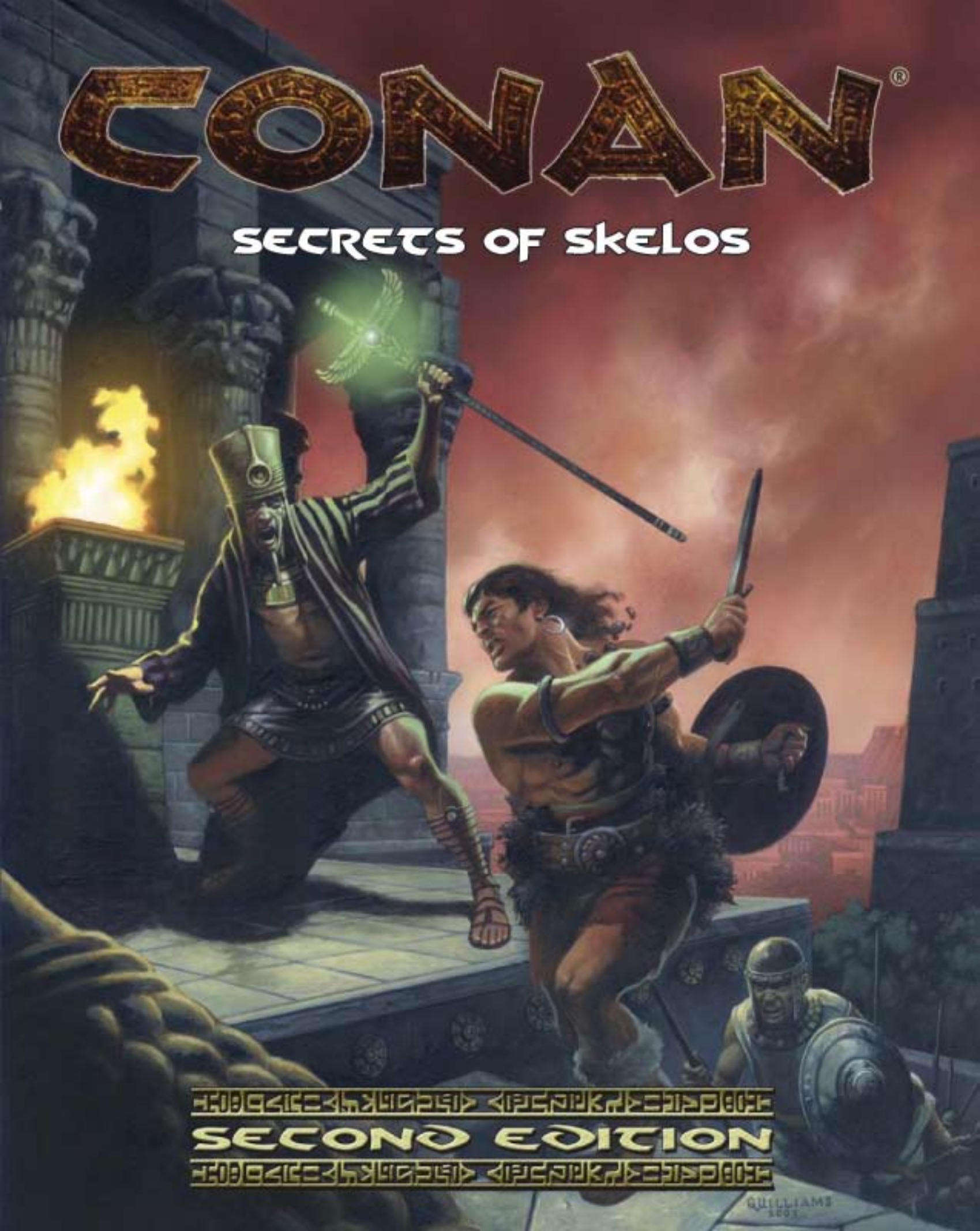


CONAN[®]

SECRETS OF SKELOS



SECONDO EDITION

WILLIAMS
1993



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SECRETS OF SKELOS

SECOND EDITION

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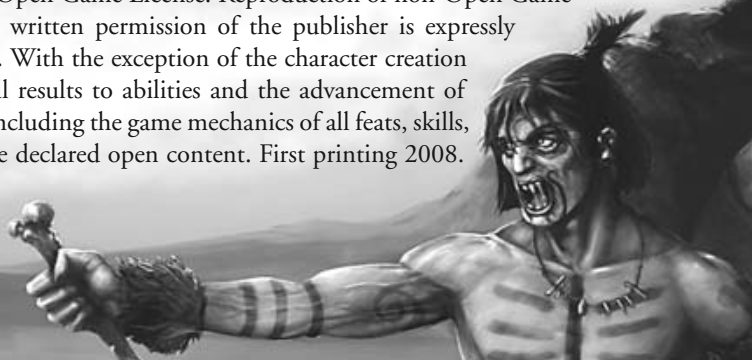
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Introduction

In *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, sorcery is a subtle but powerful force. An experienced sorcerer can cast spells undreamed of by wizards in other fantasy games, but he may need to sacrifice a dozen virgins, dose himself up with black lotus, cast the spell and then rest for several days afterwards, rather than simply being able to fire off magic whenever he chooses.

During Conan's time, the Hyborian Age, much of the most powerful magic has been lost for centuries and more. The wizards of Stygia, Khitai and Vendhya are renowned for their arcane lore, but even they would find it difficult to match the power of the sorcerers of Acheron and Old Stygia at their height many thousands of years ago.

But there is still magic in the world, like a serpent in the darkness of a cave. It coils, and waits, and sometimes – it strikes! And a strong man falls dead, though no blade touched his mortal flesh.

The dedicated sorcerer can still hope to attain the power of the elders, but he must work for it. Calling up demon lords, hunting for crumbling scrolls in dusty tombs, searching out fiend-haunted isles in the Western Ocean, gathering magical herbs in devil-infested swamps beyond Khitai... the sorcerer who desires serious magical power must do all these things and more besides. A sorcerer who has a master, coven or secret society to teach him has something of a head start over a lone scholar, but may never learn more than his tutor knows. Even he will need to quest after knowledge if he wishes to achieve his full potential.

More so than any ancient artefact or scholarly teacher, arcane books can grant a sorcerer not mere fragments of the long-lost sorcerous knowledge of the ancients, but full-blown spells, magical formulae, and the secrets of the most powerful wizards of the old times. The *book of Skelos* is the most fabled and sought-after volume of them all.

ARCANE BOOKS

A number of different arcane books are mentioned in the Conan tales. The most prominent is the *book of Skelos* itself, but the *books of Vathelos the Blind* are also noteworthy for their magical lore. Even certain more contemporary sorcerers such as Tsotha-lanti of the Scarlet Citadel have written down some information of note in their grisly-looking spellbooks bound in human skin.

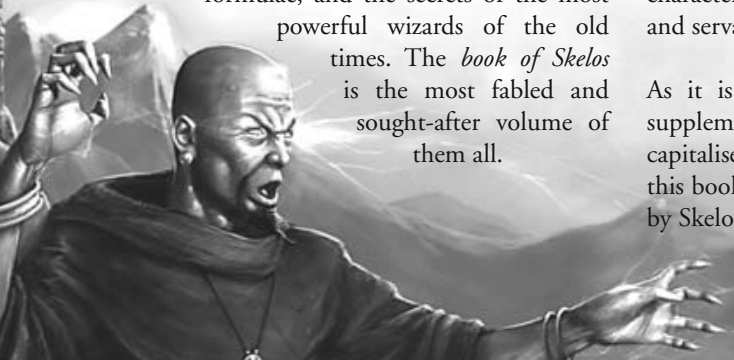
THE SECRETS OF SKELOS

The Secrets of Skelos are twofold; both the volume you hold in your hands and the book written by Skelos himself. Here you will find information on rounding out sorcerous characters in the game, whether run by players or the Games Master.

This includes additional sorcery styles and spells; full rules for creating permanent magic, including magical weapons and other sorcerous items; and a large section on the creatures of sorcery, whether the demons called up by scholars, the demon lords who act as their patrons, the strange monsters some wise men find in the wilderness and train as servants, or the weird aberrations crafted by certain sorcerers in their quests to make life itself. Further unnatural horrors and detailed rules for creating them are found in the *Bestiary of the Hyborian Age*.

The book is rounded out with a number of Non-Player Character profiles covering those prominent sorcerers of the Hyborian Age who have not already been dealt with in the main rulebook, an overview of some of the weird religions practised by certain wizards, new sorcerous feats and a sprinkling of scholarly prestige classes. There is also a Games Master's section giving advice on handling characters' relations with their demonic patrons, allies and servants, among other useful tips.

As it is usual to italicise both the names of game supplements and the names of magical items, the fully capitalised term *Secrets of Skelos* has been used to refer to this book and *book of Skelos* to refer to the book written by Skelos the sorcerer.





Sorcery

The basic sorcery rules for *Conan the Roleplaying Game* have already been presented in the main rulebook. The additional material given in this section includes new spells for some of the established sorcery styles, and brand-new sorcery styles too.

NEW SPELLS AND SORCERY STYLES

This section includes both new spells for the existing sorcery styles presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, and entirely new sorcery styles along with their associated spells.

The New Sorcery Styles and New Spells table (overleaf) shows the new spells to be found in this book.

COSMIC SORCERY

Cosmic sorcery is one of the most powerful styles of sorcery available, but for the most part it is used to augment and improve other spells. It is most widely understood in the East, and the sorcerers of the Himelians, Vendhya and Khitai are its most accomplished practitioners, but westerners sometimes also learn its secrets.

Cosmic Sorcery is closely associated with Divination and Summonings.

THE TIME IS RIGHT (BASIC COSMIC SORCERY)

Power Point Cost: x3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 2 weeks

Range: Personal

Effect: As per sorcery style

Duration: As per sorcery style

Saving Throw: As per sorcery style, but see below

Prerequisites: Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks.

Magic Attack Roll: See below.

By waiting till the time is right to perform your magic, you are able to remove most of the random

factors that might usually reduce or counteract the effects of your spell, ensuring that your own magical power is at its maximum possible level.

In game terms, this allows you to Take 20 on your magic attack roll.

For purposes of the cost to include it in a spellbook or as a general gauge of its magical strength and complexity, *the time is right* can be considered to be a 15 Power Point spell.

Material component: In addition to the usual components, various oils and incenses to a total value of 750 silver pieces.

'He drove me from him at last, saying that I was but a common witch in spite of his teachings, and not fit to command the mighty sorcery he would have taught me. He would have made me queen of the world and ruled the nations through me, he said, but I was only a harlot of darkness. But what of it? I could never endure to seclude myself in a golden tower, and spend the long hours staring into a crystal globe, mumbling over incantations written on serpent's skin in the blood of virgins, poring over musty volumes in forgotten languages.'

'He said I was but an earthly sprite, knowing naught of the deeper gulfs of cosmic sorcery. Well, this world contains all I desire - power, and pomp, and glittering pageantry, handsome men and soft women for my paramours and my slaves. He had told me who I was, of the curse and my heritage. I have returned to take that to which I have as much right as you. Now it is mine by right of possession.'

— *A Witch Shall Be Born*



TABLE I: NEW SORCERY STYLES AND NEW SPELLS

Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
Cosmic Sorcery	The Time Is Right* (Basic Cosmic Sorcery)	Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks
	Beyond Time and Space* (Defensive Blast)	Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks
	Horoscope	<i>The time is right, astrological prediction</i>
	The Hour of Your Birth, The Hour of Your Death	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, <i>horoscope</i>
	Alignment of the Heavenly Paths*	Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, <i>the time is right</i>
	Make Gate*	Knowledge (geography) 10 ranks, <i>the time is right, alignment of the heavenly paths</i>
	Dictate Fate	Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, <i>the hour of your birth, the hour of your death, visions</i>
	Nothing is Immutable*	Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, <i>dictate fate, telekinesis</i>
	The Stars are Right*	Int 19, Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, <i>the time is right</i>
Counterspells	Blessing of True Steel	Knowledge (arcana) 12 ranks, <i>warding, greater warding</i>
	Master Warding	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, <i>warding, greater warding</i>
Curses	Doom of the Doll	Hexer, Focused Magical Link, magic attack bonus +7, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i>
	Shrinking Doom	Magic attack bonus +5, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , must be a worshipper of Zath
	Invocation of Xuthalla	Magic attack bonus +6, <i>lesser ill-fortune, animate statue, awful rite of the were-beast</i>
Divination	Soothsay	Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, <i>astrological prediction, animal ally</i>
	Projection	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, <i>astrological prediction, visions, illusion</i>
Fire Magic	Heart of Flames (Basic Fire Magic)	
	Flame Burst (Defensive Blast)	Active <i>heart of flames</i>
	Boiling Blood	Active <i>heart of flames</i>
	Flame Ward	Active <i>heart of flames</i>
	Inferno Heat	Active <i>heart of flames</i>
	Incinerating Gaze	Active <i>heart of flames, inferno heat</i>
	Dance of the Flames	Active <i>heart of flames</i>
	Beguiling Smoke	<i>Heart of flames</i>
	Flame of Agni	Active <i>heart of flames, inferno heat, incinerating gaze</i>
	Ropes of Fire	Active <i>heart of flames, inferno heat</i>
	Candle of Passion	Active <i>heart of flames, beguiling smoke, magical link</i>
	Purifying Flames*	Scholar level 12, Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, active <i>heart of flames, inferno heat, flames of Agni</i> , Corruption 0
	Summon Elemental*	Perform (song or an appropriate musical instrument) 10 ranks, magic attack bonus +7, active <i>heart of flames, inferno heat, incinerating gaze</i>
	Elemental Form*	Scholar level 12, active <i>heart of flames, summon elemental</i>



Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
Frost Magic	Fell of Frost (Basic Frost Magic)	
	Icy Flames (Defensive Blast)	<i>Fell of frost</i>
	Chill Touch	<i>Fell of frost</i>
	Become Beast	Scholar level 4, <i>fell of frost</i>
	Winds of Madness	Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, <i>fell of frost</i>
	Shape Snow	Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, <i>fell of frost</i>
	Icy Slumber	Scholar level 5, <i>chill touch</i>
	Servants of Ice	Scholar level 6, magic attack bonus +4, <i>shape snow</i>
	Spirit of the Avalanche*	Scholar level 8, <i>shape snow, winds of madness</i>
	Command Weather	Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, <i>winds of madness</i>
	Ride the Storm*	Scholar level 10, <i>command weather, servants of ice, spirit of the avalanche</i>
	Hedge Magic	Blessings and Curses (Basic Hedge Magic)
Sign Against Evil (Defensive Blast)		<i>Blessings and curses</i>
Cure-All		Heal 4 ranks, <i>blessings and curses</i>
Blight		Magic attack bonus +1, <i>blessings and curses</i>
Blessing of the Good God		<i>Cure-all</i>
Twisting of Tongue and Eye		Bluff 4 ranks, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks, <i>blessings and curses</i>
Send Dreams		<i>Twisting of tongue and eye</i>
Love Charm		<i>Twisting of tongue and eye</i>
Hypnotism	Walk Unseen	Hide 8 ranks, Move Silently 8 ranks, <i>entrance, calm of the adept</i>
	Torment	Magic attack bonus +1, <i>entrance</i>
	Enslave	Cha 13, magic attack bonus +4, <i>entrance, domination, hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism</i>
	Swell	Magic attack bonus +4, <i>entrance, illusion, dread serpent, conjuring</i>
	Illusion	Magic attack bonus +5, <i>entrance, dread serpent, conjuring</i>
	Boundary	Magic attack bonus +7, <i>entrance, hypnotic suggestion</i>
	Dance of Atali	Cha 13, magic attack bonus +7, <i>entrance, hypnotic suggestion</i> , must be a female worshipper of the Nordheimir pantheon
	Voice of Power	Steely Gaze, magic attack bonus +7, <i>entrance, master-words and signs or greater demonic pact</i>
	Voice of Power, Greater	Menacing Aura, magic attack bonus +8, <i>voice of power</i>
Immortality	Witch's Vigour* (Basic Immortality)	Ritual Sacrifice, magic attack bonus +4, 3 or more sorcery styles
	Eternal Youth*	Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, magic attack bonus +5, <i>witch's vigour</i>
	Life Drain	Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +6, <i>witch's vigour, eternal youth, raise corpse, death touch</i>
	Unnatural Strength*	Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +6, <i>witch's vigour, eternal youth</i>
	Vampire Transformation*	Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +7, <i>witch's vigour, demonic pact</i>
	Unholy Revitalisation	<i>Witch's vigour</i>
	Glance of Eternity	<i>Witch's vigour</i> , sorcerer must be at least 100 years old

SORCERY



Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
Nature Magic	Become Beast	Scholar level 4, <i>summon beast, animal ally</i>
	Control Magical Beast	Handle Animal 10 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, <i>summon beast, animal ally</i>
	Control Monstrous Humanoid	Handle Animal 12 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 12 ranks, <i>summon beast, control magical beast, animal ally</i>
	Bones of Life	Heal 15 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Permanent Sorcery, <i>summon beast, raise corpse</i>
	Fruit of Air	Craft (herbalism) 20 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 20 ranks, <i>summon beast, sorcerous garden</i>
Necromancy	Legions of the Dead	Magic attack bonus +4, <i>raise corpse</i>
	Essential Salts*	Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Heal 10 ranks, <i>raise corpse</i>
Oriental Magic	Harmony of Earth and Sky	<i>Calm of the adept, warrior's trance</i>
	Harmony of Mind and Body	Heal 10 ranks, <i>calm of the adept</i>
	Walk on Clouds	Scholar level 5, <i>calm of the adept, willow dance</i>
Prestidigitation	Animate Swords	Scholar level 4, base attack bonus +3, <i>conjuring, telekinesis, greater telekinesis</i>
	Animate Statue	Scholar level 6, base attack bonus +4, <i>conjuring, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, animate swords</i>
	Magic Builder	Scholar level 10, <i>conjuring, telekinesis, greater telekinesis</i>
	Shake Earth	Scholar level 10, <i>conjuring, telekinesis, greater telekinesis</i>
Serpent Magic	Blessing of Yig (Basic Serpent Magic)	Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 4 ranks
	Unseen Serpents (Defensive Blast)	<i>Blessing of Yig</i>
	Hypnotic Gaze	Concentration 4 ranks, <i>blessing of Yig</i>
	Animal Ally	Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, <i>blessing of Yig</i>
	Snakeshift	Scholar level 4, <i>animal ally</i>
	Slither	Scholar level 5, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks, <i>snakeshift</i>
	Dread Serpent	Magic attack bonus +4, <i>hypnotic gaze</i>
	Shed the Skin*	Scholar level 10, <i>slither</i>
	Call the Great Snake*	Magic attack bonus +4, <i>shed the skin</i>
	Curse of Yig	Hexer, magic attack bonus +5, <i>snakeshift</i>
	Hands of Death	Touch of Power, magic attack bonus +5, <i>slither</i>
Curse of Ten Thousand Serpents*	Scholar level 15, Hexer, <i>unseen serpents, animal ally</i>	
Summonings	Vomit Horror*	Concentration 8 ranks, <i>summon demon, channel demon, conjure item</i>
	Travel Beyond*	Magic attack bonus +5, <i>dream of wisdom, master-words and signs</i>
	Banish Outsider	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, magic attack bonus +5, <i>master-words and signs or demonic pact, summon demon</i>
	Bind Demon	Knowledge (arcana) 18 ranks, magic attack bonus +6, <i>master-words and signs or greater demonic pact, summon demon, banish outsider</i>
	Form Demon	Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +6, <i>master-words and signs or demonic pact, summon demon</i>



BEYOND TIME AND SPACE

(DEFENSIVE BLAST)

Power Point Cost: All remaining points

Components: V

Casting Time: Immediate

Range: Evil Eye

Effect: Transports a target through time and space

Duration: None

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks.

When this spell is cast, the sorcerer instantly loses all his remaining Power Points. The attacker who triggered the defensive blast must make a Will save (DC equals the number of Power Points spent). If the saving throw is failed, then the attacker is thrown through time and space. It is up to the Games Master when and where the attacker arrives, and while it is generally within a few miles and a few days (forward or back) of his present location, victims have been thrown hundreds of leagues and many centuries by this wild spell.

HOROSCOPE

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One hour

Range: Touch or Magical Link

Target: One creature

Duration: Until triggered

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *The time is right, astrological prediction*

Casting a *horoscope* for an individual allows the sorcerer to foreshadow an event for that person. For example, a sorcerer casting a horoscope for an adventure could say '*the jaws of the serpent will close upon you – beware!*' That adventurer would gain one Fate point if he was ever in a situation that could be interpreted as 'the jaws of the serpent closing upon him'.

Alternatively, a sorcerer can cast a negative *horoscope*. If the events foreshadowed by a negative *horoscope* come to pass, then the target *loses* one Fate Point. Note that as the spell can be cast through a magical link, the sorcerer can curse a foe from afar without the foe being aware of the doom that is upon him.

A sorcerer can only place a single *horoscope* on an individual. If that *horoscope* is triggered, then the sorcerer

may later cast the spell again on that person. A character can carry multiple foreshadowings from *horoscopes* cast by different sorcerers.

Birth Horoscope: The *horoscope* spell can be cast as a permanent spell (see the rules on page 58), but only on a newborn child. It costs 1000 XP, 25 PP, a focus worth 500 silver pieces and 50 silver pieces' worth of inks, scrolls and divinatory equipment. When cast in this fashion, the sorcerer may give three foreshadowings, which are triggered in order. The first two are discarded when triggered; the third will remain permanently on the character, but can only be triggered once per adventure.

For example, if Conan had his birth *horoscope* cast, then it might have been '*he will travel far from Cimmeria; his greatest love will perish, yet return; the crown will rest uneasily on his head*'. Conan would then have received one Fate Point when he left his homeland, one when Bêlit died (and he probably spent that point immediately on a Destiny change to bring her back) and one whenever his rule of Aquilonia was threatened or whenever he felt restless on the throne.

THE HOUR OF YOUR BIRTH, THE HOUR OF YOUR DEATH

Power Point Cost: 10

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One day

Range: Special

Target: One person

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, *horoscope*.

To cast this spell, the sorcerer must know the date, hour and location of the target's birth. If he makes a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check then the sorcerer can use this knowledge as a Magical Link to the target.

ALIGNMENT OF THE HEAVENLY PATHS

Power Point Cost: x2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: As per the base spell

Range: As per the base spell

Effect: As per the base spell

Duration: As per the base spell



Saving Throw: As per the base spell, but see below
Prerequisites: Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, *the time is right*.

This dangerous spell attempts to garner the benefits of *the time is right* even when the time is patently *not* right. In effect, the sorcerer attempts to change the universe to suit his needs, instead of waiting until the ceaseless changing of the stars brings them into alignment with his desires.

In game terms, this allows you to Take 20 on your Magic Attack Roll. However, the spell automatically becomes a Mighty spell, and the sorcerer must immediately make a Will save against Runaway Magic even if this is the only Mighty spell he has cast this week.

For purposes of the cost to include it in a spellbook or as a general gauge of its magical strength and complexity, *alignment of the heavenly paths* can be considered to be a 15 Power Point spell.

Material component: In addition to the usual components, various oils and incenses to a total value of 500 silver pieces.

MAKE GATE

Power Point Cost: Special
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: One week
Range: Special
Effect: Creates a magical portal
Duration: Mortal
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: Knowledge (geography) 10 ranks, *the time is right*, *alignment of the heavenly paths*.

This spell allows the sorcerer to create a magical portal connecting two points. When the gate is open, a man can step through it as if stepping through a door, even though the two points might be separated by a hundred miles or an ocean or even the gulf between the stars.

The Power Point cost of the *make gate* spell depends on the range of the spell. See the *make gate* table.

TABLE 2: MAKE GATE COSTS

Range	Creation Cost	Activation Cost
Within one mile	5	1
Within ten miles	10	2
Within one hundred miles	15	3
Different nation	20	4
Across a continent	30	6
Across a world	40	8
Different world or dimension	50	10
Distant world or dimension	60	12

The creation cost is the number of Power Points required to create the gate initially. To make a gate, certain mystic symbols must be drawn at both the points that are to be connected. These symbols do not have to be drawn by the sorcerer himself – a sorcerer planning to make a gate to a distant land might use *sorcerous news* – or a letter – to instruct an apprentice or agent on how to draw the symbols. Those planning to open gateways to other dimensions might use *master-words and signs* to contact a suitable denizen of the other dimension. It takes one week of work to inscribe the symbols.

A sorcerer can open a gate through brute force by only drawing the symbols at one end of the gate, but this quintuples the Creation and Activation costs of the gate (thus, if Thoth-Amon wishes to open a gate into the heart of Conan's palace and send assassins to kill the king, it will cost him one hundred Power Points to do so through brute force, but only 20 if one of his agents can draw the symbols in the palace). If a gate is created by brute force, then it must be 'anchored' by drawing the symbols on the far side, or it will cease to function one week after being created.

The cost to create a gate can be halved by placing cosmic restrictions on the gate. For example, many gates are tied to the phase of the moon, only functioning during the full moon. A gate could also be tied to a particular configuration of the stars. Even the loosest restrictions only permit a gate to work a maximum of one-quarter of the time. It is clearly obvious when a gate is functioning, as the symbols glow eerily when active.

Once a gate is created, it can be opened from either side by spending the listed number of Power Points in the Activation column. Anyone with Power Points can open the gate by touching the symbols – they do not need to know the *make gate* spell, or even know where the gate goes or who made it.



An activated gate remains open for 1d6 rounds plus one round per Power Point spent to activate it. During this time, anyone or anything stepping through the gate is instantly transported to the far side of the gate. Gates are two-way when active and show a clear view of whatever is on the other side.

A gate can be destroyed by erasing the symbols.

Focus: The symbols that anchor the gate. These symbols can simply be drawn with paint or charcoal, or carved in stone if the character has the requisite tools and Craft skill. Either way, the symbols take a week of work to draw.

ⱤICTATE FATE

Power Point Cost: 10+

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: One hour

Range: Magical Link

Effect: Alters a target's destiny

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Int 15, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, *the hour of your birth, the hour of your death, visions.*

When this spell is cast, the sorcerer must specify a foreshadowing for the target. The sorcerer can then alter events to bring that foreshadowing to pass. This manipulation of destiny links the sorcerer and the target – the target will dream of the sorcerer, and may realise that his destiny is being meddled with. The sorcerer may alter events in two ways:

Using Visions: When the sorcerer is observing the target of *dictate fate* through a *visions* spell, the sorcerer may spend Power Points to alter any skill check, attack roll, or saving throw made within the field of view of his sensor. Each Power Point spent gives a +1 or –1 to the roll and the sorcerer may spend a maximum of five Power Points per roll in this fashion.

Using Fate: The sorcerer may also spend 2d6 Power Points to alter the target's destiny, as if he had spent a Fate point to do so. The sorcerer does not need a *vision* to this – indeed, it will happen even if the sorcerer is unaware of the need to change the target's Destiny, and without the consent of the sorcerer. For example, the sorcerer might place a foreshadowing on the target, saying that the target will arrive at the sorcerer's castle. The target then falls off a cliff to his death – so the spell takes 2d6 Power

Points from the sorcerer to alter the target's destiny, and the target luckily falls into soft mud and survives. The sorcerer becomes aware of the drain and who triggered it as it happens, but does not know any specifics about the event.

A sorcerer reduced to below 0 PP by this spell is reduced to 0 PP instead and suffers 1d6 Wisdom damage.

NOTHING IS IMMUTABLE

Power Point Cost: Varies

Components: S

Casting Time: One action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One object

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, *dictate fate, telekinesis.*

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the difficulty for the target's Fortitude save.

This spell allows the caster to transform any mundane object into any other mundane object of roughly the same size. A man could be transformed into a statue, or a wolf, or a cloud of mist. A dagger could become a flower, or a snake, or a jewel. The Power Point cost of the spell is equal to the level + Constitution modifier of the target when targeting a living creature, or equal to the weight of an object in lbs. A Fortitude save is permitted if the spell targets a living creature.

'All substance is one to him who holds the key of the cosmos', he said cryptically. 'To an adept nothing is immutable. At will, steel blossoms bloom in unnamed gardens, or flower-swords flash in the moonlight.'

'You are a devil,' she sobbed.

– *The People of the Black Circle*



THE STARS ARE RIGHT

Power Point Cost: x4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 month
Range: Magical link
Effect: As per sorcery style
Duration: As per sorcery style
Saving Throw: As per sorcery style, but see below
Prerequisites: Int 19, Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, *the time is right*
Magic Attack Roll: See below.

'Even the arts you call sorcery are governed by cosmic laws,' answered the man in the green turban. 'The stars direct these actions, as in other affairs. Not even my masters can alter the stars. Not until the heavens were in the proper order could they perform this necromancy.' With a long, stained fingernail he mapped the constellations on the marble-tiled floor. 'The slant of the moon presaged evil for the king of Vendhya; the stars are in turmoil, the Serpent in the House of the Elephant. During such juxtaposition, the invisible guardians are removed from the spirit of Bhunda Chand. A path is opened in the unseen realms, and once a point of contact was established, mighty powers were put in play along that path.'

— *The People of the Black Circle*

By waiting till the stars are right to perform your magic, you may render the target extremely vulnerable, so that he finds resistance to your attacks difficult if not impossible, as well as removing most of the random factors that might usually reduce or counteract the effects of your spell.

In game terms, this allows you to Take 20 on your Magic Attack Roll as for *the time is right*. Furthermore it halves (round down) any circumstance bonuses, resistance bonuses, or morale bonuses that your target would usually add to his Will saving throw. Finally, it removes any *warding* or *greater warding* spell that may be protecting him, immediately before your spell is cast.

For purposes of the cost to include it in a spellbook or as a general gauge of its magical strength and complexity, *the stars are right* can be considered to be a 20 Power Point spell.

Material component: In addition to the usual components, various oils and incenses to a total value of 1,000 silver pieces.

COUNTERSPELLS

The greatest counter-magicians seem able to negate magic by their very presence. The following additional spells are available in the Counterspells sorcery style.

BLESSING OF TRUE STEEL

Power Point Cost: 6
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: One full round
Range: Touch
Target: One metal weapon
Duration: One round/level
Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 12 ranks, *warding*, *greater warding*.

Magic is mostly air and trickery, and an honest sword will cleave through most magical defences. A character using a weapon under the effect of this spell has a +2 morale bonus to all saving throws against spells.

Furthermore, the character may choose to discharge the blessing when he strikes a foe or object which is under the effect of a spell. The character's attack roll is pitted against a magic attack roll made by the caster of the enemy spell – if the character's roll is equal to or higher than the enemy's magic attack roll, then one spell affecting the target is immediately ended. If the enemy is under the effects of multiple spells, then the Games Master chooses which spell is broken.

For example, a barbarian with a sword under the effects of *blessing of true steel* is fighting a sorcerer who is using *witch's vigour* and *channel demon*. The barbarian has no idea about the *witch's vigour*, but the demon's taint is obvious. He swings his blade, and discharges the *blessing of true steel* in an attempt to blast away the *channel demon* spell.

Focus: The sword or weapon being blessed.

Material Component: Rare oils worth 250 silver pieces, and 1d6 hit points of the sorcerer's own blood.



MASTER WARDING

Power Point Cost: 8

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Personal

Area: 10-foot radius emanation, centred on the sorcerer

Duration: One minute/level

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, *warding*, *greater warding*.

An invisible barrier surrounds the sorcerer and moves with him. The space within this barrier is impervious to most magical effects. Likewise, it prevents the functioning of any magic items or spells within its confines.

A *master warding* suppresses any spell or magical effect used within, brought into, or cast into the area, but does not dispel it. Time spent within a *master warding* counts against the suppressed spell's duration.

Summoned creatures of any type wink out if they enter a *master warding*. They reappear in the same spot once the field goes away. Time spent winked out counts normally against the duration of the conjuration that is maintaining the creature. (The effects of instantaneous spells are not affected by a *master warding* because the spell itself is no longer in effect, only its result.) Creatures of the construct type remain entirely inanimate when in the region of the spell.

A normal creature can enter the area, as can normal missiles. Furthermore, while a magic sword does not function magically within the area, it is still a sword (and often a finely crafted sword at that). Elementals and outsiders are unaffected unless summoned. These creatures' spell-like or supernatural abilities, however, may be temporarily nullified by the field.

Two or more *master wardings* sharing any of the same space have no effect on each other.

Should a creature be larger than the area enclosed by the barrier, any part of it that lies outside the barrier is unaffected by the field.

Material Component: Incenses and oils to a value of 250 silver pieces.



CURSES

Certain powerful hexers and cursers are able to shrink their enemies down to nothingness, or balefully transform them into statues who live no more than a weird and occasional quasi-life. The following additional spells are available in the Curses sorcery style.

DOOM OF THE DOLL

Power Point Cost: 10/round

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Magical Link

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial

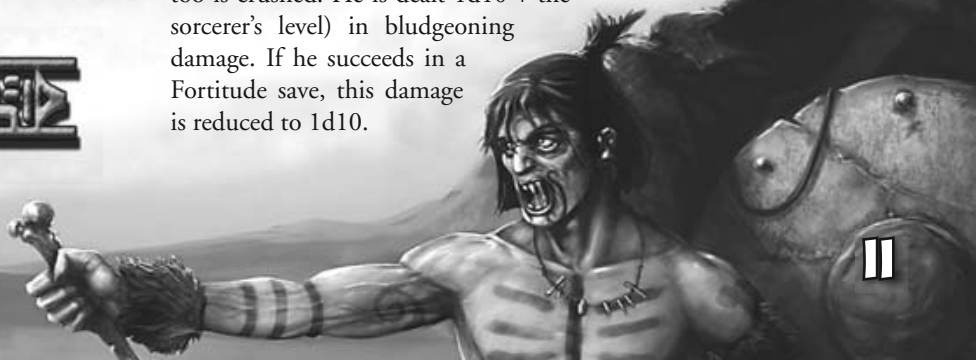
Prerequisites: Hexer, Focused Magical Link, magic attack bonus +7 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

This spell enables the sorcerer to harm and even kill a victim for whom he has made a 'voodoo doll' with the Focused Magical Link feat, simply by applying heat or other unpleasantness to the doll.

During each round of the spell's duration, the sorcerer can spend a full-round action to either burn the doll, stab it, cut it, or crush it, with the following effects:

- ❖ **Burning:** The doll transmits the heat and energy of the flames directly to the target. He is dealt 2d6 + the sorcerer's level in fire damage. If he succeeds in a Fortitude save, this damage is reduced to 1d6.
- ❖ **Stabbing:** Just as the doll is stabbed, so is the target. He is dealt 1d4 + the sorcerer's level in piercing damage. If he succeeds in a Fortitude save, this damage is reduced to just the sorcerer's level.
- ❖ **Cutting:** Just as the doll is cut, so is the target. He is dealt 1d8 + the sorcerer's level in slashing damage. If he succeeds in a Fortitude save, this damage is halved.
- ❖ **Crushing:** As the doll is crushed, the target too is crushed. He is dealt 1d10 + the sorcerer's level) in bludgeoning damage. If he succeeds in a Fortitude save, this damage is reduced to 1d10.





The sorcerer will need appropriate (and substantial) implements on hand to harm the doll, such as a bonfire and tongs, a large knife or sword, and a hefty rock or other crushing implement, depending on which method of damage he prefers to deal. The damage caused by *doom of the doll* bypasses worn armour but can be reduced by any innate damage reduction the target possesses.

Material Component: A 'voodoo doll' of the target of the spell, crafted with the Focused Magical Link feat. The doll and all associated magical links are destroyed at the end of the spell's duration, rather than during the casting time.

SHRINKING DOOM

Power Point Cost: 12

Components: V, S, (F)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil eye

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/2 levels, and see below

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +5, *lesser ill-fortune*, must be a worshipper of Zath.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

This spell causes rapid diminution of a humanoid creature. For the duration of the spell, the target is halved in size each round. This halves its height, length, and width and divides its weight by 8. This decrease changes the creature's size category to the next smaller one each round. Each drop in size gives the target a +2 size bonus to Dexterity, a -2 size penalty to Strength and Constitution (both to a minimum of 1), and a +1 bonus on attack rolls and AC due to its reduced size.

The target's reach may also be altered (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 177). Its speed is also reduced by 5 feet each time it is halved in size. At the end of the spell's duration, the creature remains at whatever size it was reduced to by that time.

The sorcerer may as he is casting the spell elect to change the target into a minuscule spider once he has been fully reduced in size, in which case this change occurs during the final round of the spell's effect. A creature changed in this manner will be unable to cast spells or speak, but may otherwise be treated in the same

And as Conan looked, he thought that his eyes must be playing him tricks. For when Yara had risen up from his couch, the priest had seemed gigantically tall; yet now saw that Yara's head would scarcely come up to his shoulder. He blinked, puzzled, and for the first time that night, doubted his own senses. Then with a shock he realized that the priest was shrinking in stature – was growing smaller before his very gaze.

With a detached feeling he watched, as a man might watch a play; immersed in a feeling of overpowering unreality, the Cimmerian was no longer sure of his own identity; he only knew that he was looking upon the external evidence of the unseen play of vast Outer forces, beyond his understanding.

Now Yara was no bigger than a child; now like an infant he sprawled on the table, still grasping the jewel. And now the sorcerer suddenly realized his fate, and he sprang up, releasing the gem. But still he dwindled, and Conan saw a tiny, pygmy figure rushing wildly about the ebony table-top, waving tiny arms and shrieking in a voice that was like the squeak of an insect.

– *The Tower of the Elephant*

way as any other creature reduced to the appropriate size. He does not gain any new attack modes, despite his new appearance – this is more a cosmetic change than anything else.

If the target wishes, it may attempt a new saving throw after one full day at its new size – if successful, it returns to normal, both in size and form. (Most sorcerers prefer to simply squish their victims like bugs long before this point.)

All equipment worn or carried by a creature is similarly reduced by the spell.

Melee and projectile weapons deal less damage (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 170). Other magical properties are not affected by this spell. Any shrunken item that leaves the shrunken creature's possession (including a projectile or thrown weapon) remains in its shrunken state.



A *greater warding* or similar effect can be used to instantly restore the target to its normal size and form.

Focus: If desired, a cut gem valued at a minimum of 1,000 sp may be used as a focus. In this case, at any time after the expiration of the spell's duration, the target may be physically forced into the gem by the simple expedient of touching it to him. The gem must be held in the hand when initially casting the spell. The target may escape the gem by either making a successful save after a day or more, or by having a *greater warding* successfully cast on him as usual.

INVOCATION OF XUTHALLA

Power Point Cost: 11/target

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil eye

Target: Up to 1 creature/3 levels

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +6, *lesser ill-fortune*, *animate statue*, *awful rite of the were-beast*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

This spell transforms its still-living targets into iron statues which can, if desired, be animated in a similar manner to the targets of an *animate statue* spell. It is intended primarily as a curse, but is also sometimes used by sorcerers desiring to create guardians for their treasures or traps for the unwary.

Then from the stranger's chiseled lips rang a terrible invocation and command: 'Yagkoolan yok tha, xuthalla!'

At the blast of that awful cry, the black figures stiffened and froze. Over their limbs crept a curious rigidity, an unnatural petrification. The stranger touched the limp body of the youth, and the chains fell away from it. He lifted the corpse in his arms; then ere he turned away, his tranquil gaze swept again over the silent rows of ebony figures, and he pointed to the moon, which gleamed through the casements. And they understood, those tense, waiting statues that had been men...

— *Shadows in the Moonlight*

If the sorcerer has the Ritual Sacrifice feat, he gains Power Points as though he had sacrificed the target of the spell, assuming the target fails his save and becomes a statue. The magical energy released by this horrific transformation is at least as great as that released by killing the target outright.

The creature altered in this way is not controlled by the sorcerer in any way. However, the sorcerer can set certain conditions related to the creature as follows:

- ✦ Choose whether or not to have it animated some of the time, similar to an *animate statue* spell. This is done automatically if the sorcerer so desires. Statues animated by the *invocation of Xuthalla* use the game statistics for iron shadows (see page 96). They retain their own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, though they gain Strength and Dexterity scores appropriate to animated objects for their size (like animated objects, they also have no Constitution scores). They retain any abilities except those that would logically be lost by becoming iron. Parts of their body or pieces of equipment that are separated from them do not revert to their original forms.
- ✦ If it is animated, choose the times or other conditions that will cause it to animate and the conditions that will cause it to return to statue form. It can be animated at most 30% of the time. Common conditions include animation when the moonlight strikes it, animation only while snow is on the ground, animation only when statue is being rained on, and animation only when there are living creatures within 30 feet, but almost any condition or time could be used. The 30% limit applies over the course of a full year; if during any year the statue has been animated for 30% of the year (110 full days), it can no longer animate for the remainder of the year.
- ✦ Define the area in which the statue can move, if it is animated. This may be at most a one square mile region centred on the place where the original creature was first affected by the spell. At the sorcerer's discretion, it can be much less than this if desired.

The only way to restore a statue to life is with a *greater warding*. However, although the statue is immune to aging, the human who was turned into the statue is not – if restored to human form, he will immediately age to reflect the amount of time he spent as a statue. This can lead to victims of this spell simply dying of old age when 'saved' from their curse by a helpful sorcerer.



DIVINATION

Great diviners who also learn some of the arts of illusion from the Hypnotism sorcery style can send out duplicates of themselves, or weird shadowy forms, when observing another place, allowing for some limited two-way interaction with the creatures there. Other diviners learn to read the future in the entrails of animals by studying Nature Magic. The following additional spells are available in the Divination sorcery style.

SOOTHSAY

Power Point Cost: 1 per 5 targets
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: Three hours
Range: Evil eye
Target: 5 people per Power Point
Duration: One week or until discharged.
Saving Throw: None (harmless)
Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, *astrological prediction, animal ally*.

By reading the entrails of a goat or other animal, the sorcerer can foretell the future for a group of people. The subjects of this spell each get an insight bonus to one die roll made in the next week, as long as it is related to the prophecy or warning made by the sorcerer. For example, five warriors have their fortune told using *soothsay*. One uses his insight bonus when making an attack roll; another uses his when making a saving throw; a third uses it when making a Jump check, and the last two die before they invoke the bonus.

The size of the bonus depends on the animal sacrificed.

Sacrifice	Insight Bonus
Animal	+1
Sacred animal	+2
Ordinary Person	+3
Virgin Sacrifice	+4
Ritually Prepared Virgin Sacrifice	+5
Perfect Offering	+6
Ritual Perfect Offering	+7

Feats like Ritual Sacrifice and Tortured Sacrifice can be used when casting *soothsay*, to increase the bonus.

Material component:
The sacrifice.

PROJECTION

Power Point Cost: 4/minute or 6/minute (see text)
Components: S, M or F
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 1,000 miles plus 100 miles/level
Effect: One shadow duplicate or other form (see below).
Duration: Power Points
Saving Throw: See below
Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, *astrological prediction, visions, illusion*.

Above her, in the darkest corner of the marble chamber, lurked a vast shapeless shadow. It was no living things of form or flesh and blood. It was a clot of darkness, a blur in the sight, a monstrous night-born incubus that might have been deemed a figment of a sleep-drugged brain, but for the points of blazing yellow fire that glimmered like two eyes from the blackness.

Moreover, a voice issued from it – a low subtle inhuman sibilance that was more like the soft abominable hissing of a serpent than anything else, and that apparently could not emanate from anything with human lips. Its sound as well as its import filled Yasmela with a shuddering horror so intolerable that she writhed and twisted her slender body as if beneath a lash, as though to rid her mind of its insinuating vileness by physical contortion.

– *Black Colossus*

This spell tap can create either a quasi-real, illusory version of the sorcerer, or if he has sufficient Corruption, a warped and misshapen vision of his soul. In effect these are two distinct uses of the spell that share some common characteristics

With the first use, the projection looks, sounds, and smells like the sorcerer but is intangible. The projected image mimics the sorcerer's actions (including speech) unless he directs it to act differently (which is a move action).

The sorcerer can see through its eyes and hear through its ears as if he were standing where it is, and during his turn he can switch from using its senses to using his own, or back again, as a free action.





While he is using its senses, his body is considered blinded and deafened (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 224).

If the sorcerer desires, any spell of the Hypnotism sorcery style he casts can originate from the projection instead of from him. The projected image may not cast any spells on itself. The spells affect other targets normally, despite originating from the projection.

This use costs 4 PP/minute.

The second version of *projection* may only be used by a character of Corruption 3 or higher. It is identical to the first version except as follows.

The image is truly horrific in visage, a black roiling mass of shadow. If it interacts with a character by conversation, it forces the character to make a Corruption save after 5 minutes of such conversation.

The second version costs 6 PP/minute.

Material Component: Sorcerous paraphernalia worth 100 silver pieces.

FIRE MAGIC

Fire magic is commonly practised as a meditative technique in Hyrkania and the far East, but among western practitioners a debased form of the style is in vogue as a form of battle magic. Fire sorcerers learn to command the element of flame and spend long hours staring at candle-flames and into hot coals. The higher mysteries of this style are steeped in alchemy, and a sorcerer learns to burn away the base and the dross and purify his very mind and soul.

'Conan, you are of the West, and know not the secrets of this ancient land. But, since the beginning of happenings, the demons of the desert have worshipped Yag, the Lord of the Empty Abodes, with fire – fire that can devour human victims.'

– *Shadows of Zamboula.*

HEART OF FLAMES (BASIC FIRE SORCERY)

Power Point Cost: 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: Self

Duration: 10 minutes/level

This is the basic spell of fire sorcery. If this spell is not active, then (with a single exception) the fire sorcerer cannot cast any spells from this style, not even his Defensive Blast. To cast *heart of flames*, the sorcerer must meditate for at least one round on a tongue of flame. It can be as small as a candle-flame or as large as a burning city, but the sorcerer must be able to see a flame in order to use this spell. Once the spell is cast, the sorcerer may keep trying to attune himself to the fire by making Concentration checks as free actions, with a maximum of one try per round. He may take 10 or 20 on this check if conditions permit and may keep making checks as long as the fire is within range. Especially large or small fires affect the difficulty of attunement.

TABLE 3: HEART OF FLAMES ATTUNEMENT

Fire Size	Examples	Concentration DC
Tiny	Candle-flame, glowing ember	25
Small	Torch-flame, campfire	20
Medium	Hearth-fire, blazing torch	15
Large	Bonfire, forge	10
Huge	Burning building, burning man	5
Gigantic	Burning city	0

If the sorcerer makes a successful Concentration check, then a spark leaps from the flame and embeds itself in his eyes. The sorcerer may now use other spells that he knows from this sorcery style for the duration of the *heart of flames* spell. Furthermore, the sorcerer is now immune to all damage from non-magical fire.





Splashing water in the sorcerer's face forces the sorcerer to make a Reflex save (DC 15) – if this test is failed, the spark of fire goes out.

The Flame-Marked feat makes attunement easier – see page 15.

ACTIVE SPELLS

A spell is considered to be active if it has been cast and its duration has not yet finished. Many fire spells require another fire spell to be active before they can be cast – the sorcerer fans the flames of his magic, piling spell on spell until the sorcerous conflagration is complete! Prerequisite spells only need to be active when the spell is cast, not for its entire duration. For example, a fire sorcerer could cast *heart of flames* (which lasts ten minutes/level), wait until the spell is nearly over, then cast *inferno heat* (lasts one hour/level, but needs an active *heart of flames*).

Active prerequisites need not be active while a character learns a spell, but the character must know all prerequisite spells before he can learn the new one.

FLAME BURST (DEFENSIVE BLAST)

Power Point Cost: All remaining points
Components: V
Casting Time: Immediate
Range: Personal
Effect: All within five feet of the caster
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*.
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for opponent's Reflex save

This spell causes a pillar of fire to surround the caster, blasting everyone around him for 1d6 fire damage for every Power Point expended.

A successful Reflex save reduces the damage by half. Worse yet, anyone slain (reduced to –10 or more hit points) by the blast *also* explodes in

a lesser explosion. These lesser explosions only deal 1d6 damage per level or HD of the victim to all within five feet of the victim, and a Reflex save (DC 10) is allowed to take half damage from these explosions. Those killed by secondary explosions will also explode. It is possible for a chain of such explosions to rocket across a battlefield, killing dozens or even hundreds. Note, however, that these blasts all have a radius of only five feet.

BOILING BLOOD

Power Point Cost: 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature
Duration: One round per level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*.
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for opponent's Fortitude save

Boiling blood has two effects – it inflicts a great deal of damage on the creature touched, and it sets the creature's blood aflame, greatly quickening its actions. When the sorcerer casts this spell, he may choose to inflict the damage at the *start* of the spell's duration or at the *end* of the spell's duration.

For example, a sorcerer is attacked by a barbarian. He casts *boiling blood* on the barbarian, and chooses to have the damage effect of the spell happen immediately. The barbarian explodes. If, however, the sorcerer had been an ally of the barbarian, he could have chosen to have the damage effect come at the end of the spell's duration, so the barbarian would have had the benefits of the fiery blood effect for several rounds before exploding (or having a *flame ward* placed upon him).

Explosion: The target must make a Fortitude save against the spell. If he fails, he suffers 1d6 damage per level of the sorcerer. If this is enough damage to kill the target, then the target explodes and deals 1d6 damage per level or HD to all within 10 feet (Reflex save DC 15 for half damage).

Fiery Blood: The victim gains the benefit of the Fighting-Madness feat (see *Conan*, page 126) for the duration of the spell. His movement is increased by ten feet. Furthermore, whenever he is struck by a melee attack with a piercing or slashing weapon, the hot blood that spurts out inflicts 1d6 points of fire damage on the foe who struck him.



If the fiery blood effect comes before the explosion, then the victim only makes a saving throw at the end of the spell's duration. If the spell is ended prematurely by the sorcerer's death, then the victim explodes immediately.

FLAME WARD

Power Point Cost: 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*.

This spell prevents the target from being damaged by any non-magical fire, and gives a +4 bonus to all saving throws against magical fire effects.

INFERNO HEAT

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: One full round

Range: Personal

Area: 30 ft emanation centred on the caster

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Fortitude resists

Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for opponent's Fortitude save.

Inferno heat makes the air around the sorcerer ripple with a heat-haze; it makes each breath feel like it burns the lungs, it makes metal hot to the touch and causes water to boil. In this intolerable furnace, it is hard to tell which of these effects are real and which are just hallucinations brought on by the heat of the sorcerer's presence. The heat saps a man's ability to think, to act, even to breathe.

Characters within the area of effect of an *inferno heat* who are not protected by a *heart of flames*, *flame ward* or similar effect must make a Fortitude save when they enter and every ten minutes thereafter. A character who fails this saving throw becomes fatigued, or becomes exhausted if already fatigued.

INCINERATING GAZE

Power Point Cost: 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One standard action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One round per scholar level

Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*, Active *inferno heat*.

The sorcerer's gaze now crackles with magical energy, and anything he looks at bursts into flame. The sorcerer may take a number of free actions equal to his Charisma bonus each round. Each free action deals one point of fire damage to any target or object within Evil Eye range of the sorcerer's gaze. For example, a sorcerer with a Charisma of 16 (+3) could deal three damage to one target, or one damage to three targets or any combination adding up to three. Note that this damage is in addition to any other spells or actions taken by the sorcerer.

DANCE OF THE FLAMES

Power Point Cost: 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One standard action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One round per level

Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*.

The sorcerer's body seems to shimmer and flicker, as if he were in truth nothing but a man-shaped tongue of flame. All non-magical attacks on the sorcerer suffer an automatic 20% miss chance, and the sorcerer's base movement is increased by 10 feet. When he moves, he seems to flicker from one spot to another without passing through the intervening space, giving him a +4 bonus to his Dodge Defence against attacks of opportunity caused by his movement.

BEGUILING SMOKE

Power Point Cost: 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: One standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Burning brazier

Duration: One minute/level

Prerequisites: *Heart of flames*.

Saving Throw: Will resists

Magic Attack Roll: Sets difficulty for the target's Will saving throw

By casting certain rare incenses and herbs into a burning brazier, the sorcerer conjures up a



cloud of thick and scented smoke. This dense smoke gives concealment. Anyone in the smoke feels dizzy, disorientated and intoxicated, and so suffers a -2 penalty to all saving throws and skill checks. The sorcerer is immune to this smoke.

Furthermore, the sorcerer may shape the smoke, causing images and illusions to form. These illusions can be used to disguise the sorcerer's appearance, create fanciful or erotic images, or even appear horrific, forcing a Terror of the Unknown check (DC for the test is equal to the casting check) on those who see them. Only those who have inhaled the smoke can see the illusions. A Will save is permitted to see through the illusions. The sorcerer may change the illusion displayed each round as a free action, but only one Terror of the Unknown check per victim can be caused by this spell.

Note that the sorcerer does not need an active *heart of flames* to cast this spell.

Material Component: Incense and herbs worth 200 silver pieces.

FLAMES OF AGNI

Power Point Cost: 2+
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One standard action
Range: Medium (100 feet + 5 feet/level)
Area: Wave of flame 10 feet wide
Duration: Instant or one round/scholar level
Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*, *inferno heat*, *incinerate*
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for the victim's Reflex save.

This potent attack spell is better known as the *flames of Abriman* in the western world. When cast, a wave of flames ten feet wide and ten feet tall washes out from the sorcerer, starting at his position and rushing in a straight

line out to the maximum range of the spell. Anyone caught in these onrushing fires suffers 1d6 points of fire damage per two power points invested in the spell. The one restriction on the spell is that the wall of flames must draw energy from a fire nearby – if the wall of flames does not have a flame within twenty feet of it, it vanishes.

For example, a hundred-foot long corridor is lined with five burning braziers that are spaced evenly down its length. The sorcerer stands at one end and casts this spell, and a wall of flame rushes down the corridor, sustained by the burning braziers, and so reaches a victim at the far end. If, however, the middle brazier was not alight, then the *flames of Agni* would vanish at the mid-point of the corridor, as there is no other fire source within twenty feet.

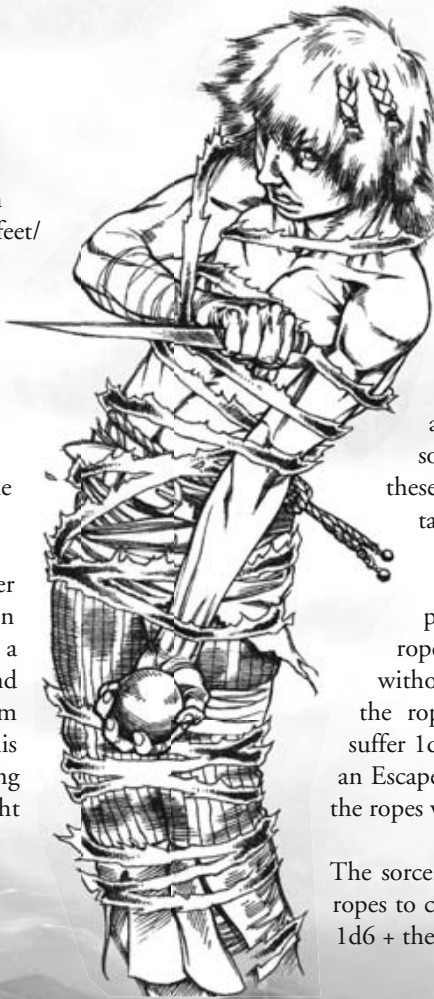
Alternatively, this spell can be cast as a stationary wall of fire anywhere within range. In this form, the *flames of Agni* last for one round per scholar level. The wall still needs a source of fire to sustain it.

ROPES OF FIRE

Power Point Cost: 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One standard action
Range: Close (25 feet + 2 feet/level)
Target: One creature
Duration: Concentration
Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*, *inferno heat*.

When this spell is cast, snaking ropes of fire appear and twine themselves around the limbs of the target. The sorcerer can control the movement of these ropes, allowing him to change the target of the ropes to any other creature within range. Commanding the ropes is a free action that can be taken once per round. A character trapped in the ropes may not move or take any actions without taking damage – moving against the ropes causes the trapped character to suffer 1d6 fire damage. A character may make an Escape Artist check (DC 30) to slide out of the ropes without taking damage.

The sorcerer may also choose to command the ropes to constrict, which deals damage equal to 1d6 + the sorcerer's Charisma bonus.



CANDLE OF PASSION

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S, M, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Magical Link

Target: One person

Duration: While the candle burns

Prerequisites: Active *heart of flames*, *beguiling smoke*.

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the target's Will saving throw

To prepare the *candle of passion*, the sorcerer must place the magical link to the target into a candle made from human fat and certain other rare oils. Making the candle requires four hours of work. Once the candle is prepared, it can be lit as a standard action. The candle will burn for twelve hours, and can be snuffed out and reused in future spells if its full duration is not exhausted.

When the candle is lit, the target of the spell is seized with an intense emotion or obsession, chosen by the caster. The victim may make a Will save to resist the emotion for a brief time, but the fires of passion will continue to burn within him. For example, the victim might be able to make a Will save to avoid his anger driving him to start a brawl in a bar, but would have to make another Will save on the street outside when asked for alms by a beggar.

Common emotions incited by the *candle of passion* include:

- ✱ Lust (or lust for a specific person).
- ✱ Anger (or hatred of a specific person).
- ✱ Fear (or fear of a specific person).
- ✱ Madness and hallucinations.

If the candle is snuffed out, the spell ends immediately.

If the candle is lit from the other end, then the sorcerer suffers the effects of the spell as well as the original target.

Material Component: Rare oils costing 500 silver pieces.

Focus: The candle itself.

PURIFYING FLAMES

Power Point Cost: 12

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: Six hours

Range: Touch

Effect: Turns a bonfire into the purifying flames

Duration: One round per level

Prerequisites: Scholar level 12, Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, active *heart of flames*, *inferno beat*, *flames of Agni*, Corruption 0.

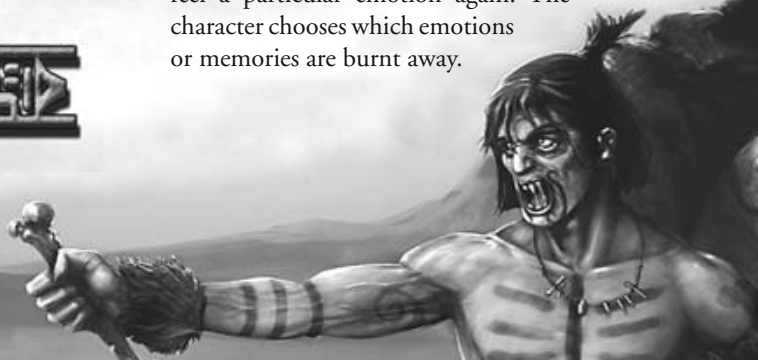
This potent spell is the height of Khitan fire magic. Preparing the *purifying flames* takes six hours of ritual chanting, dancing and throwing alchemical powders into the flames. When the spell is cast, the flames flare blue, green and finally burn a bright gold for the duration of the spell.

While the spell is in effect, a person who steps into the flames and remains there for one round must make a Will save. The difficulty of the Will save depends on which effect the person desires from the flames. In each case, the Will save is penalised by the person's Corruption score. If the Will save is failed, the person suffers 8d6 points of fire damage from the intense flames. A character can remain in the flames for multiple rounds – once he makes a successful Will save, he gains the benefits of the flames for as long as he remains in the fire.

If more than one person enters the flames at the same time, then the same thing happens to all of them. For example, three people enter the *purifying flames*. One desires youth, and makes his DC 30 Will save. One desires to be cured of a disease, and makes his DC 20 Will save. The third desires purification, but he fails his Will save. All three grow younger, are cured of disease, and suffer 8d6 fire damage.

✱ **Burning Away Disease or Poison (DC 20):** Each round spent in the flames removes one disease or poison afflicting the character.

✱ **Burning Away Emotions and Memories (DC 25):** Each round spent in the flames removes one emotion or group of memories. The character either forever loses the memories, or becomes unable to feel a particular emotion again. The character chooses which emotions or memories are burnt away.





- ❖ **Burning Away Hostile Magic (DC 25):** Each round spent in the flames removes either one spell affecting the character, or destroys one magical link to the character that is in the hands of another.
- ❖ **Burning Away Age (DC 30):** Each round spent in the flames reduces the character's physical age by 1d10 years.
- ❖ **Burning Away Corruption (DC 40):** Each round spent in the flames removes one point of Corruption.

Material Components: Rare powders and other alchemical ingredients, costing 10,000 silver pieces.

SUMMON ELEMENTAL

Power Point Cost: 2 per HD of elemental

Components: F or V, M, XP

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: See below

Effect: One elemental, of maximum HD equal to twice the scholar's level

Duration: One task, lasting up to one hour/level

Saving Throw: See below

Prerequisites: Perform (song or an appropriate musical instrument) 10 ranks, magic attack bonus +7, active *heart of flames*, *inferno heat*, *incinerating gaze*.

Magic Attack

Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

Other than the changed prerequisites, and the fact that this spell only

allows the sorcerer to summon a fire elemental, this spell is identical to the version of this spell presented in the *Conan* rulebook, page 270.

ELEMENTAL FORM

Power Point Cost: 10

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 10 minutes/level

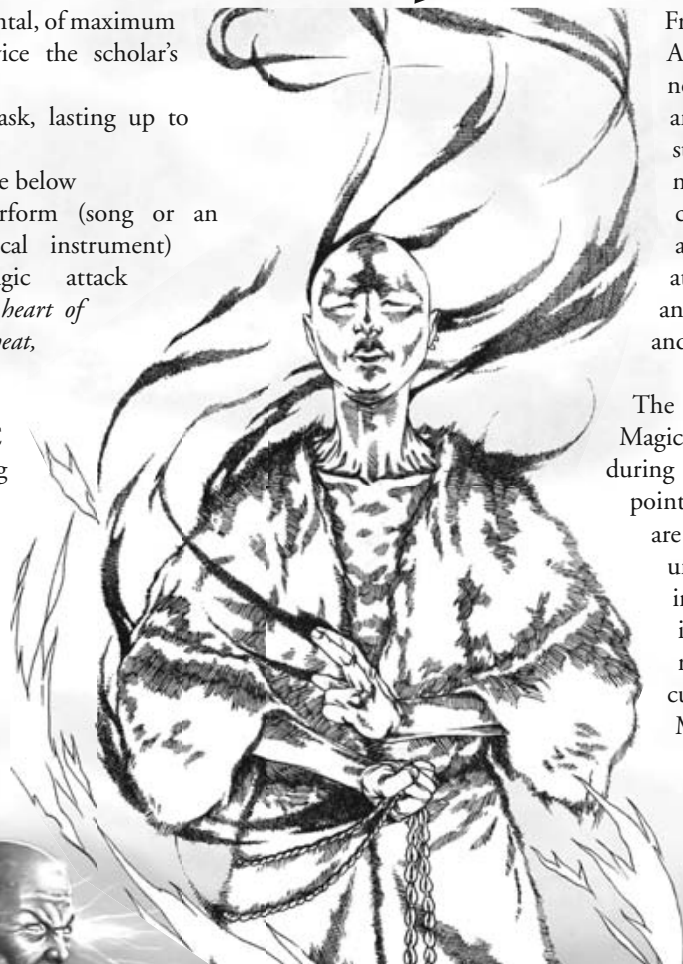
Prerequisites: Scholar level 12, active *heart of flames*, *summon elemental*.

This spell transforms the caster into a fire elemental. When in elemental form, the sorcerer may still cast fire spells. He may also travel to otherworldly realms of fire using the elemental's Manifest ability.

FROST MAGIC

Frost Magic is the magic of the Aesir and the Vanir of the far north, and is practised by shamans and priests of Ymir and other strange northern gods. It is the magic of winter wind and biting cold, of tundra and mountain and storm-cloud. Frost magic is at its strongest during the winter, and weakened severely in summer and in hot climates.

The Power Point costs for all Frost Magic spells are reduced by two points during winter and increased by two points in summer; similarly, costs are reduced by one in cold nations, unchanged in most lands, and increased by one, two or three in warm, tropical or desert lands respective. These changes are cumulative – beware the Frost Mage in the depths of winter! The cost of a Frost Magic spell cannot be reduced to 0 by these changes.



The girl's ivory body was suddenly enveloped in a cold blue flame so blinding that the Cimmerian threw up his hands to shield his eyes from the intolerable blaze. For a fleeting instant, sky and snowy hills were bathed in crackling white flames, blue darts of icy light, and frozen crimson fires. Then Conan staggered and cried out. The girl was gone. The glowing snow lay empty and bare; high above his head the witch-lights flashed and played in a frosty sky gone mad, and among the distant blue mountains there sounded a rolling thunder as of a gigantic war-chariot rushing behind steeds whose frantic hooves struck lightning from the snows and echoes from the skies.

— *The Frost Giant's Daughter*

FELL OF FROST (BASIC FROST SORCERY)

Power Point Cost: 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: One hour per level
Saving Throw: None

The *fell of frost* spell covers the sorcerer's garments or skin with a shimmering rime of frost. This increases the AP of his clothing or his natural AP by 2, and he becomes immune to damage from natural cold.

ICY FLAMES (DEFENSIVE BLAST)

Power Point Cost: All remaining points
Components: V
Casting Time: Immediate
Range: Personal
Effect: All within 10 feet of the caster
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half (see below)
Prerequisites: *Fell of frost*

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for opponent's Reflex save
 A storm of blue-white flames explodes around the caster, but these tongues of fire are incredibly cold to the touch! Icy Flames inflicts 1d6 cold damage on all

creatures within 10 feet of the sorcerer for every two Power Points expended. Furthermore, any creature who fails its Reflex save is blinded for one round per Power Point expended.

CHILL TOUCH

Power Point Cost: 4
Components: V, S, (F)
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: One round/level
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: *Fell of frost*

Chill touch wreathes the sorcerer's hands in an aura of deathly cold. Anyone touched by the sorcerer suffers 1d4 + the sorcerer's Charisma bonus in cold damage. If the sorcerer is wielding a weapon, then he may add his Charisma bonus to the weapon's damage as extra cold damage. The cold from a *chill touch* spell only affects living creatures – it is the cold of death, not a natural cold.

Focus: Optionally, a weapon.

WINDS OF MADNESS

Power Point Cost: 7
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 10 miles/level
Target: One individual/two levels
Duration: One hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, *fell of frost*
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save

The *winds of madness* are icy gusts of air that seem to howl and whisper eerie messages. All the individuals targeted by this spell must be in the same general area, so that the same wind can reach them all.

The spell can have two effects. Firstly, the spell can be used to carry a message to the targets. The same message is given to each target, as the sorcerer's words are carried on the howling winds.

Secondly, the spell can be used to drive its victims insane. Targets must make a Will save every hour – if the saving throw is failed,



then the victim suffers a -1 penalty to further Will saves made against the sorcerer's spells until he is able to sleep. Targets cannot rest or get to sleep in the hour after failing a Will save, and so cannot regain power points or avoid becoming fatigued. If a character's Will save is a negative result (for example, the target has a $+2$ Will save, rolls a 3, and has a -6 penalty to saving throws because of six hours of *winds of madness*), then he goes temporarily insane.

The spell has no effect on sleeping or unconscious characters.

COMMAND WEATHER

Power Point Cost: 8
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 10 miles/level
Duration: 1d4 hours
Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, *winds of madness*.

This spell allows the caster to control the weather in the surrounding area. He can summon up snowstorms or howling winds, quell the raging seas, or pour so much rain into a river that it bursts its banks and floods a town. The caster cannot call up any weather that is outside the possible range for a region in the current season, so he cannot create a snowstorm in the desert or at the height of summer.

SHAPE SNOW

Power Point Cost: 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: One mile/level
Effect: Controls snowfall
Duration: One hour/level
Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, *fell of frost*

By means of this spell, the sorcerer can control the shape and course of the falling snow. He can, for example, cause the snow to pile up in front of a cave mouth and block it off, or turn a snowy tundra into a surreal labyrinth of icy walls. He can even build structures and castles out of the falling snow.

For simple projects, such as creating a huge snowdrift in front of a castle wall, the sorcerer does not need to concentrate – he simply casts the spell, gives his commands to the snow,

and can carry on about his business. More complex works, such as a labyrinth or causing the snow to bury a moving target, require the sorcerer to concentrate. Major construction works, like building a snow castle, require a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check to ensure the finished building is relatively stable. The DC varies with the complexity of the building.

The amount of snow that the sorcerer can command depends on how much snow is actually falling from the sky.

A wall made from snow has Hardness 0 and 1 hit point per inch of thickness. In the cold north, the sorcerer can pack the snow into ice, which has three hit points per inch of thickness. Snowy structures are unstable, but will last as long as the snow does not melt.

If this spell is cast on a party travelling through the snows, it slows their movement by half and gives a -6 penalty to Survival checks for finding direction.

SERVANTS OF ICE

Power Point Cost: 6 for the first round, $+3$ for each additional round
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)
Targets: One Small object per level; see text
Duration: Power Points
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: Scholar level 6, magic attack bonus $+4$, *shape snow*.

The *servants of ice* spell creates temporary creatures out of the snow to serve the caster. These behave like the animated objects created by the *animate statue* spell (see page 36).

This spell imbues inanimate objects with limited mobility and a semblance of life. Each such animated object then immediately attacks whomever or whatever you initially designate.

No special concentration is necessary to cause the servants animated by this spell to remain animated and fulfill the sorcerer's wishes. He may instruct them anew once each round as a free action. No skill check is needed to do this.

The sorcerer may animate one Small servant per scholar level. Alternatively he can animate larger objects as follows. A Medium object counts as two Small or smaller objects, a Large object as four, a Huge object as eight, a Gargantuan object as sixteen, and a Colossal object as thirty-two. *Servants of ice* cannot be animated as Tiny or smaller creatures.





The conjured servants are usually roughly humanoid, although the sorcerer may also create snow-worms, snow-mammoths or other animals. He cannot create shapes that do not echo a living creature commonly found in snowy places (so, he could make a snow-bear, but not a snow-rhino or snow-octopus). Use the animated object statistics (see page 92) for the servants of ice, with the following notes:

- ❖ Servants of Ice have hardness 0
- ❖ Servants of Ice deal one extra point of cold damage with each attack.
- ❖ The sorcerer can cause a Servant to reform, regaining all its hit points. This costs one Power Point for a Small Servant, two for a Medium, four for a Large and so forth. Reforming the servant requires a standard action from the caster.

BECOME BEAST

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One hour/level

Prerequisites: Scholar level 4, *fell of frost*.

Other than its changed prerequisites, this spell is identical to the Nature Magic version of *become beast*. (See page 23).

ICY SLUMBER

Power Point Cost: 8

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

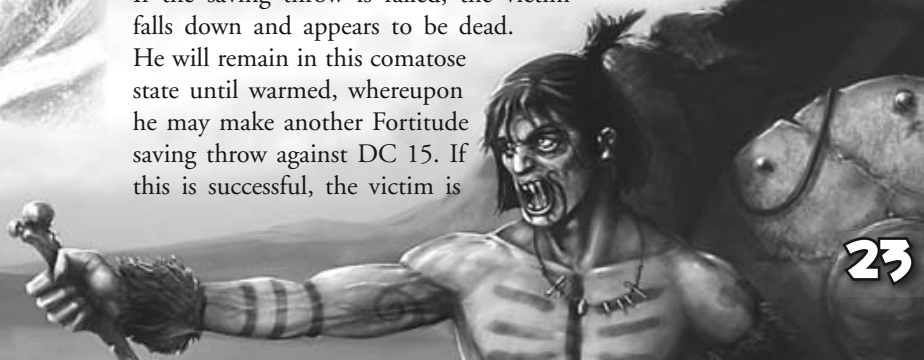
Duration: Until revived

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Prerequisites: Scholar level 5, *chill touch*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for opponent's Fortitude save

The victim of an *icy slumber* must make a successful Fortitude save or have all the life drained from their body. If the saving throw is failed, the victim falls down and appears to be dead. He will remain in this comatose state until warmed, whereupon he may make another Fortitude saving throw against DC 15. If this is successful, the victim is





revived safely. If the save fails, the victim permanently loses two points of Constitution and remains comatose. This check may be repeated every round until the warmth is removed. A Healing check may be made if the victim is being cared for by a physician, wrapped in blankets and so forth – the result of this skill check may be used instead of the victim's Fortitude saving throw if it is higher.

A comatose victim of *icy slumber* will be warmed naturally after a few hours in temperate climates, or a few minutes in hot lands. In the frozen north, though, the victim may slumber for many years, even centuries, before being discovered and restored. Although the victim of an *icy slumber* does not age while comatose, the DC of the Fortitude save to revive increases by +1 for every 10 years he remains frozen, so a character who has been buried for centuries is more likely to die than return to life.

SPIRIT OF THE AVALANCHE

Power Point Cost: 10
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)
Area: Up to one square/level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Prerequisites: Scholar level 8, *shape snow*, *winds of madness*.
Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the victim's Reflex save and escape checks.

When this spell is cast, the sorcerer causes ice and snow and rocks around him to spontaneously rise up and then crash down upon his foes, burying them. A number of five-foot squares equal to the scholar's level are affected. These squares must be non-diagonally contiguous (each square must be adjacent to at least one other affected square). The spell can only be cast on rocky or snowy ground.

Those in squares affected by the spell suffer 3d6 damage, are knocked prone and buried under the snow. A successful Reflex save halves the damage and prevents the victims from being knocked down and buried. A buried character must dig

himself out, which requires a Strength or Escape Artist check against the sorcerer's magic attack roll. A buried character is considered to be drowning.

If this spell is cast in a place where an avalanche might naturally happen, the damage is doubled to 6d6.

RIDE THE STORM

Power Point Cost: 15
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: One round/level
Prerequisites: Scholar level 10, *command weather*, *servants of ice*, *spirit of the avalanche*.

By means of this spell, the sorcerer leaps into the sky and rides the storm winds. This gives the following benefits:

- ❖ The sorcerer may fly up to 300 feet per round. He may hover freely, and may travel at great speeds, covering a mile every fifteen rounds.
- ❖ The sorcerer may direct hurricane-force winds (see *Conan*, page 223) as he wishes.
- ❖ He may command the storm, gaining the benefits of a *shape snow* and *command weather* spell.
- ❖ He may hurl one lightning bolt per round. The sorcerer must make a ranged attack to hit with these bolts, and the lightning bolt inflicts 6d6 damage. Lightning bolts have a maximum range of sight.
- ❖ Once per round, he may create a thunderclap with a word or gesture as a free action. A thunderclap inflicts 1d6 damage on anyone within 30 feet of the sorcerer, and those within 120 feet of the sorcerer must make a Fortitude save (DC15) or be deafened for 2d6 rounds. Deafened characters can still hear the sorcerer's thunderous words.

HEDGE MAGIC

Hedge magic is the commonest form of magic in the Hyborian age. It is a half-understood collection of folk beliefs and charms, some of which have some little power. It is primarily intended for use by non-player characters and dabblers. A village wisewoman might have a Scholar level or three and know a few spells from this style. Hedge magic is noticeably weaker and less flashy than other sorcery styles.

A sorcerer who knows only Hedge Magic is not subject to the Rule of Obsession. A character with the Dabbler feat may choose Hedge Magic as their style of magic.



Up on the ledge the white horse stood with drooping head. The old woman looked at it, and then at the raven; and then she lifted a strange weird cry as she had before. As if recognizing the call, the raven wheeled, suddenly mute, and raced eastward. But before it had got out of sight, the shadow of mighty wings fell across it. An eagle soared up from the tangle of trees, and rising above it, swooped and struck the black messenger to the earth. The strident voice of betrayal was stilled for ever.

'Crom!' muttered Conan, staring at the old woman. 'Are you a magician, too?'

'I am Zelata,' she said. 'The people of the valleys call me a witch.'

— The Hour of the Dragon

BLESSINGS AND CURSES (BASIC HEDGE MAGIC)

Power Point Cost: 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One creature

Duration: Up to one day

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the target's Will save.

This spell puts a minor blessing or curse on the target. The exact nature of the blessing or curse is up to the sorcerer, but the spell cannot do more than give a +1 bonus or -1 penalty to any one roll. It is up to the Games Master when exactly this spell takes hold. For example, a hedge wizard might cast *blessings and curses* on a player character who insulted him, and declares that animals will hate the character. For the rest of the day, dogs growl and cats hiss at the character, and he suffers a -1 penalty to one Riding check chosen by the Games Master.

SIGN AGAINST EVIL (DEFENSIVE BLAST)

Power Point Cost: All remaining points

Components: V

Casting Time: Immediate

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Prerequisites: *Blessing and curses.*

The sorcerer gains a luck bonus to any one saving throw or to their Dodge Defence against a single attack equal to the number of power points expended.

CURE-ALL

Power Point Cost: Varies

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: Special

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One Heal check

Prerequisites: Heal 4 ranks, *blessings and curses.*

For each Power Point expended in casting this spell, the sorcerer gains a +1 insight bonus to a Heal check made at the same time, up to a maximum of the sorcerer's Wisdom bonus. For example, a sorcerer with Wisdom 16 could spend three Power Points when casting this spell to get a +3 bonus to a Heal check.

Material Components: Potions, herbs, poultices and charms worth 2 silver pieces per Power Point.

BLIGHT

Power Point Cost: Varies

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye or Magical Link

Target: One living creature or one field of crops

Duration: Until healed or one season

Saving Throw: Special (see below)

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +1, *blessings and curses.*

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the victim's saving throw.

Blight allows the sorcerer to curse a victim. There are several manifestations of this spell, which cost a varying number of Power Points:

- ❖ **Weakness:** The target feels weak and drained. His Strength is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character rests. A successful Fortitude save negates this effect.
- ❖ **Lameness:** The target twists his ankle or sprains his wrist. His Dexterity is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character receives a successful Heal check (DC 15). A successful Fortitude save negates this effect.



- ❖ **Sickness:** The target feels ill and dizzy. His Constitution is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character receives a successful Heal check (DC 15). A successful Fortitude save negates this effect.
- ❖ **Bad Dreams:** The target suffers from series of nightmares and waking hallucinations that affect his sanity. His Intelligence is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character makes a successful Concentration check (DC 20). A successful Will save negates this effect.
- ❖ **Foolish Thoughts:** The target's good judgement is clouded and he becomes distracted or obsessed by foolish things. His Wisdom is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character makes a successful Concentration check (DC 20). A successful Will save negates this effect.
- ❖ **Ugliness:** The target suffers from boils, pock-marks and a foul body odour. His Charisma is reduced by one point per two Power Points spent until the character receives a successful Heal check at (DC 15). A successful Fortitude save negates this effect.
- ❖ **Bad Harvest:** When cast on a field, orchard or garden, this reduces the yield of the area by 10% per Power Point spent for one harvest. When cast on a herd of animals that produce some useful item, such as wool from sheep or milk from cows, the yield of the herd is reduced by 10% per Power Point spent until the animals are tended with a successful Handle Animal or Heal check at (DC 20).
- ❖ **Barrenness:** The target is unable to sire or bear children until he or she receives a successful Heal check at (DC 20). A successful Fortitude save negates this effect. This effect costs 5 Power Points.

Prerequisites: *Cure-all.*

Magic Attack Roll: Special

The *blessing of the good god* is known by different names in different lands. In Aquilonia, it is the *blessing of Mitra* ; in Stygia, the spell is attributed to Derketo, while in Shem, it is Ishtar's spell.

This spell can be cast in three ways.

Firstly, it can be used as a counter-spell against a *blight* spell. The caster may make a magic attack roll against the magic attack roll of the *blight* ; if the *blessing* roll is higher, the *blight* is lifted. The PP cost of the *blessing* spell must be equal to or greater than that of the *blight* .

Secondly, when cast on a herd or field, it increases the harvest by 5% per Power Point spent.

Thirdly, when cast on an individual, it gives a +1 bonus per two Power Points spent to any Fortitude saving throw against a mundane disease or poison, or against the travails of child-birth.

Material Components: Charms, sacrifices and other ritual components costing 10 silver pieces per Power Point.

BLESSING OF THE GOOD GOD

Power Point Cost: Varies

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: One living creature or one field of crops

Duration: Instantaneous (counter-spell) or one season (other uses)



TWISTING OF TONGUE

AND EYE

Power Point Cost: Varies

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One living creature

Duration: One skill check

Prerequisites: Bluff 4 ranks, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks, *blessings and curses*.

This glamour gives a bonus of +1 per Power Point spent to any one of the caster's skill checks using a skill from the following list: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Hide, Intimidate, Move Silently or Sleight of Hand.

The caster cannot spend more Power Points than the relevant ability score bonus to that skill, +2. For example, Diplomacy is a Charisma-based skill, so the caster cannot spend more Power Points than his Charisma bonus +2.

SEND DREAMS

Power Point Cost: 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One night

Range: Magical Link

Target: One living creature

Duration: One night

Saving Throw: Will negates (see below)

Prerequisites: *Twisting of tongue and eye*.

The *send dreams* spell allows the sorcerer to project his dreams to another living being. The sorcerer must dream these dreams too, so if the sorcerer wishes to project a specific message, he must practise lucid dreaming. This requires a Concentration check (DC varies depending on the complexity of the dream). The target knows that he is dreaming, and may not remember all of the dream upon awakening.

If the sorcerer wishes, he can project nightmares or other unusual dreams to the target. The target must make a Will save (DC equals the caster's Concentration result) to avoid being fatigued when he awakens. The sorcerer is automatically fatigued by the shared nightmares and does not regain any Power Points for sleeping.

The projected dreams can be detected and read using the *sorcerous news* spell.

A character may also use *send dreams* to enter the Dreamlands (see page 184).

LOVE CHARM

Power Point Cost: 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One living creature

Duration: Until the target sleeps.

Prerequisites: *Twisting of tongue and eye*

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the target's Will save.

If the target falls victim to the *love charm*, he is charmed and fascinated by the caster, and will normally respond favourably to him. In game terms, the target's reaction towards the caster is shifted one step towards Helpful. Often, the target will be attracted or lustful towards the caster. This spell automatically wears off while the target sleeps.

HYPNOTICISM

At the peak of their art, master hypnotists can enslave members of the opposite sex, create mystical barriers that keep out entire species, and intimidate or torture their enemies through mesmerism alone. The following additional spells are available in the Hypnotism sorcery style.

BOUNDARY

Power Point Cost: 1 point/10 ft. of boundary

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 round or more (see text)

Range: Touch

Line: A boundary up to 100 ft. long per level, and 100 ft. high.

Duration: Mortal

Saving Throw: Will partial

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +7 or higher, *entrance*, *hypnotic suggestion*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

'But the wizards wove a spell that kept them in the forest and they came not into the plain.'

— Red Nails



This spell causes an invisible boundary to be created. The boundary emanates magical vibrations that repel a specific kind of creature as defined by the spellcaster. The kind of creature to be affected must be named specifically. A creature type or subtype is not specific enough.

Creatures of the designated kind feel an overpowering urge to avoid crossing the boundary.

A compulsion forces the creatures to avoid crossing the boundary, shunning the region of the boundary and never willingly returning to it while the spell is in effect. A creature that makes a successful saving throw can cross the boundary but feels uncomfortable doing so. This distracting discomfort reduces the creature's Dexterity score by 4 points until it re-crosses the boundary.

Material Component: Chalk or other powder to draw the line, at a cost of 10 silver pieces per 10 feet of line.

DANCE OF ATALI

Power Point Cost: 6 for the first round, 1 for each round thereafter

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Target: Up to one male human/level

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: Will partial

Prerequisites: Cha 13, magic attack bonus +7, *entrance*, *hypnotic suggestion*, must be a female worshipper of the Nordheimir pantheon.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw



This spell causes males to follow the sorcerer wherever she goes, so long as she continues a wild and sensual dance begun with the casting of the spell.

The sorcerer must make a Perform (dance) check each round. If her check result is below 20, the spell ends. If her check result is above 20, she adds half her check result as an enhancement bonus to her movement rate that round, rounded to the nearest 10 feet.

All males affected by the spell will be filled with immediate and pressing feelings of lust for the sorcerer, and will follow her wherever she goes, though they will not be completely careless of danger and will certainly stop and fight if attacked. They may attempt Will saving throws when she initially casts the spell. Even a successful Will save does not entirely negate the effects of *dance of Atali*, and a character who successfully saves will still regard the sorcerer as devastatingly attractive – he may well follow her anyway.

Out across the white blinding plain the chase led. The trampled red field fell out of sight behind him, but still Conan kept on with the silent tenacity of his race. His mailed feet broke through the frozen crust; he sank deep in the drifts and forged through them by sheer strength. But the girl danced across the snow light as a feather floating across a pool; her naked feet barely left their imprint on the hoar-frost that overlaid the crust. In spite of the fire in his veins, the cold bit through the warrior's mail and fur-lined tunic; but the girl in her gossamer veil ran as lightly and as gaily as if she danced through the palm and rose gardens of Poutain.

– *The Frost-Giant's Daughter*

As a side benefit of the *dance of Atali*, the sorcerer is entirely immune to the effects of non-magical cold for the duration of the spell.

If the sorcerer has the Ritual Sacrifice feat, she gains Power Points as though she had sacrificed any of the targets who die as a direct result of following her, whether she is able to lead them to a cold death at the bottom of a crevasse somewhere, or into an ambush.

Focus: A scanty garment of high quality, which is the sorcerer's only item of clothing.

ENSLAVE

Power Point Cost: 6+6

Components: V, S, M or F

Casting Time: 1 hour, plus see below

Range: Evil Eye, Touch *and* Magical Link

Target: One creature of the opposite sex to, but same species as, the sorcerer

Duration: Mortal

Saving Throw: Will partial

Prerequisites: Cha 13, magic attack bonus +4 or higher, *entrance, domination, hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism.*

'Once you spoke otherwise, Olmec,' she taunted. 'Once, in your youth, you spoke words of love. Aye, you were my lover once, years ago, and because you loved me, you slept in my arms beneath the enchanted lotus – and thereby put into my hands the chains that enslaved you. You know you cannot withstand me. You know I have but to gaze into your eyes, with the mystic power a priest of Stygia taught me, long ago, and you are powerless. You remember the night beneath the black lotus that waved above us, stirred by no worldly breeze; you scent again the unearthly perfumes that stole and rose like a cloud about you to enslave you. You cannot fight against me. You are my slave as you were that night – as you shall be so long as you shall live, Olmec of Xuchot!'

Her voice had sunk to a murmur like the rippling of a stream running through starlit darkness. She leaned close to the prince and spread her long tapering fingers upon his giant breast. His eyes glazed, his great hands fell limply to his sides.

– Red Nails

This spell is used to totally enslave one member of the opposite sex for life, by means of sexual power.

The spell is initially cast with a one-hour ceremony incorporating a magical link to the planned target. The sorcerer then has 24 hours in which to find the target and have sex with him or her. This must be voluntary on the part of the target. This willingness on the part of the target is what gives the spell its unusual power, which is to affect the target whether or not a saving throw is successful.

The Power Point cost listed reflects an expenditure of 6 PP to initially cast the ceremony, and a further 6 PP to complete the spell when the sorcerer has sex with the target.

The end result of the *enslave* spell is to produce an effect very similar to that of the *domination* spell, except that the duration is permanent and the target does not gain a new saving throw each time he is given an instruction. The sorcerer will need to give the target direct instructions, as for *domination*, but *enslave* may not be used to cause the target to fall asleep or remove memories, unlike *domination*. In addition, a target who has failed his initial Will saving throw automatically fails any future Will saving throws against spells, spell-like effects or supernatural effects cast or caused by the sorcerer.

If the target succeeds at his initial saving throw, he is still *enslaved* but will never act in a self-destructive manner or act completely against his nature, including against his code of honour if any. The effect of a successful saving throw must be carefully roleplayed by the target and carefully adjudicated by the Games Master – the target may find his desire to serve the sorcerer warring with his inner nature, and often he will find himself either unable to act at all or else able to choose either a compromise between his own desires and the sorcerer's, or another course of action entirely. If the Games Master feels that a particular situation necessitates an either/or response, such as a command to slay an old comrade of the target's when said comrade is attacking the sorcerer, he may call for a new Will saving throw and magic attack roll, but any such new Will saving throw will be at a -4 penalty and even success will not completely throw off the effects of the spell. In addition, a target who has succeeded at his initial Will saving throw automatically has the same -4 resistance penalty applied to all future Will saving throws against spells cast or caused by the sorcerer.



The only ways for a totally or partially enslaved character to become free are for the sorcerer to voluntarily end the spell, or for it to be ended by the Rule of Impermanence (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* page 229).

Material Component: 1 dose of black lotus blossom, used during the consummation of the spell.

Focus: If a living black lotus plant is available within 20 feet, this can serve as a focus in place of the material component.

ILLUSION

Power Point Cost: 9

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One humanoid

Duration: One round/three levels

Saving Throw: Will disbelief (if interacted with)

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +5, entrance, dread serpent, conjuring.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will saves.

This spell creates in the target's mind the illusion of an object, creature, or force, as visualised by the sorcerer. The illusion can include visual, auditory, olfactory, and thermal components. The illusion follows a script determined by the sorcerer. The illusion follows that script without the sorcerer having to concentrate on it. The illusion can include intelligible speech if the sorcerer wishes. He can move the illusion so long as it and the target are always within 30 feet of him.

The target receives a Will saving throw to disbelieve the illusion, if he interacts with it. Unless and until he successfully disbelieves it, the target may not take any actions other than those relating to interacting with the illusion, and is at -4 to Defence due to distraction.

Material Component: This must be something vaguely suggestive of the illusion. For example, a paper picture of a buffalo could be used as a material component for an illusion of a herd of charging buffalo, or a handful of dirt could be used as a material component for an illusion of a mountain. A player who has learned this spell should write down some specific material components he has available to use to create the illusion.



He started toward Baal-pteur, the knuckles on his sword-hand showing white. With a swift motion the brown man threw something at him – a shining crystal sphere that glistened in the weird light.

Conan dodged instinctively, but, miraculously, the globe stopped short in midair, a few feet from his face. It did not fall to the floor. It hung suspended, as if by invisible filaments, some five feet above the floor. And as he glared in amazement, it began to rotate with growing speed. And as it revolved it grew, expanded, became nebulous. It filled the chamber. It enveloped him. It blotted out furniture, walls, the smiling countenance of Baal-pteur. He was lost in the midst of a blinding bluish blur of whirling speed. Terrific winds screamed past Conan, tugging, tearing at him, striving to wrench him from his feet, to drag him into the vortex that spun madly before him.

– *Shadows in Zamboula*

SWELL

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Targets: All creatures within range.

Duration: One round/level

Saving Throw: Will partial (see below)

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +4, entrance, illusion, dread serpent, conjuring.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for targets' Will saves.

Zogar Sag stood erect and motionless, and he seemed to increase in height – to grow and expand. Balthus experienced the illusion that the Piet was towering above him, staring contemptuously down from a great height, though he knew the shaman was not as tall as himself. He shook off the illusion with difficulty.

– *Beyond the Black River*



Swell makes the sorcerer appear to be far larger than he actually is.

For purposes of the Rule of the Sorcerer's Soul (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 232) and for no other purposes, a sorcerer who is affected by a *swell* spell may double his current Power Points.

Furthermore, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus to his magic attack roll during any war of souls that occurs with one of the affected creatures.

Finally, he gains a +4 circumstance bonus to all Intimidate checks made to target the affected creatures. The creatures may attempt a Will saving throw to avoid this effect, but not the other effects.

TORMENT

Power Point Cost: 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One creature

Duration: One round/three levels

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +1, entrance.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save.

When you cast this spell, the target creature must make a Will save or be unable to take any actions for as the duration of the spell, due to the extreme pain and suffering to which this spell subjects him. He is also dealt 1d4 subdual damage per round from the pain. At the end of the spell's duration, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to any Intimidate checks you make concerning the target of the spell within the next hour. Creatures with 8 or more HD are unaffected.

WALK UNSEEN

Power Point Cost: 1/round

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Targets: All living creatures with range.

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Hide 8 ranks, Move Silently 8 ranks, entrance, calm of the adept.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the targets' Will saves.

This spell permits the caster to become unseen. The spell does not grant actual invisibility, but forces those who fall victim to the spell to ignore the sorcerer. Whenever anyone sees the sorcerer, they must make a Will save. If the saving throw is failed, they do not see the sorcerer and the sorcerer gains all the benefits of invisibility. If the sorcerer casts a spell or makes an attack when under the effects of *walk unseen*, then all those affected by the spell may make another Will save each round to resist its effects. The sorcerer may not use this spell to fade from view – anyone who is looking at the sorcerer when the spell is cast continues to see the sorcerer.

VOICE OF POWER

Power Point Cost: 10 points

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Target: One living creature

Duration: See below

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Steely Gaze, magic attack bonus +7, entrance, master-words and signs or greater demonic pact.

You utter words of enormous magical power that instantly cause one creature of your choice to become either stunned (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 225) or frightened (*Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 225), your choice as to which, whether the creature can hear the words or not. As a standard action, you may change the state of the affected creature from stunned to frightened or vice versa, at any time during the spell's duration, without affecting that duration.

The duration of the spell depends on the target's current hit point total. Any creature that currently has 151 or more hit points is unaffected by *voice of power*.

Hit Points	Duration
50 or less	4d4 rounds
51–100	2d4 rounds
101–150	1d4 rounds



VOICE OF POWER, GREATER

Power Point Cost: 40 points

Target: Up to one living creature/two levels

Prerequisites: Menacing Aura, magic attack bonus +8 or higher, *voice of power*.

The blacks shrank back before him, their eyes slits of fire. Lifting a hand, he spoke, and his tones echoed through the silent halls in deep rich waves of sound. Like men in a trance the black warriors fell back until they were ranged along the walls in regular lines.

— *Shadows in the Moonlight*

As *voice of power*, except as noted above.



NATURE MAGIC

The greatest of the shamans, witches and other nature magicians can restore the bones of ancient dragons to full and unnatural life, as well as training creatures such as man-apes to obey their every whim. The following additional spells are available in the Nature Magic sorcery style.

BONES OF LIFE

Power Point Cost: 1 per HD of target creature

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Target: The bones of one creature, which in life had a maximum of 1 HD/level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Heal 15 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Permanent Sorcery, *summon beast*, *raise corpse*.

This spell enables you to restore a form of life to the bones of any creature. However, it cannot be used to resurrect a specific individual;

'And their magicians made a terrible magic to guard the city; for by their necromantic arts they re-created the dragons which had once dwelt in this lost land, and whose monstrous bones they found in the forest. Those bones they clothed in flesh and life, and the living beasts walked the earth as they walked it when Time was young.'

— *Red Nails*

rather, it creates entirely new flesh and blood on the creature's bones, so that the resulting creature is also entirely new. It will be a typical example of its race, considering the age of the creature when it died, except that its Strength, Dexterity and Constitution scores will all be identical to those of the original creature.

You gain no special power over the creature you restore to life in this way; if you are its natural prey, it will attack you immediately, as though you had nothing to do with restoring it to life.

Material Component: Assorted healing herbs, incenses and oils to a total value of 20 silver pieces per HD of the target creature.



BECOME BEAST

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One hour/level (D)

Prerequisites: Scholar level 4, *summon beast*, *animal ally*.

This spell allows the sorcerer to transform himself into an animal. The sorcerer must choose the type of animal when he first casts this spell, and will use the same form every time he casts this spell again.

This spell enables the sorcerer to assume the form of any single non-unique animal (any creature of the animal type) from Fine to Colossal size. The assumed form cannot have more than twice his scholar level in Hit Dice (to a maximum of 40 HD).

His creature type and subtype (if any) change to match the new form. He gains the Strength, Dexterity and Constitution scores of the new form but retain his own Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma scores. He gains all abilities (both attacks and qualities) of the assumed form but loses his own spellcasting abilities.

A sorcerer may take this spell again in a different form as another Advanced Spell. If he does so, he gets a new beast form.

CONTROL MAGICAL BEAST

Power Point Cost: 9

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One magical beast

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Handle Animal 10 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, *summon beast*, *animal ally*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save.

The sorcerer wins the loyalty of a magical beast through an initial rapport and a continued regimen of training. A magical beast's loyalty, once gained, is natural (not magical) and lasting. It may be lost and the beast may leave or even attack the sorcerer if the sorcerer ill-treats the magical beast.

The sorcerer can teach the magical beast three specific tricks or tasks for each point of Intelligence it

possesses. Typical tasks are those given under the Handle Animal skill (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 104). The sorcerer may use Handle Animal with regard to the magical beast without penalty.

A magical beast with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher could be trained more in the manner of a human servant, if desired.

At any one time, the sorcerer can have only a certain number of magical beasts under his control. The sorcerer can have under his control magical beasts whose Hit Dice total no more than his level. The sorcerer may dismiss magical beasts to enable the character to control new ones.

Focus: A masterwork whip or crop worth 100 silver pieces.

CONTROL MONSTROUS HUMANOID

Power Point Cost: 12

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One monstrous humanoid

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Handle Animal 12 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 12 ranks, *summon beast*, *control magical beast*, *animal ally*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save.

It was no ape, neither was it a man. It was some shambling horror spawned in the mysterious, nameless jungles of the south, where strange life teemed in the reeking rot without the dominance of man, and drums thundered in temples that had never known the tread of a human foot. How the ancient Pelishtim had gained lordship over them – and with it eternal exile from humanity – was a foul riddle about which Conan did not care to speculate, even if he had had the opportunity.

– *Jewels of Gwahlur*



As *control magical beast*, except that this spell allows the sorcerer to take control of a monstrous humanoid instead of a magical beast. The HD limit of the sorcerer's level in HD applies separately to the magical beasts and monstrous humanoids under the sorcerer's control, so that a 15th level scholar who knows both spells could command up to 15 HD worth of magical beasts in addition to 15 HD worth of monstrous humanoids.

FRUIT OF AIR

Power Point Cost: 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: One 10-foot by 10-foot area of ground or other surface
Duration: 1 day
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: Craft (herbalism) 20 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 20 ranks, summon beast, sorcerous garden.

'So for many centuries the people of Xuchotl dwelt in their city, cultivating the fertile plain, until their wise men learned how to grow fruit within the city – fruit which is not planted in the soil, but obtains its nourishment out of the air – and then they let the irrigation ditches run dry, and dwelt more and more in luxurious sloth, until decay seized them.'

– Red Nails

This spell creates simple foodstuffs such as fruit and vegetables. The crops created by it grow astonishingly rapidly with no more nutrients required than simple air. One day after the spell has been cast, the food will have grown sufficiently to be ready to eat.

The sorcerer makes a Craft (herbalism) check to determine how much food he can create. For every full 5 points of the check result, he has created sufficient food to keep one human or other Medium creature well fed for 24 hours. The food created decays as

usual, so after between a day and a week it will begin to become over-ripe or even rotten, depending on the conditions in which it is stored.

Material Component: A handful of seeds.

NECROMANCY

Master necromancers learn to raise vast armies of the dead. Undead monsters can be made permanent using the rules for permanent sorcery on page 58.

LEGIONS OF THE DEAD

Power Point Cost: 2 per 5 Corpses
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)
Targets: Up to five corpses/level
Duration: Concentration + 1d6 Hours
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +4, *raise corpse*.

This spell works as a more powerful version of *raise corpse*, allowing a veritable army of the undead to rise and work for the sorcerer. The undead follow the sorcerer's verbal commands until the spell expires, when the undead become lifeless corpses again.

Focus: The focus for this spell is a ceremonial tool of command worth at least 200 silver pieces – a crown, a whip of golden thread, a bejewelled sceptre or some other item.

ESSENTIAL SALTS

Power Point Cost: 2 per level of the target
Components: V, S, (M)
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)
Targets: One living being or bottle of essential salts
Duration: Mortal
Saving Throw: None
Prerequisites: Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Heal 10 ranks, *raise corpse*.

This spell is a method for a sorcerer to preserve his soul while long centuries pass. By reducing himself to a small pile of dust – his essential salts – the sorcerer can wait out an eternity, and be resurrected good as new in centuries to come. The spell can be cast in one of three ways.



First, the sorcerer can cast the spell on himself. This causes the sorcerer to crumble into his essential salts, effectively killing himself. This version of the spell requires no material components.

Secondly, the spell can be cast on a pile of essential salts, bringing them back to life. The caster must make a Craft (alchemy) check at DC 20 when casting the spell. Increase the DC if the salts were not stored properly or were mixed with common dust or ash. If this check is failed, then the target comes back only as 'ye liveliest awfulness', suffering 1d6 Points of Wisdom and Charisma damage and gaining one point of Corruption for every point of difference between the DC and the caster's skill check result. The essential salts spring back to life. The resurrected character has only 1d6 Power Points and is fatigued. The material component for this spell is the pile of essential salts itself.

Finally, the spell may be cast offensively, on a character who has already been brought back by the second variant of this spell. When the spell is cast, the target crumbles back into essential salts. The third variant of the spell has no effect on those who have not already benefited from the second variant. This version of the spell requires no material components.

ORIENTAL MAGIC

The higher mysteries of Oriental Magic are almost unknown outside the far East, where secret masters dwell in hidden valleys and temples.

HARMONY OF BODY AND SPIRIT

Power Point Cost: 7

Components: V, S

Casting Time: One day

Range: Touch

Targets: One living being

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Heal 10 ranks, *calm of the adept*.

This potent healing spell allows the sorcerer to cure injuries and poisons that would otherwise be incurable. *Harmony of mind and body* allows the sorcerer to make a Heal check on the patient with a +10 bonus. The patient also recovers lost hit points or ability scores as if he had rested for one full week under the sorcerer's care. This spell can cure magical diseases and poisons.

HARMONY OF EARTH AND SKY

Power Point Cost: 10

Components: V, S,

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Targets: One demon, undead or other unnatural creature.

Duration: Instant

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Prerequisites: *Calm of the adept*, *warrior's trance*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Fortitude save. (See below.)

Harmony of earth and sky is an offensive spell that only works on beings that are outside the natural order—demons from hell or the Outer Darkness, undead, aberrations, sorcerers with a Corruption score of 10 or more and so forth. The caster must make a successful melee attack as part of casting this spell. This melee attack inflicts normal damage, and may also banish the creature. If the attack hits, then the victim must make a Fortitude save against a DC of 10 + half the caster's magic attack roll. If the save fails undead crumble to dust, demons are banished, and mortal sorcerers and corrupt creatures are reduced to -1d10 hit points.

WALK ON CLOUDS

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One round/level

Prerequisites: Scholar level 5, *calm of the adept*, *willow dance*.

For the duration of this spell, the caster may tread on water, clouds, mist or any other surface as if it were solid ground. As long as there is *something* there, the sorcerer can walk on it. This spell also gives a +5 bonus to Acrobatics, Balance and Jump checks.



PRESTIDIGITATION

The most powerful masters of the Prestidigitation sorcery style learn to give a weird, false life to otherwise inanimate objects such as swords and statues. The following additional spells are available in the Prestidigitation sorcery style.

ANIMATE SWORDS

Power Point Cost: 4 for the first round, +2 for each additional round

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Targets: One Small object or two Tiny objects per level

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Scholar level 4, base attack bonus +3, *conjuring*, *telekinesis*, *greater telekinesis*.

This spell imbues inanimate objects with limited mobility and a semblance of life. Each such animated object then immediately attacks whomever or whatever you initially designate.

An animated object can be of any material. The sorcerer may animate one Small object per scholar level, two Tiny objects per scholar level, or any combination.

Statistics for swords and other objects animated by this spell can be found on page 92, in *Creatures of Sorcery*.

Animate swords cannot allow an object to bend or flex in any way it could not otherwise do. This is why it is most commonly used for animating objects to use as weapons, in a similar manner to the *greater telekinesis* spell, though it allows for a great deal of control over the objects animated – rather than simply flying at an enemy, for example, a sword could be swung to cut and hack just as though it were wielded by a warrior. An animated statue, though, could only be used in a manner similar to an improvised thrown weapon of the appropriate size – it could not pick up objects to use as weapons, open doors, or move in any way like the creature of which it is a statue.

This spell cannot animate objects carried or worn by a creature.

No especial concentration is necessary to cause the objects animated by this spell to remain animated and fulfill the sorcerer's wishes. He may instruct them anew once each round as a free action. No skill check is needed to do this.

Animate swords can be made permanent using the Permanent Sorcery rules (see page 58).

ANIMATE STATUE

Power Point Cost: 6 for the first round, +3 for each additional round

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Targets: See below

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: None

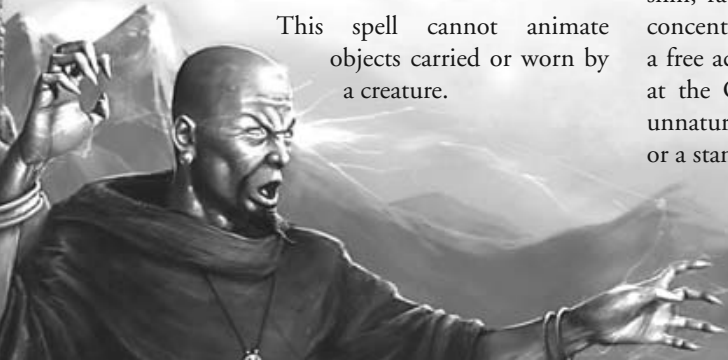
Prerequisites: Scholar level 6, base attack bonus +4, *conjuring*, *telekinesis*, *greater telekinesis*, *animate swords*.

This spell works as *animate swords*, except as follows:

The sorcerer may animate one Small object per scholar level, two Tiny objects per scholar level, or any combination, just as for *animate swords*. Alternatively he can animate larger objects as follows. A Medium object counts as two Small or smaller objects, a Large object as four, a Huge object as eight, a Gargantuan object as sixteen, and a Colossal object as thirty-two.

The animated objects can bend and move in any way the sorcerer wishes, though they must roughly retain their original shapes if made from rigid material. For example, a stone statue of a man could walk, manipulate objects, wield weapons and grapple enemies. It could not fold itself around an opponent and re-form itself into a stone tomb for him.

However, this spell works best of all when animating objects which resemble living things and can be made to move in a reasonably natural manner, such as statues. A sorcerer who wishes to cause an object to move in what would seem to be an illogical or counter-intuitive manner – for example, a stone statue that bends at the shin, rather than at the knee or ankle – must actively concentrate on ordering it to do so. This requires either a free action and a Concentration check (DC 20 to 30 at the Games Master's discretion, depending on how unnatural-looking a contortion is required of the object), or a standard action to be taken.



MAGIC BUILDER

Power Point Cost: 10 for the first hour, +5 for each additional hour

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Area: See text

Duration: Power Points

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Scholar level 10, *conjuring*, *telekinesis*, *greater telekinesis*.

'No more was I a god to kindly jungle folk - I was a slave to a devil in human form.'

Again tears stole from the unseeing eyes.

'He pent me in this tower which at his command I built for him in a single night. By fire and rack he mastered me, and by strange unearthly tortures you would not understand.'

- *The Tower of the Elephant*

This spell enables the sorcerer to rapidly erect structures, starting from having almost no raw materials. By simple magical power, he can draw stone from deep within the earth and wood from forests many miles away to assemble into towers, houses, castles or other structures.

In effect, *magic builder* allows the sorcerer to create structures to a value equal to (scholar level x 10) golden lunas per hour. Fine detail can be achieved by the spell, including the creation of doors, windows, crenellations, bars and simple locks. If more complex detail still is required, such as masterwork components or high-DC locks, the sorcerer will need to have at least 10 ranks in an appropriate craft, though otherwise these items can be created along with the rest of the structure.

Experience Point Cost: One fifth of the golden luna value of the finished structure.

SHAKE EARTH

Power Point Cost: 10

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per level)

Area: See text

Duration: Instant

Saving Throw: See below

Prerequisites: Scholar level 10, *conjuring*, *telekinesis*, *greater telekinesis*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for Balance checks.

This spell causes the earth around the sorcerer to quake violently. All those within range of the spell except the sorcerer himself must make Balance checks (DC equals the sorcerer's magic attack roll) or be knocked to the ground. Large creatures have a +4 bonus to their Balance checks to resist; Huge and bigger creatures are immune. The spell can also shatter nearby objects - compare the sorcerer's magic attack roll to the Break DC (see page 217 of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) for any nearby doors or walls.

SUMMONINGS

The greatest summoners learn not merely to call up demons, but to put them down, banish them, bind them and form them into human shapes. The following additional spells are available in the Summonings sorcery style.

BANISH OUTSIDER

Power Point Cost: 2 per HD of outsider

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round + 10 minutes (see text)

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One outsider that has the Manifest special quality

Duration: One day/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, magic attack bonus +5, master-words and signs or demonic pact, summon demon.

This spell attempts to temporarily force a creature of the outsider type, which has the Manifest special quality, to return from whence it came and to remain there for several days. *Banish outsider* is unusual in that it is cast in two parts, one to initially banish the outsider, the second to force it to remain banished.

The sorcerer selects one outsider within range. If the outsider fails its Will saving throw, it is instantly banished to the Outer Dark or to hell, depending on



its own place of origin. The sorcerer must then continue casting the spell to force the outsider to stay banished. The initial banishing takes only one round, but to force the outsider to remain there, the spell must be continued and strengthened for another ten minutes thereafter.

If the spell is finished properly, taking a full ten minutes, the outsider may not use its Manifest special quality for the full duration of the spell, though it might be possible for it to return by other means. If the spell is not finished, the outsider may manifest once more as soon as the sorcerer stops casting the spell.

Material Component: First part – a pinch of silver dust worth 1 silver piece. Second part – assorted paraphernalia to a total value of 50 silver pieces per HD of the outsider banished.

BIND DEMON

Power Point Cost: 4 per HD of demon

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One demon that does not have the Manifest special quality

Duration: See text

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 18 ranks, magic attack bonus +6, master-words and signs or greater demonic pact, summon demon, banish outsider.



'But I thought to cheat my fiend of the price a mortal must pay who calls the black folk to do his bidding.'

'By his grim arts the magician tricked the soulless waif of darkness and bound him in hell where he howled in vain — I supposed for eternity. But because the sorcerer had given the fiend the form of a man, he could never break the link that bound it to the material world; never completely close the cosmic corridors by which it had gained access to this planet.'

'A year ago in Kordava word came to me that the magician, now an ancient man, had been slain in his castle, with marks of demon fingers on his throat. Then I knew that the black one had escaped from hell where the magician had bound him, and that he would seek vengeance upon me. One night I saw his demon face leering at me from the shadows of my castle hall—'

— *The Black Stranger*

This spell attempts to transport a creature of the demon subtype, and which does not have the Manifest special quality, to hell or a similar place of torment and captivity.

The sorcerer selects one demon within range. The demon is sent to hell and bound there if it fails its Will saving throw. However, it may attempt a further Will saving throw to wrench its way back to Earth after a number of months equal to the level of the sorcerer who banished it. It may make another attempt after the same interval and keep making the attempt until it frees itself. A demon which has freed itself in this manner may never again be bound by the same sorcerer.

Material Component: A knotted cord.

FORM DEMON

Power Point Cost: 2 per HD of demon

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One willing demon of maximum HD = level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Perform (ritual) check: DC 10 + (½ x demon's HD) + demon's Constitution modifier

Prerequisites: Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +4, *master-words and signs* or *demonic pact*, *summon demon*.

Some sorcerers, or their clients, prefer to clothe their demonic allies and servitors in the form of men, so as to more easily allow them to carry out their work on Earth. This also has the advantage that the demon need not be summoned up on a regular basis, which would risk the consequence of runaway magic.

Form demon can only be cast on a willing demon, who must be prepared to give up its power to flit from the Outer Dark or hell to Earth and back in exchange for more-or-less permanent residency on Earth. The sorcerer must make a Perform (ritual) check with a DC of 10 + (½ x demon's HD) + demon's Constitution modifier, or the spell fails.

If the check is successful the demon loses the Manifest power but becomes immune to the effects of the *banish outsider* spell as a result. Furthermore, a demon affected by *form demon* may not be dismissed by means of one of the instant spells that can be formulated by a sorcerer who knows the *master-words and signs* spell (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 266). Any hostile sorcerer wishing to banish a demon affected by *form demon* must use a *bind demon* spell instead, which is both more difficult to learn and far more costly to cast.

Material Component: A handful of earth, plus assorted sorcerous paraphernalia costing 100 silver pieces per HD of the demon.

TRAVEL BEYOND

Power Point Cost: 12

Components: V, S, M, F

Casting Time: One hour

Range: Touch

Effect: Transports the caster and/or up to five willing participants to another dimension

Duration: See text

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +5, *dream of wisdom*, *master-words and signs*.

This spell transports the caster and up to five others to another dimension, such as Yag or the Dreamlands (see page 184). The travellers vanish from this world and appear in the otherworld. The caster of the spell can draw the travellers



back by casting the spell again, but the reverse casting only costs 6 Power Points and does not require the costly material component. The spell calls upon certain demon lords to open the paths beyond this world, and travellers may be forced to serve or give offerings to these cryptic entities in order to win safe passage.

The spell uses a crystal or other token as an anchor – the travellers must be touching this token when the sorcerer reverses the spell to bring them back to where they began. The spell sends the targets to the general vicinity of the target location in the otherworld, but makes no other guarantees about their safety or sanity.

Focus: An anchor, usually a crystal, which must be made wholly of terrestrial metal or stone.

Material Components: Meteoric iron and dust from space costing 5,000 silver pieces.

VOMIT HORROR

Power Point Cost: 2

Components: V, S.

Casting Time: 1d4 rounds

Range: Touch

Effect: Creates a vile monster from the sorcerer's own soul

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Concentration 8 ranks, *summon demon*, *channel demon*, *conjure item*.

When this spell is cast, the sorcerer vomits up a pool of vile, writhing inky horror, a demon-like entity that is formed from the taint in the caster's own soul. The strength of the monster depends on the caster's Corruption level. The monster counts as a demon with Hit Dice equal to the caster's Corruption, up to a maximum of 15. The caster has Monster Points equal to his Corruption x 5 to spend on buying monster traits (see page 109).

The monster will obey the caster's psychic commands, and the caster may see through the creature's eyes at will. However, while the monster is manifest, the caster cannot spend or regain Power Points.

If the monster is slain or banished, the caster must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or die instantly. The caster must physically touch the monster to reabsorb his blackened soul.

IMMORTALITY

Many of the more powerful sorcerers learn to become quite formidable hand-to-hand combatants through learning the Immortality sorcery style. The most powerful of all can even become virtually eternal, by one foul means or another. Most Immortality spells require the payment of a most dreadful price – the sacrifice of another human being. It seems there is only so much life to go around during the Hyborian Age, and if a sorcerer is to be restored to youth or granted supernatural vitality, he must take that life-force from another.

Unlike the spells of most other sorcery styles, Immortality spells tend to be elaborate one-off or periodically renewed rituals. Note that for those Immortality spells that require human sacrifices as part of their material component, the sorcerer gains the usual Power Point benefits from performing the sacrifice in addition to being able to use it as a material component. Some or all of the Power Points gained may be used immediately to cast the spell if desired.

Unlike other sorcery styles, Immortality has no Defensive Blast.

WITCH'S VIGOUR (BASIC IMMORTALITY SORCERY)

Power Point Cost: 10

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 1 day/level

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Ritual Sacrifice, magic attack bonus +4, 3 or more sorcery styles.

Then a new, grisly element introduced itself into the frenzy. Out of the gloom of the temple behind Valerius wavered a slim white figure, laced with crimson. The people screamed; there in the arms of Valerius hung the woman they thought to be their queen; yet there in the temple door there staggered another figure, like a reflection of the other. Their brains reeled. Valerius felt his blood congeal as he stared down at the swaying witch-girl. His sword had transfixed her, sundered her heart. She should be dead; by all laws of nature she should be dead. Yet there she swayed, on her feet, clinging horribly to life.

– *A Witch Shall Be Born*



Casting this spell requires the caster to make a DC 20 Perform (ritual) check or the spell fails and the sacrifice is wasted.

Witch's vigour renders the sorcerer significantly more difficult to kill than most humans. If he is reduced to 0 hit points, so long as he still has Power Points remaining, he can continue to act, but may only take either one standard action or one move action per round (his choice). Rather than being reduced to negative hit points when he would usually be reduced below 0 hit points, any additional damage comes directly off his current Power Points on a one-for-one basis.

This even applies if he is Left For Dead (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 190), though in this case his Power Points will be immediately reduced to 1 and his hit points to 0 instead of -1 (thus making him enormously vulnerable if attacked in that state, but still allowing him to act).

For example, Salome has 6 hit points and 15 Power Points remaining. She is struck by an attacker wielding a broadsword for 9 points of damage. She is reduced to 0 hit points and 12 Power Points, and is still able to act, though she may only take either one standard action or one move action per round.

Material Components: One human, who is sacrificed during the casting of the spell. The human's blood is splashed all over the sorcerer. Also, various incenses, oils, and candles to a total value of 200 silver pieces are consumed when casting the spell.

ETERNAL YOUTH

Power Point Cost: 15

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, magic attack bonus +5, *witch's vigour*.

Tascela grasped her yellow locks and forced back her head, looking impersonally down into her face. But the glitter in her dark eyes was not impersonal.

'I have chosen you for a great honour,' she said. 'You shall restore the youth of Tascela. Oh, you stare at that! My appearance is that of youth, but through my veins creeps the sluggish chill of approaching age, as I have felt it a thousand times before. I am old, so old I do not remember my childhood. But I was a girl once, and a priest of Stygia loved me, and gave me the secret of immortality and youth everlasting. He died, then – some said by poison. But I dwelt in my palace by the shores of Lake Zuad and the passing years touched me not. So at last a king of Stygia desired me, and my people rebelled and brought me to this land. Olmec called me a princess. I am not of royal blood. I am greater than a princess. I am Tascela, whose youth your own glorious youth shall restore.'

– *Red Nails*

This spell reduces the sorcerer's current age by a number of years equal to the class level of the sacrificed human (see below). Casting this spell requires the caster to make a DC 25 Perform (ritual) check or the spell fails and the sacrifice is wasted.

Material Components: One human aged 30 or less, who is sacrificed by being tortured to death during the casting of the spell. The human's blood is splashed all over the sorcerer. Also, various incenses, oils, and candles to a total value of 3,000 sp are consumed when casting the spell.

LIFE DRAIN

Power Point Cost: 6

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Living creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +6, *witch's vigour*, *eternal youth*, *raise corpse*, *death touch*.



'I journeyed to the ruins of Kuthchemes. The door of the ivory dome stood open; in the doorway lay a great serpent, transfixed by a sword. Within the dome lay the body of a man, so shrivelled and distorted I could scarce make it out at first – it was Shevatas, the Zamorian, the only thief in the world I acknowledged as my superior. The treasure was untouched; it lay in shimmering heaps about the corpse. That was all.'

'There were no bones—' began Conan.

'There was nothing!' broke in the Shemite passionately. 'Nothing! Only the one corpse!'

– *Black Colossus*

'You are selfish, Olmec,' she crooned, smiling. 'You would keep our handsome guest to yourself, though you knew I wished to entertain her. You are much at fault, Olmec!'

The mask dropped for an instant; her eyes flashed, her face was contorted and with an appalling show of strength her hand locked convulsively in his beard and tore out a great handful. This evidence of unnatural strength was no more terrifying than the momentary baring of the hellish fury that raged under her bland exterior.

– *Red Nails*

This spell allows a sorcerer to heal and revivify himself by draining the life energy from others with a mere touch.

To activate *life drain*, the sorcerer must succeed on a melee touch attack. His touch deals 1d6 points of damage per two scholar levels (maximum 10d6). He heals hit points equal to the damage he deals. However, he may not heal more than the subject's current hit points +10, which is enough to kill the subject. If he does kill the subject in this way, he gains Power Points as though he had sacrificed the target of the spell.

A target killed by this spell appears to be a shrivelled, dried-out husk.

UNNATURAL STRENGTH

Power Point Cost: 14

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 day

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 1 month/level

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +6, *witch's vigour*, *eternal youth*.

For every 14 Power Points expended, you gain a +2 enhancement bonus to your Strength. You may expend up to 14 Power Points per four scholar levels. A second casting of *unnatural strength* before the duration of the first casting is up has no effect.

Material Components: One human, who is sacrificed by being tortured to death during the casting of the spell. The human's blood is splashed all over the sorcerer. Also, various incenses, oils, and candles to a total value of 3,400 sp are consumed when casting the spell.

UNHOLY REVITALISATION

Power Point Cost: 4/round

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *Witch's vigour*.

Unholy revitalisation allows the sorcerer to swiftly heal wounds and injuries by tapping the energies of the dark dimensions. For each round that this spell is maintained, the sorcerer gains 1d4 hit points, heals one point of ability damage or drain, or is permitted another Fortitude save against a poison or disease that is currently afflicting him. The sorcerer must make a Corruption save each round; the DC begins at DC 12 and increases by +2 each round.



'We'd better go while we can,' he muttered. 'Those cuts were enough to kill any common beast – or man – but a wizard has a dozen lives. Wound one, and he writhes away like a crippled snake to soak up fresh venom from some source of sorcery.'

– *The People of the Black Circle*

GLANCE OF ETERNITY

Power Point Cost: 2

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One person

Duration: 1d4 rounds

Saving Throw: Will Negates

Prerequisites: *Witch's vigour*, sorcerer must be at least 100 years old.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save

Those who have outlived their natural lifespan are divorced from their base humanity by a vast gulf – they have denied death, the great leveller, and so are utterly different from mere mortals. The *glance of eternity* spell conveys the knowledge of this essential *difference* to the victim. For an instant, the target feels all the long years of the sorcerer's unnatural lifespan. The shock of revelation is vertiginous and disorientating.

In game terms, the victim of this spell must make a Will save against a DC of the sorcerer's magic attack roll, plus the sorcerer's Corruption, plus +1 per full hundred years lived by the sorcerer. If the victim fails his save, then he is dazed for 1d4 rounds.

VAMPIRE TRANSFORMATION

Power Point Cost: 20

Components: V, S, M, XP

Casting Time: 1 day

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Permanent Sorcery, magic attack bonus +7, *witch's vigour*, *demonic pact*.

Perform (ritual) check: DC 30.

'You have heard of the Princess Aktivasha?' inquired the girl on the couch.

'Who hasn't?' he grunted. The name of that ancient, evil, beautiful princess still lived the world over in song and legend, though ten thousand years had rolled their cycles since the daughters of Tuthamon had revelled in purple feasts amid the black halls of ancient Luxur.

'Her only sin was that she loved life and all the meanings of life,' said the Stygian girl. 'To win life she courted death. She could not bear to think of growing old and shriveled and worn, and dying at last as hags die. She wooed Darkness like a lover and his gift was life – life that, not being life as mortals know it, can never grow old and fade. She went into the shadows to cheat age and death—'

Conan glared at her with eyes that were suddenly burning slits. And he wheeled and tore the lid from the sarcophagus. It was empty. Behind him the girl was laughing and the sound froze the blood in his veins. He whirled back to her, the short hairs on his neck bristling.

'You are Aktivasha!' he grated.

– *The Hour of the Dragon*

This spell transforms the sorcerer into a vampire (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 389) if he makes a successful Perform (ritual) check at DC 30. If the check fails, so does the spell; the sacrifice is wasted. If the check succeeds he must immediately make a Corruption save (DC 30) or gain 1 point of Corruption. A sorcerer transformed into a vampire by this spell must drink human blood at least once per week, or become fatigued (-2 to Strength and Dexterity, may not run) and unable to be healed by any means (including the use of his fast healing special quality) until he drinks human blood once more.

Material Components: One human, who is sacrificed by being tortured to death during the casting of the spell. The sorcerer drinks the human's blood. Also, various incenses, oils, and candles to a total value of 6,000 silver pieces are consumed when casting the spell.





Experience Point Cost: 75,000 XP. For the purpose of *vampire transformation* a sorcerer can sacrifice enough XP to lose levels. The transition to undead status will strip him of a lot of the power he is used to.

SERPENT MAGIC

This style of magic is primarily associated with the sorcerers of Stygia, although the powerful lords of the Black Ring disdain it, claiming that it is a foolish waste of power that would be better spent on the higher arts of necromancy and demonology. The style is said to be derived from the workings of the primordial serpent-folk, but these are likely just tales to frighten apprentices.

BLESSING OF YIG (BASIC SERPENT MAGIC)

Power Point Cost: 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 4 ranks.

The blessing of Yig (also known as the Blessing of Set in some lands) causes the sorcerer's skin to appear scaled in some lights. The sorcerer gains a +1 bonus to his natural Damage Reduction, and a +4 bonus to all saving throws against poison. Furthermore, for the duration of the spell, he gains the Loathsome Weapons feat (see page 55).

UNSEEN SERPENTS (DEFENSIVE BLAST)

Power Point Cost: All remaining points
Components: V
Casting Time: Immediate
Range: Personal
Effect: All within ten feet of the caster
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Special
Prerequisites: *Blessing of Yig*
Magic Attack Roll: Sets the DC for the victim's Fortitude saving throws.

When this spell is cast, one serpent per enemy within ten feet of the caster appears. The serpents slither out of the folds of the caster's robes, out of cracks in the floor and so forth, and immediately each serpent attacks one victim. The serpents have an attack bonus of +10, +1 per Power Point expended in casting this spell. If a victim is hit, then he must immediately make a Fortitude saving throw against the serpent's poison (DC equals the sorcerer's Magic Attack roll). If this saving throw is failed, then the victim is stunned for one round and loses 1d4 Strength. He must make another four saving throws against the poison at one-round increments. As per the usual rules for poison, the die type used increases by one step for each failed saving throw (so, on the first failed save, the victim loses 1d4 Strength, and will make his second saving throw to avoid losing 1d6 Strength).

The serpents crawl away after making one attack on each enemy within range of the spell.

HYPNOTIC GAZE

Power Point Cost: 1
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Evil Eye
Target: One creature
Duration: Concentration + 1d6 rounds
Saving Throw: Will negates
Prerequisites: Concentration 4 ranks, *blessing of Yig*.
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will saving throw

This Serpent Magic spell works just like the *entrance* spell from the Hypnotism style, except that it costs one Power Point and requires no components other than the sorcerer's own eyes, which become serpentine slits when the spell is cast. The effect of the spell also lasts an extra 1d6 rounds.

ANIMAL ALLY

Power Point Cost: 6
Components: V, S, M, XP
Casting Time: 1 day
Range: 1 mile/level
Target: One snake
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, *blessing of Yig*.
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will saving throw



This spell works just like the Nature Magic spell of the same name, with one exception – the spell can only be used to call a snake or other serpentine creature.

DREAD SERPENT

Power Point Cost: 3

Components: V, S, (F)

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One humanoid; usually one who is already affected by your *hypnotic gaze* spell (but see below)

Duration: One round

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +4, *hypnotic gaze*.

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will saving throws

Other than the changed prerequisites, this spell works just like the Hypnotism spell of the same name.

SNAKESHIFT

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: One hour/level

Prerequisites: Scholar level 4, *animal ally*.

Other than its changed prerequisites, this spell is identical to the Nature Magic spell *become beast* with one exception – the only form that the spellcaster can take is that of a serpent.

SLITHER

Power Point Cost: 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Prerequisites: Scholar level 5, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks, *snakeshift*.

When the sorcerer casts *slither*, his limbs distend and elongate disturbingly. His fingers lengthen until they resemble pale, eyeless worms that wriggle and poke. He gains the following benefits from the spell:

- ❖ His weird limbs increase his reach by 10 feet and his movement by 10 feet.
- ❖ He gains a +8 bonus to Climb, Escape Artist and Sleight of Hand checks.
- ❖ He gains a +8 bonus to Grapple checks.
- ❖ He gains a +4 bonus to his Dodge Defence.
- ❖ He may squeeze through spaces as small as two inches wide.

The sorcerer may control the elongation and warping of his limbs, so he could appear completely normal until he stretches one arm out ten feet to steal a coin-purse.

CURSE OF YIG

Power Point Cost: 8

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Special

Target: One humanoid

Duration: One round per level.

Prerequisites: Hexer, magic attack bonus +5, *snakeshift*.

Saving Throw: Fortitude resists

Magic Attack Bonus: Sets the DC for the victim's Fortitude saving throw

Casting *curse of Yig* conjures a handful of sweet-smelling dust, which lasts for one round per level of the scholar. Normally, this dust is hurled into the face of a foe, but it can also be sprinkled on a sleeping victim, mixed into food or drink like a poison, or scattered on the winds. If the dust is thrown, it counts as a splash weapon (see *Conan*, page 211). One casting of the spell conjures enough dust for a single thrown attack or to poison six victims if the dust can be applied covertly.

Anyone who inhales or otherwise consumes the dust must make a Fortitude save (DC equals the sorcerer's Magic Attack roll +5). If this saving throw is failed, then the victim is nauseated for 1d6 rounds. At the end of this time, the victim must make another Fortitude save. If this second saving throw is failed, then the victim transforms permanently into a small viper snake.

The sorcerer is unaffected by his own dust.



HANDS OF DEATH

Power Point Cost: 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: One minute/level
Prerequisites: Touch of Power, magic attack bonus +5, *slither*.

The *hands of death* spell warps either or both of the sorcerer's forearms into venomous serpents. He can see through the eyes of the snakes and bite with their vicious fangs, making him a dangerous combatant. The snakes count as weapons being wielded by the sorcerer, but he cannot be disarmed. The sorcerer may add his magic attack bonus to his base attack bonus when fighting with the *hands of death*. If he turned both hands into serpents, then he gains the feats of Two-Weapon Combat and Improved Two-Weapon Combat for the duration of the spell.

The snakes deal 1d6-1 damage on a successful hit, plus the sorcerer's Strength modifier as normal, and anyone injured by a *hand of death* must make saving throws against poison as follows:

Fortitude Saving Throw DC: 10 + the sorcerer's Constitution modifier

Damage: 1d2 damage to Dexterity and 1d2 damage to Constitution

Saves (9): Immediate/1 round/1 round/1 minute/1 minute/10 minutes/30 minutes/1 hour/1 hour

The sorcerer may not wear any garments or armour on his arms when casting this spell, and he may not pick up any items or perform any action that requires the use of his hands (including casting spells with somatic or material components) if he has transformed both arms. If the sorcerer's hands are sundered (they have hardness equal to the sorcerer's DR + 2 and hit points equal to the sorcerer's total level) then the snake-head is cut away and the sorcerer finds himself missing a hand when the spell ends.



SHED THE SKIN

Power Point Cost: 10+
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One hour
Range: Personal
Target: Self
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisites: Scholar level 10, *slither*.

This spell of rebirth allows the sorcerer to shed his skin and be transformed. When the ritual begins, the sorcerer's body begins to warp and swell, and his skin begins to slough away. At the end, he bursts out of his own flesh in a new form.

The spell completely transforms the sorcerer's body. He is cured of any diseases or poisons afflicting him, and may change his appearance. He must remain humanoid, but can switch race and even gender during the ritual. He may also remove the physical signs of aging. He is cured of all damage suffered.



The sorcerer's physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity and Charisma) are set to 8 after this spell is cast. If the sorcerer spent extra power points when casting the spell above the minimum of ten, then he may buy better physical ability scores using these extra points. For example, a sorcerer who spends 20 Power Points on a casting of *shed the skin* has ten points with which to buy ability scores. See page 9 of the *Conan* rulebook for rules on buying ability scores using points. A sorcerer can buy physical ability scores above 18, but each ability point about 18 costs 4 Power Points.

If the sorcerer wishes, his new appearance can mimic that of another person with whom he is familiar. The sorcerer must buy exactly the same ability scores as the target and must have a magical link to that target. For example, if a sorcerer wishes to copy the appearance of a princess who has Strength 6, Dexterity 14 and Charisma 18, then he must spend at least 28 power points when casting the spell (10 points to cast the spell itself, minus two points for dropping his Strength from its base of 8 to 6, six points for raising his Dexterity from 8 to 14, and 14 points for raising his Charisma from 8 to 18).

The sorcerer is exhausted and ravenous after casting this spell, and must feast on the flesh of one human victim per sorcerer level within an hour the ritual being completed. If the sorcerer does not have sufficient food available, then he permanently loses 1d6 hit points per missing victim.

Material Components: Rare oils and venoms, costing 5,000 silver pieces.

CURSE OF TEN THOUSAND SERPENTS

Power Point Cost: 12

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Long (400 feet + 40 feet/scholar level)

Area: Either one building or district, or a circular area 30 feet in radius per level

Duration: Special

Prerequisites: Scholar level 15, Hexer, *unseen serpents*, *animal ally*.

The *curse of ten thousand serpents* is an understatement – the *curse of uncounted serpents* might be a better title for the spell. When the curse is thrown at the target area, the spell causes a great many venomous serpents (mostly Tiny, Small or Medium vipers and cobras) to crawl out of cracks and shadows and attack all living things. Anyone in the area of effect is attacked by 1d6 serpents each round while they remain within the area of effect. The serpents emerge full of wrath and venom and will attack on sight, but after a few minutes this initial burst of anger fades and the snakes become mundane serpents, attacking only when threatened. The snakes do regard the area of the spell's effect as their natural lair and will feel threatened by any trespassers. They regard the sorcerer who cast this spell as friendly and will not attack him.

The duration of the spell varies depending on the conditions. Once summoned the snakes are just normal serpents and will die off or thrive depending on normal circumstances. If the spell is cast on a place inimical to serpents (such as an icy castle in Hyperborea), for example, then the snakes will die off in a few days. If cast in a tropical climate, the place may remain infested for centuries.

CALL THE GREAT SNAKE

Power Point Cost: 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./two levels)

Effect: Conjures one Man-Serpent

Duration: One task, lasting up to one hour/level

Saving Throw: See below

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +4, *shed the skin*.

This spell conjures a Man-Serpent (see *Bestiary of the Hyborian Age*, page 73) who immediately appears to aid the sorcerer. The Man-Serpent is not under the caster's command, but will be favourably disposed towards him.





Feats of Sorcery

The new sorcery feats listed in this chapter may be chosen as regular feats or as bonus feats by scholars entitled to select a bonus feat instead of a new sorcery style. Several new general feats are also incorporated for their sorcerous utility.

This chapter also incorporates additional monster feats for some of the new sorcerous creatures given in Chapter 5: Creatures of Sorcery.

TABLE 4: FEATS

General Feats	Prerequisites	Benefits
Child of Jhebbal Sag	Must be a Pict or Kushite, may only be taken at 1 st level	Become inhuman
Craftsman	Craft (any) 1 rank	+2 bonus on all Craft checks
Loathsome Weapon	Dex 15, Handle Animal 1 rank, Poison Use, Improved Unarmed Attack, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus +1	Wield poisonous animals as weapons
Noble Blood	May only be taken at 1 st level, must be a race that does not have noble as a prohibited class	Gain a title
Salome	Must be a female scholar from Khauran, may only be taken at 1 st level, may only be taken by one character in each campaign	You are the infamous witch Salome
Great Library	Must be civilized, may only be taken at 1 st level or when circumstances permit.	Gain a library
Witch-Sighted	May only be taken at 1 st level.	You are sensitive to sorcery and the supernatural
Monster Feats	Prerequisite	Benefits
Awesome Blow	Str 25, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, size Large or larger	Powerful attack sends enemies flying
Titanic Blow	Str 35, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Awesome Blow, size Huge or larger	Powerful attack sends enemies flying further



Sorcery Feats	Prerequisite	Benefits
Bleed Dry	Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Ritual Sacrifice, Corruption 1+	Get the most from your sacrifices
Craft Aberration	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Permanent Sorcery	Create unnatural monsters
Craft Magic Item	Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks, Craft (any) 15 ranks, Craftsman, at least fifteen spells known	Create minor magical items
Craft Major Magic Item	Craft Magic Item, Permanent Sorcery, Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, Craft (alchemy) 20 ranks, Craft (any) 20 ranks, Craftsman, at least twenty spells known	Create magic items of legend
Craft New Life	Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 20 ranks, Heal 20 ranks, Permanent Sorcery, Craft Aberration, must know <i>bones of life</i> spell	Create any living thing
Debaucher	Cha 15, Carouser, <i>entrance</i> , <i>enslave</i> , Corruption 3+, must have experienced at least one weird pleasure	Gain Power Points by corrupting others
Flame-Marked	Must have been burnt.	Gain 2 DR versus fire, bonus on Concentration checks
Greater Sorcerer's Boon	Scholar level 12, Int 15, Sorcerer's Boon, must know at least four sorcery styles	Learn two spells
Greater Control	Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Handle Animal 15 ranks, <i>summon beast</i> , <i>control magical beast</i> , <i>animal ally</i> , <i>control monstrous humanoid</i>	Control more monsters
Greater Meditation	Wis 15, Knowledge (arcane) 10 ranks, Meditation, <i>calm of the adept</i> , no Corruption score	Gain Power Points very quickly by meditating
Improved Evil Eye	Cha 13, Steely Gaze, Dabbler <i>or</i> must know at least one sorcery style	+1 bonus on Evil Eye range spells
Improved Sorcerous Sight	Wis 13, Dabbler <i>or</i> Witch-sighted <i>or</i> must know at least one sorcery style	Better read sorcerers' souls
Meditation	Wis 13, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, <i>calm of the adept</i> , no Corruption score	Gain Power Points by meditating
Permanent Sorcery	Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 15 ranks, must know at least five sorcery styles	Create permanent magical effects
Touch of Power	Cha 13, Improved Unarmed Strike <i>or</i> Brawl, Dabbler <i>or</i> must know at least one sorcery style	+1 bonus on touch-range spells



Cult Feats	Prerequisite	Benefits
Henchmen	Member of a Cult, Character level 6+	Gain loyal minions.
Fanatic	Member of a Cult with Fanaticism 1+	Gain the benefits of fanaticism
Agents	Member of a Cult, Henchmen, Character level 8+	Gain a skilled helper.

AGENTS (GENERAL)

You have a highly skilled minion drawn from the ranks of the faithful.

Prerequisites: Must be a member of a Cult, Henchmen, Character level 8+

Benefit: You gain a cohort, as per the Leadership feat (see *Conan*, page 131). However, your Leadership score for the purposes of determining your cohort's level is determined as follows:

Character level + Charisma modifier + your Cult's Fanaticism rating + one other rating, depending on the class of cohort desired.

Borderer: Add your Cult's Reach

Noble: Add your Cult's Influence

Scholar: Add your Cult's Sorcerous Power

Soldier: Add your Cult's Military Strength

Pirate: Add your Cult's Wealth

Thief: Add your Cult's Secrecy

Tempress: Add your Cult's Influence or Wealth

Your own personal reputation and other modifiers that would normally apply when gaining a cohort do not apply in this case. Regardless of your final Leadership score, you may only recruit a cohort who is two or more levels lower than you.

AWESOME BLOW (GENERAL)

Certain creatures of primal power can knock their enemies flying.

Prerequisites: Str 25, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, size Large or larger.

Benefit: As a standard action, the creature may choose to subtract 4 from its melee attack roll and deliver an awesome blow. If the creature hits a corporeal opponent smaller than itself with an awesome blow, its opponent must

succeed on a Reflex save (DC = damage dealt) or be knocked flying 10 feet in a direction of the attacking creature's choice and fall prone. The attacking creature can only push the opponent in a straight line, and the opponent may not be knocked towards the attacking creature. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the opponent's move, the opponent and the obstacle each take 1d6 points of damage, and the opponent stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle.

BLEED DRY (SORCERY)

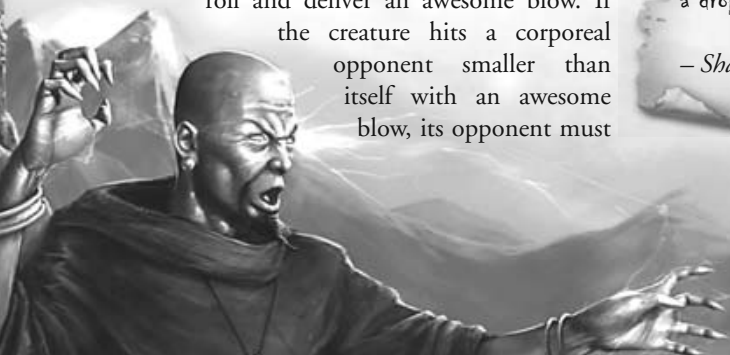
Through long practice and a gruesome understanding of the best ways to bleed a victim, you can spill every last drop of blood from anyone you sacrifice, leaving them not merely dead but bled out like a stuck pig.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Ritual Sacrifice, Corruption 1+.

Benefit: Any time you use the Ritual Sacrifice feat to sacrifice a victim, you treat them as having +10 hit points more than they actually had, solely for purposes of gaining Power Points from the sacrifice. In effect you are gaining power not just from the hit points they have left, but from the additional hit points between -1 to -10 that they would lose if they died more slowly and gradually.

'Your head, Cimmerian!' taunted Baal-pteur. 'I shall take it with my bare hands, twisting it from your shoulders as the head of a fowl is twisted! Thus the sons of Kosala offer sacrifice to Yajur. Barbarian, you look upon a strangler of Yota-pung. I was chosen by the priests of Yajur in my infancy, and throughout childhood, boyhood and youth I trained in the art of slaying with the naked hands - for only thus are the sacrifices enacted. Yajur loves blood, and we waste not a drop from the victim's veins.

- *Shadows in Zamboula*





CRAFT ABERRATION (SORCERY)

You have begun to experiment with the secrets of life itself.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Permanent Sorcery.

Benefit: You may attempt to create the horrific combination creatures known as aberrations. This feat is used in accompaniment with the Combining Creatures – Aberrations rules (see page 117).

The almost human note in its mirth staggered his reason. It was exactly such laughter as he had heard bubble obscenely from the fat lips of the salacious women of Shadizar, City of Wickedness, when captive girls were stripped naked on the public auction block. By what hellish arts had Tsotha brought this unnatural being into life? Conan felt vaguely that he had looked on blasphemy against the eternal laws of nature.

– *The Scarlet Citadel*

CHILD OF JHEBBAL SAG (GENERAL)

Though your mother was human, your father was Jhebbal Sag, the ancient and evil god of all living things.

Prerequisites: Must be a Pict or Kushite, may only be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You apply the Child of Jhebbal Sag template to your character (see page 95).

‘Who the devil is your brother?’ demanded Conan. His sword was naked in his hand, and he was subtly loosening the axe in his belt.

‘Zogar Sag; a child of Jhebbal Sag who still visits his sacred groves at times. A woman of Gwawela slept in a grove sacred to Jhebbal Sag. Her babe was Zogar Sag.’

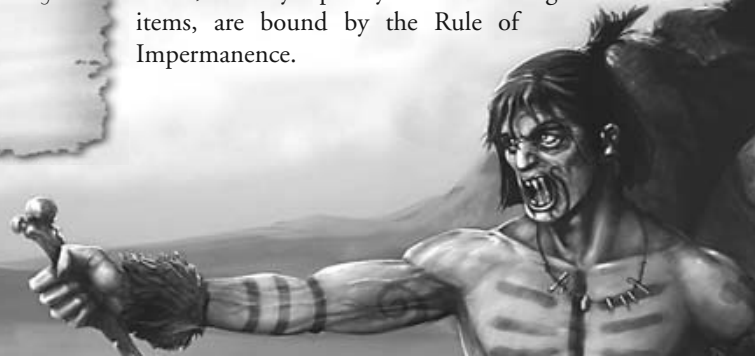
– *Beyond the Black River*

CRAFT MAGIC ITEM (SORCERY)

Thanks to your expertise with a wide range of sorcerous skills and spells, you have learned to create minor magical items of all kinds.

Prerequisite: Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks, Craft (any) 15 ranks, Craftsman, at least fifteen spells known.

Benefit: You may create any magic item whose prerequisites you meet, so long as its Experience Point Cost is at most 5,000 xp. The time this takes and the money expended are given in Chapter 4: Permanent Sorcery. You can also mend a broken magic item if it is one that you could make. Doing so costs half the XP, half the raw materials, and half the time it would take to craft that item in the first place. Any magic item you create, and any repairs you make to magic items, are bound by the Rule of Impermanence.





CRAFT NEW LIFE (SORCERY)

You have mastered the secrets of creating new life, using sorcerous vats to craft magical creatures from a variety of bizarre ingredients.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 20 ranks, Heal 20 ranks, Permanent Sorcery, Craft Aberration, must know *bones of life* spell.

Benefit: You may create creatures that are wholly new to this world. See the rules on Page 109.

CRAFTSMAN (GENERAL)

You are a naturally kinaesthetic thinker, able to intuitively grasp the best way to work on any particular craft project.

Prerequisite: Craft (any) 1 rank.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to all Craft checks.

DEBAUCHER (SORCERY)

You are highly familiar with sensual experiences of all kinds, and can use this experience both to corrupt others and to enhance your own magical power.

Prerequisite: Cha 15, Carouser, *entrance*, *enslave*, Corruption 3+, must have experienced at least one weird pleasure (such as drinking lotus wine, an orgy to Derketo, or the joy of sacrificing a living human being to your dark gods).

Benefit: Anyone with whom you have close, peaceful, pleasurable contact with (such as being lovers, drinking companions, or fellow lotus-eaters) for an hour or more at a time must make a Corruption save or gain a point of Corruption. This only applies if their current corruption is lower than your own. Furthermore, if this person does gain a point of Corruption, you immediately gain (1d6 + your Charisma bonus + your Corruption score) Power Points. The Power Points that can be gained in this way are restricted by your Maximum Power Points as usual. Extra Power Points gained in this manner do not begin to dissipate, returning you to your Base Power Points, until you have ceased doing the pleasurable activity. This would allow you to gain quite enormous numbers of Power Points during a night-long orgy of sensuality involving dozens of lotus-intoxicated participants, for example.

CRAFT MAJOR MAGIC ITEM (SORCERY)

As a true master sorcerer, you can create legendary magical items, including powerful magic swords and other weapons. Unlike lesser sorcerers, you can craft magical items that will continue to function even after your own death.

Prerequisite: Craft Magic Item, Permanent Sorcery, Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, Craft (alchemy) 20 ranks, Craft (any) 20 ranks, Craftsman, at least twenty spells known.

Benefit: As for Craft Magic Item, except that you may create a magic item which costs 5,001 xp or more. Magic items you create and repair are not bound by the Rule of Impermanence.



'You can scarcely conceive, my dear old friend, of the conditions now existing in this tiny kingdom since Queen Taramis admitted Constantius and his mercenaries, an event which I briefly described in my last, hurried letter. Seven months have passed since then, during which time it seems as though the devil himself had been loosed in this unfortunate realm. Taramis seems to have gone quite mad; whereas formerly she was famed for her virtue, justice and tranquillity, she is now notorious for qualities precisely opposite to those just enumerated. Her private life is a scandal – or perhaps 'private' is not the correct term, since the queen makes no attempt to conceal the debauchery of her court. She constantly indulges in the most infamous revelries, in which the unfortunate ladies of the court are forced to join, young married women as well as virgins.'

– *A Witch Shall Be Born*

FANATIC (GENERAL)

You are so committed to your cause that you draw strength from your devotion.

Prerequisite: Member of a cult with Fanaticism (see page 148).

Benefit: You gain the benefits of your cult's Fanaticism rating, allowing you to add that Fanaticism rating to Will saves, Intimidate checks and attack rolls made in defence of the cult.

Normal: Player characters do not benefit from Fanaticism.

FLAME-MARKED (SORCERY)

You have been marked by the flame of sorcery.

Prerequisite: Must have either sacrificed a body part to the fires, or suffered ten points of fire damage in a single attack.

Benefit: You may ignore the first two points of damage from any fire-based attack. You also gain a +4 insight bonus to Concentration checks when using the *heart of flame* spell (see page 15).

GREAT LIBRARY

(GENERAL)

You possess a large number of books and scrolls.

Prerequisites: Must be from a civilised, literate background. This feat may only be taken at 1st level, or when the character acquires a suitable library in the course of adventuring.

Benefit: You have a library with 12 ranks in each of two Knowledge skills. See the library rules on page 119.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times; each time, it applies to two different Knowledge skills.

GREATER SORCERER'S BOON (SORCERY)

Your knowledge of spells is unparalleled.

Prerequisites: Scholar level 12, Int 15, Sorcerer's Boon, must know at least four sorcery styles.

Benefit: You gain two advanced spells of your choice. You must meet any prerequisites of the spells as usual, including knowledge of the sorcery style in question. Unlike the Sorcerer's Boon feat, you must also have a source from which to learn the spells, such as a spellbook or teacher.

Special: This feat may be taken more than once – you gain two different spells each time.

GREATER CONTROL (SORCERY)

You are able to train more magical beasts or monstrous humanoids to take your commands than can most sorcerers.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 15 ranks, Handle Animal 15 ranks, *summon beast*, *control magical beast*, *animal ally*, *control monstrous humanoid*.

Benefit: Select either magical beasts or monstrous humanoids. Using the appropriate spell, you may control an additional number of magical beasts or monstrous humanoids whose total Hit Dice is equal to your scholar class level.

Special: This feat may be taken more than once. Its benefits stack.



GREATER MEDITATION (SORCERY)

Your powers of meditation allow you to build up a great many Power Points, far more than you would usually have.

Prerequisite: Wis 15, Knowledge (arcane) 10 ranks, Meditation, *calm of the adept*, no Corruption score.

Benefit: By meditating for one hour, you can gain 2d6 + Wis bonus Power Points. You may do this as often as you wish. You may gain more than your Base Power Points in this manner, up to a maximum of your Maximum Power Points as usual. You do not begin to lose Power Points again until you cease meditating. This feat supersedes the Meditation feat entirely.

Special: If you ever gain Corruption points, you apply your Corruption score as a penalty to the number of Power Points you may regain each hour. This penalty will not reduce the Power Points gained per hour below 0.

HENCHMEN (GENERAL)

You have access to a supply of minions and guards from your cult.

Prerequisites: Must be a member of a cult, character level 6th or higher.

Benefit: You gain followers, as per the Leadership feat (see the *Conan* rpg, page 131). However, your Leadership score is calculated as follows: Character level + Charisma modifier + your Cult's Military Strength + your Cult's Fanaticism. Your personal reputation and other modifiers from the Leadership feat do not factor into the number of followers you receive.

Unlike the Leadership feat, you do not receive any cohorts from this feat.

IMPROVED EVIL EYE (SORCERY)

Your eyes have a look of great magical power, capable of forcing compliance from the most powerful foes.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Steely Gaze, Dabblers *or* must know at least one sorcery style.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to your magic attack roll whenever using a spell at the Evil Eye range. This also applies to other spell-like effects delivered by the Evil Eye or by gaze attack.

'Your guest does not like your wine, Olmec,' spoke a cool, sardonic voice.

Olmec stiffened; fear grew in his flaming eyes. Slowly he swung his great head about and stared at Tascela who posed negligently in the curtained doorway, one hand on her smooth hip. Valeria twisted herself about in his iron grip, and when she met the burning eyes of Tascela, a chill tingled along her supple spine. New experiences were flooding Valeria's proud soul that night. Recently she had learned to fear a man; now she knew what it was to fear a woman.

— Red Nails

IMPROVED SORCEROUS SIGHT (SORCERY, GENERAL)

You can see into the hearts of other sorcerers.

Prerequisites: Wis 13, Dabblers *or* Witch-sighted *or* must know at least one sorcery style.

Benefit: You may attempt to examine a sorcerer's soul as a free action, rather than a standard action (see the Rule of the Sorcerer's Soul, *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 232). Furthermore, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your magic attack roll whenever so doing.

Special: This feat is regarded as a sorcery feat when chosen by a human, but a general feat when chosen by a magical beast or outsider.



Conan cried out sharply and recoiled, thrusting his companion back. Before them rose the great shimmering white form of Satha, an ageless hate in its eyes. Conan tensed himself for one mad berserker onslaught – to thrust the glowing fagot into that fiendish countenance and throw his life into the ripping sword-stroke. But the snake was not looking at him. It was glaring over his shoulder at the man called Pelias, who stood with his arms folded, smiling. And in the great cold yellow eyes slowly the hate died out in a glitter of pure fear – the only time Conan ever saw such an expression in a reptile’s eyes. With a swirling rush like the sweep of a strong wind, the great snake was gone.

‘What did he see to frighten him?’ asked Conan, eyeing his companion uneasily.

‘The scaled people see what escapes the mortal eye,’ answered Pelias cryptically. ‘You see my flesh guise; he saw my naked soul.’

– *The Scarlet Citadel*



Special: A sorcerer with the Ranged Finesse feat and this feat may use a Small or Tiny snake as an arrow.

LOATHSOME WEAPON (GENERAL)

You can pluck scorpions, snakes and other creatures off the ground and hold them in such a way as to prevent them from harming you. This enables you to use such a creature as a weapon, driving its fanged maw or stinging tail against an opponent as though it were an extension of your own body.

Prerequisite: Dex 15, Handle Animal 1 rank, Poison Use, Improved Unarmed Attack, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: If you successfully grapple a creature of the animal or vermin type that is at least two sizes smaller than you, you may wield it as though it were a weapon. You do the standard damage for one of the creature’s attacks (your choice as to which, if it has more than one) each time you strike an opponent with it. If you ever throw the creature, it has a range increment of 10 feet, and if it hits an opponent it deals damage according to one of its attacks (choose at random if it has more than one). You never suffer a non-proficiency penalty for wielding an animal in this manner.

Thugra Khotan laughed awfully, and wheeling, caught up something that crawled loathsomely in the dust of the floor.

In his extended hand something alive writhed and slavered. No tricks of shadows this time. In his naked hand Thugra Khotan gripped a black scorpion, more than a foot in length, the deadliest creature of the desert, the stroke of whose spiked tail was instant death. Thugra Khotan’s skull-like countenance split in a mummy-like grin.

– *Black Colossus*





MAGIC POWER ATTACKS

The first edition supplement *The Scrolls of Skelos* had a Magic Power Attack feat, which was a less potent version of the 'overcharging a spell' rule in the second edition of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. Characters who had the Magic Power Attack feat can swap it for another Sorcery feat.

MEDITATION (SORCERY)

You can meditate to regain power points.

Prerequisite: Wis 13, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, *calm of the adept*, no Corruption score.

Benefit: By meditating for one hour, you can regain 1d6 + Wis bonus Power Points. You may do this up to once per day.

Special: If you ever gain Corruption points, you apply your Corruption score as a penalty to the number of Power Points you may regain each hour. This penalty will not reduce the Power Points gained per hour below 0.

NOBLE BLOOD (GENERAL)

Though you have dedicated your life to other pursuits, you are of noble birth.

Prerequisite: May only be taken at 1st level, must be a race that does not have noble as a prohibited class.

Benefit: You gain the Title class feature of the noble class, exactly as though you were a 1st level noble. You do not gain any other class features or benefits of the noble class.

Special: You may freely multiclass into the Noble class at a later level, if you so wish. If you do so, you do not gain the Title class feature again, since you already have it. Instead you gain Skill Focus (Knowledge – nobility) as a bonus feat.

PERMANENT SORCERY (SORCERY)

You can make your spells last forever.

Prerequisites: Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 15 ranks, must know at least five sorcery styles.

Benefit: You can expend experience points to create permanently effective spells, including magical items. This feat is used in conjunction with the Permanent Sorcery rules (see page 58).

SALOME (GENERAL)

You are one of the infamous witches known as Salome. You were born a princess of Khauran, and might have reigned as queen there, were it not for the crescent-moon birthmark which led to your exile and to your sister's ascension to the throne.

Prerequisites: Must be a female scholar from Khauran, may only be taken at 1st level, may only be taken by one character in each campaign.

Benefit: You apply the Salome template to your character (see page 108).

Special: The Games Master is always free to disallow this feat, if he already has a non-player character in mind to take it this century. In a strictly canonical game taking place in the time of Conan, Salome is slain by Conan during the events in *A Witch Shall Be Born*. However, this feat could be appropriate in a game which does not strictly adhere to canon, or in one set before or after Conan's time. Alternatively the Games Master could quite reasonably rule that if Salome dies, another Salome can become incarnate immediately, in which case her mention of 'each century' in the story is probably poetic license.

Salome laughed fiercely, and slapped her bosom. The low-necked tunic left the upper parts of her firm breasts bare, and between them there shone a curious mark – a crescent, red as blood.

'The mark of the witch!' cried Taramis, recoiling.

'Aye!' Salome's laughter was dagger-edged with hate. 'The curse of the kings of Khauran! Aye, they tell the tale in the market-places, with wagging beards and rolling eyes, the pious fools! They tell how the first queen of our line had traffic with a fiend of darkness and bore him a daughter who lives in foul legendry to this day. And thereafter in each century a girl baby was born into the Askhaurian dynasty, with a scarlet half-moon between her breasts, that signified her destiny.'

– *A Witch Shall Be Born*



TITANIC BLOW (GENERAL)

Monstrous creatures from a more primal age can deliver truly titanic blows, knocking their enemies well away from the combat.

Prerequisites: Str 35, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Awesome Blow, size Huge or larger.

Benefit: As the Awesome Blow feat (see page 50) except that the creature need no longer subtract 4 from its attack roll when delivering an awesome blow. Furthermore, if the creature hits a corporeal opponent at least two sizes smaller than itself with an awesome blow, its opponent must succeed on a Reflex save (DC = damage dealt) or be knocked flying (1d4 + creature's strength bonus) 5-foot squares in a direction of the attacking creature's choice and fall prone. The opponent is dealt an additional 1d6 damage for each 5-foot square he flew. If desired, he may make a Tumble check (DC = additional damage dealt) to change this additional damage from lethal to nonlethal damage, but he will still fly the full distance. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the opponent's move, the opponent and the obstacle each take the full damage the creature would have taken had he gone the whole distance, and the opponent stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle. He may make a Tumble check as usual to change the damage to nonlethal.

Convinced that his death was upon him, the Cimmerian acted according to his instinct, and hurled himself full at the awful face that was bearing down on him. He leaped, slashing like a wildcat, felt his sword cut deep into the scales that sheathed the mighty snout – and then a terrific impact knocked him rolling and tumbling for fifty feet with all the wind and half the life battered out of him.

– *Red Nails*

At the first stroke Conan had bounded up and was racing down the stairs. He caught only glimpses of that brief, fiendish fight – saw men swaying, locked in battle and streaming blood; saw one Khitan, fairly hacked to pieces, yet still on his feet and dealing death, when Thutothmes smote him on the breast with his open empty hand, and he dropped dead though naked steel had not been enough to destroy his uncanny vitality.

– *The Hour of the Dragon*

WITCH-SIGHTED

You have an unnatural sensitivity to sorcery and the supernatural.

Prerequisites: May only be taken at first level.

Benefit: You have a knack for sensing supernatural events. You sometimes have prophetic dreams – normally, the Games Master will inform you when these dreams occur, but you may spend a Fate Point for a dream in the course of an adventure. The Games Master may also make a Wisdom check (DC 20) when something unnatural or sorcerous happens nearby – if successful, you sense a presence that alarms and unsettles you, but you have no idea where or what the sorcery or unnatural even was.

You count as a sorcerer for the purposes of the Rule of the Sorcerer's Soul.

Special: You have a black mark somewhere on your body. Those who see this and make a successful Knowledge (arcana) check at DC 10 will realise that this mark means you are Witch-Sighted.

TOUCH OF POWER

Your touch gives off a feeling of uncanny horror, throbbing with magical energies as you use it to deliver a spell.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Improved Unarmed Strike *or* Brawl, Dabblers *or* must know at least one sorcery style.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to your magic attack roll whenever using a spell at the Touch range. This also applies to other deleterious effects delivered by touch.



Permanent Sorcery

Few sorcerers can create magic that lasts more than a few hours or days, or at most to the limit of their own lifespans, as explained by the Rule of Impermanence (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 229). Those who can are regarded as among the most powerful wizards of their age, be they tigerskin-clad Picts or Khitan scholars in robes of the finest silk.

Permanent sorcery tends to be based around either ordinary spells, or around the creation of sorcerous creatures such as aberrations, or around the crafting of magical items. Any sorcerer who can perform permanent sorcery can also potentially create magical items and magical creatures, with the correct feats.

The permanent sorcery dealt with in this section, both permanent spells and the creation of sorcerous creatures and objects, may only ever be created by a character with the Permanent Sorcery feat (see page 56).

THE COSTS OF PERMANENT SORCERY

Each type of permanent magic, whether it is creating a magic item or laying a permanent enchantment on a place lists a number of costs to the sorcerer.

Experience: When experience points (XP) are listed as a cost, then the sorcerer loses those experience points from his total. The sorcerer cannot spend experience if the loss would bring him below the total needed for his current level. For example, a sorcerer with an experience total of 60,000 is an eleventh level character, as you need a total of 55,000 for eleventh level. If that sorcerer spends 4,000 XP on crafting an item, then his experience total drops to 56,000 – he is still eleventh level, so

this is permissible. However, he could not spend 6,000 XP on an item, as this would bring him to a total of 54,000, which is below the cut-off of 55,000 for his current level.

Silver: The cost in silver represents a combination of the cost of various magical components and items that every sorcerer must possess (beakers of weird chemicals, crystals and gemstones, blood from certain animals, water from rare and holy springs), the effort in making the item or spell, the running costs of the sorcerer's laboratory (maintaining equipment and so forth) and – greatest of all – the costs of the magical components that are specifically involved in the creation of the permanent effect.

Of these costs, 25% are unavoidable – sorcery costs coin, and whether this money is paid by the sorcerer himself or by an allied noble or royal patron, or by the sorcerer raiding some poor town and selling their daughters into slavery, someone has to pony up the silver for these basic costs.

25% of the costs may be avoidable in the course of adventuring. If a character captures a laboratory from another sorcerer, or obsessively gathers components he finds along the way, then he can reduce the costs of his permanent magic. See the box about lesser spell component costs.

If the High Living rule is used (see *Conan*, page 142), then the money spent by the sorcerer counts towards the lesser component costs of any magic item he is working on. If he is not working on an item, then he gets the +2 bonus to Knowledge checks described under High Living.

50% of the costs can be avoided by adventuring to gather the items personally. Instead of spending 20,000 silver hiring a band of adventurers and cut-throats to steal the Eye of Dagon from its temple in Zembabwe, the sorcerer can just go to the temple himself and rip the eye from the statue with his own two hands, and not pay a single coin for the privilege.



LESSER SPELL

COMPONENTS

These items are not connected to any spell or item in particular, but are generally useful to all sorcerers and other dabblers in the mystic arts. Many of these items are illegal in most civilised nations, and possession of them will result in the sorcerer being shunned and mistrusted

at the very least. These components may be gathered while adventuring – the Gathering column lists the skill used to successfully gather such items. If no skill is listed, then the item can simply be picked up (or cut from the corpse) if it is present. Characters can either sell these lesser components or hoard them for use offsetting the costs of magic item creation.

TABLE 5: SAMPLE LESSER SPELL COMPONENT

Component	Cost (SPs)	Found In	Used In	Gathering
Lotus Blossoms				
Black Lotus	500-1000 SP	Jungles of the south	Mystic visions and summonings	Craft (herbalism) DC 20-25
Golden Lotus	300-600 SP	Swamps near Stygia	Sleeping draughts and healing	Craft (herbalism) DC 30
Green Lotus	500-1000SP	Jungles of Khitai	Poison and death spells	Craft (herbalism) DC 20
Grey Lotus	200-400SP	Jungles of Khitai	Madness and mind-affecting spells	Craft (herbalism) DC 25
Purple Lotus	500-1000SP	Purple Lotus Swamp in Stygia	Paralysing and commanding	Craft (herbalism) DC 25
White Lotus	100-200SP	Black Kingdoms	Unknown	Craft (herbalism) DC 10
Yellow Lotus	100-200 SP	Black Kingdoms	Mystic visions and summonings	Craft (herbalism) DC 15
Metals and Crystals				
Meteoric Iron	1,500-3,000 SP/lb	Anywhere	Magical weapons	Craft (metalworking) DC 20
Lodestone	50-100 SP	Underground	Spells of direction and wisdom	Craft (metalworking) DC 15
Quicksilver	100-200 SP	Underground	Transformations and deceptions	Sleight of Hand, DC 10
Rare crystals	500-1000 SP	Deep underground	Purification and focussing	Craft (mining) DC 10
Blood crystals	1000-2000 SP	Underground in places of suffering	Pain and sacrifice	Craft (mining) DC 15
Greenstone	500-1000 SP	Cities of green stone	Summonings and enchantments	Craft (mining) DC 15
Unearthly Metals	2000-3000 SP	In demon-haunted places	Spells of great power	None
Animal Parts				
Serpent venom	100-500 SP	Milked from serpents	Spells of death and suffering	Handle Animal, DC 20
Dragon horn	800-2000 SP	From the dragons of Kish	Spells of strength and immortality	None
Demon blood	1000-2000SP	Shed by demons	Summonings and transformations	None
Elemental Fire	500-1000 SP	Volcanoes and from elementals	Spells of Fire	None
Elemental Earth	500-1000 SP	Deep caves and from elementals	Spells of Earth	None

PERMANENT SORCERY



Component	Cost (SPs)	Found In	Used In	Gathering
Animal Parts				
Elemental Water	500-1000 SP	Storm-tossed oceans and from elementals	Spells of Water	None
Elemental Air	500-1000 SP	Wildest storms and from elementals	Spells of Air	None
Eye of Newt	5-10 SP	Newts	Curses	None
Phoenix feather	200-500 SP	From the tail of the phoenix	Spells of rebirth and renewal	None
Salamander Oil	100-200 SP	From the brains of certain lizards	Spells of survival and endurance	Heal or Craft (taxidermy), DC 10
Rhino Horn	200-500 SP	From the rhinos of the south	Spells of virility and strength	None
Ground Sea Cucumber	1000-2000 SP	From the oceans of the far south	Spells of intelligence and cunning	Swim, DC 20
Mare's Milk	5-10 SP	Mares	Spells of healing and growth	Handle Animal, DC 10
Perilous Substances				
Tomb Dust	50-100 SP	Ancient tombs	Spells of death	None
Ground Mummy	1000-2000 SP	Ancient tombs of Stygia	Spells of death and rebirth	None
Sorcerer's Skull	200 SP per level of the sorcerer	Sorcerer's tombs	Spell of wisdom and knowledge	None
Murderer's Grave Dirt	25-100 SP	Murderer's graves	Spells of illusion, curses	None
Vampire Blood	3000-5000 SP	Vampires	Spells of immortality and command	None
Mortal Items				
Birth Caul	300-500 SP	Newborn children	Spells of prophecy and vitality	None
Vial of noble blood	100-200 SP	Nobleman	Spells of command	None
Virgin sacrifice	50-500 SP	Virgin slave or prisoner	Spell of great power	None
Hair from a newborn child	10-20 SP	Newborn children	Spells of illusion and deceit	None
Last breath of a dying man	10-20 SP	Dying men	Spells of death and forgetfulness	Sleight of Hand, DC 20
Hand of a Thief	50-100 SP	Convicted thief	Spells of illusion and invisibility.	Heal, DC 15 to remove the hand cleanly from a living thief.





3. Over the following day, a number of Power Points equal to the original PP cost of the spell x5 must also be expended.
4. Materials to a total cost of 10 sp per original PP cost of the spell are used up during the process.
5. A focus costing at least 100 sp per original PP cost of the spell must be fixed permanently in place in the location where the spell is to take effect. This focus can be used for any number of spells, so long as they are all tied to it in location – the centre of each spell's effect must be on the focus, or if the spell calls up a demon or similar entity, said entity may not stray beyond 30 feet from the focus.

A permanent spell must be tied to a specific location by the above-mentioned focus. If the focus is ever moved or disturbed from its position, the spell ends immediately, however supposedly permanent. For this reason, focuses are most commonly made from nigh-on unbreakable materials such as gemstones, and very strongly affixed into place.

If the spell is one that would normally end before its duration if discharged, like *ward dwelling*, then it may still be made permanent. However, the spell will only trigger once per day. Often, a sorcerer will place multiple copies of the same spell on a place, to ensure that it is protected.

GREATER SPELL

COMPONENTS

Each item has one or more suggested greater spell components listed – if the characters go on a lengthy quest for such an item, then up to 50% of the silver cost of the item can be ignored.

Many greater components are described in books of lore in metaphorical and mystical terms, and it is up to the characters to find out what the description truly means. A ring might be described as requiring 'the light of the last dawn' to activate its powers, but what the last dawn is, and how its light might be captured and bound into the ring is left as an exercise to the reader.

PERMANENT SPELLS

Any spell which has a duration usually measured in specific units of time such rounds, minutes, hours, or days, or a duration of Mortal, may be made permanent by the following process.

1. The initial spell is cast as usual.
2. The sorcerer must expend a total of 200 xp per Power Point that was used up to cast the spell.

SMOKE OF HELL'S FIRE

'Listen, and I'll tell you a tale the Picts tell in their huts when the fires burn low! Once, long ago, twelve strange men came out of the sea, and found a cave and heaped it with gold and jewels; but a Pictish shaman made magic and the earth shook, and smoke came out of the earth and strangled them where they sat at wine. The smoke, which was the smoke of hell's fire, was confined within the cabin by the magic of the wizard. The tale was told from tribe to tribe, and all the clans shun the accursed spot.'

– *The Black Stranger*





The *smoke of hell's fire* is a Pictish ritual in which a number of the demons known as smoke-serpents (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 380) are permanently bound to a specific site. It is included here as an example of a permanent spell.

The spell is derived from a simple *summon demon* spell made permanent by the expenditure of 200 xp per PP used by the ordinary spell – in this case, $8 \times 200 = 1,600$ xp per smoke-serpent to be summoned. For a chamber 15 ft. x 15 ft. containing a smoke-serpent on each of its 9 5-foot squares, this is a total cost of $9 \times 1,600 = 14,400$ xp. Clearly this is an enormous cost for any character, but those who wish a lasting legacy of any kind, whether for good or for ill, will pay that cost.

Also during the process, a total of $8 \times 9 \times 10 \text{ sp} = 720 \text{ sp}$ in materials is used up. This is relatively cheap compared to the cost of making a magical item, but permanent spells are far less portable. A gem worth $8 \times 100 = 800 \text{ sp}$ is also used as a focus, but all 16 of the demons can be tied to it.

The 9 smoke-serpents have been given the instruction, 'Attack and slay any who enter the chamber.' This instruction cannot now be changed by the sorcerer, as the conditions of the original spell still apply – that is, that the demons can be given only a single task.

SANCTUM

Many powerful sorcerers use the spell of *ward dwelling* to protect their homes from invading demons or the scrying spells of their rivals, but only the mightiest sorcerers have the power to make such protections permanent. To ward a room from intrusion, the spell costs 800 XP, 20 PP, and 40 sp, and requires a focus costing 400 sp – traditionally, the bust of a watchful god. Most sorcerers will place seven or more *ward dwellings* on their homes, to block attacks by enemy sorcerers who try to wear down the sanctum's defences.

If the focus is removed, the spell is broken, so rival sorcerers often employ thieves to sabotage the defences of their rivals.

WINDS OF THE SKULL GATE

The Witch-Men of Hyperborea girded the borders of their dismal land

with magical winds, which drive men mad. The winds normally lie dormant, but when brass horns are sounded in certain lonely watchtowers near the Skull Gate, the howling begins. These winds are based on the *winds of madness* spell. The basic spell costs 7 PP, but dozens of overlapping *winds of madness* are required to affect the whole region around the Skull Gate. All told, the Hyperborean winds required thirty-six castings of the spell, which cost a total of 50,400 XP and 1,260 Power Points. The cost of the endeavour was 2,520 sp in magical components, but the cost of the slaves needed to provide all that power was the main expense of the grand project.

CRAFTING MAGIC ITEMS

To create magic items, sorcerers use special feats. They invest time, money, and their own personal energy (in the form of experience points) in the creation of an item. The exception to this is the creation of herbal and alchemical items, which can be created with the Craft (herbalism) and Craft (alchemy) skills in a manner already detailed in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 97.

Note that all items have prerequisites in their descriptions. These prerequisites must be met for the item to be created. Most of the time, they take the form of spells that must be known by the item's creator (although access through another magic item or sorcerer is allowed).

While item creation costs are handled in detail below, note that normally the two primary factors are the scholar level of the creator and the Power Point cost of the spell or spells put into the item.

Raw material costs for items are always ten times the XP cost to create the item. No 'market price' is given for any of these items, as they are so very scarce that they simply never come up for sale. They are quite literally priceless. Due to the amount of time, usually months and sometimes even years, required to create these items, no sorcerer will sell one. He might make one in exchange for some major service or boon, such as being made viceroy of a good-sized nation. Most sorcerers, though, are more likely to either simply usurp the kingdom themselves, or better still act as the power behind the throne.

The creator needs a fairly quiet, comfortable, and well-lit place in which to work. At a bare minimum, a fully equipped alchemist's laboratory will be necessary, though this provides no special benefits when used to create magical items. Creating an item requires one week per



1,000 sp in the item's total cost, with a minimum of at least one week. The character must spend the gold and XP at the beginning of the construction process.

The sorcerer works for 12 hours each day. He cannot rush the process by working longer each day. The days must be

consecutive, and the caster must use the rest of his time eating and sleeping, even if he has the Sleep Mastery feat.

A character can work on only one item at a time. If a character starts work on a new item, all materials used and XP spent on the under-construction item are wasted.

TABLE 6: CRAFTING MAGIC ITEMS

Magic Item	Feat	Item Cost or Component	Magic Supplies Cost	XP Cost
Weapon	Craft Major Magic Item	Akbitanan weapon	Cost given on Table 8: Magic Weapons	1/10 of magic supplies cost
Jewellery	Craft Magic Item	1,000 sp minimum	Special, see Table 7: Calculating Magic Item Silver Price Costs, below	1/10 of magic supplies cost
Spellbook	Craft Magic Item	Skin taken from corpse of at least 1 creature of Int 3+	50 sp/PP of spells written within (use the minimum PP cost for spells with a variable cost)	5 xp/PP of spells written within
Staff	Craft Major Magic Item	Quarterstaff cut from appropriate tree (see below)	90,000 sp	9,000 xp
Wondrous Item	Craft Magic Item	As cost for ordinary item	Special, see Table 7: Calculating Magic Item Silver Price Costs, below	1/10 of magic supplies cost
Musical Instrument	Craft Major Magic Item	Masterwork musical instrument (see <i>Conan</i>)	Special, see Table 7: Calculating Magic Item Silver Price Costs, below	1/10 of magic supplies cost

TABLE 7: CALCULATING MAGIC ITEM SILVER PRICE COSTS

Effect	Base Price	Example
Save bonus (resistance)	Bonus squared x 5,000 sp	Stygian girdle of protection
Save bonus (other)*	Bonus squared x 6,000 sp	
Skill bonus (competence)	Bonus squared x 1,000 sp	<i>Burning skull of Xuchotl</i> (Intimidate bonus only)
Weapon bonus (enhancement)	See Table 8: Magic Weapons	Tulwar of Amir Khurum
Magic attack roll bonus (enhancement)	Bonus squared x 10,000 sp	<i>Heart of Ahriman</i> (heart's own spells only)
Power point bonus (enhancement)	Bonus squared x 5,000 sp	<i>Serpent ring of Set</i> (power point bonus only)
Spell Effect	Base Price	Example
Command word	Spell Power Points x caster level x 2,000 sp	<i>Heart of Ahriman</i> (greater warding use only)
Use-activated or continuous	Spell Power Points x caster level x 2,500 sp**	Burning skull
Special	Base Price Adjustment	Example
Uses per day	Divide by (4 divided by uses per day)	<i>Heart of Ahriman</i> (greater warding use only)
Special ability	+10,000 to +100,000 sp (at the Games Master's discretion)	Crystal ball of speech and vision
Grants use of one spell without knowing said spell	20,000 sp + (minimum Spell Power Points x 1,000 sp)	Heart of the elephant
Component	Extra Cost	Example
Weapon	Add cost of Akbitanan weapon	Bane knife

* Such as a luck, insight, sacred, or profane bonus.

** If a continuous item has an effect based on a spell with a duration measured in rounds, multiply the cost by 4. If the duration of the spell is 1 minute/scholar level, multiply the cost by 2, and if the duration is 10 minutes/ scholar level, multiply the cost by 1.5. If the spell has a 24-hour duration or greater, divide the cost in half.



MAGIC ITEM SILVER PIECE COSTS

Use the rules given on Table 7: Calculating Magic Item Silver Piece Costs to determine how much a magic item costs to manufacture, along with the following modifications.

Multiple Abilities: For any item which can provide more than one ability, their values are simply added together to determine the cost.

Other Considerations: Once you have a final cost figure, reduce that number if either of the following conditions applies:

- ❖ *Item Requires Specific Skill or Class to Use:* Some items require a specific skill to get them to function, or can only be used by members of a specific class. This factor should reduce the cost by 10%. The most common specific skill required is Perform (appropriate musical instrument) for the many magic items that come in the form of a musical instrument.
- ❖ *Item Requires Specific Person to Use:* Even more restrictive than requiring a skill, this limitation cuts the cost by 20%. Only the person named when the item is created can ever make use of it. This is a common restriction applied to found sorcerous items, since many sorcerers will wish to make items that only they can use.
- ❖ *Item Usable only in Specific Circumstance:* An example of this limitation, which cuts the cost by 50%, would be the *crystal ball* found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, which applies its magic attack roll bonus only to the use of certain Divination spells. Another example is the *serpent ring of Set*, whose powers to grant bonuses with certain spells may be activated only by rubbing fresh human blood on the ring.

All item costs must follow the formulas given, unless the item has some kind of special ability which does not directly relate to the table. In this case, the Games Master should use his own judgement to determine the precise cost of the item, according to the costs listed for similar items.

AKBITANAN WEAPONS AND MASTERWORK ITEMS

Akbitanan weapons and masterwork items are extraordinarily well-made. They are more expensive than ordinary weapons or items, but they benefit the user with improved quality. They are not magical in any way. However, only Akbitanan weapons may be enchanted to become magic weapons, and only masterwork musical instruments may be enchanted to become magic musical instruments.

CREATING MAGIC WEAPONS

To create a magic weapon, a character needs a heat source and some iron, wood, or leatherworking tools. She also needs a supply of materials, the most obvious being the weapon or the pieces of the weapon to be assembled. Only an Akbitanan weapon can become a magic weapon, and the Akbitanan weapon cost is added into the total cost. Additional magic supplies costs for the materials are subsumed in the cost for creating the magic weapon – see the costs given on Table 8: Magic Weapons, according to the weapon's total effective bonus.

The only exception to the requirement that only an Akbitanan weapon can become a magic weapon is for magic staves. These are covered separately, below, because their main purpose tends to be to enhance a sorcerer's abilities rather than to be wielded by a warrior.

If spells are involved in the prerequisites for making the weapon, the creator must know the spells to be cast, but need not provide any material components or focuses the spells require, nor are any XP costs inherent in a prerequisite spell incurred in the creation of the item. The act of working on the weapon activates the spells, expending PP as usual.

Creating some weapons may entail other prerequisites beyond or other than spellcasting. See the individual descriptions for details.

Note that although the magic weapons given in the table are classified by their enhancement bonuses, the weapons should never be described in this way. Each magic weapon will have its own associated legends and tales, along with a suitably powerful name.



Crafting a magic weapon requires one month for each 10,000 sp value of the cost.

Sorcery Feat Required: Craft Greater Magic Item.

TABLE 8: MAGIC WEAPONS

Weapon Bonus	Base Cost	XP Cost
+1	60,000 sp	6,000 xp
+2	90,000 sp	9,000 xp
+2, with special ability	130,000 sp	13,000 xp
Bane weapon	90,000 sp	9,000 xp

CREATING MAGIC STAFFS

Rather than being specially crafted, these staffs must be cut from the appropriate magical tree. This is often a quest in and of itself, much in the same way that herbal items must be gathered from far and wide to make use of the Craft (herbalism) skill (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 97).

The staff must be selected and cut from the tree with a Craft (woodworking) or Profession (forester) check at DC 15. This ensures a sturdy, healthy branch is chosen.

Crafting a magic staff requires nine months, once the staff has been cut from the appropriate tree.

Sorcery Feat Required: Craft Greater Magic Item.

TABLE 9: MAGIC STAFFS

Staff	Sorcery Style Benefited	Tree
Staff of Warding	Counterspells	Tree of Warding, which grows on a forgotten isle of the Western Ocean
Staff of the Stars	Cosmic Sorcery	Tree of the Stars, which grows on a tiny planet drifting through the Outer Dark, far from Earth
Staff of Blasting	Curses	Tree of Blasting, which grows in the depths of the great Eastern Desert
Staff of Knowledge	Divination	Tree of Knowledge, which grows in Iranistan in an ancient and forbidden garden
Staff of the Eye	Hypnotism	Tree of the Eye, which grows in southern Vendhya
Staff of Life	Immortality	Tree of Life, which grows in darkest Kush, a thousand miles due south of the Pelishtim capital of Asgalun
Staff of Leaf and Bud	Nature Magic	Tree of Leaf and Bud, which grows deep in the Pictish Wilderness, at the centre of a great grove sacred to Jhebbal Sag
Staff of Death	Necromancy	Tree of Death, which grows in the grounds of a temple to the death god of Paikang in Khitai.
Staff of the Rising Sun	Oriental Magic	Tree of the Rising Sun, which grows on islands far to the east of even Khitai.
Staff of the Magic Hand	Prestidigitation	Tree of the Magic Hand, which grows in the deserts of Stygia.
Staff of Hell	Summonings	Tree of Hell, which grows in hell itself.
Staff of the Pyre	Fire	The Eternally Burning Tree, which is found in the heart of the Mountains of Fire in the distant south
Staff of the Windwalker	Frost	A horn of a dragon who sleeps in the glaciers of the distant north
Ebon Staff of the Serpent	Serpent	The Tree of Serpents, where a hundred thousand serpents coil amid its branches



CREATING MAGIC ITEMS

To create a wondrous item, magic musical instrument, spellbook, or piece of magical jewellery, a sorcerer firstly needs the mundane item itself. He needs some sort of equipment or tools to work on the item, which makes up 25% of the Magic Items Cost total. He also needs a supply of arcane components that make up the other 75% of the cost. Questing for lesser or greater components can pay some or all of this component cost. Refer to Table 7: Magic Item Costs for additional costs.

If spells are involved in the prerequisites for making the item, the creator must know the spells to be cast, but need not provide any material components or focuses the spells require, nor are any XP costs inherent in a prerequisite spell incurred in the creation of the item. The act of working on the item activates the spells, expending PP as usual.

A magic item which duplicates one or more spells that require saving throws of their targets uses the following formula to determine the DC of the save: (10 + magic attack bonus of creating sorcerer). No Charisma or other bonuses are added to this DC, and it is not a variable die roll as for most actual

magic attacks; this is because the item can be used only with the creator's magical skill, with a set amount of said skill.

A magic item which provides a Power Point enhancement bonus must always be attuned to the wielder of the item before any of its powers can be used. This attunement process requires a one-day ritual, a Perform (ritual) check (DC 20), and the expenditure of 500 sp worth of incenses etc. per 50,000 sp or part thereof value of the item.

Creating some items may entail other prerequisites other than spellcasting. See the individual descriptions for details.

Note that it is not possible to make magical armour or shields.

Many magic items are made in the form of gems or jewellery, which has the advantage that the item can be small, portable, and highly durable. From the perspective of creating a magic item, though, these rules make no distinction between a piece of enchanted jewellery and any other wondrous item.

Crafting a wondrous item requires one month for each 10,000 sp value of the cost.

Sorcery Feat Required: Craft Magic Item

An Example of Magic Item Creation

The Mage King Italus, a 17th level Scholar, wants to create a very powerful magical item to set himself apart from all of the charlatans found in his territory – the Crown of Italus. To do so he has a jeweller hand-carve a piece of ivory from a royal elephant's tusk, dipping the final product in a stain made from rendered Stygian scorpions. The crown is then set with a dozen individual onyx chunks and a single sapphire the size of a man's eye, bringing the initial cost of the crown to 15,000 sp (what the jeweller asks, which must be at least 1,000 sp).

Once the crown is in his possession, he decides what all he wants the item to do. This will determine the cost of the magical supplies he will need. He decides upon the following:

- * He wants to show his lack of fear of the Serpent God, so he wishes to have a +3 save versus Poisons. This will cost an additional 54,000 sp ($3 \times 3 = 9$; $9 \times 6,000 \text{ sp} = 54,000 \text{ sp}$).
- * To show his mastery of such powerful magery, he also wants the crown to grant him the elusive *agonising doom* spell, which he does not know personally. This effect is actually two powers: one to grant him an unknown spell (24,000 sp for a 4 PP spell) and one to let him cast it using the item ($4 \text{ (PP)} \times 17 \text{ (caster level)} = 68$; $68 \times 2,000 \text{ sp} = 136,000 \text{ sp}$). The final cost is a staggering additional 160,000 sp. The spell will only be usable twice a day, and only when he says his full name (command word activation), adjusting the price accordingly ($160,000 \div 2 = 80,000 \text{ sp}$), making the final amount for the spell's use 80,000 sp.

The final magic supplies cost, 134,000 sp, means that the item will take Italus a total of 14.9 months (magic supplies cost + item creation cost \div 10,000) to create – over a full year! Although money is no object to a Mage King, the hefty xp cost of 13,400xp (magic supplies cost \div 10) and the need to find some other sorcerer to enchant it with *agonising doom* means Italus will need to think long and hard before his deadly crown can be built after all...

Sorcerous Items

For many, when they consider the power of the sorcerer, it is not his mesmeric eyes or his power to traffic with demons that impresses, but his ability to make magical items, brew potions, or know which herbs are good for healing. These things are not so showy as some of the sorcerer's powers, but they are fascinating to ordinary folk and adventurers alike – largely because it is possible to use many sorcerous objects without being a sorcerer oneself, and without having to deal with the sorcerer. The fantasy of finding an unattended magical artefact that can grant wishes, render the wearer irresistible to women (or men), or make him the mightiest warrior in the world, is a common one in many cultures, enshrined in folk-tales and myths alike.

The reality of the situation is that though many a village fish-wife knows how to make a herbal poultice or even a love potion, the creation of true magical items is such a gruelling, expensive and time-consuming process that few sorcerers are willing to undergo it, other than to craft

the occasional crystal ball or other item that is of direct benefit to their own personal magical work. Magical weapons of great power are especially scarce, since sorcerers themselves are rarely proficient swordsmen; generally, a sorcerous weapon will be crafted only in times of dire need, for example when the sorcerer's homeland is under direct threat by some powerful supernatural creature and the sorcerer does not much like the idea of confronting it personally.

MAGIC ITEMS

A large number of brand-new magic items are provided here for sorcerers to create. The costs and requirements for each are listed, so that a sorcerer with Craft Magic Item and related feats can create them. Furthermore, the costs and requirements for the various items given in the *Conan RPG* main rulebook are also provided below in Table 10.

TABLE 10: CREATING MAGIC ITEMS FROM THE CONAN RPG RULEBOOK

Item	SP cost	XP cost	Spells required to be cast during creation	Greater Components
Bane knife of Khostatral Khel	90,050 sp	9,000 xp	Death touch	Magical link to Khostatral Khel
Crystal ball	81,000 sp	8,000 xp	Visions	Unearthly crystal
Crystal ball of speech and vision	91,000 sp, plus 11,000 xp per secondary crystal ball	9,000 xp, plus 1,000 xp per secondary crystal ball	Visions	Unearthly crystal
Silvery mirror	20,010 sp	2,000 xp	Visions	Captured moonlight
Staff of Death	90,000 sp	9,000 xp	Raise dead	Branch from the Tree of Death



APPARATUS OF SET'S DEMONS

This odd-looking framework of black wood resembles a small altar, topped with a cone of smoky grey crystal. It is used to empower *summon demon* spells, when one or more smoke-serpents are summoned. When the spell is cast, each smoke-serpent gains a new attack as follows:

Paralysis: Those hit by a smoke-serpent's grapple attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Manufacturing Costs: 20,000 sp; 2,000 xp.

Greater Component: Crystal Cone

BURNING SKULL OF XUCHOTL

In the shadows beneath the balcony a ghostly light began to glow and grow, a light that was not part of the fire-stone gleam. Valeria felt her hair stir as she watched it; for, dimly visible in the throbbing radiance, there floated a human skull, and it was from this skull – human yet appallingly misshapen – that the spectral light seemed to emanate. It hung there like a disembodied head, conjured out of night and the shadows, growing more and more distinct, and yet not human as she knew humanity.

– *Red Nails*

This dreadful artefact is one of the most feared remaining creations of the original inhabitants of Xuchotl, one of the weird green cities of the Southern Desert (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 329). Like many of the magicks of Xuchotl, it is not especially versatile, but within its specialty it is incredibly powerful.

The *burning skull of Xuchotl* grants a +5 competence bonus to all Intimidate checks.

Furthermore, it automatically attempts to create a spell-like effect similar to a *mass hypnotic suggestion* against all characters within a 90-degree arc and a 30 foot range each round. The arc may be selected by the wearer as a free action each round by pointing the skull. Unlike



a true *mass hypnotic suggestion*, the effect produced by the *burning skull* is based on contact with its eyes, rather than voice. The *mass hypnotic suggestion* will always be to simply stand stock-still in terror. Characters affected are unable to take any actions and are also helpless. They may attempt a Will save (DC 20) to resist the spell-like effect.

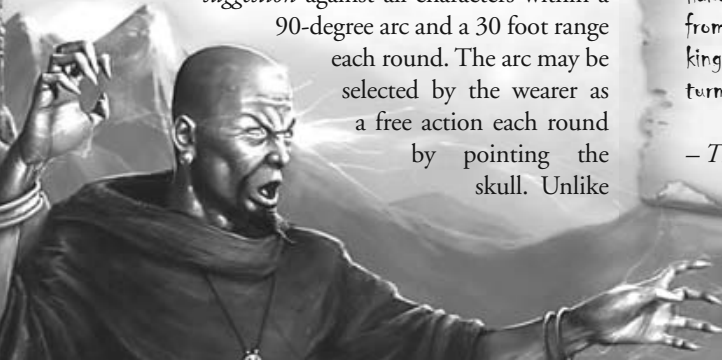
Manufacturing Costs: 412,500 sp; 41,250 xp; caster level 20th.

Greater Components: Skull of a mighty hero, fire from hell.

HEART OF AHRIMAN

'I knew, and I went to meet the Heart which came southward. It was like a magnet which drew me, unerringly. From death to death it came, riding on a river of human blood. Blood feeds it, blood draws it. Its power is greatest when there is blood on the hands that grasp it, when it is wrested by slaughter from its holder. Wherever it gleams, blood is spilt and kingdoms tatter, and the forces of nature are put in turmoil.'

– *The Hour of the Dragon*



The *heart of Ahriman* is an extremely powerful and ancient gem-like artefact, capable of restoring the dead to weird un-life, among many more evil things.

Restoring the dead to 'life' requires an hour-long ritual by at least four ritualists, each of whom makes a Perform (ritual) check at the end of the hour. The lead ritualist must have minimum of 12 ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and beat a DC of 20 on his Perform (ritual) check. The other three ritualists need only beat Perform (ritual) DCs of 15. At the end of the hour, the *heart of Ahriman* is touched to the breast of the corpse and returns him to life as a sorcerous mummy (see page 96). The *heart of Ahriman* can raise an unlimited number of mummies in this way, so long as the ritual is performed for each. The ritual also requires the use of candles and incenses to a total value of 200 sp. These resources are consumed each time the ritual is performed. No Power Points need be expended when the ritual is performed, allowing it to potentially be done by non-sorcerers.

Any sorcerous mummies created by the *heart of Ahriman* are not necessarily under the command of the wielder of the *heart*, though they will probably be well-disposed towards him, at least to begin with.

If any of the Perform (ritual) checks fail, or if the *heart of Ahriman* is left for more than a minute on the breast of any corpse, even without a ritual, the *heart* instead animates the corpse as though with a simple *raise corpse* spell. In this case the corpse will take commands from any living creature speaking a tongue it comprehends, attempting to obey as best as possible. If given conflicting commands, it will obey the bearer of the *heart of Ahriman*, or neither if neither has the *heart*.

Most of the powers of the *heart of Ahriman* are unknown to any living being in this time, though it is whispered that the mummified corpses of the ancient kings of Stygia, were they returned to life by the *heart*, could tell a sorcerer how to unlock its full powers. All its powers are as though cast by a 20th level scholar with a +5 enhancement bonus to his magic attack rolls, for a total magic attack bonus of +15 (base +10, +5 enhancement bonus).

If the *heart of Ahriman* is held in the hand, it can be used to cast a *greater warding* spell up to three times per day, as a free action.

Any who see the *heart of Ahriman* must make Will saving throws (DC 20) or be filled with an almost insane desire to own it. This acts very much like a

hypnotic suggestion. A character who manages to steal it while affected by this spell will desire to hoard it or bury it somewhere away from prying eyes, unless a sorcerer himself. If a sorcerer, his reactions may be either to guard it from other sorcerers, or to learn its full secrets, depending on how whether fear or curiosity win out – this is a roleplaying issue rather than one that must be decided by dice rolls.

The *heart of Ahriman* can also be used to destroy mummies of Ahriman, striking them down with a great lighting-flash. In this case, the wielder must be a sorcerer of 12th level or higher himself, and must be holding the *heart*. As a standard action, he may make a magic attack roll at either the *heart's* total magic attack bonus (+15) or using his own magic attack bonus with the *heart's* +5 enhancement bonus at his choice. The mummy of Ahriman must make a Fortitude save (DC set by the magic attack roll) or instantly be returned to its 'true' state, that of a withered corpse. If desired, it could later be restored to life by the *heart of Ahriman* once more, so long as it remains in reasonable condition.

Usually the *heart* is located in a secret cavern below the main temple to Mitra in Tarantia. This cavern is so far beneath the earth as to make the *heart of Ahriman* undetectable by magical means, though it could still potentially be found by careful investigation of a more mundane nature. Until the reign of Conan, it seems likely that only a handful of Mitraic priests knew of the *heart of Ahriman's* location, though it must also have been written of or spoken of elsewhere for Orastes to discover it just prior to the events of *The Hour of the Dragon*. After Xaltotun was vanquished, it seems likely that the *heart* was returned to its cavern, though by this point its location was known to Conan and several of his closest confidants, including Count Trocero, Pallantides, Prospero, the witch Zelata and the wizard-priest of Asura known as Hadrathus.

Manufacturing Costs: 860,000 sp; 86,000 xp; caster level 20th; spells required *raise corpse*, *entrance*, *greater warding*, *hypnotic suggestion*, *sorcerous news*. The costs indicated would be sufficient to create an item that could duplicate the *heart of Ahriman's* known properties; a sorcerer wishing to duplicate its presently unknown properties would need to both discover all those properties and pay a far higher price in both silver and XP.

Greater Components: At the very least, the heart of a demon, a dozen bottled ghosts, and a veritable ocean of blood.



HEART OF THE ELEPHANT

Conan turned to the gold and ivory altar indicated, and took up a great round jewel, clear as crimson crystal; and he knew that this was the Heart of the Elephant.

— *The Tower of the Elephant*

The *heart of the elephant* is a large transparent gem, closely linked in some mysterious manner to the Yaggite (see page 124 of *Bestiary of the Hyborian Age*) known as Yag-Kosha or Yogah. It stores the knowledge of a number of spells, allowing a sorcerer who is holding it to cast them without knowing them himself, once he has 'attuned' himself to the *heart*.

The attunement process requires a one-day ritual, during which the sorcerer expends some 3,000 silver pieces' worth of incenses and other consumables. At the end of this time he makes a Perform (ritual) check (DC 20) and if successful is regarded as attuned to the *heart*.

The following spells are available to a sorcerer who is attuned to the *heart of the elephant*, so long as he holds it in his hand:

Lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, shrinking doom, astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, visions, entrance, hypnotic suggestion.

The *heart of the elephant* can also be used by a Yaggite to pass on a curse after his own death. The Yaggite must arrange for his own blood to be used to bathe the gem in. He names the target of the curse. That target is affected by a *hypnotic suggestion* to pick up the gem, the instant he next sees it. He may make a Will save as usual to avoid the *hypnotic suggestion*, but the DC is set by the magic attack roll of the now-deceased Yaggite when alive. The named character can be affected by the *hypnotic suggestion* even if he would usually be immune by virtue of his hit dice or some other reason. If he does pick up the gem, he is immediately struck down by the chosen curse, with no saving

throw. If the curse was *shrinking doom*, the named character will be sucked into the *heart of the elephant* itself at the conclusion of the spell, there to remain entrapped forever.

Manufacturing Costs: 297,000 sp; 29,700 xp; caster level 20th; spells required *lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, shrinking doom, astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, visions, entrance, hypnotic suggestion.*

Greater Component: Heart of a Yaggite

HORN OF THE EARTHQUAKE

On the tower appeared a single figure, lifting a ten-foot bronze horn. Its strident bellow roared out across the echoing slopes, like the blare of trumpets on Judgment Day. And it began to be fearfully answered. The ground trembled under the feet of the invaders, and rumblings and grindings welled up from the subterranean depths.

— *The People of the Black Circle*

This horn allows whoever blows on it to cast *summon elemental*, with respect to earth elementals only, even if he does not know the spell or meet its prerequisites. A scholar of 10th level or above casts the spell normally, and so can summon an earth elemental of up to 2 HD in size per scholar level as usual, so long as he pays the requisite PP cost.

A scholar of below 10th level can use the horn only to summon the most minor of elementals, since the least of the 'true' elementals has 20 Hit Dice. These elemental cannot manifest physical forms but can manifest to a state of rock incarnate. They can have a maximum number of Hit Dice equal to the sorcerer who summoned them and cost the usual 2 Power Points per Hit Die.

In any case, the sorcerer using the *horn of the earthquake* must have a minimum of 2 Power Points and a minimum Perform (horn) skill of 4 ranks to gain any benefit from the *horn* other than a loud noise.

Manufacturing Costs: 60,000 sp; 6,000 xp; caster level 20th; spell required *summon elemental.*

Greater Component: A tethered earthquake.





PIPES OF MADNESS

Men were clustered thickly outside the door; grim, dark-faced men with swords gripped in their teeth – and their fingers thrust into their ears. One who wore a feathered headdress had a set of pipes which he set to his lips, and even as the Tecuhltli started to shout a warning, the pipes began to skirl.

The cry died in the guard's throat as the thin, weird piping penetrated the metal door and smote on his ears. Xatmec leaned frozen against the door, as if paralysed in that position. His face was that of a wooden image, his expression one of horrified listening. The other guard, farther removed from the source of the sound, yet sensed the horror of what was taking place, the grisly threat that lay in that demoniac fiffing. He felt the weird strains plucking like unseen fingers at the tissues of his brain, filling him with alien emotions and impulses of madness. But with a soul-tearing effort he broke the spell, and shrieked a warning in a voice he did not recognize as his own.

– Red Nails

All those who hear these pipes go screaming insane, acting more or less randomly. The pipes may be played as a full-round action by any scholar with 10 or more ranks of Perform (pipes).

This spell renders the targets unable to independently determine what they will do. All creatures within 60 feet of the piper must make Will saves (DC 19 for pipes made by an 18th level scholar) or be maddened by the terrible music. Creatures who are unable to hear, either permanently by virtue of their deaf or earless state, or temporarily by stopping up their ears by some means, are unaffected.

Roll on the following table at the beginning of each maddened subject's turn each round to see what the subject does in that round.

A maddened character who cannot carry out the indicated action does nothing but stand staring into the distance, rendered speechless and immobile by cosmic anguish. Maddened characters have a -2 penalty to Defence but otherwise attackers are not at any special advantage when attacking them. Any maddened character who is attacked automatically attacks its attackers on its next turn. Note that a maddened character will not make attacks of opportunity against any creature that it is not already devoted to attacking (either because of its most recent action or because it has just been attacked).

Maddened characters remain maddened for the duration of the piping and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. A character who successfully saved against the effects of *pipes of madness* cannot be affected by the pipes for 24 hours.

Manufacturing Costs: 100,000 sp; 10,000 xp; caster level 18th; spells required *entrance, mass hypnotic suggestion*.
Greater Component: The dreams of a lotus-eater.

D100	Behavior
01–10	Attack piper with melee or ranged weapons (or close with piper if attack is not possible).
11–20	Act normally.
21–50	Do nothing but stand staring into the distance, rendered speechless and immobile by cosmic anguish.
51–70	Flee away from piper at top possible speed.
71–100	Attack nearest creature





POMEGRANATE ALTAR OF THE BLACK CIRCLE

A hundred feet from the door began the broad jade-green steps of a stair that tapered toward the top like the side of a pyramid. What lay beyond that stair he could not tell. But between him and its shimmering foot stood a curious altar of gleaming black jade. Four great golden serpents twined their tails about this altar and reared their wedge-shaped heads in the air, facing the four quarters of the compass like the enchanted guardians of a fabled treasure. But on the altar, between the arching necks, stood only a crystal globe filled with a cloudy smoke-like substance, in which floated four golden pomegranates.

– *The People of the Black Circle*

This great *altar* has one use and one use only, and that is to contain the magical essence of the four lords of the Black Circle (see page 162). It must be constructed as one of the requirements for taking the Master of the Black Circle prestige class (see page 163).

The four serpents act as the magical guardians of the central crystal ball. Each serpent can be treated as a medium viper (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 375). Their type is altered to magical beast, but their other statistics remain unaffected by this change. The serpents themselves are closely linked to the four lords of the Black Circle, and this grants them a degree of magical protection – they may use the Will saving throws of the lords of the Black Circle, rather than their own. The four vipers remain in a statue-like form of pure gold until anyone approaches within 5 feet of the *altar*, at which point they come to life and attack him viciously. If slain, each reverts to its solid gold form, and would be valued at around 350,000 golden lunas each, though each weighs some 70,000 pounds.

The crystal ball at the centre has Defence Value 9 (base 10, -5 Dex, +4 size) and Hardness 8, but only 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points, it shatters instantly, releasing the four magical pomegranates and reducing the four lords of the Black Circle to -1

hit points, wherever they are. A lord of the Black Circle whose pomegranate has been released in this way cannot be healed or restored to health by any means.

There can only be one *pomegranate altar of the Black Circle* in existence at a time. Only if this *altar* is destroyed can another be manufactured.

Manufacturing Costs: 1,400,000 gl + 50,000 sp; 5,000 xp; caster level 12th; spells required *demonic pact*, *summon demon*, *greater demonic pact*. Note that the 1,400,000 gl cost is for crafting the golden vipers, before enchanting them – in effect this is a jewellery cost (see page 66) and so does not increase the XP cost.

Greater Component: Golden pomegranates.

SERPENT RING OF SET

'Ah, here it is!' 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.

– *The Phoenix on the Sword*

For anyone other than a Set-worshipper and powerful sorcerer, this ring appears to grant one power and one power only. This is the power of good luck. Once per day, the ring allows its wearer to re-roll any one die roll he has just made.

The full powers of the *serpent ring of Set* may be accessed only by a worshipper of Set who has a magic attack bonus of +5 or higher, who knows at least three sorcery styles, including Summonings, and knows the *summon demon* spell. These powers are as follows, and are gained in addition to the power of good luck detailed above.

The ring increases the wearer's Power Points by +10 for all purposes while worn. This is an enhancement bonus. Whenever the ring is removed, reduce the wearer's Power Points by -10 immediately, even if this would cause him to be reduced below 0 Power Points.



Rubbing fresh human blood on the serpent's eyes enhances all spells, granting the wearer a +5 enhancement bonus to his magic attack roll for 10 minutes per 1 hit point's worth of blood used. This blood can come from either the wearer or another creature.

The wearer of the *serpent ring of Set* may also summon a specific creature, the slave of the ring (see page 100). He casts *summon demon* as usual, but may now summon the slave of the ring as an option along with whatever other demons are available to him.

These advanced powers come at a dreadful price. It binds more and more of the magician's soul up within it. In game terms, any experience the magician gains while wearing the ring is directly tied to the ring, and will be lost whenever it is not worn. The player should begin keeping separate track of experience points gained while wearing the ring, and any gained when not wearing the ring (including any experience points he had when he first came into possession of the artefact). Note that this only applies to a wearer of the ring who fulfils the requirements to access the advanced powers; a character who uses the ring only to grant him good luck pays no particular penalty.

Manufacturing Costs: 725,000 sp; 72,500 xp; caster level 20th; spells required *demonic pact*, *summon demon*, *greater demonic pact*; must be a worshipper of Set and a member of the Black Ring (see page 155).

Greater Component: Blessing of Set.

STAFF OF SORCERY

This staff comes in a variety of forms, each associated with a sorcery style. The *staff of Death* (Necromancy) has already been detailed in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* (page 274). The following rules apply to the *staff of Warding* (Counterspells), *staff of the Stars* (Cosmic Sorcery), *staff of Blasting* (Curses), *staff of Knowledge* (Divination), *staff of the Eye* (Hypnotism), *staff of Life* (Immortality), *staff of Leaf and Bud* (Nature Magic), *staff of the Rising Sun* (Oriental Magic), *staff of the Magic Hand* (Prestidigitation), *staff of Hell* (Summonings), *staff of the Pyre* (Fire), *staff of the windwalker* (Frost) and the *staff of Serpents* (Serpent).

This magical item resembles a quarterstaff. It can be used as a weapon, in which case it is treated as a quarterstaff but with a +1 enhancement bonus on all attack rolls made with it. In addition, it can be used to deliver spells that have a range of 'touch'. Used in this way, it activates the spell whenever it

strikes an enemy, whether or not its regular melee damage penetrates his armour. Furthermore, each type of staff reduces the Power Point cost of casting spells from the appropriate sorcery style by 1, to a minimum of 1. This applies both to the initial spellcasting cost and to any maintenance cost required by spells with a duration of Power Points.

The staff itself must be cut from the appropriate living Tree (see page 65), and must be crafted individually for the wielder – if stolen or otherwise acquired from the original wielder, it has no effect.

Manufacturing Costs: 90,000 sp; 9,000 xp; caster level 12th; spell required (basic spell from the appropriate style)

Greater Component: Wood from the appropriate tree.

STAR OF KHORALA

'Why did you wish your lover to sleep?' he retorted. 'So you could steal from him the only thing he would never give you – the ring with the jewel men call the Star of Khorala – the star stolen from the Queen of Ophir, who would pay a roomful of gold for its return. He would not give it to you willingly, because he knew that it holds a magic which, when properly controlled, will enslave the hearts of any of the opposite sex. You wished to steal it from him, fearing that his magicians would discover the key to that magic and he would forget you in his conquests of the queens of the world. You would sell it back to the queen of Ophir, who understands its power and would use it to enslave men, as she did before it was stolen.'

– *Shadows in Zamboula*

The *star of Khorala* is a jewelled ring that can be used by a knowledgeable wielder to cast the *entrance*, *domination*, *hypnotic suggestion*, *ranged hypnotism* and *enslave* spells, but only when the target is of the same species as the wielder and the opposite sex. It stores the knowledge of the above spells, allowing a sorcerer who is wearing it to cast them without knowing them himself, once he has 'attuned' himself to the *star*.



The attunement process requires a one-day ritual, during which the sorcerer expends some 4,500 silver pieces' worth of incenses and other consumables. At the end of this time he makes a Perform (ritual) check (DC 20) and if successful is regarded as attuned to the *star of Khorala*.

An attuned character may cast the spells as a though he knew them himself. The *star of Khorala* also provides an enhancement bonus of +12 to the wielder's Power Points, but these additional 12 PP may be used only for casting the spells provided by the *star* itself, and only when targeting a creature of the same species as the wielder and the opposite sex.

Manufacturing Costs: 418,750 sp; 41,875 xp; caster level 20th; spells required *entrance, domination, hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism, enslave*.

Greater Component: Heart of the sorcerer's true love.

STYGIAN GIRDLÉ OF PROTECTION

Conan stared down at the girdle. The hair of which it was woven was not horsehair. He was convinced that it was woven of the thick black tresses of a woman. Set in the thick mesh were tiny jewels such as he had never seen before. The buckle was strangely made, in the form of a golden serpent-head, flat, wedge-shaped and sealed with curious art. A strong shudder shook Conan as he handled it, and he turned as though to cast it over the precipice; then he hesitated, and finally buckled it around his waist, under the *Bakhariot* girdle.

— *The People of the Black Circle*

This powerful magical belt renders the wearer invulnerable to many sorcerous attacks. Its first property is that any spell-like or supernatural effect that has a random variation which is used to select the victim it strikes will never strike him, but will always affect someone else instead. This is always at the Games Master's discretion, but could include such things as *globes of Yezud* being bounced down a hill at the *girdle's* wearer and

always striking someone else, or a creature affected by the *savage beast* spell running right past the *girdle's* wearer to attack one of his allies. An effect or spell which is targeted specifically at the owner will not be blocked by this benefit of the *girdle*.

Furthermore, up to once per round, if touched as a free action, the *Stygian girdle of protection* grants a new saving throw against any spell, spell-like ability or supernatural ability that is affecting the wearer. This new saving throw is made at a +4 resistance bonus. Even a character who is affected by a mind-affecting spell such as one of the Hypnosis spells may touch the *girdle* to attempt a new saving throw – he always has just sufficient instinct to know he is hypnotised, even if, without the *girdle*, he might be unable to do anything about it.

Manufacturing Costs: 160,000 sp; 16,000 xp; caster level 17th; spells required *warding, greater warding*.

Greater Component: Blessing of Derketo

TULWAR OF AMIR KHURUM

Conan lifted his knife and smote, and the watchers were dumbfounded to see his blow checked apparently in midair, with the loud clang of steel that meets an unyielding substance. He wasted no more effort. He knew that not even the legendary tulwar of Amir Khurum could shatter that invisible curtain.

— *The People of the Black Circle*

Amir Khurum was a legendary prince and commander of the Wazuli tribe. He was a highly industrious, honourable and honest (by the standards of the Wazuli) man. Dedicated to his tribe's success above all else, he seemed to have no vices and took pleasure in nothing other than raiding and conquering other tribes. He dedicated his life to this conquest, and always divided up the plunder fairly and even generously with his tribe's warriors.

His *tulwar* is a mighty weapon that according to legend can slice



through any armour. However, it is said that the *tulwar of Amir Khurum* may only be wielded by an honest man. In effect this means that only a character who currently has a Code of Honour (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 77), whether barbaric, civilised or other, may gain any special benefit from wielding the *tulwar of Amir Khurum* in battle. For anyone without a code of honour, this weapon functions simply as an Akbitanan quality tulwar (which is treasure enough in many a nomad's eyes).

For a character with a code of honour, the *tulwar of Amir Khurum* has a +2 enhancement bonus to all attack and damage rolls, and a +6 enhancement bonus to its Armour Piercing score (for a base AP of 11, plus the wielder's Strength bonus). Furthermore, it does a bonus of +1d6 damage whenever used to try to sunder inanimate objects, including weapons and barriers of any kind.

Manufacturing Costs: 130,000 sp; 13,000 xp; caster level 17th; spell required *burst barrier*.

Greater Component: Soul of an honourable man.

WAND OF CRIMSON FIRE

'You sought something hidden!' whispered Tascela, cringing back. 'And you have found it! You remember the feud! After all these years of blackness, you remember!'

For in the lean hand of Tolkemec now waved a curious jade-hued wand, on the end of which glowed a knob of crimson shaped like a pomegranate. She sprang aside as he thrust it out like a spear, and a beam of crimson fire lanced from the pomegranate. It missed Tascela, but the woman holding Valeria's ankles was in the way. It smote between her shoulders. There was a sharp crackling sound and the ray of fire flashed from her bosom and struck the black altar, with a snapping of blue sparks. The woman toppled sidewise, shrivelling and withering like a mummy even as she fell.

— Red Nails

The *wand of crimson fire* is one of the secrets of the sorcerers of Xuchotl, the dread green city on the edge of the Southern Desert. A blast from its beam can lay low even a powerful warrior.

The wielder of the *wand* may blast out one beam from it for each attack he would usually be permitted to make. He may target anyone who is wearing a sizable quantity of metal (anything of 20 pounds or heavier, including armour and weaponry) or who is standing between the *wand* and a sizable quantity of metal, such as a metal pillar, doorway, altar or even another character in 20 pounds of metal armour. The target must make a Reflex save (DC set by the magic attack roll of the *wand's* wielder) or be struck by a beam of crimson fire that inflicts 5d6 fire and 2d6 electrical damage.

The *wand* may be used an unlimited number of times.

Manufacturing Costs: 100,000 sp; 10,000 xp; caster level 20th; spell required *summon elemental*.

Greater Component: Bound fire elemental.





Unusual Items

The following items are not strictly magical, but may be regarded as magical by the ignorant. Some of them are useful either for sorcerers or for those battling sorcerous creatures. All will be difficult to buy, and are likely to be available only in a few communities that specialise in their manufacture. Unusual items are only ever offered for sale at the Games Master's discretion.

APE PIPES OF KHITAI

'He brought me from the lost jungles of Khitai where the grey apes danced to the pipes of the yellow priests, and offerings of fruit and wine heaped my broken altars.'

– *The Tower of the Elephant*

Khitai sorcerers have masterwork pipes that can control grey apes. These grant a +1 circumstance bonus to all Perform (pipes) checks, a +1 circumstance bonus to all Handle Animal checks targeting grey apes, and a +1 circumstance bonus to magic attack rolls targeting apes of any kind. These bonuses replace the usual +2 circumstance bonus to Perform checks given by most masterwork instruments.

In effect, musical instruments of this kind are little different to any other masterwork musical instruments, except they are pitched specifically to assist with calming and controlling the chosen creature – in this case, grey and other apes. It is likely that similar masterwork musical instruments are used to control other types of creature, at the Games Master's discretion. In each case, the instruments will only be useful to control perhaps two to four specifically named and related creatures, such as a flute that controls dogs and wolves.

Cost: 108 sp. This is for the grey pipes specifically, though similar masterwork instruments could provide a similar benefit at a slightly different price.

BLACK CANDLE OF SET

Thin, greasy plumes of smoke rise from the burning of these black candles. The tallow of these candles is rendered from the body of a virgin strangled with her mother's hair and made woman after death by her father. Each candle burning while casting a spell within 10 feet of it gives the caster a +1 circumstance bonus to his magic attack roll. The use of these candles puts a sorcerer in danger of Corruption (the item has a magic attack bonus of +2 per candle for determining the save DC). Burning more than two candles at once has a tendency to upset the magical balance of a given area and causes any spell cast to be considered a Mighty spell if it is not already for determining runaway magic results.

Cost: 10,000 silver pieces per candle, which should cover the cost to secure a virgin from a kidnapper, as well as the father and mother, plus the cost to compel the father to defile his daughter's body, plus the cost of rendering down the body.

EBON STAFF OF SET

The leader carried an ebon staff which supported a grinning white skull, and Conan knew it was one of the ritualistic processions so inexplicable to a foreigner, but which played a strong – and often sinister – part in the Stygian religion.

– *The Hour of the Dragon*

This is a masterwork black wooden staff, topped with a white human skull. It is typical of the accoutrements wielded by priests of various religions during their ceremonies, as well as by masters of sorcerous covens and societies when leading their acolytes in ritual.

The *ebon staff of Set* and similar items grant a circumstance bonus of +2 to all Perform (ritual) checks.

Cost: 50 sp (minimum, for a plain but masterwork staff or similar item; a bejewelled or gold-chased item could be worth far more)

GREEN FIRE-STONES

The vaulted ceiling was of lapis lazuli, adorned with clusters of great green stones, that gleamed with a poisonous radiance.

'Green fire-stones,' growled Conan. 'That's what the people of Punt call them. They're supposed to be the petrified eyes of those prehistoric snakes the ancients called Golden Serpents. They glow like a cat's eyes in the dark. At night this hall would be lighted by them, but it would be a hellishly weird illumination.'

— *Red Nails*

These large green stones are found in the jungles of Punt and elsewhere on the continent of Kush. A green fire-stone gives off a weird, unnerving glow, clearly illuminating a 10-foot radius area and casting flickering shadows over a wider area. A cluster of three fire-stones will clearly illuminate a 20-foot radius area and create shadowy illumination within a further 40 feet (rather than 20 feet as for normal light sources).

Due to their weight (5 pounds each) green fire-stones are rarely used as portable illumination, but would be good for permanently lighting the interior of a building if they were not so odd. As it is, they are likely to be used only by sorcerers, scholars, and those of a similarly twisted demeanour. Anyone who does not have Corruption 1+ will feel distinctly unnerved when in an area lit by one or more green fire-stones. If he lives in such an area for a week or more, he must make a Corruption save (DC 15) or gain 1 point of Corruption. Characters who already have at least 1 point of Corruption are unaffected, and may even rather enjoy the glow.

Cost: 150 sp. A character searching for green fire-stones in the appropriate place (warm jungles anywhere in the continent of Kush) may make a Search check once per week, with a +2 circumstance bonus if in Punt. A

check result of 25 or higher means he has found a green fire-stone, with an additional fire-stone found for each additional 5 points he made the roll by.

MEMORY PALACE

A memory palace is a room decorated with carvings and mementoes in such a way as to inspire and remind the sorcerer. It is a series of mnemonics in ivory and wood, guiding the sorcerer's thoughts and memories to enable him to recall secrets of sorcery. For example, a particular panel in a room might be decorated with concentric circles and painted in different colours, symbolising the orbits of the planets and the horoscopes they influence. If a sorcerer is in a memory palace room that he constructed, he gets a +4 bonus to all Knowledge checks.

Cost: 50,000 sp. *Requirements:* Concentration 4 ranks.

SILVER WEAPONS

Near the Cimmerian stood a massive silver bench, ornately carved, once part of the splendor of Korzetta castle. Conan grasped it, heaving it high above his head.

'Silver and fire!' he roared in a voice like a clap of wind, and hurled the great bench with all the power of his iron muscles. Full on the great black breast it crashed, a hundred pounds of silver winged with terrific velocity. Not even the black one could stand before such a missile. He was carried off his feet — hurtled backward headlong into the open fireplace which was a roaring mouth of flame. A horrible scream shook the hall, the cry of an unearthly thing gripped suddenly by earthly death.

— *The Black Stranger*

At great expense, a weapon can be made of solid silver so that it bypasses the damage reduction of creatures such as demons. This is done only rarely — far more commonly a character must improvise a weapon from a silver bench or similar item.

This is only practical for bludgeoning or piercing weapons. A silver slashing weapon cannot function, as it



cannot hold an edge. A silver piercing weapon can just barely work, as it need not be quite so razor-sharp as a slashing weapon. Even then, it is not so efficient as the usual iron equivalent – on a successful attack with a silver piercing weapon, the wielder takes a -1 penalty on the damage roll (with the usual minimum of 1 point of damage). Silver bludgeoning weapons have no penalty.

Silver weapons have -1 Hardness and -1 hit points (minimum 1 in both cases) in comparison to their

normal equivalents. They cost an additional 50 sp per lb of weight.

Table 11: Silver Weapons gives game statistics for typical silver weapons, including the kind of improvised silver weapon that might be found in the houses of the rich. Note that the improvised weapons generally cost rather more by weight than 50 sp per pound; this reflects the typically increased cost of such finely made goods as intricately carved silver goblets.

TABLE 11: SILVER WEAPONS

Simple Weapons									
Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Armour Piercing	Range Increment	Hardness	Hit Points	Weight	Type
Unarmed Attacks									
Gauntlet*	55 sp*	1d6	X2	1	-	9	1	1 lb	Bludgeoning
Light Melee Weapons									
Dagger*	53 sp	1d4-1	19-20/x2	1**	10 ft.	9	1	1 lb	Piercing
Stiletto*	27 sp	1d4-1	X4	1	-	7	1	½ lb	Piercing
One-Handed Melee Weapons									
Mace, Heavy	203 sp	1d10	X2	4	-	6	4	4 lb	Bludgeoning
Mace, Light	127 sp	1d8	X2	2	-	6	2	2½ lb	Bludgeoning
Ranged Weapons									
Arrow (for hunting bow) (1)	16 sp	(-1)	-	-	-	4	1	3/10 lb	-



Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Armour Piercing	Range Increment	Hardness	Hit Points	Weight	Type
Martial Weapons									
Light Melee Weapons									
Pommel*	+50 sp	1d4	X2	1	-	*	*	*	Bludgeoning
Poniard*	60 sp	1d6-1	19-20/x2	1**	5 ft.	9	1	1 lb	Piercing
Sword, Short*	125 sp	1d8-1	19-20/x2	1	-	9	2	1½ lb	Piercing
One-Handed Melee Weapons									
Sword, Arming	200 sp	1d10-1	19-20/x2	2	-	10	4	2 lb	Piercing
Ranged Weapons**									
Arbalest Bolt (1)	11 sp	(-1)	-	-	-	4	1	1/5 lb	-
Arrow (any bow) (1)	16 sp	(-1)	-	-	-	4	1	3/10 lb	-
Crossbow Bolt (1)	6 sp	(-1)	-	-	-	4	1	1/10 lb	-
Sling Bullet (1)	26 sp	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/2 lb	-

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Armour Piercing	Range Increment	Hardness	Hit Points	Weight	Type
Improvised Weapons									
Light Melee Weapons									
Cup or Goblet**	30 sp	1d4	X2	-	10 ft.	6	1	½ lb	Bludgeoning
Flagon or Tankard**	60 sp	1d6	X2	-	10 ft.	6	1	1 lb	Bludgeoning
One-Handed Melee Weapons									
Sceptre	700 sp	1d8	X2	1	-	6	2	3 lb	Bludgeoning
Vase**	300 sp	1d8	X2	-	5 ft.	6	1	2 lb	Bludgeoning
Two-Handed Melee Weapons									
Bench**	6,000 sp	2d6	X2	8	5 ft.	6	40	100 lb	Bludgeoning
Chair**	2,000 sp	2d4	X2	3	5 ft.	6	20	30 lb	

* See the weapon description for special rules.

** The Armour Piercing score for all ranged weapons is reduced by 1 for each range increment beyond the first.

* Finesse weapon.



SORCEROUS AND RITUAL PARAPHERNALIA

The long tapers flickered, sending the black shadows wavering along the walls, and the velvet tapestries rippled. Yet there was no wind in the chamber. Four men stood about the ebony table on which lay the green sarcophagus that gleamed like carved jade. In the upraised right hand of each man a curious black candle burned with a weird greenish light.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

At various times, the *Conan RPG* and this volume refer to magical paraphernalia of an indeterminate sort, such as incenses, oils, and candles. Usually such paraphernalia is consumed as part of the material component for a spell, or is used during a ritual.

In most cases, there is no particular need for either the player or Games Master to worry about precisely what is in a character's collection of magical paraphernalia. So long as the total value is recorded, and reduced each time it is used up, there is no need to list specific types of candle or incense. Most sorcerers are able to adapt almost any paraphernalia to specific purposes in any case.

Sorcerous paraphernalia can be made with the Craft (alchemy) or Craft (herbalism) skills. Typically, sorcerous paraphernalia costing 100 sp weighs around 1 pound.

Examples of such paraphernalia can be found on page 188.

DRUGS AND HERBAL PREPARATIONS

LOVE POTION

The love potion is used to secure a person's love for the next reasonably attractive (Cha 13+, within 20 years either way of the target's age) adult human of the opposite sex he or she sees. Usually the character who administers the potion will ensure this is him or herself, though this is not necessary for the potion to work.

A character who drinks a love potion must attempt a Will saving throw (DC = 10 + ½ character level of the person he may fall in love with + Charisma bonus of said person) or begin to have immediate feelings of love for the person. Success indicates he shakes off the effect completely.

These feelings closely duplicate the early stages of being deeply in love, giving the victim an almost physical need to be with the person. If he was already at least a little in love with her at one time, this love will be strengthened and revived; if not, it will be awakened as a completely new emotion. In either case the victim will probably be at least a little surprised himself, but will rationalise his feelings in the way all new lovers do.

The effects typically last at least a week, with a new saving throw possible after each full week. However, the victim does not usually recognise that he has been ensorcelled, even after that time, and may still believe his original feelings of love to have been genuine. By this time, too, those feelings may have blossomed into something more. Once he has thrown off the initial effects of the potion, the victim may make a Sense Motive check opposed to *his own* Bluff check. If he succeeds, he realises that something was not quite right about his love. If he fails, he will still probably feel strongly for the person, though it is always possible they will fall out of love for whatever reason after this point.

Cost: 1,500 sp.

MANDRAKE ROOT

The mandrake root is a relative of the belladonna plant, and is quite poisonous. It is shaped roughly like a man, and this symbolic correspondence makes mandrake very useful to sorcerers. A preparation of the mandrake root increases the power of spells that use a magical link, increasing the DC of saving throws against them by +2.

When the mandrake is dragged out of the ground, it is said to scream in a killing voice. Animals and sorcerers can hear the root's screams, and must make a Will save (DC 15) or suffer 2d6 points of damage.

Cost: 200 sp.

POTION OF MADNESS

This is made to a similar recipe as black lotus wine (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 275), except that it also contains grey lotus extracts and the form is far more concentrated. The effect produced is intended to send the drinker permanently screaming insane, rather than simply making him pleasantly drunk. A potion of madness comes in a small phial holding only a fluid ounce or so, which can then be added to another drink or foodstuff. It is very difficult to detect (Craft (herbalism) check, DC 23, to detect) when added to food or drink in this way.

A character reduced to 0 Int or Wis by this poison is permanently insane.

Cost: 1,500 sp.

PURPLE LOTUS WINE

The purple lotus mentioned in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* also grows around the shores of Lake Zuad, in southern Stygia, on the border with Kush. Certain Tlazitlan sorcerers brew a wine with its flowers, rather than extracting the juice to smear on their blades. This wine provides much the same effects as the juice, but acts as an ingested rather than injury poison. It also has the advantage that it looks and tastes much like any other good quality red wine (Craft (herbalism) check, DC 25, to realise it has been added to a liquid before drinking a full dose).

Cost: 1,750 sp.



PURGATIVE POTION

This vile-tasting potion makes anyone who drinks it retch out their guts. If the full draught is drunk, then the imbiber must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). If the character fails, he is nauseated for 3d20 minutes; if he succeeds, he is only nauseated for 1d6 minutes. Either way, there is copious vomiting. The advantage of the potion's effect is that it gives a +8 circumstance bonus to saving throws against ingested poisons.

Costs: 250 sp.

UPAS-TREE JUICE

The upas-tree grows throughout the northern Hyborian kingdoms from Aquilonia to Nemedias and Brythunia. Its sap is a dangerous poison which is particularly deadly to serpents and other servants of Set. All such creatures have a -4 circumstance penalty to their saving throws against the juice of the upas-tree, and all priests of Set have a -2 circumstance penalty to their own saves.

Furthermore, the juice has a powerful side-effect against sorcerers of any kind. Each point of Constitution damage it deals to a sorcerer also reduces his current Power Points by 1. There is no additional saving throw against this.

Cost: 1,200 sp





UPAS-TREE OIL

It is possible, though difficult, to concentrate the sap of the upas-tree into a viscous oil which can be smeared upon weapons. Upas-tree oil has exactly the same properties as upas-tree juice (see above) except as indicated in the Poisons table.

Cost: 1,000 sp.

RED LOTUS

Master Tito gave that dreamy, glass floored bay a wide berth, even when a serpent-prowed gondola shot from behind a castellated point of land, and naked dusky women, with great red blossoms in their hair, stood and called to his sailors, and posed and postured brazenly.

– *Queen of the Black Coast*

Red Lotus Blossoms

The temple harlots of Idris wear only red lotus blossoms in their hair. This has the effect of rendering men and women stupefied. Any one other than Idris' temple harlots, who have a limited immunity, who smells the blossom's perfume at close range (within 10 feet) must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) or be unable to take any non-sexual actions. Anyone under the influence of Red Lotus is considered entranced (as per the *entrance* spell) for the purposes of other spells.

Cost: 1,100 sp per dose.

Red Lotus Residue

The temple harlots keep red lotus residue under their long, sharp fingernails to dig into the men and women who kiss them. If a harlot inflicts at least 4 hit points of damage with her unarmed strike, a character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or be unable to take any non-sexual actions. Anyone under the influence of red lotus is considered entranced for the purposes of other spells.

Cost: 1,500 sp per dose.

SPACE MEAD

This strange brew of unearthly herbs and strong liquor protects the imbiber from the cold vacuum of interplanetary or interstellar space. Sorcerers wishing to travel physically beyond this world must procure a recipe for Space Mead, or they will freeze to death long before they are devoured by the demons of the Outer Darkness.

Cost: 2,000 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 12 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks.

SLEEPING DRAUGHT

This liquid is almost completely tasteless and odourless (Craft (herbalism) check, DC 30, to realise it has been added to a liquid before drinking a full dose), as well as being extremely potent. It is commonly kept on hand by those in a position of authority who may need to deal with inconvenient guards when planning a jailbreak or robbery from their own people. A sleeping draught is made from a weakened extract of various lotus plants and related herbs.

Cost: 650 sp.

VIOLET CUREALL

This is a potion that rapidly cures wounds. It is made from certain specific herbs of Kush and the legendary Misty Isles. Though not so quick or effective as the Golden Wine of Xuthal, it is much more readily available and easy to brew for an accomplished sorcerer.

A single dose of this smoky violet potion restores 1d4 + (1/2 x Character Level, rounded down) hit points to any wounded character at a rate of 1 hit point per round each round after drinking it. However, a character can benefit from only one dose per day.

Cost: 300 sp/dose. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 8 ranks.

WATER OF ZARKHEBA

The waters of the Zarkheba river are a deadly poison. Furthermore, in addition to the Constitution damage inflicted by drinking the water, the water causes Corruption – the drinker is filled with unnatural, evil thoughts, tempting him to turn from goodness. Any creature drinking the waters of Zarkheba and who must fail a Fortitude save against the poison must also make a Corruption save (DC 25, as for the Fortitude save; all the



usual Corruption bonuses and penalties apply) or gain 1 point of Corruption.

The waters are extremely foul-tasting, and so are rarely used to poison someone secretly, since the victim will not down a full dose voluntarily. However, some groups or individuals may slay an enemy by simply throwing him in the river, or collect a dose and force-feed it to a particularly hated individual. The death it causes is swift but agonising.

Waters of the Zarkheba do not retain their potency for long when removed from that dread channel, indicating that some spell or curse may be partially responsible for the poison. Removing the water from the river immediately reduces the initial damage to 1d4 Con and removes the Corruption effect. Furthermore, each day after it was drawn from the river, the Zarkheba river water's potency (save DC) is reduced by 1. For this reason the water has no especial resale value as a poison – the buyer can never be certain as to how potent the water will be by the time it reaches him.

WOUNDWORT

A variety of healing herbs can be found in every forest and even in locations such as deserts, if the herbalist knows where to look. These are known by a variety of different names depending on the precise herb and the local language, but many translate as woundwort, woundwood, hurts'-ease or something similar, giving a clear indication of their use. Some alchemists refer to it as xerion, 'wound-powder', or an elixir.

A herbalist who gathers or otherwise acquires the appropriate herbs can turn them into a salve with which to enhance his healing skills, so long as he also possesses a healer's kit and herbalist's kit and at least five levels in each of the Heal and Craft (herbalist) skills. Anyone to whom he successfully grants short-term care while using a dose of the herbal salve regains an additional +1d4 hit points.

Cost: 50 sp.

YELLOW LOTUS BLOSSOM

Closely related to the yellow lotus of Kush which provides yellow lotus resin (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 277), the yellow lotus of Khitai has a far stronger effect. Its blossom can make an enemy insensible for several hours, though if he breathes in too much it may kill him.

Cost: 1,250 sp/dose.

WHITE LOTUS

After his arrest and imprisonment at the capital, the world had changed; scatterings of white lotus dust east into his face by his warders had temporarily blinded and paralyzed him. His captivity after that had become a hazy, drug-slaked stupor.

– *Conan the Savage*

White Lotus Powder

This powder, made from the rare white lotus, paralyzes when breathed in and blinds if it gets in the eyes. When thrown, it creates a cloud around a person. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 27) or suffer 3d6 Dexterity damage plus paralysis and blindness. The paralysis and blindness last for 1d4+2 hours.

Cost: 1,000 sp per dose.

White Lotus Pollen

The pollen from the white lotus is a counter-reagent to black lotus, negating its effects, regardless of the actual type of black lotus instantly. It has no effect on any other form of lotus.

Cost: 800 sp per dose.



TABLE 12: POISONS

Poison	Type	Damage	Saving Throws	Interval	Price
Potion of Madness	Ingested DC 23	1d6 Wis + 1d6 In + Hallucinations (see description)	3	1 minute	1,500 sp
Purple Lotus Wine	Ingested DC 28	1d6 Dex + Paralysis	1d6	1 round	1,750 sp
Upas-Tree Juice	Ingested DC 22	1d3 Con (and Power Points)	4	1 round	1,200 sp
Upas-Tree Oil	Injury DC 20	1d3 Con (and Power Points)	4	1 round	1,000 sp
Red Lotus Blossom	Inhaled DC 25 (Will)	Uncontrollable Lust	1	Instant	1,100 sp
Red Lotus Juice	Injury DC 20	Uncontrollable Lust	1	Instant	1,500 sp
Sleeping Draught	Ingested DC 17	Unconsciousness for 1d3 hours	4	After each period of sleep	650 sp
Water of Zarkheba	Ingested DC 25	2d6 Con	1	1 minute	-
Yellow Lotus	Inhaled DC 21	Unconsciousness for 1d6 hours, 1d4 Con	4	After each period of sleep	1,250 sp
White Lotus Powder	Inhaled DC 27	3d6 Dexterity, paralysis, blindness	1	Instant	1,000 sp

TABLE 13: CRAFT (HERBALISM) AND CRAFT (ALCHEMY) DCs FOR MANUFACTURE (ADDITIONAL)

Item	Craft Skill	Craft DC
Blue Devil's-Flame, Rope of Dead-Women's Hair, Mild or Potent Acid	Alchemy	15
Hellfire Puffball, Radium Gem, Violet Cureall, Dust of Forgetfulness, Globe of the Amber Serpent, Smoke Powder	Alchemy	20
Globe of Yezud, Potion of Hibernation, Potion of Strength	Alchemy	25
Potion of Madness, Woundwort, Mandrake Root, Purgative Potion	Herbalism	15
Upas Tree Juice, Sleeping Draught, Love Potion, White Lotus Pollen	Herbalism	20
Purple Lotus Wine, Upas Tree Oil	Herbalism	25
White Lotus Dust	Herbalism	30



TABLE 14: GATHERING HERBS (ADDITIONAL)

Plant	DC to gather (by location)
Mandrake Root	20 (forests of northern Aquilonia, Nemedra and Brythunia)
Love Potion Ingredients	25 (steppes to the east of Zamboula)
Potion of Madness Ingredients	20 (plains of northern Vendhya)
Purple Lotus	25 (ghost-haunted swamps of southern Stygia, as for Purple Lotus Juice in <i>Conan RPG</i>)
Upas-Tree	20 (forests of northern Aquilonia, Nemedra and Brythunia)
Red Lotus	25 (temple gardens of the south)
Sleeping Draught Ingredients	25 (any jungle or swamp where any type of lotus grows)
Water of Zarkheba	- (Zarkheba River only)
Woundwort	25 (anywhere), 20 (warm or temperate forest)
Yellow Lotus Blossom	25 (bamboo jungles of Khitai)
White Lotus	30 (secret temples of Khitai)

ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

The following additional alchemical items are available to scholars, as well as those given in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. As usual an asterisk (*) indicates that the item can be used in conjunction with the *telekinesis* and *greater telekinesis* spells.

ACID*

There is a great variety of acids in use in alchemy. Most are relatively harmless, but some are caustic enough to cause damage instantly. A rare few are so deadly that they devour flesh and metal with alarming ease.

Acid inflicts damage each round until it is wiped or washed away, or counter-acted with another chemical.

Mild acid – 25 sp/vial, deals 1 damage per round.

Requires: Craft (alchemy) 1 rank

Powerful acid – 150 sp/vial, deals 1d4 damage per round.

Requires: Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks

Lethal acid – 500 sp/vial, deals 1d8 damage per round.

Requires: Craft (alchemy) 8 ranks.

BLUE DEVIL'S-FLAME*

He started violently and the chanting broke off as the kneeling blacks flung up their heads. An inhuman voice boomed out high above them. They froze on their knees, their faces turned upward with a ghastly blue hue in the sudden glare of a weird light that burst blindingly up near the lofty roof and then burned with a throbbing glow. That glare lighted a gallery and a cry went up from the high priest, echoed shudderingly by his acolytes. In the flash there had been briefly disclosed to them a slim white figure standing upright in a sheen of silk and a glint of jewel-crusted gold. Then the blaze smoldered to a throbbing, pulsing luminosity in which nothing was distinct, and that slim shape was but a shimmering blue of ivory.

– *Jewels of Gwahlur*

This is an old Stygian trick used both by the priests of that cursed land to cow their followers with supposed displays of supernatural power, and by sorcerers everywhere to blind and daze their enemies, taking advantage of the opportunity to either slay them or to get a chance at a quick getaway. In either case it has a range increment of 10 feet if thrown.

In the former mode, the *blue devil's flame* is dispersed so as to impress onlookers, but without being quite so bright as to actively dazzle them. The sorcerer adds a +2 circumstance bonus to any attempts to influence the onlookers by such means as Intimidate, Bluff and Diplomacy checks. This applies only to onlookers of 4 HD and below.

In the latter mode, the *blue devil's flame* bursts into light. This causes all creatures within 10 feet of the burst to be dazed for one round (unable to take any actions) and dazzled for 1 minute thereafter (-1 penalty to attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks). A creature that makes a successful Fortitude save (DC 20) is unaffected by the dazing, and the duration of his bedazzlement is reduced to 1 round. Sightless creatures, as well as creatures already dazed or dazzled, are not affected by *blue devil's flame*.

Cost: 300 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks.



DISTILLATE OF BLACK LOTUS

'I broke a glass ball upon your breast. The ball was filled with a weak distillate of the Black Lotus. The fumes produce unconsciousness but do no lasting harm. You will feel dizzy and ill for a time, though.'

— *Conan and the Emerald Lotus*

Created by the priests of Keshan, these are glass balls containing a weak distillate of Black Lotus. When the ball is broken, fumes are released, rendering any who breathe them unconscious. It can be thrown with a range increment of 5 feet. Its cloud of fumes has a volume of 3,375 cubic feet (15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet). The fumes dissipate after 2d4 minutes in still, contained air or 2d6 rounds outdoors in still air. Wind dissipates the fumes faster. Those breathing the fumes must make a

Fortitude save (DC 21) or fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Its secondary effect is dizziness and sickness, resulting in 1d4 Con damage.

Cost: Black Lotus, 1,875 sp. *Raw Materials:* ½ dose of black lotus. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 8 ranks.

DUST OF FORGETFULNESS

This powder is thrown or blown into an enemy's face. The range of the powder is only 5 feet. Launching it into the target's face is a standard action on the part of the thrower; the target cannot avoid it unless he has stated that he is holding his breath. He must make a Will saving throw (DC 20) or forget all that has occurred within the last 1d4+1 hours. This knowledge will gradually begin to return to him over the course of several weeks, so that by the end of a month he will recall everything he had forgotten once more.

Cost: 500 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks.



GLOBE OF YEZUD

'I bade you got to the watchers!' the chief bellowed. 'You have not had time to come back from them.'

The other did not reply; he stood woodenly, staring vacantly into the chief's face, his palm outstretched holding the jade ball. Conan, looking over Yar Afzal's shoulder, murmured something and reached to touch the chief's arm, but as he did so, Yar Afzal, in a paroxysm of anger, struck the man with his clenched fist and felled him like an ox. As he fell, the jade sphere rolled to Yar Afzal's foot, and the chief, seeming to see it for the first time, bent and picked it up. The men, staring perplexedly at their senseless comrade, saw their chief bend, but they did not see what he picked up from the ground.

Yar Afzal straightened, glanced at the jade, and made a motion to thrust it into his girdle.

'Carry that fool to his hut,' he growled. 'He has the look of a lotus-eater. He returned me a blank stare. I - aiel!'

In his right hand, moving towards his girdle, he had suddenly felt movement where movement should not be. His voice died away as he stood and glared at nothing; and inside his clenched right hand he felt the quivering of change, of motion, of life. He dared not look; his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not open his hand. His astonished warriors saw Yar Afzal's eyes distend, the color ebb from his face. Then suddenly as if struck by lightning he fell, his right arm tossed out in front of him. Face down he lay, and from between his opening fingers crawled a spider - a hideous, black, hairy-legged monster whose body shone like black jade. The men yelled and gave back suddenly, and the creature scuttled into a crevice of the rocks and disappeared.

- *The People of the Black Circle*

The *globe of Yezud* entraps a highly venomous spider, of no more than around two inches across in size, within a ball of black, shiny, polished jade.

This *globe* is activated just before use with a quick ritual requiring one round and a Perform (ritual) check (DC 15). During this ritual, the sorcerer using the *globe of Yezud* names the target of the *globe*. The sorcerer using the *globe of Yezud* need not be the same sorcerer who created it, but he must be a sorcerer (that is, any character with Power Points). The target can be anyone known by name to the sorcerer using the *globe*.

From that point onwards, the *globe* will be completely inert until it touches the flesh of the named creature for at least one round. At that point it will transform back into the spider for one final time, and immediately bite the creature, hitting automatically. This bite is so minor it does not deal any damage, but it is sufficient to subject the target to the spider venom. The venom has a Fortitude saving throw of DC 20, deals 1d10 Constitution damage as its initial damage, and has three saving throws at intervals of one round.

Once a *globe of Yezud* has been activated by naming a target, its target may not be altered by any means.

Cost: 2,000 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, priest of Zath (must have the Priest feat and worship Zath, and be in good standing with the main cult of Zath in Yezud - see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

GLOBE OF THE AMBER SERPENT

The *globe of the amber serpent* is a lesser form of the *globe of Yezud*, used by priests of Set. It contains a tiny coral snake instead of a spider, and does not need to be ritually prepared. The snake is held in suspended animation until the globe is broken, whereupon it slithers out and attacks anyone around it. Use the Tiny Viper statistics from *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 375. The snake does not hit automatically, but it gets a +4 circumstance bonus to its initial attack.

Cost: 500 SP. *Requirements:* None, but if the user does not have the Loathsome Weapons feat, then any globes that he carries break if he fails a Reflex save or suffers a critical hit.



HELLFIRE PUFFBALL

They all saw it – a white puffball of smoke that tumbled over the tower-rim and came drifting and rolling down the slope toward them. Others followed it. They seemed harmless, mere woolly globes of cloudy foam, but Conan stepped aside to avoid contact with the first. Behind him one of the Irakzai reached out and thrust his sword into the unstable mass. Instantly a sharp report shook the mountainside. There was a burst of blinding flame, and then the puffball had vanished, and the too-curious warrior remained only a heap of charred and blackened bones. The crisped hand still gripped the ivory sword-hilt, but the blade was gone – melted and destroyed by that awful heat. Yet men standing almost within reach of the victim had not suffered except to be dazzled and half blinded by the sudden flare.

‘Steel touches it off,’ grunted Conan. ‘Look out – here they come!’

– *The People of the Black Circle*



(DC 15) or be dazed for one round (unable to take any actions) and dazzled for 1 minute thereafter (-1 penalty to attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks). A creature that succeeds in its Fortitude save is unaffected by the dazing, and the duration of his bedazzlement is reduced to 1 round. Sightless creatures, as well as creatures already dazed or dazzled, are not affected by *blue devil's flame*.

Hellfire puffballs are dreadful bombs, giving off extreme heat and flames in a very localised area. They also tend to dazzle those nearby. A *hellfire puffball* will only be set off by the touch of steel or iron, but any steel or iron will do.

Each *puffball* covers one 5-foot square completely to a height of five feet, and will roll drift and roll downhill at a speed of 30 feet (6 squares) per round. Any time it passes through a square containing any iron or steel, or any time some iron or steel contacts it, it will instantly explode, affecting all creatures within the 15 feet by 15 feet area centred on the *puffball's* position at the time.

Affected creatures are dealt 10d6 fire damage, with a Reflex save (DC 20 if in one of the outer 5-foot squares, or DC 30 if in the central 5-square with the puffball itself) for half damage.

Furthermore, any creature within 30 feet of the *puffball* when it explodes, and looking in the direction of the *puffball*, must make a Fortitude save

The only drawback with the *puffballs* from a sorcerer's point of view is their rather nebulous nature. It is not possible to guide them in any way once they are released – even a Prestidigitation spell or minor gust of wind will disperse a puffball rather than guide it. Each *puffball* simply rolls downhill, continuing in the same direction it was initially pushed in, unless some other factor alters things such as terrain (*puffballs* always take the downhill route where possible). If sufficient numbers of *puffballs* are rolled simultaneously, they will tend to form a great mass, with the individual *puffballs* bouncing off one another to some extent but generally covering a large area between them.

Hellfire puffballs are rather bulky, with each one being typically confined in a large sack. Though this sack seems to weigh almost nothing, it will be very unwieldy, and carrying more than one or two *hellfire puffballs* is difficult. For this reason these devices are most commonly used in defensive sieges, so that the sacks can be stored ahead of time in great arsenals away from anything iron, then each sack simply upended over the walls so as to roll downhill straight into the attacking army. No army worthy of the name ever lacks iron and steel in its arms and armour.

Note that once characters realise that it is ferrous metals that set off the *puffballs*, a number of strategies present themselves for dealing safely with them. The easiest is perhaps that used by Conan in *The People of the Black Circle*, where his forces simply shoot the *puffballs* with arrows. The puffballs should be classed as Defence Value 10 if in motion, with range modifiers applying as usual. Any hit with a steel-tipped arrow will set the *puffball* off, though there is never any 'chain reaction' effect – each *puffball* must be set off individually.

Cost: 2,500 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks.

POTION OF HIBERNATION

They had stormed over Kuthchemes like a tidal wave, washing the marble towers in blood, and the northern Stygian kingdom had gone down in fire and ruin.

But while they were shattering the streets of his city and cutting down his archers like ripe corn, Thugra Khutan had swallowed a strange terrible poison, and his masked priests had locked him into the tomb he himself had prepared. His devotees died about the tomb in a crimson holocaust, but the barbarians could not burst the door, nor ever mar the structure by maul or fire. So they rode away, leaving the great city in ruins, and in his ivory-domed sepulchre great Thugra Khutan slept unmolested, while the lizards of desolation gnawed at the crumbling pillars, and the very river that watered his land in old times sank into the sands and ran dry.

– *Black Colossus*

This potion puts the drinker to sleep, a total, deathlike sleep in which he does not age. He may sleep for up to 1,000 years, plus 1,000 years per point of Wisdom bonus (if any). However, he will find himself physically drained by this process, so that he is dealt 1 hit point damage for each 100 years of sleep. This can, if he sleeps for long enough, kill him.

As he drifts off to sleep, the drinker makes a Will saving throw (DC 20). If successful, he may mentally set himself a condition which will cause him to awaken. This may either be a specific span of years (though this method is somewhat inaccurate, and will only work to within +/- 10% accuracy) or a different condition such as 'when anyone enters the chamber wherein I sleep' or 'when my sleeping body is touched.' He will awaken when the conditions are fulfilled.

If he fails his Will saving throw, he will remain asleep indefinitely. There may be ways of waking him, usually by magic, but these should be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Games Master.

Cost: 1,850 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks, 1 dose of black lotus juice (included in price), must know at least two spells from the Immortality sorcery style.

POTION OF STRENGTH

This potion, brewed from the hot blood of a bull and certain rare herbs and roots including the Red Lotus, can temporarily increase a man's strength, making him a titanic force in combat. However, the user risks boiling his internal organs if he uses the potion for too long. Those who use this potion should also carry a purgative with them so they can vomit up the lethal stimulant.

A character using a potion of strength gains a +6 enhancement bonus to Strength. Keep track of the number of rounds that the character has been under the effect of the potion; if this number exceeds the character's Constitution, he suffers 2d6 points of damage per round until the potion is counteracted or the character dies.

Cost: 500 sp.



RADIUM GEM

'They are wonderful scientists, when they are not drugged with their dream-flower. Their ancestors were mental giants, who built this marvelous city in the desert, and though the race became slaves to their curious passions, some of their wonderful knowledge still remains. Have you wondered about these lights? They are jewels, fused with radium. You rub them with your thumb to make them glow, and rub them again, the opposite way, to extinguish them.'

– *The Slithering Shadow*

Radium gems are a refined form of green fire-stones (see page 77). A single radium gem provides illumination within a 10-foot radius, weighs a negligible amount, and can be switched on or off up to once per round as a free action. However, it still has a tendency to corrupt the carrier, exactly like green fire-stones do:

Anyone who does not have Corruption 1+ will feel distinctly unnerved when in an area lit by one or more radium gems. If he lives in such an area for a week or more, he must make a Corruption save (DC 15) or gain 1 point of Corruption. Characters who already have at least 1 point of Corruption are unaffected, and may even rather enjoy the glow.

Cost: 500 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, 1 green fire-stone (included in cost).

ROPE OF DEAD WOMEN'S HAIR

'We must climb this cord – little need to ask a Cimmerian if he can.'

'If it will bear my weight,' grunted Conan, cleansing his sword on the grass.

'It will bear thrice my own,' answered Taurus. 'It was woven from the tresses of dead women, which I took from their tombs at midnight, and steeped in the deadly wine of the upas tree, to give it strength.'

– *The Tower of the Elephant*

This supernaturally strong rope is made from dead women's hair steeped in the juice of the upas-tree (see page 81). It weighs but 2 lb per 100 feet, and can bear some 750 pounds without snapping. In appearance it seems only a thin and flimsy cord, so that a full 100-foot coil of it could be carried in a large belt-pouch.

The cost given is for a 100 feet length of the rope.

Cost: 1,250 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks, 1 dose of *upas-tree juice* (included in cost), hair from 20 dead women.

SMOKE POWDER

When a packet of smoke powder is thrown into a burning brazier or candle, it creates a billowing cloud of thick smoke. The smoke emanates out from the brazier with a range of 30 feet, filling the area with thick, black, greasy vapours. See page 220 of *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for rules on smoke.

Cost: 250 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks.





Creatures of Sorcery

Though the ancient empire of Acheron was overrun and destroyed by the Hyborian barbarians three millennia ago, many of Acheronians survived the onslaught and were assimilated into the then-new Hyborian kingdoms, particularly in Nemedias and Aquilonia. Here their descendants survive in scattered hill villages, barely noticed by the descendants of the barbarian destroyers of Acheron, preserving dark rituals and strange customs that have otherwise been forgotten. In these tiny hamlets the Acheronians bide their time, firmly believing that their empire of evil will one day return, overthrowing the petty kingdoms of the Hyborians to usher in a new reign of sorcery.

THE ACHERONIAN RACE

But while in both Aquilonia and Nemedias men talked of the madness of the king, in Nemedias men talked much of Xaltotun, the masked one. Yet few saw him in the streets of Belverus. Men said he spent too much time in the hills, in curious conclaves with surviving remnants of an old race: dark, silent folk who claimed descent from an ancient kingdom. Men whispered of drums beating far up in the dreaming hills, of fires glowing in the darkness, and strange chantings borne on the winds, chantings and rituals forgotten centuries ago except as meaningless formulas mumbled beside mountain hearths in villages whose inhabitants differed strangely from the people of the valleys.

— *The Hour of the Dragon*

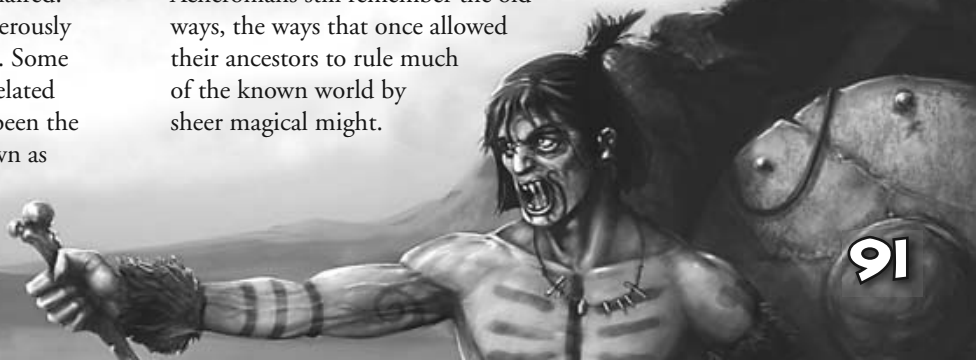
Acheronians are tall, white-skinned, and dark-haired. The men tend to wear full beards and be cadaverously thin, while the women are lithe yet voluptuous. Some scholars believe the Acheronians to be closely related to the race of giant-kings that are said to have been the founders of Stygia, long before those now known as Stygians conquered that land.

Culture: The culture of Acheron is now so lost in the mists of time that many Hyborians doubt that it is anything other than a myth. Similar to Stygians in many ways, the Acheronians were greater sorcerers, practicing foul necromancy, thaumaturgy of the most evil kind, and grisly magic taught to them by devils. They built towers rather than pyramids. They used gold coins as currency. The degenerate modern Acheronian is no more than a shadow of those ancient sorcerers.

Names: Xaltotun, and possibly Baal, Chiron, Tothmekri, Thugra Khotan, and Akivasha are the only Acheronian names we know of for certain. Contemporary Acheronians might give their children Nemedian or Aquilonian names as a form of cover, or, as with the examples we have of ancient Acheronian names, their names might be similar to those of Stygia, or derived from names of Phoenician gods and demons. Suggestions: (male) Aleyin, El, Hadad, Hammon, Hay-Tau, Keret, Mot, Ruti, Sutekh, Tsaphon; (female) Anat, Asherat, Baalat, Sapas.

Religion: Like the Stygians, the Acheronians of old were worshipers of Set, the Old Serpent. They believed, not without some justification, in bodily resurrection, and communed with the creatures of the Outer Dark, often taking such devils as familiars.

- ✿ +2 Charisma, -2 Strength. Acheronians have very forceful personalities, but are far less forceful in body.
- ✿ -1 racial penalty to all Diplomacy and Gather Information checks that target non-Acheronians. Though Acheronians are powerfully charismatic, there is a sinister and rather antisocial edge to their personalities that makes other races very wary of them.
- ✿ +2 racial bonus to all Craft (alchemy), Craft (herbalism), and Knowledge (arcana) checks. Acheronians still remember the old ways, the ways that once allowed their ancestors to rule much of the known world by sheer magical might.





- ❖ -2 racial penalty to all saving throws against Corruption. Acheronians are probably the most corrupt human race still in existence, if they can even be said to be truly human. It would not even occur to a typical Acheronian to resist being corrupted, or even that it was possible to become more corrupt!
- ❖ +1 racial bonus to all magic attack rolls when using Curses. Acheronians are experts in the path of wizardry in general, but are particularly effective and vindictive when blasting their enemies with curses.

Background Skills: Craft (alchemy), Craft (herbalism), Knowledge (arcana).

Favoured Class: Scholar

Prohibited Classes: Barbarian, Noble, Nomad, Pirate

Automatic Languages: Acheronian, plus the language of whichever Hyborian kingdom they live in.

Bonus Languages: Demonic, Old Stygian, Nemedian, Aquilonian, Brythunian, Ophirean, Corinthian, Hyperborean.

NEW CREATURES

Sorcerers come into contact with a number of mysterious, scarce and just plain weird creatures during their studies, sometimes as masters, sometimes hazards, and sometimes servants. A number of sorcerer-related creatures were presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* main rulebook, including the various demons and elementals, but those who delve deeper into sorcerous knowledge will find a need to deal with stranger and more dangerous creatures...

TABLE 15: ANIMATED OBJECTS

	Animated Object, Tiny	Animated Object, Small	Animated Object, Medium
	Tiny Construct	Small Construct	Medium Construct
Hit Dice:	1/2 d10 (2 hp)	1d10+10 (15 hp)	2d10+20 (31 hp)
Initiative:	+2	+1	+0
Speed:	Fly 40 ft. (8 squares); walk 40 ft., 50 ft. legs, 60 ft. multiple legs; 80 ft. wheels	Fly 30 ft. (6 squares); walk 30 ft. (6 squares), 40 ft. legs, 50 ft. multiple legs, 70 ft. wheels	30 ft. (6 squares); 40 ft. legs, 50 ft. multiple legs, 70 ft. wheels
Defence Value:	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex)	12 (+1 size, +1 Dex)	10
Damage Reduction:	Varies by material: 0 (cloth, paper etc), 1 (wood), 2 (stone), 3 (iron)	Varies by material: 0 (cloth, paper etc), 2 (wood), 4 (stone), 6 (iron)	Varies by material: 0 (cloth, paper etc), 3 (wood), 6 (stone), 8 (iron)
Base Attack/Grapple:	+0/-9	+0/-4	+1/+2
Attack:	Slam +1 melee (1d4-1)	Slam +1 melee (1d6)	Slam +2 melee (1d8+1)
Full Attack:	Slam +1 melee (1d4-1)	Slam +1 melee (1d6)	Slam +2 melee (1d8+1)
Space/Reach:	2-1/2 ft. (1/2)/0 ft. (0)	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)
Special Attacks:	See text	See text	See text
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -5	Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -5	Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1
Skills:	—	—	—
Feats:	—	—	—
Environment:	Any	Any	Any
Organisation:	Group (4)	Pair	Solitary
Advancement:	—	—	—
Example (attacks):	Poniard (+1 melee, 1d6-1 damage)	Broadsword (+1 melee, 1d10 damage)	Greatsword (+2 melee, 2d10+1 damage), or 6' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two broadswords +2/-3 melee, 1d10+1/1d10 damage)





	Animated Object, Large	Animated Object, Huge	Animated Object, Gargantuan	Animated Object, Colossal
	Large Construct	Huge Construct	Gargantuan Construct	Colossal Construct
Hit Dice:	4d10+30 (52 hp)	8d10+40 (84 hp)	16d10+60 (148 hp)	32d10+80 (256 hp)
Initiative:	+0	-1	-2	-3
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares); 30 ft. legs, 40 ft. multiple legs, 60 ft. wheels	20 ft. (4 squares); 30 ft. legs, 40 ft. multiple legs, 60 ft. wheels	10 ft. (2 squares); 20 ft. legs, 30 ft. multiple legs, 50 ft. wheels	10 ft. (2 squares); 20 ft. legs, 30 ft. multiple legs, 50 ft. wheels
Defence Value:	10 (-1 size, +1 natural)	10 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +3 natural)	10 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +6 natural)	11 (-8 size, -3 Dex, +12 natural)
Damage Reduction:	Varies by material: 1 (cloth, paper etc), 4 (wood), 8 (stone), 10 (iron)	Varies by material: 2 (cloth, paper etc), 5 (wood), 10 (stone), 12 (iron)	Varies by material: 3 (cloth, paper etc), 6 (wood), 12 (stone), 14 (iron)	Varies by material: 4 (cloth, paper etc), 7 (wood), 14 (stone), 16 (iron)
Base Attack/Grapple:	+3/+10	+6/+19	+12/+31	+24/+49
Attack:	Slam +5 melee (2d6+4)	Slam +9 melee (2d8+7)	Slam +15 melee (3d6+10)	Slam +25 melee (4d6+13)
Full Attack:	Slam +5 melee (2d6+4)	Slam +9 melee (2d8+7)	Slam +15 melee (3d6+10)	Slam +25 melee (4d6+13)
Space/Reach:	10 ft. (2)/5 ft. (1) (long) 10 ft. (2)/10 ft. (2) (tall)	15 ft. (3)/10 ft. (2) (long) 15 ft. (3)/15 ft. (3) (tall)	20 ft. (4)/15 ft. (3) (long) 20 ft. (4)/20 ft. (4) (tall)	30 ft. (6)/20 ft. (4) (long) 30 ft. (6)/30 ft. (6) (tall)
Special Attacks:	See text	See text	See text	See text
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; also see text
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4	Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3	Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0	Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 20, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 24, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 28, Dex 4, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1
Skills:	—	—	—	—
Feats:	—	—	—	—
Environment:	Any	Any	Any	Any
Organisation:	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary
Advancement:	—	—	—	—
Example (attacks):	10' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two Large broadswords +5/+0 melee, 2d6+3/2d6+1 damage)	25' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two Huge broadswords +9/+4 melee, 3d6+5/3d6+2 damage)	50' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two Gargantuan broadswords +15/+10 melee, 4d6+7/4d6+3 damage)	75' tall humanoid statue (standard, or by two Gargantuan broadswords +25/+20 melee, 5d6+9/5d6+4 damage)





They were statues, apparently of iron, black and shining as if continually polished. They were life-sized, depicting tall, lithely powerful men, with cruel hawk-like faces. They were naked, and every swell, depression and contour of joint and sinew was represented with incredible realism. But the most life-like feature was their proud, intolerant faces. These features were not cast in the same mold. Each face possessed its own individual characteristics, though there was a tribal likeness between them all. There was none of the monotonous uniformity of decorative art, in the faces at least.

– *Shadows in the Moonlight*

Animated objects come in all sizes, shapes, and colours. They owe their existence as creatures to spells such as *animate sword*, *animate statue* or similar supernatural abilities.

COMBAT

Animated objects fight only as directed by the animator. They follow orders without question and to the best of their abilities. Since they do not need to breathe and never tire, they can be extremely capable minions.

Construct Traits: Constructs have no Constitution score. They are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. They are not subject to death by massive damage, critical hits, fatigue, exhaustion, nonlethal damage, ability damage or ability drain. They are immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also affects objects. Constructs do not eat, sleep or breathe. They do not heal naturally.

An animated object can have one or more of the following special abilities, depending on its form.

Blind: A sheet-like animated object such as a carpet or tapestry can grapple an opponent up to three sizes larger than itself. The object makes a normal grapple check. If it wins, it wraps itself around the opponent's head, causing that creature to be blinded until removed.

Constrict: A flexible animated object such as a rope, vine, or rug deals damage equal to its slam damage value plus 1- 1/2 times its Strength bonus with a successful grapple check against a creature up to one size larger than itself. An object of at least Large size can make constriction attacks against multiple creatures at once, if they all are at least two sizes smaller than the object and can fit under it.

Hardness: An animated object has the same hardness it had before it was animated.

Improved Speed: The base land speed given in the statistics block assumes that an animated object lurches, rocks, or slithers along. Objects with two legs (statues, ladders) or a similar shape that allows faster movement have a +10 foot bonus to speed. Objects with multiple legs (tables, chairs) have a +20 foot bonus to speed. Wheeled objects have a +40 foot bonus to speed. Objects might have additional modes of movement. A wooden object can float and has a swim speed equal to half its land speed. A rope or similar sinuous object has a climb speed equal to half its land speed. Any object of Tiny or Small size can fly (clumsy manoeuvrability) at the indicated speed.

Trample: An animated object of at least Large size and with a Damage Reduction of at least 6 can trample creatures two or more sizes smaller than itself, dealing damage equal to the object's slam damage + 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the object can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + 1/2 object's HD + object's Str modifier) to halve the damage.

Weapon Attack: An animated object which is or which incorporates a weapon, such as a sword animated with the *animate swords* spell or a statue of a pikeman which includes his weapon, will deal damage appropriate to the size and nature of the weapon, rather than slam damage. A statue which picks up a weapon will also deal appropriate damage. The animated object's Strength bonus is added to this damage as usual. An animated object wielding more than one weapon has the usual -5 penalty to all attack rolls made with weapons other than its primary weapon.



CHILD OF JHEBBAL SAG

'Zogar!' muttered the woodsman, his bloody countenance set in wolfish lines as he unconsciously strained at his cords. Ralthus saw a lean figure of middle height, almost hidden in ostrich plumes set on a harness of leather and copper. From amidst the plumes peered a hideous and malevolent face. The plumes puzzled Ralthus. He knew their source lay half the width of a world away to the south. They fluttered and rustled evilly as the shaman leapt and cavorted.

With fantastic bounds and prancings he entered the ring and whirled before his bound and silent captives. With another man it would have seemed ridiculous – a foolish savage prancing meaninglessly in a whirl of feathers. But that ferocious face glaring out from the billowing mass gave the scene a grim significance. No man with a face like that could seem ridiculous or like anything except the devil he was.

– *Beyond the Black River*

Jhebbal Sag, the primal god who once ruled all living things (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 343), is still known to visit women who sleep in his sacred groves, impregnating them with his weird, half-human, half-demonic spawn.

CREATING A CHILD OF JHEBBAL SAG

'Child of Jhebbal Sag' is an inherited template that can be added to any living creature with an Intelligence score of 1 or more (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A child of Jhebbal Sag uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to outsider. Do not recalculate Hit Dice, base attack bonus, or saves. Size is unchanged. Although outsiders, Children of Jhebbal Sag are not subject to banishment since their home realm is Earth.

Speed: As the base creature.

Damage Reduction: As the base creature.

Attacks: As the base creature.

Special Attacks: As the base creature.

Special Qualities: A child of Jhebbal Sag has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus the following special qualities.

Low-light vision.

Wild Empathy. The child of Jhebbal Sag may improve the attitude of an animal. This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person. The child of Jhebbal Sag rolls 1d20 and adds his character level and his Charisma bonus to determine the wild empathy check result. The typical domestic animal has a starting attitude of indifferent, while wild animals are usually unfriendly. To use wild empathy, the child of Jhebbal Sag and the animal must be able to study each other, which means that they must be within 30 feet of one another under normal visibility conditions. Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes 1 minute, but as with influencing people it might take more or less time. The child of Jhebbal Sag can also use this ability to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but he takes a -4 penalty on the check. This is an extraordinary ability.

Spells: Although the child of Jhebbal Sag gains no particular bonus spells, he is particularly effective with spells of the Nature Magic sorcery style. Whenever he casts any Nature Magic spell, his scholar level is considered to be +1 for all purposes.

Favoured Classes: Change to borderer and scholar.

Base Power Points: As the base creature.

Abilities: Adjust from the base creature as follows: Cha +2, Str -2. Furthermore, a creature whose Intelligence was 6 or below has its Intelligence increased to 6.

Fate Points: Reduce by -2.

Skills: Children of Jhebbal Sag gain a +2 racial bonus to all Handle Animal checks.

Corruption: As base creature +1.



IRON SHADOW

Medium Construct

Climate/Terrain: Any (Isle of Iron Statues)

Organization: Solitary

Initiative: +2 (+2 Reflex)

Sensory Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Low-light vision, Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages: –

Dodge Defence: 12 (+2 natural)

DR: 8

Hit Dice: 6d10+20 (53 hp)

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3

Defensive Specials: –

Speed: 30 ft.

Full Attack: Slam +8 melee (1d8+3, 19-20/x2 critical, AP 5)

Space/Reach: x ft./x ft.

Base Attack: +4

Grapple: +7

Special Attacks: Rending Grip

Sorcery Knowledge: –

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 10, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12

Special Qualities: Construct traits

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Sunder, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills: Climb +8, Perform (ritual) +6, Search +10

Possessions: –

Advancement: –

Created through sorcery and animated to serve, iron shadows are humanoid golems of solid iron that are animated when moonlight strikes their polished surfaces. They come to life when struck by moonlight to do the bidding of their master, only to return to their place of stoic standing at dawn.

Although the most infamous iron shadows are the ones that are created on the Isle of Iron Statues through the horrific casting of the *invocation of Xuthalla*, other places could also be home to these looming creatures.

COMBAT

Iron shadows are simplistic warriors, grabbing their foes and pulling them limb from limb.

Rending Grip: The mighty fingers of their horrible iron hands and arms can crush a man's limbs or neck in moments, if they can get a solid grip on them. With a successful grapple check an iron shadow can choose to inflict some or all of its damage as damage to the target's Constitution, Dexterity or Strength, as it chooses. The victim gets a DC 13 Fortitude save for half damage (round up).

SORCEROUS MUMMY

Many of the kings and sorcerers of Stygia and Acheron were mummified after death. This process is essentially a non-magical one, although extensive herbal and alchemical extracts are used along with certain post-mortem surgical techniques to remove those organs which decay rapidly and preserve those which do not. A properly mummified body can remain recognisable for thousands of years.

Mummification requires one week of work by a character with Profession (embalmer) 12 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 4 ranks and Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks. The cost is 500 silver pieces in incenses, potions and other consumables, as well as a mummy case of at least 1,500 silver pieces' value. The latter is a crucial part of the preservation process, but is always made at least in part from precious metals and so is often a target for grave robbers and looters in later years.

At the end of the week, the mummifier makes a Profession (embalmer) check (DC 20). This allows the mummy to be properly preserved for 1,000 years. For every 2 points above 20 on the skill check, the mummy will remain preserved for another 1,000 years. All Profession (embalmer) checks get a +2 synergy bonus from 5 ranks of Craft (alchemy) or Craft (herbalism).

CREATING A SORCEROUS MUMMY

'Sorcerous Mummy' is an acquired template that can be applied to any humanoid creature, henceforth referred to as the base creature. A Sorcerous mummy uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities as noted here.

'Mummies of Ahriman' are especially powerful sorcerous mummies, created using the Heart of Ahriman.





As undead creatures...

- ✦ Mummies no longer suffer from the effects of aging
- ✦ Mummies have no need to eat, drink or sleep
- ✦ Mummies have no Constitution score, and instead use Charisma for Constitution-based skills.
- ✦ Mummies are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, disease, ability damage, ability drain and fatigue.
- ✦ Mummies are immune critical hits
- ✦ Mummies are immune to non-lethal damage
- ✦ Mummies have darkvision out to 60 feet.
- ✦ Mummies trigger Terror of the Unknown checks.
- ✦ Mummies do not heal damage normally; instead, they must make Heal checks for short-term care, or use the *unholy revitalisation* spell.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead (augmented humanoid). Do not recalculate base attack bonus, saving throws or hit points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Change all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Speed: Unchanged.

Defence Value: Unchanged.

Damage Reduction: Change to DR 2. This replaces the creature's original DR, if any. Mummies of Ahriman have DR 8 instead.

Attack: Unchanged.

Full Attack: Unchanged.

Damage: Sorcerous mummies have natural weapons, be they bony claws or unearthly strength. They retain their old damage values or use the appropriate values from the Mummy Weapons table, whichever is better.

TABLE 16: MUMMY WEAPONS
TABLE

Size	Damage
Tiny	1d4
Small	1d6
Medium	1d8
Large	2d6
Huge	2d8

Special Attacks: A sorcerous mummy retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below. Saving throws have a DC set by the sorcerous mummy's magic attack roll unless otherwise noted.

Dominate: A sorcerous mummy can crush an opponent's will just by looking into his eyes. This works just like the *domination* spell from the Hypnotism style, but does not cost the mummy any Power Points.

Special Qualities: A sorcerous mummy retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below.

Cold Immunity: Sorcerous mummies are immune to cold damage.

Fire Vulnerability: Mummies take double damage from any fire-based attacks.

Mummies of Ahriman also gain the following abilities:

Fast Healing: Mummies of Ahriman gain Fast Healing 2.

Heart of Ahriman Vulnerability: Mummies of Ahriman can be destroyed by the *heart of Ahriman*.

Abilities:

For sorcerous mummies, increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex -4, Int +0, Wis +0, Cha -4.

For mummies of Ahriman, increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +2, Int +4, Wis +4, Cha +6.

Skills: Sorcerous mummies have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search and Spot checks. Otherwise, same as the base creature.

Feats: Sorcerous mummies gain no feats.

Mummies of Ahriman gain Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and does not already have those feats.

Advancement: By character class (usually Master of Death)

Corruption: As the base creature +2.





DEMONS

The following demons can generally be affected by such spells as *summon demon* from both this book and *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. However, certain demons may have special requirements which must be met before they can be *summoned* or before a *demonic pact* can be entered into with them. These requirements are listed separately for each demon.

LORD OF THE BLACK CIRCLE

Medium Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +12 (+12 Reflex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 23 (+4 Dex, +9 natural)

DR: 5

Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+18

Attack: Broadsword +18 melee (1d10+5)

Full Attack: Broadsword +18/+13/+8 melee (1d10+5)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Special Attacks: Halt, puppet

Special Qualities: Manifest

Power Points: 20 (base 10, +5 Wis, +5 racial bonus)

Magic Attack Bonus: +7 (+3 natural, +6 Charisma)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +13

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +22, Craft (alchemy) +18, Craft (herbalism) +18, Hide +20, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Listen +21, Move Silently +20, Perform (ritual) +30, Spot +21, Search +18

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -

There on the ledge stood four men. It was miraculous, incredible, impossible, yet it was true. They were not ghosts or phantoms. They were four tall men, with shaven, vulture-like heads, and black robes that hid their feet. Their hands were concealed by their wide sleeves. They stood in silence, their naked heads nodding lightly in unison.

— *The People of the Black Circle*

The lords of the Black Circle are otherworldly demons but outwardly resemble humans, though their form is gaunt, elongated and somewhat vulture-like. Most of the time, lords of the Black Circle wear long black robes over their bony bodies.

It is whispered that their true form is far more horrible than the humanoid one which they wear, and occasionally an observer will catch a hint at their true withered, mummified state, or see more than a passing resemblance to a vulture in their emotionless faces or claw-like hands. They are capable of sustaining astonishing injuries and showing little or no ill-effects as a result.

Lords of the Black Circle speak Demonic naturally, but have deigned to learn most of the earthly tongues spoken in the area around Mount Yimsha including Afghuli, Vendhyan, Turanian and Iranistani.

Then the figure moved and rose upright, towering above her. It stooped over her and the long arms in their wide black sleeves bent about her. She fought against them in speechless fright, surprised by their lean hardness. The hooded head bent down toward her averted face. And she screamed, and screamed again in poignant fear and loathing. Bony arms gripped her lithe body, and from that hood looked forth a countenance of death and decay — features like rotting parchment on a moldering face.

She screamed again, and then, as those champing, grinning jaws bent towards her lips, she lost consciousness.

— *The People of the Black Circle*





SUMMONING REQUIREMENTS

The four lords of the Black Circle must all be summoned simultaneously, and may only be summoned by the Master of the Black Circle. He may call them up by using the process detailed in the description of the Master of the Black Circle prestige class (see page 163).

All four lords of the Black Circle are closely tied into the *pomegranate altar of the Black Circle* (see page 72) which holds their ability to exist on Earth, in the form of the pomegranates. If the crystal ball in the altar's centre is destroyed, the lords of the Black Circle will be destroyed too, at least on this plane – it seems likely that they can be summoned forth once more by a new Master of Yimsha, or even by the old one if he still lives.

COMBAT

Lords of the Black Circle prefer to demonstrate their total superiority over humans. They will use their Halt attack to prevent enemies from harming them, then their Puppet attack to bring them over one at a time for execution. If brought to melee combat by opponents capable of resisting their magic, lords of the black circle will fight expertly and effectively with weapons taken from dead enemies, usually swords or scimitars.

Halt: Halt works much like the spell *entrance*, except that the lord of the Black Circle can use the ability as a standard action to affect all characters (regardless of HD) within Evil Eye range, and need not concentrate on causing them to remain *entranced*. They can only be released from their *entrancement* by a *warding* or similar spell, or by the death of the lord of the Black Circle. No Power Points are expended to use the Halt attack, and it may be used an unlimited number of times each day.

Manifest: As a standard action, the lord of the Black Circle can either leave Earth and return to its home place, or appear on Earth. In either case, it manifests at the new location at the end of its action.

Puppet: Puppet works much like the spell *domination*, except that the lord of the Black Circle can use the ability as a standard action to affect any one character (regardless of HD) within Evil Eye range, and need not concentrate on causing him to remain *dominated*. He can only be released from this *domination* by a *warding* or similar spell, or by the death of the lord of the Black Circle. No Power Points are expended to use the Puppet attack, and it may be used an unlimited number of times each day.



Spells: A lord of the Black Circle may cast the following spells as though he were a 13th level scholar. The usual Power Point and other costs apply.

Hypnotism: *Entrance, domination, dread serpent, hypnotic suggestion, savage beast*

Necromancy: *Raise corpse, agonising doom, death touch, draw forth the heart*

Skills: The lord of the black circle gains a +4 racial bonus to all Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks.

SERVITOR SPIRIT

Small Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Reflex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

DV: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural)

DR: 2

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-3

Attack: Claw +2 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: Claw +2 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Special Attacks: None.

Special Qualities: Manifest, partial invisibility, weakness.

Magic Attack Bonus: +0

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -1

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Sleight +6, Spot +5

Feats: Improved Initiative

Environment: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -

These minor spirits are often called forth by sorcerers as servants, as they are comparatively weak-willed while still being usefully intelligent. They manifest as small, wispy humanoid shapes, although the legs and lower half of the spirit's torso are usually invisible.

Partial Invisibility: Servitor spirits can become partially invisible at will. While partially invisible, attacks on the spirit have a 25% miss chance, and the spirit gains a +8 bonus to Hide checks.

Weakness: Servitor spirits have unusually weak Will saving throws. Furthermore, if a servitor spirit suffers damage, it suffers a -4 penalty to all attacks and skill checks for one round.

SLAVE OF THE RING

Medium Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 18d8 (81 hp)

Initiative: +18 (+14 Reflex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft.

DV: 27 (+3 Dex, +13 natural, +1 Dodge)

DR: -

Base Attack/Grapple: +18/+22

Attack: Bite +22 melee (1d10+6)

Full Attack: Bite +22 melee (1d10+6) and 2 claws +20 melee (1d6+4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Special Attacks: Soulblast, improved grab

Special Qualities: Immunities, manifest, scent, magical tracking

Magic Attack Bonus: +14 (+9 natural, +5 Charisma)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +13

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 20

Skills: Climb +25, Hide +28, Intimidate +26, Jump +25, Listen +23, Move Silently +28, Spot +23, Survival +27

Feats: Track, Multiattack, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative

Environment: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -

The hideousness of its face transcended mere bestiality. It might have been the face of an ancient, evil mummy, quickened with demonic life. In those abhorrent features the outlaw's dilated eyes seemed to see, like a shadow in the madness that enveloped him, a faint and terrible resemblance to the slave Thoth-Amon. Then Ascalante's cynical and all-sufficient philosophy deserted him, and with a ghastly cry he gave up the ghost before those slaving fangs touched him.

Conan, shaking the blood-drops from his eyes, stared frozen. At first he thought it was a great black hound which stood over Ascalante's distorted body; then as his sight cleared he saw that it was neither a hound nor a baboon.

— *The Phoenix on the Sword*



This terrifying creature resembles a bizarre, abominable cross between a dog and a baboon, though in truth it is more otherworldly demon than any earthly creature. It is some seven feet tall, with a powerfully built, apelike body and a great but wrinkled head with slaving jaws the size of a large dog's. This terrible fanged maw is topped by a pair of fiendishly glaring eyes that lock upon those of its victims.

At the conclusion of the story *The Phoenix on the Sword*, the slave of the ring is killed by Conan. It is up to the Games Master to decide if it is able to return somehow from the Outer Dark, or if the *serpent ring of Set* (see page 72) can create or summon a new one to replace it. This latter course is recommended, as this is an excellent opponent for high-level games and should perhaps not be restricted solely to games that take place before the events in *The Phoenix on the Sword*.

SUMMONING REQUIREMENTS

The slave of the ring is a unique demon of staggering power, which is magically bound to the *serpent ring of Set* (see page 72). The wielder of that magical ring may call up the slave with great ease and safety, using it to do his bidding. The slave of the ring may not be called up by any means, including the *summon demon*, *demonic pact*, and *greater demonic pact* spells, by a sorcerer who does not

own the *serpent ring of Set*. The slave of the ring is most commonly used to track down and slay specific enemies.

COMBAT

The slave of the ring takes great pride in finishing off its victims with its soulblast attack if it possibly can. It will use its claws and bite to hold them steady, then gaze deep into their eyes to shrivel their souls before tearing apart their bodies.

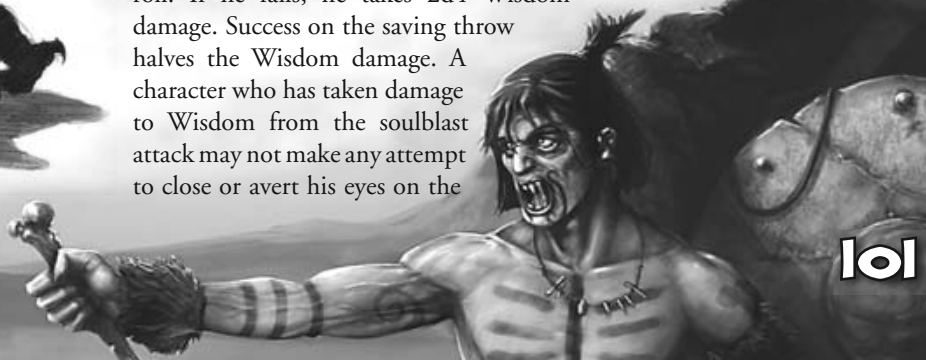
Immunities: The slave of the ring is immune to all physical damage, except that dealt by either fire or objects made from silver. Silver weapons are not generally manufactured during the Hyborian Age, though improvised weapons made from silver benches, candlesticks, mugs etc. could be used. Any weapon on which the Phoenix of Epemitreus (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 344) has been inscribed inflicts full damage to the slave of the ring, including the +4d6 bonus damage for the slave of the ring being summoned by a worshipper of Set.

Improved Grab: To use this ability, the slave of the ring must hit with its claw or bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the slave of the ring wins the grapple check, the grappled victim may not avert his eyes from the slave of the ring's soulblast attack (though he may still close them if desired).

Magical Tracking: If the slave of the ring has a magical link to the target of its Track attempts, it gains a +20 circumstance bonus to any attempts to track him, as it is capable of using magical means to follow him as well as its mundane senses.

Manifest: As a standard action, the slave of the ring can either leave Earth and return to its home place, or appear on Earth. In either case, it manifests at the new location at the end of its action.

Soulblast: Once per round as a free action, the slave of the ring may lock eyes with a target and attempt to draw out his soul. The victim makes a Will saving throw against a DC set by the slave of the ring's magic attack roll. If he fails, he takes 2d4 Wisdom damage. Success on the saving throw halves the Wisdom damage. A character who has taken damage to Wisdom from the soulblast attack may not make any attempt to close or avert his eyes on the





following round, as his eyes are locked to those of the slave of the ring. He is otherwise free to act as normal. A character reduced to 0 Wisdom by the soulblast attack makes one final Will saving throw against a DC once more set by the slave of the ring's magic attack roll. If he succeeds, he simply withdraws into a deep coma-like sleep. If he fails, his soul is blasted by the slave of the ring, and utterly destroyed. He dies immediately and cannot be healed or returned to life by any means, nor can he even return as a ghost. Note that as the target is dealt more and more Wisdom damage, it will become far harder to succeed at his Will saving throws.

Skills: The slave of the ring's bestial instincts grant it a +4 bonus to all Hide, Move Silently and Survival checks.

DEMON LORDS

In the *Conan RPG*, the spell *greater demonic pact* mentions the prospect of making a pact with demon lords, rather than mere demons. This section gives game statistics and descriptions for a number of the demon lords mentioned in the Conan stories. These can either be used as patrons as they are, or be taken as typical examples of lords to use as starting points for the Games Master to create his own new demon lords.

As well as functioning as effective patrons for sorcerers, demon lords are often worshipped as gods by those who know no better. They do not offer quite the same benefits as the more established religions, but can prove useful for those well-versed in evil. More about worshipping demon lords can be found later in this book in Chapter 8: Arcane Religions.

Unlike true gods, demon lords can have an incarnate form on Earth, and can potentially be slain in that form, particularly with the assistance of spells such as the *incantation of Amalric's witchman* (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 241).

Damage Reduction for Demon Lords: Many demon lords have damage reduction derived directly from their unearthly nature as demon lords, rather than from the hardness or natural armour of their bodies. This is indicated in the entry for Damage Reduction by the

parenthetical note (demon lord) after the number. Any damage reduction gained in this way can be removed by use of the *incantation of Amalric's witchman* spell.

Demon Lords and Spells: All demon lords are capable of teaching all spells, both those found in this book and those found in the *Conan* main rules. Note that demon lords need not meet the same prerequisites as human scholars. For example, many can cast *summon elemental* or *summon demon* without needing to have a *demonic pact* or similar spell, simply by virtue of their demonic nature.

KHOSATRAL KHEL

Medium Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 20d8+20 (110 hp)

Initiative: +15 (+15 Reflex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 28 (+3 Dex, +15 natural)

DR: 20 (iron body)

Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+30

Attack: Slam +31 (1d6+10, AP 15)

Full Attack: 2 slams +31 (1d6+10, AP 15)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Special Attacks: Improved grab, spells, crush (2d6+15, AP 20)

Special Qualities: Iron body

Power Points: 57 (base 50, +7 Wis)

Magic Attack Bonus: +20 (+10 natural, +10 Charisma)

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +15, Will +21

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 24, Wis 25, Cha 30

Skills: Balance +26, Climb +33, Craft (alchemy) +30, Craft (blacksmithing) +30, Craft (herbalism) +30, Decipher Script +30, Intimidate +33, Jump +33, Knowledge (arcana) +30, Knowledge (history) +30, Knowledge (religion) +30, Knowledge (military strategy) +30, Listen +30, Perform (ritual) +33, Spot +30

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Critical (slam), Weapon Focus (slam), Iron Will

Environment: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -



It was dim and misty in the chamber, and Conan's hair began to lift on his scalp as he looked. He saw a head and a pair of gigantic shoulders grow out of the twilight gloom. There was no sound of footsteps, but the great dusky form grew more distinct until Conan recognized the figure of a man. He was clad in sandals, a skirt and a broad shagreen girdle. His square-cut mane was confined by a circlet of gold. Conan stared at the sweep of the monstrous shoulders, the breadth of the swelling breast, the bands and ridges and clusters of muscles on torso and limbs. The face was without weakness and without mercy. The eyes were balls of dark fire. And Conan knew that this was Khosatral Khel, the ancient from the Abyss, the god of Dagonia.

— *The Devil in Iron*



Khosatral Khel is a demon lord who chose to clothe himself with a material form, many thousands of years ago. This form was not of flesh, for the demon lord needed a more powerful vessel for his essence. He chose iron, and became a living god of iron in the form of a large man.

Khosatral Khel is over seven feet tall and would weigh perhaps 300 pounds, were he made of flesh. As it is, he is solid iron and weighs some 12,000 pounds. His iron body is the colour of a dark-skinned human, perhaps a Vendhyan, but he is far more heavily built than any earthly man, his metal muscles rippling with enormous strength. His sorcerous power is evident in the form of his compelling, black-flaming eyes.

Khosatral Khel once regarded the Earth and all its occupants as no more than playthings, though after he was bound by the *bane knife of Khosatral Khel* by its creator-priest, he began to take humans a little more seriously. Despite this, he still frequently underestimates mortals, and often values his own enjoyment and whim over his safety.

During the events described in *The Devil in Iron*, Conan slew Khosatral Khel. However, it is certainly possible that other similar entities could clothe their essences in iron to walk the earth; similarly, Khosatral Khel might be only banished, not dead.

COMBAT

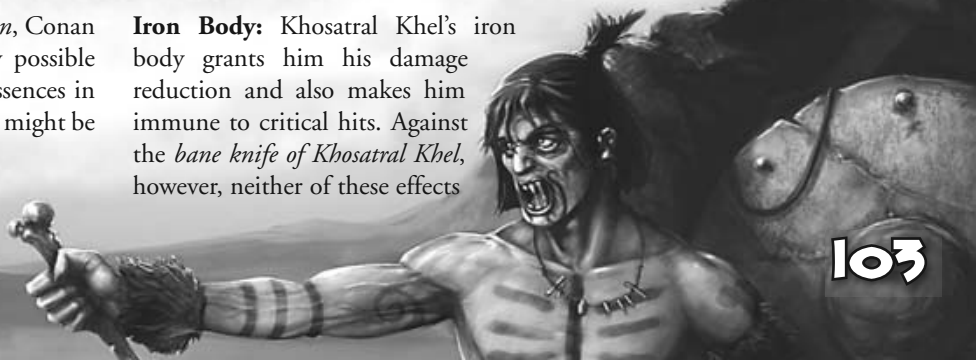
Though Khosatral Khel is a sorcerer of enormous power, he would far rather get his great steely hands on his enemy and simply rip them to shreds. He believes himself invulnerable, and his favoured style of combat reflects this – he revels in the physical destruction of his enemies, and is more than strong and tough enough to do it himself. So far as he is concerned, his spells are for subjugating whole nations, not fighting one-on-one battles.

Note that Khosatral Khel no longer has the Manifest special quality. He has elected to incarnate permanently into his earthly, iron-thewed form.

Crush: With a successful grapple check, Khosatral Khel deals 2d6+15 damage. He may do this once per round.

Improved Grab: To use this ability, the Khosatral Khel must hit with his slam attack. He can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If Khosatral Khel wins the grapple check, he may crush in following rounds.

Iron Body: Khosatral Khel's iron body grants him his damage reduction and also makes him immune to critical hits. Against the *bane knife of Khosatral Khel*, however, neither of these effects





apply – he has no damage reduction and can be affected by critical hits normally. Note that his Damage Reduction is unaffected by the *incantation of Amalric's witchman*, as it is acquired purely through the physical nature of his solid iron body and not by virtue of his infernal status as a demon lord.

Spells: Khosatral Khel may cast the following spells as though he were a 20th level scholar. The usual Power Point and other costs apply.

Hypnotism: *Entrance, domination, dread serpent, hypnotic suggestion, mass hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism, savage beast*

Necromancy: *Raise corpse, agonising doom, black plague*, greater black plague*, death touch, draw forth the heart*

Summonings: *Summon demon*, summon elemental**

OLLAM-ONGA

Medium Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 20d8 (90 hp)

Initiative: +17 (+17 Reflex)

Speed: 40 ft.

DV: 31 (+5 Dex, +15 natural, +1 dodge)

DR: 15 (demon lord)

Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+27

Attack: Claw +27 (1d8+7, AP 8)

Full Attack: 2 claws +27 (1d8+7, AP 8), bite +25 (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Special Attacks: Improved grab, rip armour, silence

Special Qualities: Manifest

Power Points: 56 (base 50, +6 Wis)

Magic Attack Bonus: +16 (+10 natural, +6 Charisma)

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +17, Will +18

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 22, Cha 22

Skills: Balance +28, Climb +30, Craft (alchemy) +28, Craft (herbalism) +28, Decipher Script +28, Hide +28, Intimidate +29, Jump +30, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Move Silently +28, Listen +29, Perform (ritual) +29, Spot +29

Feats: Multiattack, Dodge, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Steely Gaze

Environment: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -



And before him stood a white, naked figure. Amalric halted, his tongue cleaving to his palate. It was a naked white man, to all appearance, who stood there, gazing at him with mighty arms folded on an alabaster breast. The features were classic, cleanly carven, with more than human beauty. But the eyes were balls of luminous fire, such as never looked from any human head. In those eyes, Amalric glimpsed the frozen fires of the ultimate hells, touched by awful shadows.

– *Drums of Tombalku*

Ollam-Onga dwells in a sinister red tower on the edge of the city of Gazal. From here, he stalks the city at night, catching and devouring the peaceful folk of Gazal. They have been cowed by him for generations, and are temperamentally unsuited to fighting in any case. For these reasons they make excellent food for him. He delights in eating sentient life, but prefers it not to fight back. When someday he kills the last of the Gazali, he will need to find a new home. Perhaps he will wander back into Kush itself and ally himself directly to one of the various tribes and secret societies that worships him by cannibalism.

During the story *Drums of Tombalku*, Amalric, an ally of Conan's, slays Ollam-Onga using the incantation named for both of them. However, this is an unfinished



story, and so it is fairly reasonable for the Games Master to design a scenario based on it in which the player characters take the places of Amalric and Conan and face Ollam-Onga themselves.

COMBAT

Ollam-Onga will make extensive use of his Manifest special quality and his excellent Hide and Move Silently skills to escape from an unequal combat and stalk his foes one at a time from ambush. If forced into direct combat, he will concentrate his attacks on the most serious threat, tearing off his armour then tearing him to pieces.

Improved Grab: If Ollam-Onga hits with his claw attack, he deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If he wins the opposed grapple check, he gets a hold and may rip armour.

Manifest: As a standard action, Ollam-Onga can either leave Earth and return to his home place, or appear on Earth. In either case, he manifests at the new location at the end of his action.

Rip Armour: When Ollam-Onga is grappling an enemy, he may elect to make a claw attack directly against his enemy's armour rather than against the enemy himself. He makes a standard melee attack roll and if successful any damage he deals is subtracted permanently from the armour's Damage Reduction, as he simply tears it off with his free claw.

Silence: Ollam-Onga's terrifying presence can force his enemies into a stunned silence, in which they dare not speak, overwhelmed by the cosmic horror of the situation. Anyone within 30 feet of him must make a Will saving throw (DC set by his magic attack roll) or be unable to speak until they are at least 30 feet away and can no longer see him.

Spells: Ollam-Onga may cast the following spells as though he were a 20th level scholar. The usual Power Point and other costs apply. He has a crystal ball in his tower for use with his *visions* spell.

Divination: *Astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, mind-reading, psychometry, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news, visions, visions of torment and enlightenment*

Hypnotism: *Entrance, domination, hypnotic suggestion, mass hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism*

Summonings: *Summon demon* (Riders of Ollam-Onga only. If you do not have *Bestiary of the*

Hyborian Age, treat these as black fiends without sorcery mounted on uncanny steeds.)

THAUG

Huge Outsider [demon]

Hit Dice: 20d8+300 (390 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+8 Reflex)

Speed: 20 ft.

DV: 19 (-2 Size, -4 Dex, +15 natural)

DR: 4* (demon lord)

Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+43

Attack: Claw +36 (2d6+15)

Full Attack: 2 claws +36 (2d6+15, AP 20), bite +31 (2d8+15, AP 22)

Space/Reach: 15 ft. (3)/15 ft. (3)

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Manifest

Power Points: 55 (base 50, +5 Wis)

Magic Attack Bonus: +20 (+10 natural, +5 Charisma)

Saves: Fort +27, Ref +8, Will +17

Abilities: Str 40, Dex 2, Con 40, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 20

Skills: Balance +19, Climb +38, Craft (alchemy) +27, Craft (herbalism) +27, Intimidate +28, Jump +38, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (religion) +27, Listen +28, Perform (ritual) +28, Spot +28

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Critical (bite), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun

Environment: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Advancement: -

But the monster seemed to be watching Valerius and the girl. Squeezing its vast, unstable bulk through the door, it bounded toward him, as he ran down the steps. He felt it looming behind him, a giant shadowy thing, like a travesty of nature cut out of the heart of night, a black shapelessness in which only the staring eyes and gleaming fangs were distinct.

— *A Witch Shall Be Born*





Thaug is enormous, some 18 feet high and wide with it. He resembles a grossly fat human, horned and fanged, though his true form is impossible to discern as he is constantly shrouded in shapeless shadows. All that can be seen are the great claws and teeth, as well as the demonically flaming orbs of his eyes.

Thaug is a typical demon lord of the type which humans may make pacts with. He is even quite willing to dwell upon Earth if this is requested of him, so long as he is well supplied with sacrifices. As with any demon lord, he can teach a mortal any spells he wishes, though Thaug himself is not very effective when it comes to casting magic.

Thaug has a particular affinity for those hereditary witches of Khauran named Salome (see page 108).

It is a Salome who summons him up for what is to prove to be the last time, when he comes up against a unit of Conan's Zuagir archers. The Games Master however should feel free to rule that only Thaug's material body was destroyed, leaving him free to return if called upon. Alternatively, there are plenty more like that where he came from

- Thaug's statistics can be used unmodified for any shambling, fat demon lord.

COMBAT

Thaug's combat style is simple and brutal. He will simply wobble over to his enemies, rip them apart with his claws and fangs, and devour them as they fall.

Manifest: As a full-round action, Thaug can either leave Earth and return to his home place, or appear on Earth. In either case, he manifests at the new location at the end of his action.

Spells: Thaug may cast the following spells as though he were a 20th level scholar. double the usual Power Point and other costs apply.

Fire Magic: *Incinerating gaze*
Prestidigitation: *Shake earth*

GREY DEVIL (SERVANT OF BIT-YAKIN)

Large Outsider [demon]

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary or guardian circle (5 – 12)

Initiative: +9 (+4 Dex, +5 Reflex)

Sensory Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages: Demonic

Dodge Defence: 19 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +6 natural)

DR: 4

Hit Dice: 7d8+21 (52 hp)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +8

Speed: 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Full Attack: 2 claws +11 melee (1d6+5, AP 5)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Base Attack: +7

Grapple: +16

Special Attacks: Improved Grab, Rend (2d6+5), Trip

Sorcery Knowledge: –

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 18

Special Qualities: Sorcerous Glow

Feats: Alertness, Diehard, Endurance

Skills: Climb +23, Jump +15, Hide +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Move Silently +22

Possessions: –

Advancement: –

At first they seemed like gray stone statues, those motionless shapes, hairy, man-like, yet hideously inhuman; but their eyes were alive, cold sparks of gray icy fire. And as the weird glow lit their bestial countenances, Gorulga screamed and fell backward, throwing up his long arms in a gesture of frenzied horror.

But a longer arm shot across the altar and a misshapen hand locked on his throat. Screaming and fighting, the high priest was dragged across the altar; a hammer-like fist smashed down, and Gorulga's cries were stilled. Limp and broken he sagged across the altar, his brains oozing from his crushed skull. And then the servants of Bit-Yakin surged like a bursting flood from hell on the black priests who stood like horror-blasted images.

— *The Teeth of Gwahlur*

Grey devils are roughly humanoid in form, but far larger and stronger. Their bones are almost as hard as steel, and their limbs more powerful than those of a great ape. Their bodies are misshapen and ugly, and coated with thick grey hair.

Grey devils have a language of their own, which to any ordinary human sounds like no more than vile gibbering. However, those who command them (see the spell *control monstrous humanoid*, page 33) soon learn to communicate in this sub-human tongue.

Grey devils tend to be somewhat literal in their interpretation of commands, and may occasionally continue to perform whatever they believe to be their duties even many years after their masters have died or moved on. However, they are violent by nature and will often allow themselves to misremember instructions slightly if there is an opportunity to get more involved in killing by doing so.

A servant of Bit-Yakin can be summoned with a *summon demon* spell. They also make good subjects for a *demonic pact* spell, forcing them to protect a holy site or artefact with every haggard breath of their beast-like bodies. They know nothing of true sorcery, and cannot teach their masters any sorcery styles at all.

COMBAT

Grey devils take a primeval joy in combat, and are quite inventive when it comes to slaying their foes. They will pick enemies up, knock them down, throw things at them, throw them at things, or simply smash them to pieces with their great hammer-like fists.

Grey devils are also naturally expert with all weapons, and are well aware of the damage that can be done with a boulder or oaken table. For this reason, they can be considered proficient with all weapons, including improvised and exotic weapons.

Improved Grab: To use this ability, the grey devil must hit with a claw attack.

Rend: A grey devil can make a single rend attack against a target it is grappling. If the grey devil wins a grapple check, it inflicts 2d6+5 damage.

Sorcerous Glow: The grey devils have eerie glowing eyes that shake the will of anyone who look upon them. Living creatures within 30 feet of a grey devil that can see its unnatural glowing eyes suffer a –2 penalty to all Will saves, including Terror of the Unknown checks.

Trip: A grey devil that hits with a claw attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+5 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to try to trip the grey devil.

Skills: Grey devils have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Additionally, they are almost supernaturally quiet and gain a +8 racial bonus to Move Silently skill checks.





SALOME

'Every century a witch shall be born.' So ran the ancient curse. And so it has come to pass. Some were slain at birth, as they sought to slay me. Some walked the earth as witches, proud daughters of Khauran, with the moon of hell burning upon their ivory bosoms. Each was named Salome. I too am Salome, the witch. It will always be Salome, the witch, even when the mountains of ice have roared down from the pole and ground the civilisations to ruin, and a new world has risen from the ashes and the dust – even then there shall be Salomes to walk the earth, to trap men's hearts by their sorcery, to dance before the kings of the world, to see the heads of the wise men fall at their pleasure.

– *A Witch Shall Be Born*

Salome is one spirit who reincarnates each century into the noble dynasty of Khauran, taking on the form of a newborn girl-child born to the current queen and king. Every girl so born is checked for the telltale red crescent moon birthmark which indicates that another Salome has come into the world.

In almost every case, if the newborn is indeed a Salome, the dynasty will take steps to slay her. Often those steps will not be sufficient.

CREATING SALOME

'Salome' is an inherited template that can be added to any female human (referred to hereafter as the base creature) who has the Salome feat (see page 56).

Salome uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to outsider. Do not recalculate Hit Dice, base attack bonus, or saves. Size is unchanged. Although an outsider, Salome is not subject to banishment because her home realm is Earth.

Speed: As the base creature.

Damage Reduction: As the base creature.

Attacks: As the base creature.

Special Attacks: As the base creature.

Special Qualities: Salome has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus the following special qualities.

Low-light vision.

Sensualist. Salome must experience a new pleasure at least once a week – a new sexual partner, drug, alcoholic drink, or other vice. If she does not, her Base Power Points are reduced by 1 per week until she does experience something new.

Spells: Although Salome gains no particular bonus spells, she is particularly effective with spells of the Curses sorcery style. Whenever she casts any Curse, she gains a +1 competence bonus to her magic attack roll.

Favoured Class: Change to scholar.

Base Power Points: As the base creature +1.

Abilities: Adjust from the base creature as follows: Cha +2, Con +2, Int -2, Wis -2.

Fate Points: Reduce by -2.

Skills: Salome gains a +2 racial bonus to all Bluff and Gather Information checks targeting human males.

Corruption: As base creature +2.



Things That Should Not Be

Many sorcerers consider the pinnacle of their art to be the creation of new life. Rarely is this life genuinely new – most sorcerers have to make do with recreating extinct creatures (see the spell *bones of life*) or combining earthly and demonic creatures into new forms.

Sorcerers may also summon demons from hell or the Outer Dark. There is a frightful multitude of such monsters beyond the belt of light that surrounds this planet, and a sorcerer who knows the secret names of the demons may call down whatever particular demon he desires.

MAKING MONSTERS

These rules allow a sorcerer to construct a monster according to his specifications.

The sorcerer may choose to create creatures of either the monstrous humanoid or magical beast types when making new life, or of the outsider type when calling up demons. The creature's skill points, hit die type, attack bonus, saving throws, and defence bonuses are derived from its type, according to the Type Traits table. As with any other creature, it has one feat, plus one per three full hit dice.

TABLE 17: TYPE TRAITS

Trait	Outsider	Monstrous Humanoid	Magical Beast	Aberration
Hit Dice	D8	D8	D10	D8
Base Attack Bonus	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Base Magic Attack Bonus	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor
Fortitude Saving Throw	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Reflex Saving Throw	Good	Poor	Good	Poor
Will Saving Throw	Good	Poor	Poor	Good
Dodge Bonus	Good	Poor	Good	Poor
Parry Bonus	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Skill Points	8+Int modifier/HD	2+Int modifier/HD	2+Int modifier/HD	2+Int modifier/HD

A creature gets four times its normal skill points for its first Hit Dice.

Base Characteristics (for the purposes of monster creation)

Strength	8	8	12	Varies
Dexterity	8	10	8	Varies
Constitution	8	10	10	Varies
Intelligence	10	6	2	Varies
Wisdom	10	6	6	Varies
Charisma	8	4	4	Varies





Hit Dice	Good Base Attack	Poor Base Attack	Good Magic Attack	Poor Magic Attack	Good Save	Poor Save	Good Defence	Poor Defence
1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	+0
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	+3	+0	+1	+0
3	+3	+2	+1	+0	+3	+1	+2	+1
4	+4	+3	+2	+1	+4	+1	+3	+1
5	+5	+3	+2	+1	+4	+1	+3	+1
6	+6	+4	+3	+1	+5	+2	+4	+2
7	+7	+5	+3	+1	+5	+2	+5	+2
8	+8	+6	+4	+2	+6	+2	+6	+3
9	+9	+6	+4	+2	+6	+3	+6	+3
10	+10	+7	+5	+2	+7	+3	+7	+3
11	+11	+8	+5	+2	+7	+3	+8	+4
12	+12	+9	+6	+3	+8	+4	+9	+4
13	+13	+9	+6	+3	+8	+4	+9	+4
14	+14	+10	+7	+3	+9	+4	+10	+5
15	+15	+11	+7	+3	+9	+5	+11	+5
16	+16	+12	+8	+4	+10	+5	+12	+6
17	+17	+12	+8	+4	+10	+5	+12	+6
18	+18	+13	+9	+4	+11	+6	+13	+6
19	+19	+14	+9	+4	+11	+6	+14	+7
20	+20	+15	+10	+5	+12	+6	+15	+7

Once the basic type of the monster has been selected, the sorcerer now purchases the monster's traits. Each trait listed has a cost in Monster Points. The amount of Monster Points available varies depending on the origin of monster in question, as a sorcerer can either use the Create New Life rules to make permanent monsters

in a vat, or he can use the *summon demon* spell to call down exotic horrors from the Outer Dark. Both types of monster use the same monster rules.

Most creatures created using this rules will trigger Terror of the Unknown. At the Games Master's option they may even trigger terror in their creator.





TABLE 18: MONSTER TRAITS

Monster Points Cost	Hit Dice	Melee Damage	Ranged Damage	Move	Special Movement	Poison	Damage Reduction
1	1	1d2	-	20 ft.	-	-	
2	2	1d3	-	25 ft.	-	-	1
3	3	1d4	1d2	30 ft.	Swim	-	
4	4	1d6	1d3	35 ft.	Climb	1d3/2	2
5	5	1d8	1d4	40 ft.	Fly I	1d3/3	
6	6	1d10*	1d6	45 ft.*	Fly II	1d4/2	3
7	7	2d6	1d8	50 ft.	Fly III	1d4/3	
8	8	2d8**	1d10	55 ft.	Burrow	1d6/3	4
9	9	3d6	2d6	60 ft.**	Fly IV	1d6/4	
10	10	4d6***	2d8	65 ft.	Fly V	1d8/4	5
12	11			60 ft.			6
14	12**			75 ft.***			7
16	13						8
18	14						9
20	15***						10

* Creature's size must be at least Medium

** Creature's size must be at least Large

*** Creature's size must be at least Huge

All creatures begin as either Small or Medium size, the sorcerer chooses which, with a space of 5 ft. by 5 ft. and a reach of 5 ft. A sorcerer may create larger creatures or smaller creatures, but this costs extra (see *Monster Powers* below). Each column must be paid for separately.

Hit Dice: The creature's hit dice, in conjunction with its type, determine its hit points, saving throws, and base attack bonus. Once the creature is completed, roll to determine its hit points. All creatures must possess at least one level in this ability.

Melee Damage: The creature has a melee attack that deals the listed damage. A creature may be granted a second melee attack simply by purchasing two attacks for it. Each attack deals damage according to its level, and both attacks use the creatures base attack bonus without penalty. A creature that does not have at least 1 level in melee damage has no effective melee attacks, but may use weapons if it possesses hands. This attack is a claw, bite, fang, or other natural attack.

Ranged Damage: The creature has a natural ranged attack, such as a launched barb or a mantichore's spikes, that deals the listed damage. This attack has a range increment of 30 ft. Creatures with 2 or fewer levels in this ability have no natural ranged attack. The creature has unlimited ammunition for this attack.

Movement: The creature has the listed speed for its level. A creature with 0 levels in this feature has a movement of 15 ft.

Special Movement: In addition to walking or running, the creature has a special mode of movement. Creatures that gain the swim or climb movement mode have a speed equal to their walking speed when using those special abilities. Creatures that gain the ability to burrow dig through the earth at half their normal speed.

Creatures that can fly move through the air as follows, depending on their size and their grade of the Fly special movement:





Size	Fly Grade				
	Fly I	Fly II	Fly III	Fly IV	Fly V
Small	Walk speed (poor)	1.5 x walk speed (poor)	2 x walk speed (average)	2.5 x walk speed (good)	3 x walk speed (perfect)
Medium	Walk speed (clumsy)	Walk speed (poor)	1.5 x walk speed (poor)	2 x walk speed (average)	2.5 x walk speed (good)
Large	0.5 x walk speed (clumsy)	Walk speed (clumsy)	Walk speed (poor)	1.5 x walk speed (poor)	2 x walk speed (average)
Huge	N/A	0.5 x walk speed (clumsy)	Walk speed (clumsy)	Walk speed (poor)	1.5 x walk speed (poor)

Poison: A creature with a poison feature of 4th level or higher produces a natural venom usable with all of its attacks gained by the melee damage and ranged damage features. Creatures that do not have natural attacks cannot use poison. The creature's poison requires a Fortitude saving throw to resist, with the DC being 10 + ½ the creature's HD + creature's Con bonus. The initial damage is listed first, followed by the number of saving throws after the slash. The sorcerer may choose which of the six characteristics (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) the poison damages. No poison can damage more than one characteristic with its poison. All of the creature's natural attacks are coated with its poison.

Damage Reduction: The creature gains the listed natural bonus to DR. The bonus comes from a tough hide, armoured plates, or other thick, hard parts of its anatomy. A creature with 0 levels in this ability has a natural AC bonus of 0.

MONSTER POWERS

In addition to its base characteristics like Hit Dice and Damage Reduction, a creature can have a number of special powers. These powers are purchased individually with Monster Points. A monster may have a maximum number of individual powers up to its Hit Dice divided by three, rounding up,

TABLE 19: MONSTER POWERS

Monster Points Cost	Special Abilities
1	Low-light Vision, 2 characteristic points
2	Darkvision 60 ft., Advanced Skill
3	Aquatic, Advanced Spell+
4	Improved grab
5	Large size, 10 ft. reach, Bonus Feat, Terror of the Unknown +2, Tiny Size, 1 ft. reach+
6	Blindsight
7	Constrict (damage as for melee attack)
8	Immune to critical hits**
9	Huge size, 15 ft. reach, Fine Size, 0 reach.+
10	Fast healing 2
10	Invisibility+
12	Manifest+
15	Sorcery+, Shapechanging, Fast Healing 3, Immunity to Damage

* Creature's size must be at least Medium

** Creature's size must be at least Large

*** Creature's size must be at least Huge

+: Creature must be a demon.



SIZE CHANGES

A size increase affects any special ability the creature has that is affected by size. Increased size also affects a creature's ability scores, DV, attack bonuses, and damage values as indicated on the tables below.

TABLE 20: CHANGES TO STATISTICS BY SIZE

Old Size*	New Size	Str	Dex	Con	DV/ Attack
Small	Tiny	-4	+2	Same	+1
Medium	Large	+8	-2	+4	-1
Large	Huge	+8	-2	+4	-1

*Repeat the adjustment if the creature moves up more than one size.

TABLE 21: CHANGING DAMAGE WITH SIZE

Old Damage (Each)*	Increase Size	Decrease Size
1d2	1d3	1
1d3	1d4	1d2
1d4	1d6	1d3
1d6	1d8	1d4
1d8	2d6	1d6
1d10	2d8	1d8
2d6	3d6	1d10
2d8	3d8	2d6

* Repeat the adjustment if the creature moves up more than one size category.

Characteristic Points: This feature grants the sorcerer a pool of points to add to the creature's base characteristics. The base characteristics vary by monster type. Each point gained from this feature may be spent on any of the six characteristics. Characteristics raised above 20 cost two points per characteristic point; characteristics raised above 30 cost four points per point.

This ability may be taken multiple times.

Terror of the Unknown +2: The Will save DC to resist Terror of the Unknown when encountering this creature is increased by +2.

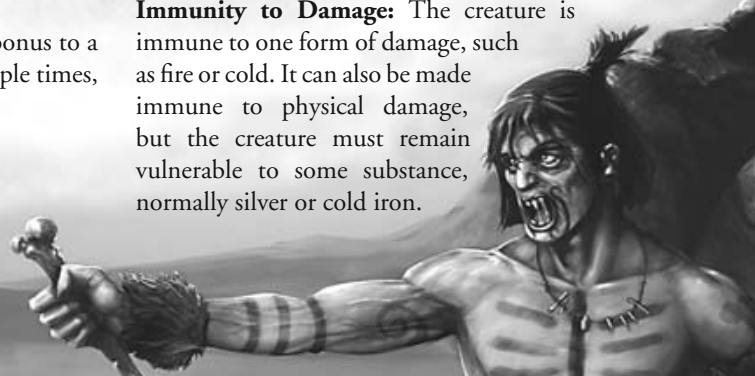
Advanced Skill: The creature has a +4 racial bonus to a particular skill. This ability may be taken multiple times, but only twice for any single skill.

Advanced Spell: If the creature has Sorcery, it gains another Advanced Spell or a new style. This ability may be taken multiple times.

Sorcery: The creature can cast spells. It gains the Basic Spell and Defensive Blast of one style, and has a Base PP of 4+ Wisdom modifier+ ½ its Hit Dice.

Shapechanging: The monster can change into a different form. This form is constructed using the rules above, but the monster has fifteen fewer Monster Points with which to buy traits. Switching forms is a full-round action.

Immunity to Damage: The creature is immune to one form of damage, such as fire or cold. It can also be made immune to physical damage, but the creature must remain vulnerable to some substance, normally silver or cold iron.





MONSTER WEAKNESSES

A sorcerer may deliberately compromise his design by allowing certain inherent weaknesses to remain in the finished horror. By taking monster weaknesses, the sorcerer can get extra Monster Points.

TABLE 22: MONSTER WEAKNESSES

Monster Points Cost	Special Abilities
-1	Extra Corruption [^] Reduced Ability Score
-2	Unnatural Hunger
-3	Vulnerability Demanding+ Deceptive+ Compulsion
-4	Requires Special Environment [^] Missing Sense
-5	Disobedient

[^]: Non-demon only.

+ : Demon only.

Extra Corruption: The creature's Corruption score is increased by +1. This weakness may be taken multiple times, but there are severe negative effects if a creature's Corruption ever reaches 10 (see below).

Reduced Characteristic: One of the creature's ability scores is reduced by 2.

Unnatural Hunger: The monster hungers for some sustenance that is hard to obtain and extremely distinctive. A monster might crave blood, for example, and leave distinctive puncture wounds on its victims, or it might only feed on moonlight distilled in a magical glass, or it might hunger for the flesh of ordained priests. A creature who is not given what it hungers for becomes Disobedient.

Vulnerability: The creature takes double damage from a particular form of attack, like fire or cold, or from a particular substance like iron or silver. If the creature has damage reduction, it does not apply to its vulnerability.

Demanding: The demon wants the sorcerer to aid it in some manner, or requires a particular offering or form of payment worth at

least 500 silver pieces per HD of the demon, even when called using *summon demon*. If called with *demonic pact* or *greater demonic pact*, then the demon's demands will be insanely excessive.

Deceptive: The demon delights in twisting the sorcerer's words, and will do its best to disobey or misinterpret whatever commands it is given.

Compulsion: The creature has an instinctive behaviour that it cannot override even under sorcerous command. It *must* shy away from bright lights, it *must* devour the corpses of the fallen, it *must* howl when the moon rises. This compulsion must be a significant one, enough to make it inconvenient for the sorcerer.

Requires Special Environment: The creature can only survive in a particular environment, such as a particularly warm chamber, a lightless cave, within the sanctified confines of a temple and so forth. The creature sickens and dies when taken outside its home, suffering 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round.

Missing Sense: The creature is missing one of its senses – either sight or hearing, making it blind or deaf. See *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 224, for rules on Blindness and Deafness.

Disobedient: The creature is filled with hatred and loathing for the sorcerer, and will attack him in preference to all other targets. A disobedient creature cannot be commanded normally, but it can be temporarily cowed with violence or have its will crushed by sorcery.

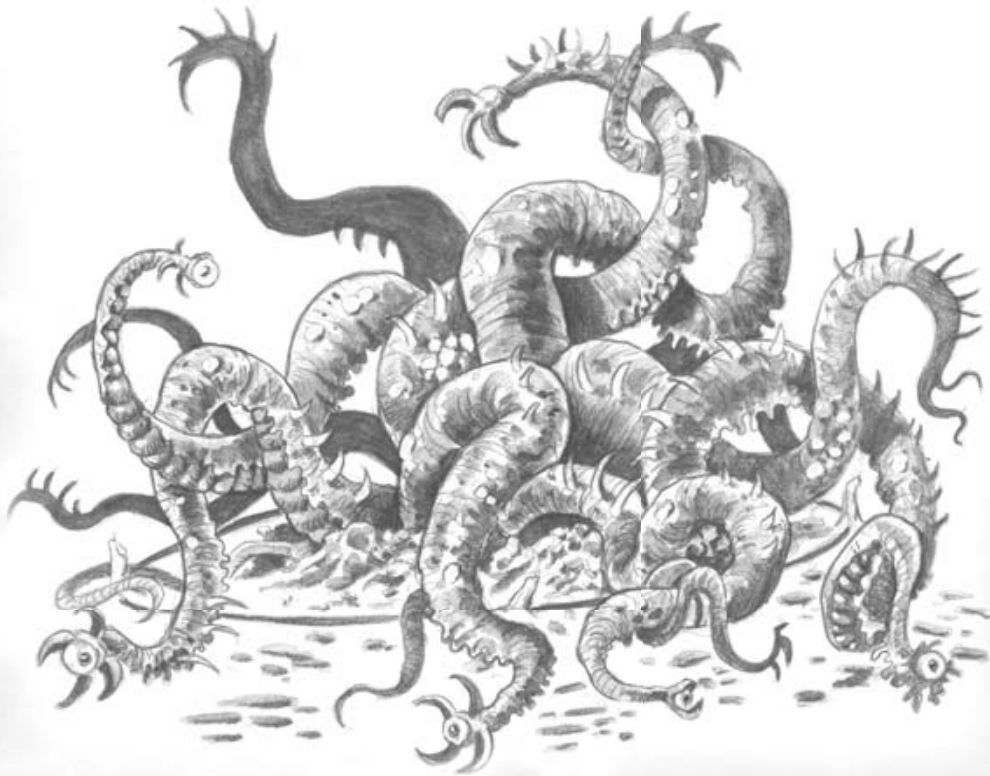
SUMMONING DEMONS

Sorcerers with the *summon demon* spell can call up whatever demon they wish. The *Conan* rulebook and the *Bestiary of the Hyborian Age* list various demons, but there are many sorts of other demons. A sorcerer may use these rules to choose the demon he wants for a particular task.

To summon a demon, the sorcerer needs to know the creature's name and the realm in which it dwells. To obtain this lore, the sorcerer needs to make a Knowledge (arcana) check, at a DC equal to the half the Monster Point cost of the creature. Often, this will require extensive research in a library of unholy lore (see page 119).

Once the desired creature has been identified, it can be called to the earthly plane using the *summon demon*





spell (or using *demonic pact*). The Power Point cost for summoning the demon is equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the demon's Monster Point total, round up.

For example, Thoth-Amon wishes to summon an imp to spy on a rival. This demon has 6 HD (6 points), deals 1d4 damage in melee (4 points), can move 60 feet (9 points) and has DR 2 (4 points). He then buys the creature's powers, giving it Fly III (7 points) and Tiny size (5 points). Changing its size to Tiny reduces its damage to 1d3, decreases its Strength to 4 and increases its Dexterity to 10. Thoth-Amon spends another 3 points on the creature's Dexterity, increasing it by 6 to 16 (3 points). Finally, he gives the imp the power of Invisibility (10 points). The total Monster Point cost of the imp is $6+4+9+4+7+5+3+10=48$ points.

It requires a DC 24 Knowledge (arcana) check to find such a demon. Once identified, it will cost $48 / 4$ or 12 Power Points to summon the demon.

The shuddering echoes made him start and brought back his own situation vividly to the king. He glared fearsomely at the outer gloom, and thought of all the grisly tales he had heard of Tsosha's necromantic cruelty, and it was with an icy sensation down his spine that he realized that these must be the very Halls of Horror named in shuddering legendry, the tunnels and dungeons wherein Tsosha performed horrible experiments with beings human, bestial, and, it was whispered, demonic, tampering blasphemously with the naked basic elements of life itself. Rumour said that the mad poet Rinaldo had visited these pits, and that the nameless monstrosities of which he hinted in his awful poem, *The Song of the Pit*, were no mere fantasies of a disordered brain. That brain had crashed to dust beneath Conan's battle-ax on the night the king had fought for his life with the assassins the mad rimer had led into the betrayed palace, but the shuddersome words of that grisly song still rang in the king's ears as he stood there in his chains.

— *The Scarlet Citadel*





THE VATS - CREATING NEW LIFE

For the sorcerer who is truly obsessed with the quest to bring completely new creatures into being, there is really only one option. He must create new life from primal matter such as mud or seawater, magically infused with spell after spell to give it vital energy. This is done in great vats, bubbling away in vast and complex laboratories.

Such a course of action is of course contrary to the policies and philosophies of most of the established religions, who generally regard the creation of new life as the province of the gods and only the gods. A sorcerer who successfully creates a completely new life-form, even an essentially non-viable one such as those presented here, will earn the eternal enmity of civilised folk and their priests. Even savages will often harbour a primitive but deep-running superstition of a magician who can create new life from such humble ingredients.

All creatures crafted in this way are regarded as somewhat monstrous, and have a tendency to become corrupted over time, turning to the utmost evil even if their creator was not himself evil.

THE CRAFTING PROCESS

The sorcerer's primary focus lies in creating, raising, and devising new lifeforms. These creatures are the end result of many hours of research, design, and careful creation. As the sorcerer gains levels, he learns to make more intricate creatures that feature a wider range of bizarre abilities and powers. The sorcerer's creations all count as magical beasts, even if their form and function mimics that of a humanoid or other creature type.

To create a creature, the sorcerer must first create a laboratory with arcane tools, vats, and other resources costing a total of 10,000 sp. This laboratory is also capable of functioning as a masterwork alchemist's laboratory, and as a laboratory with which to create aberrations (see page 117). It can be either built from scratch or else created from an expanded masterwork alchemist's laboratory or aberration creator's laboratory at a cost of +5,000 sp or +2,500 sp respectively.

The sorcerer selects the options he wants his creature to have and notes their listed Monster Point cost. After totalling the Monster Point cost of all the

selected options, multiply the result by 250 to determine the silver piece cost of the raw materials needed to produce the creature and by 25 to determine the XP cost of the rituals and incantations necessary to grant the creation a spark of life. The process of forming the creature's body from the proto-organic goop of its component materials requires a number of full days of work equal to the Monster Point cost of the creature. The sorcerer can undertake no other tasks aside from tending to his creation, though he may take breaks in the process of up to seven days without ruining it. If by some mishap or attack the sorcerer's lab is destroyed while he is in the midst of creating a creature, the beast is automatically destroyed and the sorcerer must begin his work anew.

For example: Amun-Re is an 18th level scholar with the Craft New Life feat. He wishes to create a skirmishing creature to help defend his tower. It will have 4 hit dice (4 points), do 1d6 damage in melee (4 points), 1d8 ranged (7 points), move at 50 ft. (7 points), climb (4 points), have a mild poison on its quills (1d4 Dex/2) (6 points), +3 Damage Reduction (6 points), low-light vision (level 1) and Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10 (18 bonus stat points, 9 points). The total point cost is 4+4+7+7+4+6+6+1+9 = 48 Monster Points. Amun-Re must spend 250 x 48 = 12,000 sp and 25 x 48 = 1,200 xp to create the creature, and the process will take 48 days.

CONTROL AND MAINTENANCE OF CREATURES

Over time, the beasts concocted by the sorcerer slowly become corrupted. While sorcerers blame this on their still-imperfect understanding of the fundamental nature of life, their critics and most priests claim it is a mark of the gods' disfavour towards their blasphemies.

After four weeks of life, the creature must make a Corruption save once per week (DC = 10 + creating sorcerer's scholar class level + creating sorcerer's Charisma bonus). If it fails the save, it gains 1 point of Corruption with the usual effects thereof. If it ever reaches 10 points of Corruption, it falls completely outside the sorcerer's control and will in all likelihood go on a wild rampage, attacking the sorcerer, his allies, and anyone else it can find.

A sorcerer can preserve his creation's sanity by regularly strengthening the magical bonds and fields that give it life. By completing a ritual that requires (100 x creature's current Corruption) sp in consumable materials, the sorcerer prevents his creation from requiring a Corruption save for one week. A sorcerer who maintains several creatures must spend the requisite amount on each of them to prevent their slide to evil.





The sorcerer's creations cannot speak unless they have an Intelligence of 3 or higher, in which case they speak the same language as the sorcerer who created them. They obey the sorcerer to the best of their abilities at all times, until they begin to become Corrupted.

Men and women were to the wizard no more than the writhing insect is to the scientist. Soft white hands that had caressed him, red lips that had been pressed to his, dainty white bosoms that had quivered to his hot fierce kisses, to be stripped of their delicate skin, white as ivory and pink as young petals – from Conan's lips burst a yell so frightful and inhuman in its mad fury that a listener would have started in horror to know that it came from a human throat.

– *The Scarlet Citadel*

COMBINING CREATURES - ABERRATIONS

A sorcerer who captures or summons a number of different creatures, for example a demon, a human and an octopus, can attempt to combine them together. This act requires the Craft Aberration feat.

Crafting aberrations also requires a masterwork alchemist's laboratory. This is modified slightly and given certain additions to make it more useful for aberration creation. These modifications and additions cost a further 2,500 sp.

The process of aberration creation requires the following steps:

1. Pay for various consumable materials to a total value of 100 sp per HD of the various creatures you plan to combine.
2. Ensure all creatures to be combined are somehow pacified or restrained. The process is painful, and it is extremely rare that any creature will wish to become part of an aberration. Often all the creatures are given lotus wine or a similar drug to both deaden the pain and render resistance unlikely.
3. Cut and recombine the creatures. This is a painstaking process, for the various creatures involved must be kept alive if at all possible. The process takes 1 day per total HD of the creatures involved. The sorcerer makes a Heal check (DC 30 + number of creatures involved). If he fails, one of the creatures has been dealt unacceptable levels of damage, rendering it unusable in the process (and probably dead). He must either start again, with the loss of one-quarter of the materials used, or continue the process in a modified form which incorporates only the remaining creatures.
4. Re-awaken the new aberration creature. This takes a Knowledge (arcana) check at DC 30. Success allows the creature to be re-awakened. Failure necessitates an unmodified 1d20 roll on Table 23: Life Creation Failure.
5. Define game statistics for the new creature. These are based on whichever of the spliced-together creatures had the highest initial HD. This creature is now known as the core creature. Game statistics are defined according to the process below.
6. Pay 10 XP per hit point of the finished creature.

TABLE 23: LIFE CREATION FAILURE

1d20 Roll	Result
1-7	Simple failure: The creature is dead, or never awakes, and all monies expended are wasted.
8-11	Partial failure: The creature awakens, but is sickly and weak. Work out its statistics as usual, but reduce its final hit dice to one-half (rounded down) and all its abilities by 1d6 (to a minimum of 1 each).
12-14	Partial failure: The creature awakens and is as it should be, that it gains 1d6 weaknesses, chosen at random.
15-16	Partial failure: The creature loses 1d3 special qualities or special attacks it would usually have had, at random or else gains 1d3 weaknesses.
17-18	Partial failure: The creature seems cursed by the gods and has a -4 racial penalty to all saving throws.
19	Catastrophic failure: Great forces have been unleashed, so that you must immediately make a Will save (DC 25) or roll again on the Runaway Magic Table (<i>Conan the Roleplaying Game</i> , page 234), irrespective of whether you had cast any powerful spells recently.
20	Catastrophic success: The new creature awakens immediately, at full power and hit points, but forever dedicated to slaying the sorcerer.





Size: Identical to the largest size of the various creatures spliced together.

Hit Dice: HD equals the HD of the core creature, *less* 1 HD for each additional creature added.

Type: The creature's type becomes aberration.

Speed: As the core creature. If another one of the creatures' speeds was at least 10 feet higher or lower than the core creature's, there is a straight 30% chance that this creature's speed is used instead. If any of the creatures had an additional movement mode that the core creature did not have, there is a 50% chance that the new creature gains this movement mode and the associated speed.

Defence Value: Decide this based on the new creature's HD and type (aberration).

Damage Reduction: Identical to that of the core creature, plus 2d4-5, for a minimum of 0.

Attacks: Retain all attacks of the core creature, with the same levels of damage (subject to any changes in Strength). Recalculate attack rolls based on the creature's new type. If any creature spliced into the core creature had an attack mode the core creature did not, it has a straight 30% chance of acquiring that attack mode.

Special Attacks and Special Qualities: The creature retains most of the Special Attacks and Special Qualities of the core creature, but loses either one Special Quality or Special Attack for each additional creature spliced into it, as determined by the Games Master. It gains one random Special Attack or Special Quality from each creature spliced into it.

Saves: Work these out as usual for an aberration of the new creature's hit dice and abilities.

Abilities: Take the ability scores of the core creature as a basis. For each of the other spliced-in creatures in turn, go through each ability score and compare with that of the core creature. If the spliced-in creature's score in that ability is higher than the core creature's, add +1d4 to the new creature's score in that ability. If lower, subtract 1d4.

Skills and Feats: Select new skills and feats for the new creature, based on its hit dice and the rules for the Aberration type given on page 109. These new skills and feats need not bear any resemblance to those of the original creature; the new creature is just that, a new creature, with its own values and specialities.

CONTROL AND CORRUPTION OF CREATURES

The new creature is likely to be reasonably well disposed to its creator, at least to begin with. However, in the classic Frankenstein's monster way, this disposition is likely to alter as and when it discovers the truth about its origins. Sooner or later, he will likely need to leave it to go its own way, or else confine it to some hellish labyrinth far from mankind. The sorcerer certainly does not have any special ability to command or control his new creation.

Furthermore, the very nature of aberrations – sorcerous abominations that should never have existed – is such that they are highly prone to corruption. After two weeks of life, the creature must make a Corruption save once per week (DC = 10 + creating sorcerer's scholar class level + creating sorcerer's Charisma bonus). If it fails the save, it gains 1 point of Corruption with the usual effects thereof. If it ever reaches 10 points of Corruption, it will in all likelihood go on a wild rampage, attacking the sorcerer, his allies, and anyone else it can find. There is nothing the sorcerer can do to prevent this slow slide into degeneracy.





Tomes of Ancient Lore

Musty libraries of forbidden scrolls, dark tomes bound in human skin, slabs inscribed with runes not made by any human hand – a scholar craves all these and more. All these things contain *knowledge*, and it is a thirst for knowledge and the power that knowledge brings that drives the sorcerer onwards.

LIBRARIES

The building of great libraries and halls of record is the very essence of civilisation. To a barbarian, the only useful knowledge is that which is immediately useful and practical – how to read the signs of wind and rain, how to hunt and cure meat, when to sow and when to reap, how to deal with a sick child or angry spirit. Civilised men, though, value knowledge for its own sake, and knowledge that is only rarely of practical use – the histories of dead kings, knowledge of far-off lands, rare forms of alchemy and philosophy. Libraries are the repositories of this lore.

A library is rated by the ranks of Knowledge it possesses, just like a character. A good library might have 20 ranks in Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (religion), for example. Cults with a high Sorcerous Power usually have excellent libraries (see page 148). A character can obtain a personal library through the Great Library feat, or by adventuring and accumulating books and scrolls.

BENEFITS OF LIBRARIES

A character can perform Research in a library. Research is a special form of a Knowledge check – instead of rolling 1d20, the character rolls 1d6 for every four hours spend researching and reading. The character's dice roll is cumulative, but the total of the character's roll and skill cannot go above the library's Knowledge ranking.

A character must have at least one rank in the relevant Knowledge to make use of a library.

If the library's books are written in a language the character does not know, or are obscure or cryptic, then he must make a Decipher Script roll before each four-hour period of research. The DC for this roll varies depending on the library. If the character is relying on Decipher Script and makes a false conclusion, then his die roll for that period is *subtracted* from his running total instead of adding to it.

For example, a young scholar is researching the mysteries of Set in a Stygian library. The library has a Knowledge (religion) rank of 25, while the young scholar has a Knowledge (religion) skill of +6 (4 ranks, +2 Intelligence modifier). The particular piece of information that the scholar needs is DC 15 to discover.

First, the scholar makes a normal Knowledge (religion) check to see if he knows the information offhand. He rolls 1d20 and adds his Knowledge (religion) skill, but he only rolls a 5 (for a score of 11), less than the DC 15 he needs. He must spend time researching the question.

In his first four hours of research, he rolls 1d6 and gets a 3. Adding his Knowledge skill of +6, he has a result of 9 – not enough. After another four hours research, he rolls another 1d6, getting a 6. 3 (the die roll for the first period of research) +6 (the die roll for the second period of research) +6 (his Knowledge skill) gives him a total of 15, so the scholar finds the particular secret he needs after eight hours of research.

If the piece of information had been DC 30 to find, then this library would have been useless to the young scholar, as his total is capped by the library's own Knowledge ranking in the relevant field.



A HANDFUL OF SCROLLS, A GREAT ARCHED VAULT OF BOOKS

The size of a library affects how useful it is, but also how long a period of research takes.

TABLE 24: LIBRARY SIZE

Size	Maximum Total Knowledge Ranks	Research Period	Description
Tiny	10	1 hour	A single book or sheaf of scrolls
Small	25	4 hours	A handful of books and scrolls
Medium	50	4 hours	A dozen or more books
Large	100	4 hours	A shelf of books and scrolls
Huge	150	8 hours	A large library with hundreds of books
Gigantic	200	12 hours	A great vault with thousands of scrolls and books
Colossal	300	24 hours	One of the greatest libraries of the Hyborian age.

Maximum Total Knowledge Ranks: The total of Knowledge ranks contained in the library. A library with Knowledge (religion) 15 and Knowledge (history) 15 would be at least Medium size.

SAMPLE LIBRARIES

Aquilonian Noble's Library: This is the sort of library that might be found in the home of a noble who prides himself on his erudition. The library contains no great secrets or books of power, but has a wealth of useful information.

Ranks: Knowledge (architecture & engineering) 5 ranks, Knowledge (history) 5 ranks, Knowledge (geography) 5 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) 5 ranks.

Size: Small (Tens of books and scrolls)

Sorcerer's Library: A sorcerer of waxing power might possess a library like this one. Again, the sorcerer has no books of great power, but he has a collection of commentaries and copies of ancient Stygian and Acheronian texts enabling him to pursue his arcane research.

Ranks: Knowledge (arcana) 20 ranks, Knowledge (history) 10 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 10 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks.

Size: Medium

Tsotha-Lanti's Library: The library of the infamous sorcerer Tsotha-Lanti is the envy of many sages. The demon-spawn looted the library of Pelias and other wizards of the north, and also retrieved certain tomes of terrible power from the vaults below the citadel at Khorshemish.

Ranks: Knowledge (arcana) 30 ranks, Knowledge (history) 20 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 30 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 20 ranks

Size: Large

City of Things That Are Not Good To Know: This is a fabled city of scholars in Khitai, where the walls of every street and alleyway are lined with scrolls, and even the most wretched beggar is a learned sage. It may be a myth repeated in the dreaming west by scholars jealous of the wisdom of the east, or a great repository of lore.

Ranks: Knowledge (arcana) 50 ranks, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) 20 ranks, Knowledge (history) 50 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 40 ranks, Knowledge (nobility) 20 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 60 ranks, Knowledge (warfare) 30 ranks.

Size: Colossal





BOOKS OF MAGIC

The greatest prizes for scholars are those books of magic that contain the secret teachings of sorcery. To write a spellbook, a sorcerer must put something of his own warped soul into the text. These books of magic are like living things, steeped in the blasphemous power of their creators, lurking in locked vaults and shadowed places of the earth. Those who read the writings of the ancients often go mad, becoming caught up in the obsessions of long-dead sorcerers.

WRITING YOUR OWN SPELLBOOK

A sorcerer may create his own masterpiece, a spellbook containing some or all of his lore. Most often, a sorcerer writes a spellbook because he is growing old and his memory is failing, but others create such books for the instruction of apprentices and cult members.

Defensive Blasts count as 3 PP spells for the purposes of spellbooks.

Manufacturing Costs: 50 silver pieces per PP of spells written within, 5 xp per pp of spells written within, must know all the spells written within.

Greater Component: Human skin

BOOK OF SKELOS

This is the ancient libram of a long-ago sorcerer, now forgotten by all save for sorcerers, adventurers, and the strange cult that worships Skelos as a god (see page 157). The *book of Skelos* was written at least a millennium ago, judging by the illustrations that fill its bestiary, depicting the great golden leopards of Hyborian legend and the giant snakes that once infested the marshes south of the Vilayet Sea.

The *book of Skelos* is said to contain all known spells, as well as a heap of other knowledge. However, it is written in a curious, old-fashioned and cryptic language, with a great many deliberate errors or 'blinds.' This makes deciphering



it extremely difficult, even for the most ardent and expert scholar. Many who read the *book of Skelos* come away with no benefit at all, or may even become troubled by terrifying dreams and risk corruption.

A character who studies the *book of Skelos*, which will take two full weeks and require a Decipher Script check, has a chance to discover new knowledge depending on the Decipher Script check result, as follows:

TABLE 25: BOOK OF SKELOS

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
19 or less	No benefit. The character has nightmares for 3d6 days thereafter and wakes up fatigued (see <i>Conan the Roleplaying Game</i> , page 225) each day thereof. He must make a Corruption save (DC 20) at the end of this time or gain 1 point of Corruption.
20-24	No benefit. The fortnight is wasted in fruitless study.
25-29	+4 competence bonus to all Knowledge (nature) checks for the next month.
30-34	+4 competence bonus to all Knowledge (geography) checks for the next month.
35-39	+4 competence bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) checks for the next month.
40+	Discover a new spell, chosen at random.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

The *book of Skelos* also tells at length of the reputed treasures to be found on the mysterious islands and lost continents of the Western Ocean (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 300). This information is subsumed in the Knowledge (geography) competence bonuses for the most part; however, the Games Master is also encouraged to use the *book of Skelos* as a source of useful information about upcoming adventures. A character perusing the *book of Skelos* will frequently come across a section dealing with a specific treasure and its alleged location. This can be written up by the Games Master and used as a handout. This possibility is not included as an option on the table above, since the Games Master may not have a handout ready at the time.

Manufacturing Costs: 52,000 sp; 5,200 xp; must own another *book of Skelos* to copy from.

Greater Component: Skin of a sorcerer.

A Note on Spellbooks

It is always important to remember that spell books do not instantly grant the reader the knowledge of a new spell. Rather, a spellbook that has been successfully deciphered allows the reader to learn the spell (or one of the spells) discovered next time he is eligible to choose a new spell anyway, instead of having to make a Knowledge (arcana) check (if an independent) or simply being forced to learn the next spell his coven or magical order wishes to teach him.

For the spell-books that have a large number of spells that can be discovered randomly with study, the player should keep a record of which spells he has discovered. Again he does not automatically know them, but they will all be available to him to choose from next time he is eligible to learn a new spell by virtue of class feature or feat.

A sorcerer can try to cast a spell he does not know from a spellbook in his possession – see the *Conan* rulebook, page 274. The sorcerer must have successfully deciphered the book in order to cast the spell.





BOOKS OF TSOtha-LANTI

These grim volumes are bound in human skin, and contain the full sorcerous knowledge of the scholar Tsotha-lanti, as well as several spells he has not yet had a chance to learn. The *books* are written in Tsotha-lanti's own cipher and require a Decipher Script check (DC 25) to read, and one week of time. They include the following spells:

Oriental Magic: *calm of the adept, darting serpent, warrior trance.*

Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news, dream of wisdom.*

Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, dread serpent, domination, mass hypnotic suggestion.*

Necromancy: *raise corpse, death touch, agonising doom;*
Prestidigitation: *conjuring, burst barrier, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, animate swords.*

Summonings: *demonic pact, greater demonic pact, summon demon, summon elemental, form demon.*

Manufacturing Costs: 7,050 sp; 705 xp; must own another set of *books of Tsotha-lanti* to copy from.

Greater Component: Mystic incense of Tsotha-Lanti

BOOKS OF VATHELOS

But he put aside his fears and mounted to the bronze door, whose smooth surface offered no bolt or catch. Not for naught had he gained access into darksome cults, had harkened to the grisly whispers of the votaries of Skelos under midnight trees, and read the forbidden iron-bound books of Vathelos the Blind.

— Black Colossus

Vathelos the Blind was another great scholar and sorcerer, almost as famed as Skelos. He wrote a number of iron-bound books filled with grim secrets – or, more correctly, he dictated them to an unnamed scribe or apprentice, whose descent into madness is clearly illustrated by the gradual alteration in the style of the script and the weird practice of leaping about from book to book, sometimes even in mid-sentence.

The *books of Vathelos* potentially contain all the secrets of almost every spell ever invented, though they do not have quite so many as the *book of Skelos*. However, they are most useful if acquired as a set, for each volume refers back and forth to each other volume, and the best sorcerous knowledge can only be gleaned from a careful study of all six books. Even though there do not seem to be any deliberate errors in the tomes, this style of writing is annoying and time-wasting, so that studying the *books of Vathelos* is considerably more time-consuming than the *book of Skelos*.

A character who studies the *books of Vathelos*, which will take four full weeks and require a Decipher Script check, has a chance to discover new knowledge depending on the Decipher Script check result, as follows:

Modifiers: -4 circumstance penalty to Decipher Script check for each book less than 6.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

Manufacturing Costs: 30,000 sp; 3,000 xp; must own another six-book set of *books of Vathelos* to copy from. Cost for one *book of Vathelos* alone is 5,000 sp/500 xp.

Greater Component: Iron Casing, forged by the dead from meteoric iron.

TABLE 26: BOOKS OF VATHELOS

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
14 or less	No benefit. If the character does not have a complete set of the <i>books of Vathelos</i> , he is stumped and may not try again until he has acquired at least one additional volume in the series.
15-19	No benefit. The month is wasted in fruitless study.
20-24	+2 competence bonus to all Knowledge (religion) checks for the next month
25-29	+2 competence bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) checks for the next month
30+	Discover a new spell, chosen at random.





BOOKS OF LORE

Most Hyborian age texts are written on scrolls or stone/clay tablets. However, the sorcerous works of the era are usually described as ‘iron-bound,’ indicating they are actually books in the modern, bound sense. Of course, even this is disputed by scholars, some of whom believe these iron-bound ‘books’ are merely collections of scrolls kept within iron chests for protection. The Games Master is free to choose whichever interpretation pleases him – it is actually unimportant. That there exist collections of sorcerous knowledge is the most important piece of information. Most readers of the Conan sagas are familiar with the Books or Scrolls of Skelos, for example. Do not be afraid to tie these ancient tomes (or the other magic items listed in this volume and the other sourcebooks for the *Conan the Roleplaying Game* line) into an adventure or campaign. However, do not make these random treasures. If these items have no story-specific purpose, then they are wasted items. Once they have served their purpose, destroy or remove them. Also remember that there are false tomes floating around the Hyborian Age – a search for one of the famous tomes may involve finding several leads and testing them for authenticity.

BOOK OF THE DEATH GOD

The *Book of the Death God* is the holy book of the Azweri. In it are the religious rites of Yama the Demon King, the many-armed Great God of Death and Terror. Scarlet-clad shamans recite these ancient prayers and spells as they have for millennia. It includes a ceremony for marrying their horrible god to mortal women, a ceremony which allows the god-king of the Azweri to publicly consummate the wedding as a stand-in for the demon. The book discusses reincarnation and issues of karma, allowing the god-kings to enforce their will by

claiming others deserve their fates because of unresolved issues from former lives. Any sort of divination is also considered to be predestined and unavoidable because of the text of this book.

A character who studies the *Book of the Death God*, which will take a week and require a Decipher Script check (as well as a Corruption save that will have the same DC as the characters Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled. The Corruption save DC, however, does not change.

Manufacturing Costs: 48,000 sp; 4,800 xp; must own another *Book of the Death God* to copy from.

BOOKS OF SHUMA-GORATH

There are three iron-bound books of Shuma-Gorath, each secured with an insidious lock. A magical key is required to unlock the books, which is kept in Kheshatta in Stygia. More than a millennia before the sinking of Atlantis, the demon Shuma-Gorath settled on the mountain that would later be known as Mount Crom in Cimmeria. Shuma-Gorath is from the Outer Dark and appears as a giant eye surrounded by a multitude of tentacles. Sometimes the tentacles are portrayed as legs, other times they are portrayed as having lobster-like claws on the ends. He was kept sated by blood sacrifice, although he would destroy any shaman who sought to commune with him or dared to enter into a pact with him. He ruled over the humans of the area until a shaman from the north arrived, bringing with him the religion of Crom and three iron-bound books. The shaman confronted Shuma-Gorath and read from the books. When he finished the third book, Shuma-Gorath was imprisoned in the mountain and the shaman proclaimed the victory of Crom over the demon. The mountain was named Mount Crom.

TABLE 27: BOOK OF THE DEATH GOD

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
12 or less	No Benefit
13-17	+2 Competence Bonus to all Knowledge (religion) checks for the next month
18-22	+2 Competence Bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks for the next month
23+	+2 Magical Attack Bonus to all Necromancy and Curse spells for the next month





By reading the books in order, the character can bind Shuma-Gorath or any other demon lord into a geographic feature. Also, by reading from all three books the character can summon Shuma-Gorath or other demon lords previously trapped by the books into a geographic feature (depending on where the ceremony is read). The character enters into a *greater demonic pact* (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) whether he has the spell or not.

Manufacturing Costs: 48,000 sp; 4,800 xp; must own another *Book of Shuma-Gorath* to copy from.

THE SECRETS OF IMMORTALITY, ACCORDING TO GUCHUPTA OF SHAMBALLAH

At intervals he raised his eyes from the ancient, python-bound tome that lay upon his lap to stare thoughtfully at the alabaster casket, wherein the bloated body of King Numedides rested in its bath of virgin's blood. Then, frowning, he would again return to the pages of his book. The parchment of this monstrous volume was inscribed in a spidery hand in a language unknown to scholars of the West. Row upon row of hooked and cursive characters marched down the page in columns. And many of the glyphs were writ in inks of emerald, amethyst and vermillion, unfaded by the passage of the years... Had anyone been present to study the inscription on the spine and understand its cryptic signary, he would have discovered that this arcane volume was entitled: *The Secrets of Immortality, According to Guchupta of Shamballah.*

— *Conan the Liberator*

This arcane book discusses rituals and tortures designed to bring about immortality and the transference of *signum vitalis* from one body to another. Guchupta of Shamballah wrote down the secrets of immortality in this tome. The book has pages of parchment and is inscribed in a spidery hand in a language known only to scholars of the East. A character who studies the secrets, which will take a week and require a Decipher Script check as well as a Corruption save (DC equal to the Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge. Eastern scholars have a +2 competence bonus to the Decipher Script check.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled. The Corruption save DC, however, does not change.

Manufacturing Costs: 47,000 sp; 4,700 xp; must own another copy of *The Secrets of Immortality, According to Guchupta of Shamballah* to transcribe from.

THE TOMES OF SABATEA OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

These 'evil-reeking' books of black magic, written in envenomed ink, discuss the uses of torture in magic and spellcasting. There are three volumes. A character who studies *The Tomes of Sabatea of the Golden Peacock*, which will take four weeks per volume and require a Decipher Script check as well as a Corruption save (DC equal to the Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge.



TABLE 28: THE SECRETS OF IMMORTALITY, ACCORDING TO GUCHUPTA OF SHAMBALLAH

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
18 or less	No Benefit
19-23	+2 Competence Bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) checks for the next month.
24-28	The character gains the benefits of the Tormented Sacrifice feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character already has the feat, he gains 2 PP per hit point drained from the victim up to the character's maximum.
29-33	The character may cast <i>witch's vigour</i> within the next two hours even if he does not know the spell. There is a 30% chance of spell failure.
34+	The character may cast <i>eternal youth</i> on himself or another if cast within the next two hours, but the material component is a virgin of less than 13 years. There is a 50% chance of spell failure.



TABLE 29: VOLUME I: THE TORTURES OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
18 or less	No Benefit, but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Tormented Sacrifice feat at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
19-23	+2 Competence Bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks for the next month.
24-28	The character gains the benefits of the Tormented Sacrifice feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character does not have the feat but is subject to the Rule of Obsession to obtain it, then he is temporarily relieved of the penalty. If the character already has the feat, he gains 2 PP per hit point drained from the victim up to the character's maximum.
29-33	All curses cast by the character for the next month have a +1 bonus to the Magic Attack roll and the victims suffer great pain whenever the curse afflicts them (for example, the victim of Lesser Ill-Fortune suffers pain whenever he has to make an attack roll, a saving throw, an ability check or a skill check).
34+	A character can use the book to cast <i>torment</i> even if he does not meet the prerequisites (casting time increases to 1 full round) or can learn it if he has an available slot and meets the prerequisites.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled. The Corruption save DC, however, does not change.

Manufacturing Costs: 56,000 sp; 5,600 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Tortures of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

TABLE 30: VOLUME II: THE BLOOD OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
19 or less	No Benefit, but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Bleed Dry* feat at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
20-23	Character gains a +2 competence bonus to Intimidate checks for the next month.
24-27	The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all Magic Attack Rolls for the next month for all spell cast involving human sacrifice.
28-31	The character gains the benefits of the Bleed Dry feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character does not have the feat but is subject to the Rule of Obsession to obtain it, then he is temporarily relieved of the penalty. If the character already has the feat, he treats all victims as if they had +20 hit points more than they actually had for his next sacrifice only.
32+	Character can cast <i>draw forth the heart</i> or <i>agonising doom</i> from the book even if he does not meet the prerequisites, but immediately gains a point of Corruption and it takes a full round action to cast, or can learn either if he has available slots and meets the prerequisites.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled. The Corruption save DC, however, does not change.

Manufacturing Costs: 104,000 sp; 10,400 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Blood of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.



TABLE 31: VOLUME III: THE POISONS OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
21 or less	No Benefit but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Loathsome Weapon feat at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
22-27	+4 Competence Bonus to all Craft (herbalism or alchemy) checks for the next month
28-33	The character can increase the potency of any poison concocted in the next month, increasing its save DCs by +2
34-39	The character can increase the potency of any poison concocted in the next month, increasing its save DCs by +4 and any victim slain by the poison is treated by the sorcerer as if he had ritually sacrificed him with the Tormented Sacrifice feat.
40+	Character can cast <i>dread serpent</i> from the book even if he does not meet the prerequisites, but it takes a full round action to cast.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled. The Corruption save DC, however, does not change.

Manufacturing Costs: 159,000 sp; 15,900 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Poisons of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

THE BOOK OF DZYAN

Only copies of this book are known to exist – the original is rumoured to have been written in vanished Atlantis. The *Book of Dzyan* was preserved only by scribes in the Himelias in far-off Vendhya, leading some to suspect that the book actually comes from the mysterious realm of Mu, beyond the known world. The *Book* is primarily a work of philosophy about magic, and claims that certain races and peoples are more gifted in the arcane arts than others. It also describes the changing ages of the world, and contains dire portents and prophecies for the

future. The original was written in an obscure tongue, but Vendhyan translations are much more common. Increase the DC of Decipher Script checks by +10 when dealing with an untranslated copy of the book, but only the original version contains the higher spells described below.

Spells:

Manufacturing Costs: 104,000 sp; 10,400 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Blood of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

Warding: *warding, desperate ward, incantation of amalric's witchman, master warding**

Divination: *astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, visions, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news**

Summonings: *master-words and signs, demonic pact, summon demon, banish outsider, bind demon*, travel beyond**

TABLE 32: THE BOOK OF DZYAN

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
15 or less (25 or less)	No benefit.
16-20 (26-30)	The character gains a +4 insight bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) checks for the next month.
21-30 (31-40)	Character can cast or learn any of the spells not marked with an asterisk above.
(41 or more)	Character can cast or learn the spells marked with an asterisk above.

Values in brackets are for the untranslated *Book of Dzyan*. If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

Manufacturing Costs: 7,100 sp; 7,100 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Book of Dzyan* to transcribe from.





THE BOOK OF EIBON

The fearsome *Book of Eibon* hails from Hyperborea, and is said to have been written by an ancestral sorcerer-god of that cold land. It is a potent collection of spells, all written in a clear and concise manner. However, the book is said to carry a curse, and those who study it often meet alarming and grisly fates.

Spells:

Counterspells: *ward by will*

Divination: *not this day, mind-reading*

Necromancy: *the dead speak, death touch*

Prestidigitation: *telekinesis*

Summoning: *demonic pact, summon demon*

Cosmic Sorcery: *the time is right, make gate*

Frost Magic: *winds of madness, command weather, become beast*

SEVEN CRYPTICAL BOOKS OF EARTH

This set of scrolls from Khitai primarily discusses spirits and monsters that dwell in the far east, including a mysterious mountain where the gods are held to dwell. Each of the seven scrolls must be translated separately, but when all seven are comprehended and cross-referenced, then certain higher secrets are revealed.

Each book contains a single spell and gives a single benefit. The benefits last for one month after reading the book. The spell can be cast from the book as normal, or learned.

TABLE 33: THE BOOK OF EIBON

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
20 or less	The character becomes the subject of a curse, and will suffer from terrible nightmares for 1d6 weeks that leave the character fatigued each night. He dreams of a horror that walks on the wind, and soon that horror will come and murder him.
21-25	No benefit.
25+	Character can cast or learn any of the spells above.

Manufacturing Costs: 10,100 sp; 1,010 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Book of Eibon* to transcribe from.

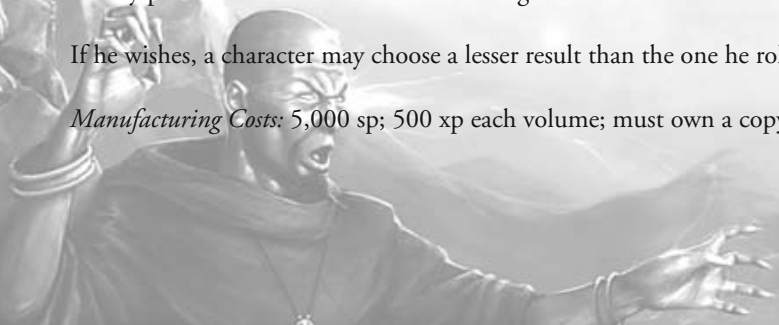
TABLE 34: SEVEN CRYPTICAL BOOKS OF EARTH

Decipher Script Check Result	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
15 or less	No benefit						
16-20	+2 Healing checks	+2 Knowledge (nature)	+2 Diplomacy	+2	+2 Tumble	+1 to Dodge DV	+1 to all Unarmed Attacks
21-30	Calm of the Adept	Summon Beast	Entrance	Astrological Prediction	Vanish	Warding	<i>Darting Serpent</i>
31+*	Travel Beyond, Make Gate						

* Only possible when all seven scrolls are together

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

Manufacturing Costs: 5,000 sp; 500 xp each volume; must own a copy of the relevant scroll to transcribe from.





THE SONG OF THE PIT

The Song of the Pit is a short book of poems written by the infamous bard Rinaldo, who was slain by Conan during the events of *The Phoenix on the Sword*. Before his death, Rinaldo visited the Scarlet Citadel of Tsoth-Lanti, and in the pits beneath that fortress he saw things that drove him mad. Most of the decadent nobles and intellectuals of Aquilonia and Koth dismissed *the Song of the Pit* as the fevered rantings of a febrile brain, but those with sufficient knowledge can find a deeper meaning in the poems.

A character needs at least one rank of Knowledge (arcana) before he can attempt to decipher *The Song of the Pit*.

THE CODEX OF ZHAR

In the bazaars of Yezud, a man with gold to spare can find a hundred different copper-bound books written in indecipherable tongues that each merchant swears is the true Codex of Zhar. Fire-worshipping cults drink distillations of black oil and belch flame as part of their bizarre rituals, and madmen claim that they have read the secrets of the codex before immolating themselves to the horror of onlookers. The original Codex is said to contain the mystic secrets of flame, but most of the sages of Turan agree that the book has long since been consumed by its own flames.

Spells: *heart of flames, flame burst, inferno heat, incinerate, flames of agni, beguiling smoke, summon elemental, elemental form.*

TABLE 35: THE SONG OF THE PIT

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
15 or less	The character must make a Corruption save (DC12) or gain one Corruption
16-20	No benefit
21-30	The character is inspired by the poetry, gaining the benefits of a <i>Dream Vision</i> spell. This benefit can only be gained once per month.
31+	The character can learn (but not cast from the book) one of the following spells: <i>Demonic Pact, Bones of Life, Children of the Night, Doom.</i>

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

Manufacturing Cost: 50 sp to copy the poems, 500 XP to capture the madness of the poet's inspiration.

TABLE 36: THE CODEX OF ZHAR

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
15 or less	The book bursts into flames, inflicting 6d6 points of damage on the reader and destroying the book (Reflex save, DC15, for half damage).
16-20	No benefit.
21-30	The character gains a +4 insight bonus to all Craft (alchemy) checks for one month.
31+	The character can learn or cast from the book any of the spells contained in it.

If he wishes, a character may choose a lesser result than the one he rolled.

Manufacturing Costs: 5,000 sp; 500 xp each volume; must own a copy of the relevant scroll to transcribe from.





Rivals and Foes

'Crom!' his mighty shoulders twitched. 'A murrain on these wizardly feuds! Pelias has dealt well with me, but I care not if I see him no more. Give me a clean sword and a clean foe to flesh it in!'

— *The Scarlet Citadel*

BUILDING A SORCEROUS VILLAIN

Master-sorcerers are a wonderful nemesis for a group of adventurers, so it is worth lavishing attention and preparation time on them. The following checklist can aid you in designing a villain worthy of your heroes!

MEANING

What does the villain mean to the characters? Why do they want to kill him, or to thwart his plans? What does the villain threaten? Why does he deserve death? A villain with a personal or emotional connection to the player characters is much better than a generic sorcerer. Often, this will be connected to the villain's scheme, but the emotional appeal of the villain should always be the first thing on your mind. Make the players *hate* him.

Threaten things the players value (see how often Conan's kingdom is stolen or threatened by wizards), torment the characters (like Atali) or hit them with visceral horror (a sorcerer who is a walking pile of greasy fat white graveworms; a Pictish werewolf tribe; a sorcerer who has possessed the body of an innocent child). Sorcerers should get under their skin.

Make your sorcerous villains mean. When the

villain does anything, think for a moment about ways to make it nastier. For example, if your villain is digging a secret passage into the palace, then have him whip the slaves to death...or maybe you should replace the slaves with drugged thralls...or mind-controlled apes... or perhaps he grinds the fallen slaves into mortar so the work goes faster.

THEME

Pick one or two sorcery styles or other concepts to serve as a theme for your sorcerer. There are certain unavoidable aspects to sorcery – every evil wizard is going to have magical components, scrolls, a cackling laugh and a lengthy speech about how evil they are, but how you present these common elements can vary. There is a huge difference between the urbane and treacherous sorcerer who is a handsome and dashing noble in the court by day (and the player characters' best friend/comic relief) and who worships demons by night, and a savage madman dressed in filth and rags who cavorts and dances in front of seven ancient standing stones of ill repute.

The sorcerer's theme should be reflected in his speech patterns (a snake-themed sorcerer hisses, obviously; a feral shaman speaks in a broken pidgin language and growls and barks; a reanimated mummy from ancient days might have an old-fashioned and unusually precise way of talking), in his name, in the minions he employs, in the décor of his fortress, in how he appears, in the way he casts spells, in the weapons he uses. Often, these will just be special effects – there is no mechanical difference between the sorcerer having a pit trap full of snakes in his throne room, and a portal straight to Hell, as a character who falls into either is stone dead. However, the different presentations of the same certain-death situation play into the sorcerers' respective themes.

SCHEME

What role does the sorcerer have in the adventure? What is he planning? Not all adventures involving sorcerers should also involve a vile ritual that the heroes have to thwart at the last minute (sometimes, a sorcerer can just be minding his own dark and unholy business when he



is rudely interrupted by thieves and interlopers), but the sorcerer's intentions should threaten the characters.

The sorcerer's scheme should not be immediately apparent to the players, but they should be able to work most of it out before the sorcerer monologues at them in his secret lair. Try to aim for a moment of revelation, where the players put the pieces together and realise just what is going on. For example, the players are investigating the death of a rich merchant, who died of a mysterious disease. There is also a sorcerer in town, who is known for wearing an elaborate mask and armour. A member of the royal family falls dead of the same disease, and investigations reveal that the merchant was actually an illegitimate child of the last king, and is therefore related to the dead royal. The disease only affects members of that one family...and if the sorcerer is taking precautions never to expose himself, that means that he too must be a member of the family!

When designing the sorcerer's scheme, decide in advance what the sorcerer will do if some key element of the scheme is thwarted, and what he will do if his back-up plan also fails. Sorcerers are highly intelligent and cunning, and spending a little time pre-planning will make them into far more formidable enemies. If you really want to make the players hate the sorcerer, have his plans involve manipulating them. For example, the kindly old sage warns the players that the evil sorcerer is on the verge of conquering the world, and that the only thing that can stop him is the magic knife that has been locked on the Isle of Mad Men for a thousand years. The characters go to the Isle of Mad Men, retrieve the knife, and give it to the sage – only to discover that the sage is an apprentice of the evil sorcerer, or the evil sorcerer in disguise, or that the sorcerer doesn't actually exist and it was the sage lying to them all along!

FIEND

Sorcerers need a good minion or two. Do not go overboard – instead of a whole dungeon stocked with a smorgasbord of weirdness, most of the sorcerer's minions should be humans. Either give him a single powerful monster (a demon, a huge brute lurking in a pit, a monster that comes staggering out of a vat, dripping the slime it was born from, a primordial horror from ancient days), or a handful of competent servants (acoytes with their own sorcerer, lesser demons, a quartet of ghosts armed with swords of bone), or even a host of distinctive minions (cannibal tribes who worship the sorcerer as a god, packs of wolves bound to his will, tcho-tcho dwarfs from the Earth's core).

The important thing is to only have one sort of minion if possible. Too many monsters spoil the broth – a sorcerer is less impressive and interesting if magic and weirdness are everywhere in the campaign.

TACTICS

What will the sorcerer do when the characters finally catch up with him? What clever tactics and surprises does he have up his voluminous and silky sleeves? How will he cope with:

- ❖ A band of adventurers entering his fortress?
- ❖ A single assassin entering his fortress?
- ❖ A band of adventurers attacking him in his laboratory or other private chamber?
- ❖ A single assassin attacking him in his private chambers?
- ❖ Being caught unawares by a foe?
- ❖ Fighting a rival sorcerer?
- ❖ Fighting a barbarian with a big axe?
- ❖ Having to flee the scene immediately?

If the sorcerer does not have an appropriate spell to use in one of these situations, then does he have an alchemical weapon or a minion or other tactic to compensate?

Climatic fight scenes with wizards should take place somewhere interesting. If it's the wizard's laboratory, then fill it with bubbling vats, vials of acid that can be thrown or moved with telekinesis, weird artefacts that can be used as improvised weapons, and ritual items that can be shattered with a well-placed sword-blow. If it is in a temple, then there are shadowy vaults overhead, huge statues to climb on, altars with maidens tied to them, holy relics, and hordes of fanatical cultists. If it is in the open air, then the fight should take place in an unnatural storm, with roiling dark clouds overhead that seem to conceal strange lights or tentacles in the sky, or beside a circle of ancient cyclopean stones that were not raised by human hands.



WIZARDS, WITCHES AND SHAMANS OF THE HYBORIAN AGE

The following characters are significant sorcerers during the time of Conan, in addition to those presented in the *Conan RPG*. They may also be used as examples of the type of sorcerer encountered by Conan during his various exploits.

ATALI

His gaze went again to her unruly locks, which at first glance he had thought to be red. Now he saw that they were neither red nor yellow, but a glorious compound of both colors. He gazed spell-bound. Her hair was like elfin-gold; the sun struck it so dazzlingly that he could scarcely bear to look upon it. Her eyes were likewise neither wholly blue nor wholly grey, but of shifting colors and dancing lights and clouds of colors he could not define. Her full red lips smiled, and from her slender feet to the blinding crown of her billowy hair, her ivory body was as perfect as the dream of a god. Conan's pulse hammered in his temples.

— *The Frost-Giant's Daughter*

Medium-Size Outsider (cold)

Hit Dice: 20d10+200 (310 hp)

Initiative: +22 (+22 Reflex save)

Speed: 50 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 36 (+15 natural, +10 Dex, +1 Dodge)

DR: 4 (natural)

Attack: Unarmed strike +30 melee finesse

Full Attack: Unarmed strike +30/+25/+20/+15 melee finesse

Damage: Unarmed strike 1d4+5

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Cold subtype, vanish.

Base Power Points: 50 (base 50)

Maximum Power Points: 100

Magic Attack Bonus: +30 (+10 natural, +20 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +22, Ref +22, Will +17

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 30, Con 30, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 50

Skills: Bluff +43, Gather Information +43, Intimidate +43, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Listen +28, Perform (dance) +43, Sense Motive +28, Spot +28.

Feats: Run, Dodge, Adept (Hypnotism), Steely Gaze, Menacing Aura, Improved Evil Eye, Magic Power Attack.

Possessions: Gauzy, diaphonous garments more suited to a harem dancer than a woman of the North.

Spell-like abilities (cast as though a 20th level scholar):

Counterspells: *warding, greater warding, master warding*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, dance of Atali, mass hypnotic suggestion, enslave, ranged hypnotism, domination, savage beast, dread serpent, domination, boundary, illusion, swell, torment, voice of power, greater voice of power*; Immortality: *witch's vigour, eternal youth, life drain, unnatural strength*.

Cold Subtype (Ex): Cold immunity; double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Vanish: Once per day, Atali can disappear at will in a flashing flame of cold, vanishing to another place. Supposedly she is carried off by her father Ymir's divine magic.

Atali seems to be a beautiful girl with the most perfect form imaginable. Her supple limbs are ivory, her body trim yet voluptuous, and her hair a shimmering cloud of mingled red and gold.

Atali's delight is to slay mortal men. She appears on battlefields, seeking out the dying when the fight is all done, dancing provocatively in front of them to tempt them to follow her. She always leads them into a trap, whether by simply taking them far from all human contact and abandoning them to die of exposure in the icy wilderness or using some more direct means to slay them.

Atali claims to be the daughter of Ymir, the frost-giant god of the Æsir and Vanir. It is clear that she is an enchantress of more than earthly power, but whether she is truly a goddess or merely a semi-demonic thing in human form is a question for the philosophers. She does not seem to have worshippers in the usual sense, though she is generally regarded as one of the pantheon of Nordheim.





❖ While Atali usually takes little interest in the affairs of mortals, what would happen if some Vanir shaman discovered a way to bind the goddess? Or perhaps Atali has taken a fancy to some brave Vanir jarl, and she is now helping her lover in his conquest of Cimmeria or Asgard!

❖ Atali has been seen as far east as the rocky wastes and mighty Skull Gate of Hyperborea. If some enterprising Hyperborean sorcerer dared to capture and bind the goddess, Ymir's wrath on the whole north would be terrible until his daughter was rescued.

HAORATHUS

On the other side of the altar stood a man in a black hooded robe, whose cowl shadowed pale delicate features and dark eyes calm and meditative.

– *The Hour of the Dragon*

Atali is generally unwilling to come to grips in either combat or in love with a mortal. She will happily use her hypnotic powers to lure men to their deaths in icy crevasses, exposed snow plains, or lethal combat with her brothers the frost giants, but if any seem either immune to her charms or able to deal with all the threats they encounter, she will simply vanish away. If, somehow, a mortal could prevent her escaping, and fulfil his inevitable passionate desire for her, the result cannot easily be predicted. He might father a semi-divine being; Ymir might strike him down in vengeance; or Atali might be forced to grant him a boon as well as her favours.

Atali in your games:

- ❖ The maiden of the snowstorms can be dropped into any game set in Nordheim as a side track. You can rerun the plot from *The Frost Giant's Daughter* verbatim – it is one of those classic *Conan* moments that every character should have a chance to experience.
- ❖ A pretty Nordheimer maiden with the *fell of frost* and *dance of Atali* spells can mimic Atali's deeds (but not her unearthly beauty), luring characters to their deaths.

Medium-Size Humanoid (Aquilonian Scholar 20)

Hit Dice: 10d6+20 (55 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+7 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 18 (+7 level, +1 Dex)

DV (Parry): 17 (+7 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Unarmed strike +15 melee

Full Attack: Unarmed strike +15/+10/+5 melee

Damage: Unarmed strike 1d4

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power, Adaptability (+2 to Knowledge – arcane and +2 to Knowledge – religion), civilised code of honour.

Base Power Points: 19 (base 6, +8 Wis, +5 scholar)

Maximum Power Points: 85

Magic Attack Bonus: +16 (+10 natural, +6 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +25 (+28 against Corruption)

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 22, Wis 26, Cha 22





Skills: Concentration +24, Craft (alchemy) +29, Craft (herbalism) +29, Decipher Script +29, Diplomacy +29, Gather Information +26, Heal +31, Knowledge (arcane) +33, Knowledge (history) +31, Knowledge (religion) +33, Listen +18, Perform (drums) +26, Perform (harp) +27, Perform (song) +26, Spot +18.

Feats: Priest, Meditation, Greater Meditation, Leadership, Iron Will, Knowledgeable, Adept (Divination), Adept (Summoning), Summoner, Augment Summoning, Improved Sorcerous Sight, Permanent Sorcery.

Possessions: Hooded robe.

Spells: Cosmic Sorcery: *the time is right, the stars are right*; Counterspells: *warding, greater warding, master warding, incantation of Amalric's witchman*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news, dream of wisdom, psychometry*; Oriental Magic: *calm of the adept, warrior trance*; Summonings: *master-words and signs, summon demon, summon elemental, banish outsider, bind demon*.

As the High Priest of Asura in Aquilonia, Hadrathus is one of the most powerful

scholars in the Western world. He has an unparalleled intelligence network, for all the followers of Asura in Aquilonia must keep their faith a secret and so are well used to operating with the utmost discretion and stealth. His knowledge of sorcery is unmatched outside of Stygia and the East, for he has been trained by the sorcerer-priests of Asura in Vendhya, among the greatest wizards in the world.

Hadrathus has a special hatred of the worshippers of Set and similar demonic cults. He is a fierce enemy to the wizards of Stygia, and is constantly on the alert for new alliances of evil sorcerers or other magical threats to the good folk of the world. He is that rare thing: a genuine, pious priest, utterly committed to the truths of his religion.

Though the cult of Asura is still underground during the reign of King Conan, it is not so heavily persecuted as it was in previous times, when the state itself either permitted or even encouraged the priests of Mitra to lead purges of the Asura-worshippers. Conan has no real interest in religion, but is keen to fight oppression wherever he finds it, and is a strong proponent of freedom of religion. This has endeared him to Hadrathus, who will defend and assist Conan however he can. During the events of *The Hour of the Dragon* this strange alliance proves of astonishing use to Conan, helping him escape his usurpers in Aquilonia and return to destroy them. It is likely that Conan and Hadrathus will remain close allies in the years to come, though Conan is never likely to entirely lose his distrust of Hadrathus' sorcerous powers.

Hadrathus' cohort is also his second-in-command in the church of Asura in Aquilonia, a 14th level scholar. He could call on well over a thousand priests and followers of Asura in Aquilonia alone, all of them personally loyal to him. These include many scholars, but also others from all walks of life from nobles to thieves. His influence spreads throughout the Hyborian kingdoms and beyond, even to a lesser extent as far as Vendhya, via the network of Asura cultists

Hadrathus in your game:

❖ Hadrathus is an excellent patron for adventurers in Aquilonia. The Asuran cult battles evil wizards and dark powers, just like adventurers. However, try to avoid making Hadrathus and his church unambiguously good. Play up Asura's conflict with the church of Mitra – the cult may be trying to usurp Mitra's place in the land, and the characters might be forced to choose between destroying the power of the cult of Mitra or trying on their erstwhile Asuran allies.

❖ Players familiar with the *Conan* stories will trust Hadrathus – which is why he can make a wonderful villain. Either Hadrathus could fall victim to a curse, or perhaps he was always out for his own ends, but having the leader of the Cult of Asura as an enemy of the characters can make for interesting times.

MASTER OF YIMSHA, THE

On another, smaller dais of jet, a few feet away, a man sat cross-legged, gazing contemplatively at her. His long black velvet robe, embroidered with gold thread, fell loosely about him, masking his figure. His hands were folded in his sleeves. There was a velvet cap upon his head. His face was calm, placid, not unhandsome, his eyes lambent and slightly oblique. He did not move a muscle as he sat regarding her, nor did his expression alter when he saw that she was conscious.

– *The People of the Black Circle*

Medium-Size Humanoid (Vendhyan Scholar 15/ Master of the Black Circle 5)

Hit Dice: 10d6+30 (65 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+9 Reflex save)

Speed: 40 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 21 (+8 level, +3 Dex)

DV (Parry): 16 (+6 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Unarmed strike +17 melee finesse

Full Attack: Unarmed strike +17/+12/+7 melee finesse

Damage: Unarmed strike 1d4

Special Attacks: Spells, Master Mesmerist

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power, Spellcraft

Base Power Points: 19 (base 6, +4 Wis, +4 scholar, +5 master of the Black Circle)

Maximum Power Points: 76

Magic Attack Bonus: +17* (+9 natural, +8 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +18 (only +17 vs. Hypnotism)

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 19, Cha 27

Skills: Concentration +25, Craft (alchemy) +28, Craft (herbalism) +28, Decipher Script +28, Diplomacy +27, Gather Information +25, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcane) +28, Knowledge (nobility) +30, Knowledge (religion) +28, Perform (horn) +21, Perform (ritual) +21, Perform (song) +21, Sense Motive +18.

Feats: Fleet-footed, Stealthy, Ritual Sacrifice,



Opportunistic Sacrifice, Tormented Sacrifice, Bleed Dry, Adept (Hypnotism), Steely Gaze, Improved Evil Eye.

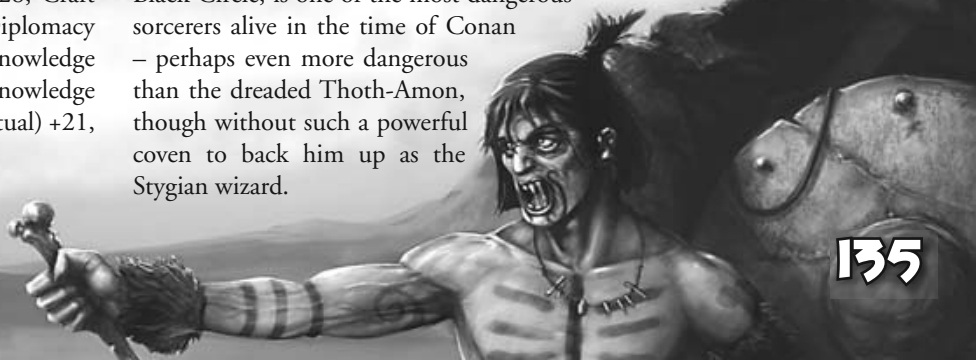
Corruption: 10

Possessions: Silk robes, 20 doses of flame-powder, 3-stringed harp, potion of hibernation, dust of forgetfulness.

Spells: Cosmic Sorcery: *the time is right, the stars are right*; Curses: *lesser ill-fortune, draw forth the soul*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, visions of torment and enlightenment, projection*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, mass hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism, illusion, swell, dread serpent, domination*; Necromancy: *Raise corpse, agonising doom, death touch, draw forth the heart*; Oriental Magic: *calm of the adept, shape-shifter*; Summonings: *demonic pact, greater demonic pact, summon demon, summon elemental, banish outsider, bind demon, form demon*.

The Master of Yimsha, also known as the Master of the Black Circle, is one of the most dangerous sorcerers alive in the time of Conan

– perhaps even more dangerous than the dreaded Thoth-Amon, though without such a powerful coven to back him up as the Stygian wizard.





The Master of Yimsha runs the coven known as the Black Circle, and though he teaches his rakhsha adepts competently enough he is careful to ensure they never gain sufficient power and knowledge to rival himself. Even his best and most advanced pupil, Khemsa, is no real threat to the Master, especially considering that his inner circle is made up of the four Lords of the Black Circle (see p. 162).

The Master plans in the long term, and his motivations are utterly corrupt and evil. He wishes to rule the world – one country at a time if need be. He is highly politically adept and quite willing to make alliances of expedience with rulers of various countries, appearing to work for mutual ends though in fact he eventually plans to destroy them too.

By the time he goes up against Conan in *The People of the Black Circle*, the Master has gone some way towards achieving his ends. He has completely dominated the priests of Tarim in Turan, and has made a close alliance with the rulers of that land to attack Vendhya. He slays the King of Vendhya at the beginning of the story with a carefully timed *draw forth the soul* backed up by Cosmic Sorcery. He also has access to a network of expert thieves, probably Himelian tribesmen.

The Master of Yimsha in Your Games:

- ❖ He's an evil genius sitting on a mountain with a powerful cult backing him up, and he intends to conquer the world. The Master is an excellent long-term foe for a campaign – he sets his sights on the PCs' homeland, and sends his minions and spies in to overthrow the rulers and throw the country into chaos. The characters can initially battle his minion's minions, then his minions, then an apprentice sorcerer like Khemsa, then the Lords of the Black Circle, and finally the Master himself.
- ❖ Conan slew almost the entire Black Circle, and the Master of Yimsha will have to replace his minions. What if the Master decided that one of the player characters had the potential to be a new acolyte, and guided his steps to Mount Yimsha?
 - ❖ The Master's psychic torment of the Devi Yasmina sends her consciousness plummeting back through all her previous incarnations. Characters encountering

the Master could have their minds sent voyaging through time, and have to complete adventures as their previous selves before battling the sorcerer. A single footstep across Yimsha's chamber could take the characters months of subjective time.

NATOHK THE VEILED ONE

Natohk faced the Cimmerian – inhumanly tall and lean, clad in shimmering green silk. He tossed back his veil, and Conan looked into the features he had seen depicted on the Zujite coin.

'Aye, blench, dog!' The voice was like the hiss of a giant serpent. 'I am Thugra Khotan! Long I lay in my tomb, awaiting the day of awakening and release. The arts which saved me from the barbarians long ago likewise imprisoned me, but I knew one would come in time – and he came, to fulfill his destiny, and to die as no man has died for three thousand years!'

– *Black Colossus*

Medium-Size Humanoid (Stygian Scholar 17)

Hit Dice: 10d6+17 (52 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+9 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 20 (+6 level, +4 Dex)

DV (Parry): 16 (+6 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Unarmed strike +16 melee finesse; or thrown flame-powder +16 ranged

Full Attack: Unarmed strike +16/+11/+6 melee finesse; or thrown flame-powder +16 ranged

Damage: Unarmed strike 1d4+1, flame-powder 1d4

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power.

Base Power Points: 13 (base 6, +3 Wis, +4 scholar)

Maximum Power Points: 52

Magic Attack Bonus: +12 (+8 natural, +4 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +13

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 19



Skills: Bluff +16, Concentration +21, Craft (alchemy) +25, Craft (herbalism) +23, Decipher Script +20, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcane) +25, Knowledge (history) +23, Knowledge (religion) +23, Listen +8, Perform (harp) +20, Perform (ritual) +19, Spot +18.

Feats: Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Poison Use, Improved Unarmed Attack, Improved Grapple, Loathsome Weapon, Leadership, Priest, Alertness.

Corruption: 10

Possessions: Silk robes, 20 doses of flame-powder, 3-stringed harp, potion of hibernation, dust of forgetfulness.

Spells: Counterspells: *warding, greater warding, master warding*; Necromancy: *raise corpse, death touch*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, projection*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, dread serpent, domination*; Immortality: *witch's vigour, eternal youth*; Summonings: *demonic pact, greater demonic pact, summon demon, summon elemental, banish outsider, bind demon, form demon*.

Natohk, the Veiled One, is a mysterious desert sorcerer of unnatural tallness and terrifying aspect, who always appeared cloaked and veiled. He welded together a dangerous force of Asshuri Shemites, savages of Kush and rebel nobles of Stygia with which to menace Khoraja and eastern Koth. None knew from whence he came, though persistent rumours hinted that he came out of the desert on a demonic, cloven-hoofed black camel, all wreathed about with fire.

In truth, Natohk is Thugra Khotan, an ancient wizard-prince of Old Stygia, reawoken from his millennia-long sleep beneath Kuthchemes. If he needed it, he would have access to almost unlimited wealth from his tomb there, though he seems to have left most of it behind when he came out of his hibernation there.

When encountered by Conan, Natohk has a *greater demonic pact* with a demon lord, who has sent him an uncanny steed and a black fiend as servitors. However, neither of these creatures is especially loyal to him, and both will flee if he has clearly lost favour with his demonic overlord, for example by his army badly losing a battle.

Natohk has Stygian followers as follows: 90 1st level nobles, 110 1st level soldiers, 8 2nd level nobles, 3 3rd level nobles and 1 4th level noble. These are led by Natohk's cohort, Prince Kutamun, a rebel prince of Stygia (9th level noble). They have 100 chariots to lead Natohk's allies in battles.

By virtue of his wealth and intimidating nature, Natohk has also been able to recruit some 2,000 Kushite light cavalry (1st and 2nd level barbarians on Kushite horses) and 5,000 Asshuri out of the Meadow Cities in western Shem, again light cavalry (1st and 2nd level soldiers on warhorses).

Natohk in your games:

☼ Natohk's rise to power no doubt caused chaos across Khoraja, a land already beset by many troubles. With the King imprisoned in Ophir and Koth in Tsothalandi's thrall, Khoraja needs more heroes than just Conan. The characters could find themselves battling the sorcerer's minions and demon allies.

☼ For that matter – what voice spoke in the temple of Mitra and sent Princess Yasmela out into the night to put her kingdom into the hands of the first man she sees? If it was a god, then it guided her well, for Yasmela found Conan that night, but why would the god reveal himself in such a way? If it was a trick of a priest, then how did the priest know that some mercenary dog could lead an army the way Conan did? What strange force or conspiracy protected Khoraja? Perhaps the characters could be the ones who arranged for Conan to be in that alley that fateful night!

☼ Natohk's tomb contains a wealth of treasure to be plundered – and not just by the characters. The awakening of the sorcerer would have caused potent ripples in the *sorcerous news* network, so there will be dozens of vultures circling that crypt in the ruins of Kuthchemes. For that matter, the sorcerer was remarkably easy to defeat for a necromancer of his skill – perhaps someone aided Conan by banishing Natohk's demon servants, or maybe the sorcerer sensed his inevitable defeat and chose to hide his life force somehow. He waited three thousand years already – he is nothing if not patient.





PELIAS

The freed man was on his feet, surveying him. Conan gaped in wonder. No longer were the eyes in the worn face expressionless. Dark and meditative, they were alive with intelligence, and the expression of imbecility had dropped from his face like a mask. The head was narrow and well-formed, with a high splendid forehead. The whole build of the man was aristocratic, evident no less in his tall slender frame than in his small trim feet and hands.

– *The Scarlet Citadel*

Medium-Size Humanoid (Kothian Scholar 20)

Hit Dice: 10d6+20 (55 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+8 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 19 (+7 level, +2 Dex)

DV (Parry): 18 (+7 level, +1 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +11 melee; or thrown dagger +11 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +11/6 melee; or thrown dagger +11 ranged

Damage: Dagger (1d4+1)

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power.

Base Power Points: 15 (base 6, +4 Wis, +5 scholar)

Maximum Power Points: 75

Magic Attack Bonus: +16 (+10 natural, +6 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +16

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 26, Wis 18, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +17, Concentration +24, Craft (alchemy) +33, Craft (herbalism) +33, Craft (woodwork) +20, Decipher Script +31, Gather Information +29, Heal +27, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcane) +35, Knowledge (nobility) +35, Knowledge (religion) +33, Perform (drums) +28, Perform (horn) +28, Perform (ritual) +28, Perform (song) +28.

Feats: Knowledgeable, Noble Blood, Performer, Summoner, Craftsman, Adept (Divinations), Permanent Sorcery, Craft Magic Item, Craft Major Magic Item.

Corruption: 2

Possessions: Silk robes, dagger.

Spells: Counterspells: *warding, greater warding, master warding*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, dread serpent, domination, mass hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism*; Necromancy: *raise corpse*; Oriental Magic: *calm of the adept, shape-shifter*; Prestidigitation: *conjuring, animate sword, animate statue, burst barrier, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, magic builder*; Summonings: *master-words and signs, summon demon, summon elemental, banish outsider, bind demon, form demon*.

Pelias was born into a noble family in Koth. As a younger son who knew he would never inherit the family title and wealth, he sought other routes to power, travelling the world and learning sorcery from any who would teach it him. Picking up shape-shifting in the Himelians, necromancy in Stygia and divination in Shem and Vendhya, he soon learned much of the magic the world had to offer, yet managed to avoid making firm commitments to join any particular sorcerous cults or covens on the way.

Pelias once had a civilised Code of Honour, and still retains the vestiges of it, desiring fairness and justice. He has attained an incredible level of magical power, considering how relatively uncorrupted he is in comparison to most experienced sorcerers. Still, he thinks nothing of tormenting his enemies and using others to achieve his own ends.

Pelias in your Games:

- ✦ During the events related in *The Scarlet Citadel*, Pelias and Conan defeated the evil wizard Tsoth-lanti. Pelias hinted at ambitions to become the new master of Khorshemish, so it is quite possible he will take over Tsotha's role as power-behind-the-throne in Koth – or even claim the throne himself.
- ✦ Pelias was held prisoner in the Scarlet Citadel for many years, and while Tsotha-lanti no doubt looted his library, Pelias was wealthy and had many villas and sanctums. What if the characters inherit or occupy one of Pelias' possessions for several years, only to have the sorcerer return and treat them as obstacles or usurpers?



THOTH-AMON

Behind them a sardonic countenance was framed in the partly open door; a pair of evil eyes glittered malevolently in the gloom.

'Go into the night, creatures of the night,' a voice mocked. 'Oh, fools, your doom hounds your heels like a blind dog, and you know it not.'

The speaker closed the door and bolted it, then turned and went up the corridor, candle in hand. He was a somber giant, whose dusky skin revealed his Stygian blood.

— *The Phoenix on the Sword*

Medium-Size Humanoid (Stygian Scholar 20)

Hit Dice: 10d6+2d10+16 (62 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+9 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 20 (+7 level, +3 Dex)

DV (Parry): 19 (+7 level, +2 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +14 melee finesse; or thrown dagger +14 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +14/+9 melee finesse; or thrown dagger +14 ranged

Damage: Dagger 1d4+2

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power.

Base Power Points: 12 (base 6, +1 Wis, +5 scholar)

Maximum Power Points: 60

Magic Attack Bonus: +15 (+10 natural, +5 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +13

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 21

Skills: Bluff +28, Concentration +25, Craft (alchemy) +27, Craft (herbalism) +27, Decipher Script +27, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (nobility) +27, Knowledge (religion) +27, Move Silently +26, Perform (drums) +28, Sense Motive +24.

Feats: Ritual Sacrifice, Summoner, Adept (summoning), Adept (necromancy), Diligent, Augment Summoning, Hexer, Adept (curses), Tortured Sacrifice, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Possessions: Silk robes, dagger

Spells: Counterspells: *warding, greater warding*; Curses: *lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, awful rite of the were-beast, curse of Yizil, draw forth the soul*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, sorcerous news*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, dread serpent, domination, ranged hypnotism*; Necromancy: *raise corpse, death touch, agonising doom, black plague, greater black plague, draw forth the heart*; Prestidigitation: *conjuring, burst barrier, telekinesis, greater telekinesis*; Summonings: *demonic pact, greater demonic pact, summon demon, summon elemental*.

Thoth-Amon is widely regarded as the greatest living sorcerer in Stygia, if not the world. For this reason, he is alternately revered and hated in Stygia, depending on just how powerful he is at the time. One mistake, one revealed weakness, and his rivals among the sorcerous society of the Black Ring and the priesthood of Set will be quick to exile or attack him.

At various times in his life, Thoth-Amon has had access to an artefact known as the *serpent ring of Set* in addition to the equipment listed here. It is assumed for the purposes of these statistics that he does not have it at present, since when he does he is ensconced in the position of Lord of the Black Ring, and so is unlikely to interact with adventurers directly. See page 72 for the *serpent ring of Set*.

When he does have the *serpent ring of Set*, Thoth-Amon's power is almost unbeatable, which is why he is then able to command a large portion of the magical power in Stygia from his home in Kheshatta, the city of magicians.

Thoth-Amon is highly vengeful and vicious. Whenever he is under another's power, whether through sorcery or blackmail, he is always careful to gain leverage and gather magical links to one day turn the tables on his oppressor. When he makes an enemy, too, he is unlikely to rest until that enemy is painfully dead.

Thoth-Amon in your games:

✦ When Thoth-Amon has the *serpent ring* and is in power in Stygia, then the characters will encounter him only if they are involved in very high-level intrigue in Stygia. The wizard's dependence on the ring is not common knowledge – but if the characters find out and are able to steal it, then they could hold the keys to power in the desert kingdom.



❖ For a very odd patron idea – how about Thoth-Amon as the teacher of the characters? Set your game in the years between Thoth-Amon's fall and *The Phoenix on the Sword*. Thoth-Amon is a wandering beggar, with only a fraction of his former power, but he does remember all his magic. The characters can learn some of his spells if they spare his life and help defend him from Stygian assassins and rivals. Of course, once he recovers the ring, he will want revenge on the player characters...

TSOTHA-LANTI

The lean vulture Tsottha-lanti, clad only in silken robes, his great black eyes glittering from a face that was like that of a bird of prey. Of this Kothian wizard dark tales were told; tousel-headed women in northern and western villages frightened children with his name, and rebellious slaves were brought to abased submission quicker than by the lash, with the very threat of being sold to him. Men said that he had a whole library of dark works bound in skin flayed from living human victims, and that in nameless pits below the hill whereon his palace sat, he trafficked with the powers of darkness, trading screaming girl slaves for unholy secrets. He was the real ruler of Koth.

– *The Scarlet Citadel*

Medium-Size Outsider (native) (Kothian Scholar 19)

Hit Dice: 10d6+16 (62 hp)

Initiative: +21 (+17 Reflex save, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 25 (+5 level, +9 Dex, +1 Dodge)

DV (Parry): 18 (+5 level, +3 Str)

DR: 1

Attack: Unarmed attack +19 melee finesse; or Kothic Demon-Fire +18 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +19/+14 melee finesse; or Kothic Demon-Fire +18/+13 ranged

Damage: Dagger 1d4+3 plus poison ring, or Kothic Demon-Fire 5d6

Special Attacks: Spells, poison ring (see sidebar)

Special Qualities:
Knowledge Is Power,

Darkvision (30 feet), immunity to poison, spawn of Dagoth Hill (+2 effective scholar level when casting *summon demon* and *summon elemental*).

Base Power Points: 18 (base 6, +3 Wis, +5 scholar, +4 Spawn of Dagoth Hill)

Maximum Power Points: 72

Magic Attack Bonus: +14 (+9 natural, +5 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +17, Will +14

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 28, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 21

Skills: Bluff +15, Concentration +22, Craft (alchemy) +28, Craft (herbalism) +28, Decipher Script +24, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (nobility) +24, Perform (harp) +27.

Feats: Spawn of Dagoth Hill, Ritual Sacrifice, Summoner, Adept (summoning), Augment Summoning, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Tortured Sacrifice, Weapon Focus (unarmed attack), Improved Initiative.

Corruption: 8

Possessions: Silk robes, dagger

Spells: Oriental Magic: *calm of the adept*, *darting serpent*, *warrior trance*; Divinations: *astrological prediction*, *mind-reading*, *visions*, *sorcerous news*, *greater sorcerous news*, *dream of wisdom*; Hypnotism: *entrance*, *hypnotic suggestion*, *dread serpent*, *domination*, *mass hypnotic suggestion*; Necromancy: *raise corpse*, *death touch*, *agonising doom*; Prestidigitation: *conjuring*, *burst barrier*, *telekinesis*, *greater telekinesis*; Summonings: *demonic pact*, *greater demonic pact*, *summon demon*, *summon elemental*.

Tsotha-lanti is the dreaded ruler of Koth until slain by King Conan during the events of *The Scarlet Citadel*. Though Koth nominally has a monarch, King Strabonus, Tsotha-lanti's word is law and even the king does not dare to stand against him. Tsotha was born of an unnatural union between a dancing-girl and a demonic entity from Dagoth Hill. He is preternaturally quick, moving like a serpent in both attack and defence.

Tsotha-Lanti in your games:

❖ Welcome to Koth. I'm Tsotha-lanti, and I'll be your evil wizard for your visit here. I'll be kidnapping your loved ones to feed to my monsters. I might even abduct you and subject you to strange surgical experiments, leaving you with bizarre new powers and hungers and holes in your memory. I'll certainly be having my minions watch you and my hypnotised nobles force you to do my bidding. Oh, and if you come from a neighbouring country, I'll probably



be conquering that. Have a nice time in sunny Khorshemish!

- ✿ The Scarlet Citadel is one of the biggest and nastiest dungeon complexes in the West, and with Tsotha-Lanti's death at Conan's hands, the characters have a chance to loot it before Pelias takes over. Monsters in the pits, the spawn of the demon plant Yothga, Tsotha-lanti's sorcerous traps and defences... For a scenario set before *The Scarlet Citadel*, the characters could be sent to rescue the poet Rinaldo from the pits (which would neatly involve them in the conspiracy of *The Phoenix on the Sword*).

Tsotha's Poison Ring

Tsotha-lanti wears an oddly designed ring which is used to deliver poison to a victim. In effect it allows his unarmed attacks to deliver poison damage. It holds three doses of any Injury poison. Whenever possible, Tsotha coats it with purple lotus juice (see page 141 of *Conan*).

The ring's poison 'fang' can be retracted or extended as a free action. When retracted, its true nature can be detected only by a Spot check (DC 30).

XALTOTUN

In that light the figure seated in a silver, throne-like chair before him seemed unreal and fantastic, with an illuiveness of outline that was heightened by a filmy silken robe. But the features were distinct – unnaturally so in that uncertain light. It was almost as if a weird nimbus played about the man's head, casting the bearded face into bold relief, so that it was the only definite and distinct reality in that mystic, ghostly chamber.

It was a magnificent face, with strongly chiseled features of classical beauty. There was, indeed, something disquieting about the calm tranquility of its aspect, a suggestion of more than human knowledge, of a profound certitude beyond human assurance. Also an uneasy sensation of familiarity twitched at the back of Conan's consciousness. He had never seen this man's face before, he well knew; yet those features reminded him of something or someone. It was like encountering in the flesh some dream-image that had haunted one in nightmares.

– *The Hour of the Dragon*



Medium-Size Undead (Acheronian Scholar 20)

Hit Dice: 20d12 (130 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+9 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 19 (+7 level, +2 Dex)

DV (Parry): 21 (+7 level, +3 Str, +1 Parry)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +13 melee; or thrown dagger +12 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +13/+8 melee; or thrown dagger +12 ranged

Damage: Dagger 1d4+3

Special Attacks: Spells, dominate, +1 to magic attack rolls when cursing

Special Qualities: Sorcerous Mummy vulnerabilities (fire, Heart of Ahriman), fast healing (2 points/round), cold immunity, Knowledge Is Power.

Base Power Points: 14 (base 6, +3 Wis, +5 scholar)

Maximum Power Points: 70

Magic Attack Bonus: +17 (+10 natural, +7 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +15 (only +13 vs. Corruption)

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con -, Int 26, Wis 16, Cha 25





Skills: Bluff +25, Concentration +23, Craft (alchemy) +33, Craft (fine art) +20, Craft (herbalism) +33, Decipher Script +29, Gather Information +15*, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana) +33, Knowledge (history) +31, Knowledge (nature) +31, Perform (drums) +19, Perform (horn) +19, Perform (song) +19

Feats: Ritual Sacrifice, Steely Gaze, Menacing Aura, Summoner, Adept (hypnotism), Adept (necromancy), Focused Magical Link, Parry, Adept (counterspells), Tortured Sacrifice, Combat Expertise.

Possessions: Silk robes, dagger, Acheronian demon-fire x3, Kothic demon-fire, flame powder, Stygian tomb-dust, black lotus powder x4, yellow lotus resin x2, lotus-wine.

Spells: Counterspells: *warding, greater warding, incantation of Amalric's witchman*; Curses: *lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, curse of Yizil*; Divinations: *astrological prediction, mind-reading, visions, visions of torment and enlightenment, dream of wisdom, psychometry, sorcerous news, greater sorcerous news*; Hypnotism: *entrance, hypnotic suggestion, mass hypnotic suggestion, dread serpent, domination, ranged hypnotism*; Necromancy: *raise corpse, death touch, agonising doom*; Prestidigitation: *conjuring, telekinesis*; Summonings: *demonic pact, greater demonic pact, summon demon, summon elemental*.

Xaltotun is a master strategist, but as with many a genius has occasional lapses of absent-mindedness. He seems to see the entire world as something little more than a game – a vast experiment upon which he can impose his will. He will use whatever tools – or gamepieces – he finds expedient, including his supposed enemies, to achieve his aims. Equally, he will discard people as though they were no more than failed experiments or captured pawns. He has no more human feeling than a lizard or other reptile. How much of this is natural, and how much is a result of his resurrection as an undead creature, is uncertain.

His aims are nothing less than the restoration of the ancient sorcerous empire of Acheron to its full glory – though it will take the political and even physical

reshaping of an entire continent. After his restoration to life as a mummy of Ahriman (see page 96), he begins the process by deposing King Conan from the throne of Aquilonia and emplacing his own puppet king, Valerius. Eventually he is slain by agents of Conan, during *The Hour of the Dragon*.

Even Xaltotun himself does not realise his own true nature. He knows he has been restored to life by the magic of Orastes and the *heart of Ahriman*; but he does not seem to have realised yet that he is no longer even faintly human. The other possibilities are that he has realised and does not much care, and that he has realised and is attempting to deny this knowledge even to himself. In any event, his status as a mummy seems to have ensured he is even more monomaniacal, obsessive and heartless than ever.

Xaltotun in your games:

- ✦ Obviously, Xaltotun will only be a factor in games set just before or during *The Hour of the Dragon*, but there is plenty of scope for adventures in this time frame. The characters could be part of King Conan's scattered and defeated army, fighting against the usurpers until the true king returns. They could be agents of Asura or the Black Dragons, or just adventurers willing to fight for the underdog.
- ✦ Xaltotun intended to bring back Acheron, and during his time in control of Aquilonia he no doubt put this plan into action. His agents were digging up Acheronian ruins and dungeons all over the world. Who knows what ancient horrors were unleashed?
- ✦ The rise of Xaltotun was an incredibly significant event in the magical community. He was a living god, a master of arcane arts now lost to civilised men. The coming of Xaltotun was presaged by omens and psychic visions; his death drove sensitive souls mad. Characters who sense the dreams of Xaltotun may be drawn to sorcery like moths to a flame.



MINIONS

The characters in this section are less powerful spellcasters than the arch-wizards and demi-gods described earlier. They are generic servants and minor sorcerers, suitable as challenges in a lower-level game or as minions for an arch-villain.

CULTIST

This is a generic cultist of a sorcerer or evil god, who has learned a little in his time serving his dark masters.

Medium-Size Humanoid (Hyborian Commoner 2/ Scholar 2)

Hit Dice: 2d4+2d6+4 (16 hp)

Initiative: +0 (+0 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 11 (+1 level, +0 Dex)

DV (Parry): 11 (+1 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +3 melee; or thrown dagger +3 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +3 melee; or thrown dagger +3 ranged

Damage: Dagger 1d4

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power.

Base Power Points: 7 (base 5, +2 Wis)

Maximum Power Points: 14

Magic Attack Bonus: +0 (+1 natural, -1 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +5

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8

Skills: Bluff +5, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Move Silently +8, Perform (ritual) +7, Profession (any) +5, Listen +5, Spot +5

Feats: Stealthy, Weapon Focus (dagger), No Honour

Possessions: Hooded robes, dagger

Spells: Choose any two of the following styles. The cultist gets only one Defensive Blast (marked with an asterisk).

Counterspells: Warding, Desperate Ward*

Curses: Lesser Ill-Fortune, Weapon Curse*

Divination: Astrological Prediction, Not This Day*

Hypnotism: Entrance, Terrible Fascination*

Oriental Magic: Calm of the Adept, Vanish*

Fire Magic: Heart of Flames, Flame Burst*

Frost Magic: Fell of Frost, Icy Flames*

Hedge Magic: Blessings & Curses, Sign Against Evil*



ACOLYTE

This is an ambitious servant of a cult or a sorcerer's apprentice.

Medium-Size Humanoid (Hyborian Sorcerer 6)

Hit Dice: 6d6+6 (28 hp)

Initiative: +4 (+4 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 12 (+2 level, +0 Dex)

DV (Parry): 12 (+2 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +4 melee or Staff +4 melee

Full Attack: Dagger +4 melee; or Staff +4 melee

Damage: Dagger 1d4 or Staff 1d6

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)

Base Power Points: 8 (base 6, +2 Wis)

Maximum Power Points: 24

Magic Attack Bonus: +5 (+3 natural, +2 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14





Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +11, Craft (alchemy) +12, Decipher Script +7, Gather Information +7, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Perform (ritual) +14, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +5.

Feats: Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Leadership (or Henchmen), Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Ritual Sacrifice

Possessions: Hooded robes, dagger, staff, Kothic Demon-Fire or Stygian Tomb-Dust

Spells: Choose one of the following packages.

Stygian Sorcerer: This package is a combination of Curses and Serpent magic, with a little useful Necromancy for emergencies. The sorcerer can use his staff to disarm foes or turn it into a serpent, which he can then wield as a weapon using the Loathsome Weapons benefit from *blessing of Yig*.

Serpent Magic: Blessing of Yig, Unseen Serpents*, Hypnotic Gaze, Dread Serpent

Curses: Lesser Ill-Fortune, Greater Ill-Fortune

Necromancy: Raise Corpse, Chill of the Grave*, The Dead Speak

Demonologist: An acolyte of a vile sorcerer or demonic cult might have this package of spells, focusing on Fire Magic and Summonings. His primary defence is the *Dance of the Flames*, while he can use *Beguiling Smoke* to distract foes – and using *Boiling Blood* on a summoned demon who is immune to fire makes the demon a vicious killer.

Summonings: Demonic Pact, Master, Aid Me!*, Summon Demon

Fire Magic: Heart of Flames, Flame Burst*, Boiling Blood, Beguiling Smoke, Dance of the Flames

Counterspells: Warding.

Scholar: This package of spells focuses on Divination and information gathering. He can also transmit what he learns using *Send Dreams*.

Divination: Astrological Prediction, Not This Day*, Blessing of Fate, Visions, Dream of Wisdom

Hedge Magic: Blessings & Curses, Twisting of Tongue and Eye, Send Dreams.

Hypnotism: Entrance.

NECROMANCER

This necromancer has picked up a few of the skills of a thief from his tomb raiding. He fights with a pair of ancient daggers looted from some buried treasure, and uses poison and telekinesis in a fight.

Medium-Size Humanoid (Hyborian Sorcerer 8/Thief 3)

Hit Dice: 8d6+3d8+22 (58 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+8 Reflex save)

Speed: 30 ft. (unarmoured)

DV (Dodge): 17 (+4 level, +3 Dex)

DV (Parry): 14 (+4 level, +0 Str)

DR: -

Attack: Dagger +11 finesse melee; or thrown dagger +11 ranged

Full Attack: Dagger +11 finesse melee; or thrown dagger +11 ranged

Damage: Dagger 1d4

Special Attacks: Spells, Sneak Attack +3d6/3d8

Special Qualities: Knowledge Is Power, Increased Maximum Power Points, Trap Disarming, Trap Sense +1, Sneak Attack Style (dagger)

Base Power Points: 8 (base 6, +2 Wis)

Maximum Power Points: 24

Magic Attack Bonus: +0 (+1 natural, +3 Charisma)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +12, Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Decipher Script +12, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +13, Heal +13, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +12, Listen +12, Move Silently +9, Search +12, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +13, Spot +7, Tumble +8.

Feats: Iron Will, Eyes of the Cat, Precise Shot, Ranged Finesse, Stealthy, Two-Weapon Combat, Poison Use, Loathsome Weapons, Light-Footed

Possessions: Robes, several dagger, vials of Purple Lotus Juice, Stygian Tomb-Dust

Spells:

Necromancy: Raise Corpse, Chill of the Grave*, The Dead Speak, Legions of the Dead

Prestidigitation: Conjuring, Telekinesis, Conjure Item

Hypnotism: Entrance, Domination, Hypnotic Suggestion

Oriental Magic: Calm of the Adept, Vanish*, Darting Serpent.



Cults and Conspiracies

Though sorcerers often prefer to be alone, wandering the Earth and taking instruction wherever they can find it, even more seem to prefer to get involved in a magical community of some kind. These range from the small numbers of apprentices gathered around a Pictish shaman in a savage hut, to trans-national magical organisations that can decide the fate of entire countries.

In his adventures, Conan encountered many cults and conspiracies lurking behind the scenes, from the various Stygian magical orders to the conspiracies against his own rule of Aquilonia. Not all cults are evil – the secret cult of Asura, for example, aided Conan during *The Hour of the Dragon*. Characters may battle, join or even found their own cults.

Technically, any organisation can be a cult or conspiracy, but adventurers will most often be dealing with vile sorcerous covens and nefarious conspiracies. A cult has seven characteristics: **Influence, Reach, Wealth, Fanaticism, Sorcerous Power, Military Strength** and **Secrecy**. Each characteristic is rated from 0 to 5.

As a rough guideline, the true strengths of a cult are its Influence, Military Strength, Sorcerous Power and Wealth. The total of these four characteristics should be roughly equal to the character level at which your players confront the cult. For example, if the finale of your campaign is to be at 16th level, then the enemy cult might have a four in each of those characteristics. The other three characteristics (Reach, Fanaticism and Secrecy) work with the first four to strengthen the cult.

RELIGIONS, CULTS AND CONSPIRACIES

The cult rules are designed to model powerful, focussed organisations such as the Black Ring or the cult of Asura, or the sort of secret conspiracies that the characters might find themselves serving or leading. Larger, more open faiths like the Mitraic religion should not be modelled as a single cult – instead, the Mitraic faith is a web of allied cults, each devoted to a different city, religious leader or aspect of the god.

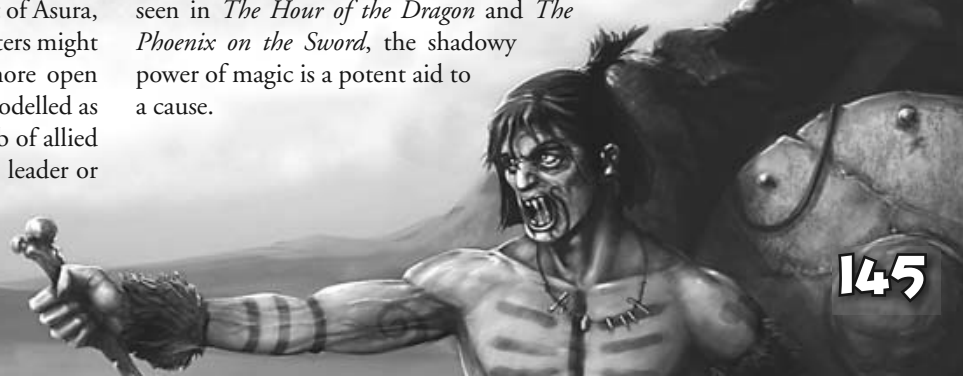
While the same rules apply to all sorts of cults and conspiracies, there is a difference between a religious cult, a sorcerous cult, and a conspiracy. A **religious cult** is dedicated to serving a particular god or demon. A **sorcerous cult** is focussed on a particular sorcerer or cabal of sorcerers. A **conspiracy** is a group dedicated to achieving some particular goal, often a clandestine political one.

The smaller sorcerous cults, basically involving a lone master and perhaps one or two acolytes, usually taught very individualistically, are common in the supposedly primitive countries such as Kush and the Pictish Wilderness. In fact, these lands are not so primitive at all when it comes to sorcery, and the shaman will certainly point out if asked that his two pupils are not only learning far more from him than could a larger group, they also completely avoid the power-politicking that comes with any number more than four or five.

The sorcerers of the Black Ring and similar groups actively seek for plenty of acolytes. They enjoy power politics, both within their order and when playing diplomatic games on a wider scale. The lower grades can function as subjects of internal politics or as tools in machination that affect all Stygia. Also, having plenty of students per teacher means the teachers need not be so dedicated, and so can devote more time to their own researches and less to teaching.

Religious groups of sorcerers, whether based around an established and popular cult such as that of Set or the more minor sects presented here, function in much the same way as other sorcerous groups when it comes to culture. Inevitably there is more of a mystical or philosophical interest.

Conspiracies may not teach sorcery at all, although as seen in *The Hour of the Dragon* and *The Phoenix on the Sword*, the shadowy power of magic is a potent aid to a cause.





Each cult lists the following:

Requirements of Membership (Worship for religious cults, Service for sorcerous cults): What a character needs to do to qualify for membership of the cult.

Benefits of Membership: What the character gets for joining the cult.

Requirements for Mastery (Priesthood for religious cults): What the character needs to reach Master rank in the cult.

Benefits of Mastery (Ordained Priesthood for religious cults): What the character gets for being Master in a cult, in addition to the normal benefits.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Members: What happens to those who betray or leave the cult.

INFLUENCE

A cult's Influence is its political power, its ability to command princes and kings and to inflame the wrath or fear of the common people. The higher a cult's Influence, the greater its ability to control things within its reach.

0: The cult has no Influence whatsoever. It is forgotten and ignored. A long-dead Acheronian cult might have 0 Influence.

1: The cult has minimal influence; it is treated as little more than a curiosity. A small minority among common people pay lip service to the cult. One of the minor Shemite cults in that polytheistic land might have Influence 1.

2: The cult is moderately influential within its reach, but is still one voice among many. Most religions have Influence 2.

3: The cult is very influential within its reach, and princes and kings must listen when the cult speaks. The Mitraic religion in Aquilonia has influence 3.

4: The cult is highly influential within its reach, able to command whatever it desires. None dare speak against the cult. The various cults of Set in Stygia have Influence 4 there.

5: The cult has complete control. The cult leaders are the rulers of the nation.

Influence affects a character's Social Standing within the cult's reach (and Social Standing affects Reputation, and Reputation affects Diplomacy checks).



TABLE 37: CULT INFLUENCE

Cult Influence	Initiate	Acolyte	Master	Grand Master
0	+0	+0	+0	+1
1	+0	+0	+1	+2
2	+0	+0	+2	+4
3	+0	+1	+3	+6
4	+1	+2	+4	+8
5	+1	+3	+5	+10

STANDING IN A CULT

There are five levels of standing within a cult. *Devotees* are ordinary members, who follow the tenets of the cult, attend ceremonies and pay tithes to the cult. Not every cult has devotees – a secret conspiracy or magical order will not have any, for example. *Initiates* have been indoctrinated into the cult’s outer mysteries, but are not yet experienced or trusted members. *Acolytes* are the servants and henchmen of the cult leaders. *Masters* are the leaders of the cult, and at the head of the order is a single *Grand Master*. In especially large cults, there may be multiple Grand Masters.

In a religious cult, a character must have the Priest feat to reach the rank of Master.

- 2: Local Reach. The cult’s influence extends to a particular region, such as a part of a country or a small nation. Most religious cults have only Local reach.
- 3: National Reach. The cult’s influence reaches across a whole nation. The cults of Set have national reach.
- 4: Great Reach. The cult’s influence stretches across a whole continent. If the various Mitraic faiths were considered a single cult, then they would have great reach.
- 5: Worldwide Reach. The cult’s agents are everywhere.

WEALTH

A cult’s Wealth score is a combination of how much cash it has in its coffers, and the other resources it can draw on, such as business it owns, land holdings, and old debts. Importantly, a cult’s Wealth score measures how much money a sorcerer in the cult can draw on for his own research and projects.

- 0: No Wealth. The cult is effectively penniless.
- 1: Poor. The cult has enough income to fund its day to day activities, but it must conserve every copper piece.
- 2: Average. The cult is moderately wealthy, able to fund its activities and keep its senior members in luxury.
- 3: Wealthy. Many cults have this level of wealth. Temples are decorated with rare woods and marble statues. A Mitraic temple might have this level of wealth.
- 4: Staggeringly Wealthy. Temples are decorated with silver and gold and jewels, and the cult is a significant factor in the economy of the region. The leaders of the cult live like kings. The fabled cult of Ishtar, the Ivory Woman, has this level of wealth, as does the Cult of Set.
- 5: Obscenely Wealthy. Temples overflow with gold, and the leaders of the cult are among the richest in the world.

REACH

Reach measures the cult’s area of control. A cult with a small Reach is a purely local affair; a high Reach indicates the cult spans whole nations. Within its Reach, the cult can use its Influence and draw upon its strengths, and the characters may encounter worshippers and temples belonging to the cult. A cult can send agents and spies and assassins outside its Reach, but this is a drain on its resources.

- 0: No Reach Whatsoever. A cult that exists only within a particular lost city or temple and never leaves it might have 0 reach.
- 1: Very Limited Reach. The cult’s influence extends to the immediate area, such as a single city. A sorcerous cult would generally have only limited reach.





TABLE 38: FUNDING PER MONTH

Wealth Level	Initiate	Acolyte	Master	Grand Master
0	0 silver pieces	0 silver pieces	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 50 silver pieces
1	0 silver pieces	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 50 silver pieces	1d6 x 100 silver pieces
2	0 silver pieces	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 100 silver pieces	1d6 x 250 silver pieces
3	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 50 silver pieces	1d6 x 250 silver pieces	1d6 x 500 silver pieces
4	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 100 silver pieces	1d6 x 500 silver pieces	1d6 x 1000 silver pieces
5	0 silver pieces	1d6 x 250 silver pieces	1d6 x 1,000 silver pieces	1d6 x 2,500 silver pieces

The *funding per month* total comes in sorcerous components, not in actual hard cash. A character can tap into the order's coffers to get the funding in cash, but doing so too often will raise questions among the cult leadership.

FANATICISM

Cult members would refer to this as 'loyalty', 'devotion' or 'belief', but for most adventurers, fanaticism is the right word – it measures how committed the cult members are to the cult, and thus how likely they are to break in combat or under pressure. Unlike other characteristics of a cult, Fanaticism is not tied to standing within the cult – an initiate of the cult is just as likely to be a fanatical believer as the leader of the cult. The cult score, therefore, measures the *average* fanaticism in the cult.

If a morale bonus is listed, the cult member may add that value when making Will saves and against Intimidate checks when fighting for the cult. They also gain the bonus to attack rolls when fighting in the defence of the cult's temples and leaders. Player characters cannot benefit from the Fanaticism rules without the Fanatic feat (see page 53).

- 0: No belief. Members of the cult are loyal to the cult only because it is currently convenient.
- 1: Members of the cult pay lip service to the cult's beliefs. They may believe in the cult's teachings, but it has limited effect on their day to day lives.
- 2: Average loyalty to the cult. The cult members are committed in their loyalty to the cult, but must balance this loyalty with their ties to family, friends and personal beliefs. Cult members gain a +1 morale bonus when in the service of the cult.

- 3: Strong loyalty. The cult is the most important thing in the cultist's life. Cult members gain a +2 morale bonus when in the service of the cult.
- 4: Fanatic loyalty. Members exist to serve the cult, and would die for it without a moment's thought. Cult members gain a +3 morale bonus when in the service of the cult.
- 5: Complete loyalty. Members of the cult exist purely to serve it, and have no fear of death whatsoever. Cult members gain a +4 morale bonus when in the service of the cult.

SORCEROUS POWER

A cult's Sorcerous Power is a measure of the cult's magical knowledge and arcane ability. A high level of Sorcerous Power indicates that the cult is able to summon demons and lay curses on its enemies. Sorcerous Power also measures the type of library possessed by the cult, and the number of sorcery styles it knows.

- 0: No arcane knowledge. The cult has no knowledge of the magical arts.
- 1: The cult has a minimum knowledge of magic, possessing one sorcery style. It has a library that has a maximum of 10 ranks in one topic. Its most powerful sorcerer is a scholar of level 8 or less.
- 2: The cult has a working knowledge of magic, possessing at least two sorcery styles. It has a library that has a maximum of 15 ranks in several subjects. Its most powerful sorcerer is level 12.
- 3: The cult has a considerable knowledge of sorcery, possessing at least three styles. Its library has a maximum of 20 ranks in several subjects, and its mightiest sorcerer is level 16.
- 4: The cult has a great mastery of magic. It has at least five styles, and its library has 30 ranks in many topics. It has at least one 20th level sorcerer.
- 5: The cult is one of the greatest repositories of magical might. It has several master sorcerers, and its library has 40 ranks in many topics.





POWER RITUALS

Both a cult's Fanaticism and Sorcerous Power ratings factor into how many worshippers the cult can gather for a power ritual. Add both values together to determine the number

of worshippers that can be gathered easily. This number of cultists will gather for ceremonies or when called at short notice; a cult can muster up to three times as many for great ceremonies and rituals.

TABLE 39: POWER RITUAL PARTICIPANTS

Total of Fanaticism plus Sorcerous Power	Total Participants
0	None
1	Less than ten
2	10-19
3	20-49
4	50-99
5+	100+

MAGICAL ITEMS

The combination of Wealth and Sorcerous Power determines what, if any, magical items the cult has available. Add the two together and compare to the

Magical Items table. The Alchemical and Minor items column lists what poisons and trivial items might be possessed by the average cult stronghold; the Relics column is for powerful and unique items.

TABLE 40: POWER RITUAL PARTICIPANTS

Total of Wealth plus Sorcerous Power	Alchemical and Minor Items	Relics
0	None	None
1	One minor item, such as a poison or flame-powder trap, each item costing a maximum of 50 silver pieces per dose	None
2	Two minor items, each costing a maximum of 100 silver pieces per dose	None
3	Three minor items, such as blue devil's flame or the dust of forgetfulness, each costing a maximum of 250 silver pieces per dose	None
4	Many minor items. Cult members will often carry items with them. Items have a maximum value of 1000 silver pieces.	One relic
5	Items have a maximum value of 2500 silver pieces.	Two relics
6	As above, and cult guards may have Akbitanan weapons.	Three relics
7+	Items have a maximum value of 10,000 silver pieces.	Wonders undreamed-of





MILITARY STRENGTH

A cult's Military Strength measures the skill and number of its guards and the quality of their equipment. Cults are rarely large or powerful enough to field a real army – they tend to focus on quality, not quantity.

- 0: A handful of armed cultists, none of which have any Soldier levels.
- 1: A dozen level 1 Soldiers, with poor weapons and armour, led by a level 4 officer. The average temple falls into this category.
- 2: The cult has a small fighting force of around fifty guards, with average armour. The highest-level warrior in the cult is no more than level 8.
- 3: The cult has an excellent fighting force of one hundred or more guards, with good armour and weapons. The highest level officer is level 12 at least. Alternatively, the cult might have demonic servants or other monsters.
- 4: The cult has a small army of hundreds of warriors, many of which are highly skilled.
- 5: The cult's military strength is enough to topple the local ruler if they desire.

SECRECACY

The Secrecy score of a cult measures how difficult it is to learn about the cult's activities and to locate its members. Many religions have a Secrecy score of 0; illegal demon-worshipping cults dream of having a Secrecy of 5.

Each rank of Secrecy adds +2 to the DC of Gather Information or Knowledge (local) tests to discover any information about the cult.

- 0: No secrecy – the cult is entirely public and has no secrets.
- 1: The cult's inner rituals are secret, but the temples are on the main streets of cities and the symbols of the cult are publicly displayed. Most religions have Secrecy 1.
- 2: The cult is only for the initiated, and its temple is known only to those who keep their ears close to the ground and know the secrets of the region. Many people have never even heard of the cult.
 - 3: The cult's name is known only to a few, and its practises and beliefs are the subject of wild rumour and speculation.
 - 4: Those who ask questions about the cult usually end up dead in an alley somewhere.
 - 5: No-one knows the cult exists.

THE ADVANTAGES OF SECRECACY

The higher a cult's Secrecy, the harder it is to get help to thwart the cult's machinations. Some cults may keep their inner rituals secret, but have many enemies – witness the eternal rivalries of the cults of Set and Ibis. Characters battling the cult of Set might be able to rally local rulers and priests who have heard of the evils of the Set-worshippers to their cause. However, tales of a more secretive cult would be dismissed as wild imaginings.

In game terms, not only does a higher Secrecy make it difficult to Gather Information about the cult, it should also be applied as a penalty to Diplomacy and Sense Motive tests made when trying to persuade others about the truth.

A cult does not have to be actually *hidden* to get the benefits of Secrecy – if the common people are so terrified or controlled by the cult that they refuse to talk about it under any circumstances, then the cult can have a Secrecy score even if everyone knows its secrets – Secrecy applies to those outside the cult's control.

JOINING AND ADVANCING IN A CULT

A character can join a cult by fulfilling the requirements for membership, and by swearing allegiance to the cult's leaders. This gives the character Initiate rank in the cult.

To become an Acolyte of a cult, the character needs to prove himself to his masters. For adventurers, this may come through serving the cult or by committing some especially heroic or vile deed. Some cults demand that initiates prove themselves by sacrifice – giving up all worldly goods, for instance, or cutting off one's manhood and throwing it to the flames. Others have their initiates commit terrible and vile deeds such as murder. Still others use bizarre ceremonies involving hallucinogenic drugs and tests of courage and faith. An Initiate might be brought to the edge of a cliff, then blindfolded and given a draught of a strange potion that makes him dizzy and confused. The Initiate is then spun around and 'pushed off the cliff' – in fact, he falls to one side and is unharmed, but the drug convinces him that he fell hundreds of feet and survived because of the magic of the cult.



Rising to Master rank requires study, continued proofs of devotion, mastering the cult's teachings (including sorcery). For religious cults, the character must almost always take the Priest feat.

CULT BENEFITS

In addition to the special benefits listed for each cult, a character in a cult gains access to the resources. Most benefits are accrued automatically – for example, Influence gives a bonus to Reputation for being part of a cult. A cult's Wealth score determines the quality of a character's lifestyle within the cult's fortress or temple, and the size of the stipend given to him to pursue his arcane research. A cult's Sorcerous Power determines the teachings and the library available to the character, while its Military Strength shows what guards and servants might be found in the cult stronghold.

A character can use the resources of the cult for his own ends – for example, a character could send guards from the cult to attack his enemies, or dip into the cult's coffers. If he does so, then the effective characteristic is reduced depending on his standing in the cult, as follows:

- Initiate:** -4
- Acolyte:** -3
- Master:** -2
- Grand Master:** -1

For example, an acolyte in the Black Ring wishes to use the Military Strength of the organisation to murder a rival. The Black Ring has a Military Strength of 4. The -3 modifier for an Acolyte means that the effective Military Strength of the organisation for this task is a 1, which on the Military Strength table shows that the character could send up to a dozen guards.

This represents the character acting within the bounds of accepted behaviour – if he wishes, he can push his luck and increase the effective characteristic by one, but this will likely anger his superiors (or, in the case of a Grand Master, damage the organisation by overstressing its resources).

BATTLING A CULT

When the characters are fighting a cult, the Games Master should use the cult's resources as a guide to the sort of dangers that the characters will encounter. A cult with a high Influence might have spies in every tavern and blacken the characters' reputations in the eyes of the rulers; a cult with a high Sorcerous Power

will hunt the characters with divination spells, blast them with curses and hound them with demons.

In general, a single adventure against a cult can temporarily reduce any one of its characteristics by one. For example, rooting out and destroying a gang of Nemedian spies in Aquilonia could reduce the reach of the Nemedian conspiracy by one. Burning down a sorcerer's library and slaying the arch-wizard could reduce a cult's Sorcerous Power. A cult's characteristics will regenerate over time, but a concerted and ongoing campaign against an organisation can destroyed it utterly, by damaging its characteristics again and again before the cult can rebuild.

The time taken to rebuild varies from cult to cult, but generally one point of damage can be restored within weeks, two points within months, and three or more points take years.

A cult is destroyed when *all* of its characteristics are reduced to 0. However, most organisations will self-destruct long before then, with ambitious and greedy members stealing the cult's Wealth and Sorcerous Power – unless the cult has Fanaticism, in which case it continues to resist until its Fanaticism is reduced to 0.

Possible ways to attack cults include:

Influence

- ✿ Removing the cult's agents in the sultan's palace
- ✿ Destroying the cult's blackmail material on a local leader
- ✿ Revealing the cult's evil manipulations
- ✿ Freeing people from the cult's thrall
- ✿ Aiding those who do not bow to the cult

Wealth

- ✿ Stealing the cult's treasures
- ✿ Destroying or undercutting the sources of the cult's financial might
- ✿ Convincing worshippers not to tithe money to the cult
- ✿ Destroying the cult's possessions and holdings

Sorcerous Power

- ✿ Stealing artefacts of power from the cult
- ✿ Slaying sorcerers allied with the cult
- ✿ Disrupting power rituals and preventing followers from lending their magical energy to the cult





- ☼ Slaying demons bound to the cult

Military Strength

- ☼ Defeating the cult's guards
- ☼ Slaying the leader of the cult's military forces
- ☼ Poisoning the cult's guards
- ☼ Destroying their fortress

Reach

- ☼ Destroying overseas cells of the cult
- ☼ Preventing the cult from contacting its agents
- ☼ Destroying a cult's minions and holdings in a particular area
- ☼ Sinking a cult's ships

Fanaticism

- ☼ Humiliating the leaders of the cult
- ☼ Proving to the followers of the cult that they have been duped
- ☼ Preventing followers from getting lotus-pollen and other drugs
- ☼ Defeating the cult in a fair fight
- ☼ Banishing the cult's demon patron

Secrecy

- ☼ Exposing the cult's nefarious deeds
- ☼ Stealing secret documents from the cult
- ☼ Discovering the secret symbol that all members bear
- ☼ Making alliances with other secret orders

CULT AGAINST CULT

Sometimes, one religion or conspiracy will battle another. To do so, a cult must pit its Influence, Sorcerous Power or Military Strength against the relevant characteristic of the rival cult. It is possible to substitute Wealth at -1 for any other characteristic. The target cult must be within the Reach of the attacking cult. Cult battles are very slow – each attack takes at least one week to resolve, and when long Reaches are involved, an attack might take a year or more to plan and execute.

To make an attack, both cults roll 1d6 and add the relevant characteristic, then check the clashing cults table.

TABLE 4: CLASHING CULTS TABLE

Difference	Higher Result	Lower Result
0 (Draw)	Both cults lose one point from the contested characteristic	
1-3 (Successful Attack)	No change	Lose one point from the contested characteristic
4-5 (Plunder)	Gain one point of the contested characteristic, as long as the new characteristic is equal to or less than the characteristic of the enemy cult before the contest.	Lose one point from the contested characteristic
6+ (Crushing Attack)	No change	Lose two points from the contested characteristic

Optionally, the attacking cult can take a -2 penalty to its attack in order to reduce a different characteristic if it wins. For example, a cult could attack with Military Strength, but reduce the enemy's Wealth if it wins. The enemy would still defend with Military Strength.

For example, the Black Ring strikes at the Cult of Ibis using Sorcerous Power. The Set cult has Sorcerous Power 5; Ibis has Sorcerous Power 2. Both roll 1d6 – the Black Ring gets a 4, for a total of 9, and Ibis gets a 6 for a total of 7. The difference is a 2, so the Cult of Ibis loses one point of Sorcerous Power.

Fanaticism: A cult can use its Fanaticism to defend against any attacks. A cult can never Plunder with Fanaticism, nor may it attack with Fanaticism.

Secrecy: The losing cult may subtract its Secrecy score from the difference between their results. If this reduces the difference to below 0, then neither cult is harmed by the attack.





RETALIATION

If the characters do manage to injure a cult, then the cult will retaliate in some fashion. The nature of this retaliation depends on four things:

- The nature of the cult, which is normally determined by its highest score among Influence, Wealth, Sorcerous Power and Military Strength, or whatever asset is especially suited to the current situation.

- How many times the characters have attacked this cult. Each time the characters attack the cult, the likelihood of serious retaliation grows.
- How much the cult knows about the characters.
- Whether or not the characters are within the cult's reach.

Subtract -3 from the die roll if the attack took place outside the cult's Reach, and another -3 if the cult needs to find out who the characters are before it can act. Add +1 each time the characters strike at the cult.

TABLE 42: CULT RETALIATION USING INFLUENCE OR WEALTH

d10	Influence	Wealth
0 or less	...attempts no retaliation	
1	...attempts to cover up the damage done by the characters.	...repairs and continues.
2	...seeks out rumours of the characters.	...puts out a reward for information about the character .
3	...seeks out word of the characters' past deeds, to learn of their abilities and strengths.	...bribes officials to make life more difficult for the characters.
4	...blackens the name of the characters, sullyng their reputations.	...offers the characters money to go away and never return.
5	...strikes at the characters' families or allies.	... puts a bounty on the characters' heads of 1d6 x 500 silver, which attracts an assassin of up to level 5.
6	...plants rumours claiming the characters' committed vile and illegal acts.	... bribes officials to torment the characters – roll on the Influence table instead.
7	...frames the characters for a crime.	... hires an assassin to slay the characters – roll on the Military Strength table instead.
8	...arranges for one character to be stripped of his status within an organisation or kingdom.	... hires a sorcerer to slay the characters – roll on the Sorcerous Power table instead.
9	...has the characters declared outlaws.	...hires the characters for a mission that will lead to their deaths.
10	...frames the characters for murder.	... puts a bounty on the characters' heads of 1d6 x 2000 silver, which attracts an assassin of up to level 10.
11	... commands the loyalty of one of the characters' oldest allies, who now betrays them.	... arranges for the characters' wealth and holdings to be taken from them.
12	... kidnaps the characters and brainwashes them with drugs.	... bribes a great lord to punish the characters – roll on the Influence table with a +5 bonus.
13	... arranges for another nation or organisation to turn on the characters.	... hires the best assassins they can get – roll on the Military Strength table with a +5 bonus.
14	... is secretly behind everything the characters have done this far, and this defeat plays into the cult's plans.	... pays a mighty sorcerer – roll on the Sorcerous Power table with a +5 bonus.
15+	... plunges the world into war to get at the characters.	...puts a king's ransom on the characters' heads, which attracts the most feared assassins in the world (up to level 20).





TABLE 43: CULT RETALIATION USING SORCEROUS OR MILITARY POWER

Roll	Sorcerous Power	Military Strength
0 or less	... attempts no retaliation	
1	... searches for information about the characters using <i>sorcerous news</i> reinforces its defences and doubles the guard.
2	... tries to find a magical link to the characters.	... sends out thugs to gather information about the characters.
3	... spreads information about the characters using <i>greater sorcerous news</i> sends out guards to hunt down the characters (level 1-2).
4	... watches the characters using <i>visions</i> or <i>dream of wisdom</i> sends out heavily armed guards to hunt down the characters (level 3-4).
5	... dispatches a black fiend to hunt down the characters.	... sends an assassin to kill the characters (up to level 5).
6	... uses Hypnotism or similar sorcery to strike at the characters (roll on the Influence table with a +5 bonus).	... sends out a raiding party to strike at the characters if they are within a day's ride of a cult fortress.
7	... strikes the characters with <i>ill-fortune</i> .*	... causes atrocities and blames it on the characters.
8	... strikes the characters with a magical attack like an unnatural thunderstorm that shipwrecks them.	... keeps killing innocents until the characters give themselves up.
9	... raises up the ghosts of the characters' former enemies to harass them.	... attempts to kidnap the characters' loved ones.
10	... dispatches a child of the dark to hunt them down.	... sends a fleet of ships or a great many riders to hunt them down.
11	... curses the characters with horrific doom.	... sends a master assassin (level 10+) after the characters.
12	... breeds a monster in a vat to destroy them.	... besieges the characters' homes.
13	... uncovers an ancient evil artefact to use against them.	... trains a band of warriors to be the perfect foes for the characters.
14	... curses the characters with a <i>greater black plague</i> .*	... sends an army after the characters.
15+	... dispatches a creature like a slave of the ring to hunt them down.	... plunges the world into war to destroy them.

* Requires a magical link. If the cult does not have a magical link, treat this result as '...tries to find a magical link to the characters'.



SIGNIFICANT CULTS

More details on these cults can be found in the *Conan* RPG – they are present so that their statistics using the new cult rules can be shown.

THE BLACK RING

The Black Ring is the pre-eminent sorcerous society in Stygia, and wields great influence within that dark nation. The Ring is closely associated with the cult of Set, but also has the ear of the king of the desert lands.

Requirements of Service: Swear allegiance to the Black Ring; be a Stygian of good breeding, high intellect and without conscience, worship Set.

Benefits of Service: Sorcery (all styles), access to the Black Ring libraries.

Requirements for Mastery: See the Lord of the Black Ring prestige class, below.

Benefits of Mastery: See the Lord of the Black Ring prestige class, below.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Members: A slow death at the hands of a demonic enforcer, followed with an eternity of magical enslavement as an undead horror. Influence: 3 Reach: 3 Wealth: 4 Fanaticism: 3 Sorcerous Power: 5 Military Strength: 4 Secrecy: 4



THE CULT OF ASURA

The cult of Asura in Aquilonia is a small but potent one. Located in the capital city of Tarantia, the cult watches for magical dangers and foes that might upset the natural order of things.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 3 sp/level/month to the local priests of Asura; keep secret about your membership of the cult; carry out duties for the priesthood as required; do not become Corrupt; oppose those who carry out human sacrifice or trafficking with demons.

Benefits of Worship: Atonement, Faith, Spells (Counterspells, Divination).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: scrupulous honesty is required in all things except in the matter of concealing the existence of the cult from outsiders; you must work for the greater good of the cult and the god in everything you do; and you must avoid becoming personally wealthy.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus the following: Spot and Sense Motive become class skills (even if the priest gains levels in a non-scholar class); sorcery teaching is available (Counterspells, Divination, Oriental Magic, Prestidigitations, *master-words and signs*, and *summon elemental* only).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Removal of priestly status.

Influence: 2 Reach: 2 Wealth: 2 Fanaticism: 1 Sorcerous Power: 2 Military Strength: 1 Secrecy: 4

THE CULT OF IBIS

Ibis himself is a moon-god, a patron of scholars and those who seek to gain sorcerous knowledge but use it for moral ends. He has an abiding hatred of Set. It is whispered that worshippers of Ibis survive in Stygia itself, keeping their religion secret but ever eager to foil the schemes of Set and his followers at any opportunity.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 2 sp/level/month to the priests of Ibis; report any Set-worship, sorcery or related activity to your nearest priest of Ibis as soon as possible; oppose those who carry out human sacrifice or trafficking with demons.

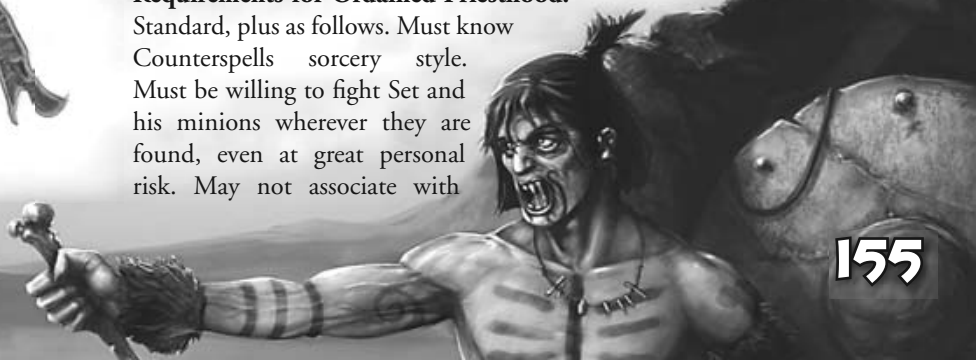
Benefits of Worship: Faith, Atonement, Spells (Counterspells and Divination only), may call on priests for protection against Set and his minions generally.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood:

Standard, plus as follows. Must know

Counterspells sorcery style.

Must be willing to fight Set and his minions wherever they are found, even at great personal risk. May not associate with





demonic entities or minions of Set. May not learn the Curses, Necromancy or Summonings sorcery styles.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available (Counterspells, Divination, Prestidigitations).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Excommunication, unless the priest has been associating with minions of Set, in which case capture and summary execution.

Influence: 2 Reach: 2 Wealth: 3 Fanaticism: 2 Sorcerous Power: 2 Military Strength: 2 Secrecy: 3

THE CULT OF ZATH

The spider-god, Zath, has a pre-eminent position among the Zamorian gods. Zath's main temple dominates the city of Yezud and has a large stone statue of a spider at its centre. Sacred dancing girls wearing black jade bead pendants perform ritual dances around this weird idol.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 2 sp/level/month to the local temple.

Benefits of Worship: Faith.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Knowledge (religion) 10 ranks; must know the Hypnotism sorcery style.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available (Hypnotism only); much of a Zamorian priest's time serving the temple is taken up with religious debate, giving all priests who have served for at least 1 year a +2 competence bonus to all Knowledge (religion) checks.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Nothing more severe than public criticism.

Influence: 4 Reach: 2 Wealth: 4 Fanaticism: 3 Sorcerous Power: 1 Military Strength: 3 Secrecy: 2

THE REBEL FOUR

This is the conspiracy that acted against King Conan in *The Phoenix on the Sword*. It was composed of a handful of nobles – Count Volmana of Karaban, Gromel of the Black Legion, Dion of Attalus and the exiled Ascalante, who together with the mad poet Rinaldo and the sorcerer Thoth-Amon attempted to overthrow Conan and seize the throne of Aquilonia. They were thwarted by the sorcerer Epimetreus and the heroism of Conan himself.

Requirements of Membership: Hate King Conan.

Benefits of Membership: None, but when the usurper is overthrown

and the conspiracy gains control of Aquilonia, their loyal men will be richly rewarded.

Requirements for Mastery: None – only the original four (Dion, Grommel, Volmana and Rinaldo) could be the masters of the Rebel Four.

Benefits of Mastery: Dion expected to be King of Aquilonia; the others fought for justice, or their own greed.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Members: None of the members ever betrayed the rest, but it is likely that Ascalante would have insisted on the disloyal member being murdered.

Influence: 3 Reach: 1 Wealth: 3 Fanaticism: 0 Sorcerous Power: 1 (rising to 3 when Thoth-Amon recovers his Ring) Military Strength: 2 Secrecy: 5

THE LEAGUE OF THE DRAGON

This is another conspiracy against Conan. Tarascus and Amalric of Nemedica joined together with Valerius of Aquilonia and the fallen priest Orastes to overthrow the kings of both Nemedica and Aquilonia. To do this, they retrieved the fabled *heart of Abriman* (see page 68) and resurrected Xaltotun, the master-sorcerer of vanished Acheron.

Requirements of Membership: Serve one of the three nobles.

Benefits of Membership: Payment from the nobles; the promise of reward when the thrones are theirs.

Requirements for Mastery: Must be one of the original conspirators.

Benefits of Mastery: Ruling the world.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Members: Death. Influence: 4 Reach: 3 Wealth: 4 Fanaticism: 0 Sorcerous Power: 4 Military Strength: 4 Secrecy: 3

BATTLING CULTS

The events of *The Hour of the Dragon* provide an excellent illustration of battling cults. Conan is defeated by a combination of the Military Strength and Sorcerous Power of the League. He then wanders around, gathering his own conspiracy. He gets Sorcerous Power from the Cult of Asura and from Zelata, and Military Strength from Poitain and the other rebellious provinces. His former pirate contacts provide him with Reach, and eventually he is able to recover the *heart of Abriman* and remove the League's advantage in Sorcerous Power.



ARCANE RELIGIONS

The following religions represent examples of cults too small to be included in the section on religion in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. They are based on deifying a powerful wizard or demon lord, or are so closely confined to a specific place and people as to not warrant inclusion in that chapter. All though offer some training in sorcery for those of their worshippers who dare.

Note that several of the entities mentioned here as minor gods are also potentially opponents in combat; see the *Creatures of Sorcery* chapter.

KHOSATRAL KHEL

Khosatral Khel is remembered by few indeed, but may be worshipped by the occasional evil sorcerer among the Yuetshi, Hyrkanians and even Kozaks. As a god of domination, dimly recollected in legend as the most baleful opponent of all right-thinking folk in the region, he doubtless provides much in grisly lore to any who will grant him obeisance. However, the scattered folk who worship him do not truly constitute a cult, and often do not even know each other much less work together.

Requirements of Worship: Revere Khosatral Khel above all other gods.

Benefits of Worship: Spells (Hypnotism and Curses only).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must know at least three sorcery styles including Hypnotism. Must be willing to lead worshippers, insofar as there are any worshippers who wish to be led. Must sacrifice at least one victim per year to Khosatral Khel.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Non-standard: the priesthood is very much a personal one, and the priest does not receive the usual benefits of the Priest feat, but nor must he expend a feat on it. He is, however, taught sorcery by demonic spirits closely related to Khosatral Khel, even if Khosatral Khel himself is bound or destroyed at the time.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Nothing – there is no real cult to carry out any punishment.

Influence: 0 Reach: 0 Wealth: 0 Fanaticism: 2 Sorcerous Power: 3 Military Strength: 0 Secrecy: 4

The cult of Khosatral Khel has forgotten its mysteries.

SKELOS

Though Skelos is often said to have been no more than a powerful, mortal sorcerer, he is also worshipped as a god of magic by many sorcerers, particularly those who are not quite so evil as to revere Set but who still seek after dark and forbidden knowledge. His followers whisper grisly secrets to one another in secret cult meetings held in forest glades at midnight. These meetings have more the character of a coven meeting than a religious act of worship, and Skelos's priests are wizards first and foremost.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 1 sp/level/month to the local priests of Skelos, attend at least one cult meeting/month.

Benefits of Worship: Spells (any).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: must know at least three sorcery styles and three advanced spells; Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks; must give up at least three magical links to oneself to the cult's Archpriest.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus sorcery teaching is available (all spells)

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Killed by magical means.

Influence: 1 Reach: 1 Wealth: 0 Fanaticism: 1 Sorcerous Power: 3 Military Strength: 0 Secrecy: 4

Inner Mysteries: Learning the Mysteries of Skelos is cause for Corruption saves at DC 20+ the rank of the mystery. They are learned by taking ranks in Knowledge (Mystery: Skelos). Every three ranks makes one eligible for the next mystery. Learning the mystery requires reading the *book of Skelos*, which was written by Skelos with his dead hands.

❖ **The First Mystery:** The first mystery of Skelos reveals the secrets of the curious language and style Skelos wrote in. Initiation into this first mystery gives a character a +2 competence bonus on Decipher Script checks when reading the *book of Skelos* (see *The Scrolls of Skelos* for information on this book and how it is used). At this point, the character is considered a votary of Skelos. The character is given access to read the *book of Skelos* for two weeks each year by a High Priest. He may not take the book from the premises, however. The character lodges with the Archpriest for the two weeks. The High Priest handles the scheduling, and if the character is not available, then he loses his opportunity. Of course most high priests take



bribes for preferred scheduling. The character must give up a magical link to oneself to the High Priest to be considered for initiation to this level.

❖ **The Second Mystery:** Once initiated into the second mystery, the character may have an additional two-week session with the *book of Skelos*. The initiation is a frightening, soul-blasting experience involving the sacrifice of something vitally important to the sorcerer. It is said that some sorcerers have sacrificed their own children, devoted wives, loyal best friends or, in one case, a beloved king to achieve this level. The character gains an additional +2 competence bonus on Decipher Script when reading the Book of Skelos (this stacks with the previous bonus). The power of the initiation also gives the character a +1 bonus to Power Points. He may also add two to his scholar level to determine the maximum HD he can affect with summoning or binding. The character must give up a second magical link to oneself to the High Priest to be considered for initiation to this level.

❖ **The Third Mystery:** Like the second mystery, the third mystery initiation is horrible beyond description. The character must give up a third magical link to oneself to the High Priest and three magical links to the Archpriest to be considered for initiation to this level. This initiation is the ordination process for priests. After achieving this mystery, the character may call himself an assistant priest of Skelos. The character may have an additional two-week session with the *book of Skelos* and begins to learn more about magic. However, the priest must also dedicate three weeks each year to teach new votaries under the supervision of a priest; failure to do this results in being named disloyal. From here on out, whenever the character has a chance to learn a new spell, he may instead opt to learn a new sorcery style (gaining the basic spell from that style as usual).

❖ **The Fourth Mystery:** Once initiated into the fourth mystery, the assistant priest is made a priest of Skelos, and now has the right to make a copy of the *book of Skelos* (but he is not allowed to share his copy with those of lesser status). He is also given more duties in the cult and may be sent on adventures and tasks for the Archpriest or High Priest.

He will be given job duties, essentially. Some of this rank are Enforcers of Skelos, who are charged with punishing disloyal priests, and

others are Seekers of Skelos, who are charged with hunting down extant copies of the *book of Skelos* that have left the hands of the priesthood. Others are simply instructors. Other titles and duties can be left to the imagination of the Games Master. The priest of Skelos will be working for the Cult for at least six months of the year. He may also be assigned an assistant priest if necessary on certain tasks. This mystery teaches the character additional insights into how magic works and how to make spells more powerful. The character gains +2 Power Points from the initiation process and can use Power Points to reduce the saving throws of his victims on a one per one basis (note that multiple victims require multiple power points and the points are spent before the save is made). The priest is allowed one meeting per year with the Archpriest by his own request (of course, the Archpriest can command anyone to appear before him as often as he wants).

❖ **The Fifth Mystery:** The initiate of the Fifth Mystery is given the title of High Priest and is allowed to start his own cult. He still serves the Archpriest, but is allowed to schedule access to his *book of Skelos* to others and to teach them up to the Fourth Mystery. This mystery teaches about the thirsting of the soul and relishing the satiation of that thirst. The character become Obsessed with finding a new spell and must satisfy that Obsession during the initiation period. Once obtained, the character gains double the bonus for absorbing the Obsession. The spell, one not found in the *book of Skelos*, must be presented to the Archpriest. The character must learn the power of achieving goals. The High Priest is allowed three meetings with the Archpriest per year by his own request. The High Priest also learns that Skelos is still 'alive'. The spell found during the Initiation thereafter appears in all copies of the *book of Skelos*, but the Initiate rarely learns how.

❖ **The Sixth Mystery:** The initiate of the Sixth Mystery is brought to the West and allowed to sit at the feet of Skelos himself. He is allowed to learn two additional advanced spells or a single sorcery style from Skelos (in addition to any other spells he may learn at this level). He is hereafter allowed regular meetings with the Archpriest.

❖ **The Seventh Mystery:** There can be only one Initiate of the Seventh Mystery at a time. The initiation is conducted by Skelos himself, and the successful Initiate is made the Archpriest. The Archpriest's main duty is to serve Skelos directly as his lieutenant. The Archpriest also brings all newly discovered spells to Skelos for



inclusion in the *book of Skelos*. The Archpriest also brings petitions to Skelos from lesser priests (often requests for personal favours). He is allowed to learn two additional advanced spells or another single sorcery style from Skelos (in addition to any other spells he normally would have gained this level).

THAUG

First known for being summoned by Salome in *A Witch Shall Be Born*, Thaug is a traditional demon in eastern Kothic mythology, and has been summoned by witches known as Salome since time immemorial. He is enormously hungry for sacrifice, even for a demon lord – he never seems satiated.

Most priests of Thaug specialise in spells from the Curses, Necromancy and Summonings styles. If a Salome is alive, she is often made high priestess of the cult.

Requirements of Worship: Obey priests of Thaug, sacrifice at least one human to the god per month.

Benefits of Worship: Spells (any).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Ritual Sacrifice feat; Debaucher feat; obey the high priest of Thaug; sacrifice at least one human per week to Thaug.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available (all sorcery styles).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Capture him and sacrifice him to Thaug.

Influence: 0 Reach: 0 Wealth: 0 Fanaticism: 2 Sorcerous Power: 2 Military Strength: 2 Secrecy: 4

When Salome was in power in Khauran, the cult had:
Influence: 4 Reach: 2 Wealth: 4 Fanaticism: 2 Sorcerous Power: 3 Military Strength: 4 Secrecy: 2

Inner Mysteries: Learning the Mysteries of Thaug is cause for Corruption saves at DC 20+ the rank of the mystery. They are learned by taking ranks in Knowledge (Mystery: Thaug). Every three ranks makes one eligible for the next mystery. Learning the first mystery requires membership of the cult of Thaug; further mysteries are revealed in the ecstasies that come with sacrifice.

❖ **The First Mystery:** The first mystery of Thaug is found in debauched pleasure and sinful joy. A character must gain at least one point of Corruption and participate in an orgy or sacrificial ritual to understand this mystery. Characters who learn the first mystery of Thaug gain a +2 synergy bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks involving sex. Children conceived during such rituals are considered

a blessing from Thaug and are sacrificed as soon as they are born, unless they bear the mark of a witch.

❖ **The Second Mystery:** The second mystery of Thaug requires the initiate to study the arcane arts and gain at least four ranks in Knowledge (arcana). The initiate studies certain books of lore and secret scrolls that are kept by the hidden priests of Thaug, who wait in the deserts of Koth for signs in the stars and the birth of a witch. Once they have learned this secret lore, the Eyes of Thaug go and watch for children born with the power of sorcery, abducting them so they can join the cult. The second mystery gives the character the Witch-sighted feat for free.

❖ **The Third Mystery:** The third mystery of Thaug requires that the cultist give three magical links to a senior member of the cult. This is the highest level of the cult that can be reached by those who are not witches (witches are those unfortunate individuals who have a natural, inborn talent for sorcery, as opposed to those who learn the arcane arts purely through study). At this level, the initiate must take the Priest feat and may call himself a priest of Thaug.

❖ **The Fourth Mystery:** In the horror of the Fourth Mystery, the initiate (who must be a witch or warlock) drinks from a hidden oasis in the deep desert whose location is known only to the cult of Thaug. The poisoned waters of the well send the witch's soul to Hell, where she consorts with Thaug and is shown the blasphemous truth of the universe. The initiate must make three Will saves at DC 20; if he fails one saving throw, he gains 1d4 Corruption, if he fails two, he permanently loses 1d4 Wisdom, and if he fails all three, he goes forever insane. After this mystic experience, the initiate gains three new spells from any style he knows.

❖ **The Fifth Mystery:** When a character learns the Fifth Mystery, he is referred to as a son or daughter of Thaug. The Fifth Mystery is learned through mass sacrifice – the character must sacrifice one victim each night for a month until the night of the full moon, whereupon he bathes in the blood spilt. The character gains a +2 morale bonus to all magic attack rolls made when casting Curse spells.

❖ **The Sixth Mystery:** The last mystery of Thaug is available only to Salome, and she has never spoken of it in any of her incarnations.





YAJUR

When I was a child they gave me infants to throttle; when I was a boy I strangled young girls; as a youth, women, old men, and young boys. Not until I reached my full manhood was I given a strong man to sacrifice on the altar of Yota-pong.

'For years I offered the sacrifices to Yajur. Hundreds of necks have snapped between these fingers—he worked them before the Cimmerian's angry eyes. 'Why I fled from Yota-pong to become Totrasmek's servant is no concern of yours. In a moment you will be beyond curiosity. The priests of Kosala, the stranglers of Yajur, are strong beyond the belief of men. And I was stronger than any. With my hands, barbarian, I shall break your neck!'

— *Shadows in Zamboula*

Yajur is the bloody-handed god of stranglers, worshipped almost exclusively in mysterious Kosala, whose rites are terrible and deadly. Little is known about him, save that his pre-eminence in Kosala is more or less absolute, with the people accepting the death of loved ones and friends for their religious experiences.

Priests of Yajur tend to specialise in Hypnotism, especially the casting of spells like *illusion* and *dream serpent*. The more combat-oriented Oriental Magic spells are also popular.

Requirements of Worship: Obey priests of Yajur, sacrifice at least one human to the god per year, pay 2 sp/level/month to the priesthood of Yajur.

Benefits of Worship: Spells.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must know at least two sorcery styles and the Ritual Sacrifice, Bleed Dry and Improved Grapple feats; obey the high priest of Yajur; sacrifice at least one human per month to Yajur, using your bare hands.

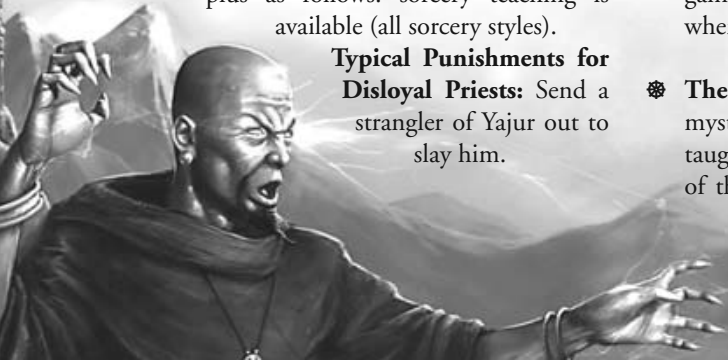
Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available (all sorcery styles).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Send a strangler of Yajur out to slay him.

Influence: 3 Reach: 2 Wealth: 3 Fanaticism: 4 Sorcerous Power: 4 Military Strength: 2 Secrecy: 3

Inner Mysteries: The mysteries of Yajur come from sacrifice. They are learned by taking ranks in Knowledge (Mystery: Yajur). Every three ranks makes one eligible for the next mystery. There are five lay mysteries, one for each finger on the bloody hand, two mysteries reserved for priests alone.

- ❖ **The First Mystery:** In the first mystery, the initiate must present himself to the priests of Yajur. He is brought into the temple, and blindfolded. He is asked if he is willing to give his life to the Strangler. If he accepts, he feels hands close around his throat and strangle the life from him – but when the blindfold is removed, the initiate sees the corpse of another person in front of him. Often, this corpse is that of a person the initiate once loved before handing himself over to the cult.
- ❖ **The Second Mystery:** The second mystery is embroidered in the ritual yellow scarves that are used as garottes and bandages by the cult. The initiate is strangled by a priest until the lack of oxygen to the brain opens him up to the mystic visions, whereupon he meditates upon the scarf until he is enlightened. This enlightenment gives the initiate a +1 morale bonus to all unarmed attacks.
- ❖ **The Third Mystery:** The third mystery of Yajur comes with sacrifice – not the first, nor the fifth, nor the twentieth, but one day, a windpipe will crack beneath the initiate's hands and he will *understand*. Immediately, the priests will come and induct him into the third mystery, which teaches the transience of life. The initiate gains the *walk unseen* spell, and will be taught the other spells of the Hypnotism style also. Most priests of Yajur have attained the third mystery, but priesthood is not a requirement for any mystery save the sixth and seventh.
- ❖ **The Fourth Mystery:** The fourth mystery is the mystery of death. A character must know Oriental Magic or have the Stealthy feat to learn this mystery. When in lands where Yajur is welcomed, the character gains a +4 bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks when hunting sacrifices.
- ❖ **The Fifth Mystery:** Those who possess the fifth mystery are called the Stranglers of Yajur. They are taught the spells of Oriental Magic, learning any of the following spells if they do not possess them



already: *calm of the adept, darting serpent, willow dance, warrior trance*. They also gain a +4 morale bonus to all attack rolls and damage rolls made against initiates of Yajur. To learn the Fifth Mystery, the character must have the Crushing Grip feat.

The two Sacred Mysteries of Yajur may be learned only by priests of Yajur. They are obtained with Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (Mystery: Yajur) – a character with 10 ranks in both skills and the Priest feat may learn the first, while fifteen ranks in both skills and the Priest feat is required for the second mystery.

✱ **The First Sacred Mystery:** By studying death, the priest of Yajur has a greater experience of life. The priest's Maximum Power Points are increased by one step (doubled to tripled, tripled to quadrupled and so forth), but only for the purposes of storing Power Points gained from sacrifice. To obtain the first sacred mystery, the priest must enter the Vault of Whispers and listen to the echoes of the death rattles of all those slain by the cult of Yajur.

✱ **The Second Sacred Mystery:** Only one man, the Hand of Yajur, may learn this mystery, and it is learned by strangling the previous Hand of Yajur when he becomes too weak to serve the god. The Hand of Yajur is the head of the cult.

SORCEROUS SOCIETY PRESTIGE CLASSES

Prestige classes offer a new form of multiclassing. Unlike the basic classes, characters must meet Requirements before they can take their first level of a prestige class. The rules for level advancement apply to this system, meaning the first step of advancement is always choosing a class. If a character does not meet the Requirements for a prestige class before that first step, that character cannot take the first level of that prestige class.

Over the years, the magical boost from a cult provides the society with a strength all of its own, building up a certain archetypal force that tends to shape the masters of the group into a certain mould. The power of a sorcerous tradition stretching back hundreds or even thousands of years is not to be dealt with lightly, and the higher grades within groups such as the Black Circle, Black Ring and Scarlet Circle are among the most dangerous individuals of the Hyborian Age.

Note that the prestige classes presented below are not obligatory for members of sorcerous societies. For example, a character can be a member, even a high-ranking member, of the Black Ring coven, without being a member of the lord of the Black Ring prestige class. The classes merely offer a typical career path for high-ranking members of the coven, not a straitjacket, and most groups will accept any sorcerer of sufficient power as a high-grade member or even leader. The only exception is the master of the Black Circle class – a character must have at least one level in this class to become Master of Yimsha, since without it he cannot summon the lords of the Black Circle.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Here are definitions of some terms used in this section.

Base Class: One of the standard nine classes.

Scholar Level: Generally equal to the number of scholar class levels (see below). Levels in some prestige classes add to levels in the scholar class to determine total scholar level. Temptresses with the sorcery secret art can count their temptress levels as scholar levels.

Character Level: The total level of the character, which is the sum of all class levels held by that character.

Class Level: The level of a character in a particular class. For a character with levels in only one class, class level and character level are the same.

PRESTIGE CLASSES AND FAVOURIED CLASSES

All prestige classes are treated as favoured classes, whatever the character's race. This can make an otherwise less viable class and race combination more viable at higher levels, so for example a Hyrkanian scholar who becomes a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle will gain bonus feats as though the prestige class was his favoured class, even though his main class (scholar) is not.

LORD OF THE BLACK RING

The Black Ring is the main sorcerous coven in Stygia. It is made up of former or current priests of Set, formerly independent sorcerers whose infamy and power draws the attention of the senior wizards of the Black Ring, and acolytes of the Black Ring.





Lords of the Black Ring are among the highest ranking sorcerers of their cult, capable of commanding the loyalty of both their lower grade acolytes and great numbers of Stygian warriors and nobles. Most also have an official position within the cult of Set, though almost as many pay no more than lip service to the Old Serpent. There is a certain rivalry between those who are priests of Set and those who are not. This rivalry often degenerates into power struggles and even open magical warfare. There is no honour among lords of the Black Ring, just a naked desire for control over others and sorcerous knowledge.

Sorcerers join the Black Ring because they seek raw magical power, and indeed lords of the Black Ring tend to have more Base Power Points and more advanced spells than independent sorcerers or those who belong to other magical societies. (The only real contender for them in terms of raw magical power is the master of the Black Circle, but he is very much unique.) They are also among the most powerful wizards in the world in terms of their ability to sway others with magical attacks, too. However, they miss out on some of the physical formidability of the Eastern sorcerers, as well as the versatility that other sorcerers may gain by bonus feats. For the lords of the Black Ring, such tradeoffs are irrelevant. They are among the top wizards of the western world, and that is enough for them.

Lords of the Black Ring are feared wherever they go, even in Stygia itself. Even the threat of their wrath is generally enough to bring their cowering inferiors back into line.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a lord of the Black Ring, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

Sorcery Styles: Must know at least four sorcery styles, including Summonings.

Codes of Honour: Must not have a code of honour.

Skills: Knowledge (arcane) 12 ranks, Perform (ritual) 12 ranks.

Race: Must be Stygian.

Religion: Must be a worshipper of Set in good standing.

Corruption: 3 or higher.

Special: Must have been a member of the Black Ring coven for at least a year.

CLASS SKILLS

The lord of the Black Ring's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), and Sleight of Hand (Dex).

Skill Points At Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the lord of the Black Ring prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: The lord of the Black Ring gains no new weapon or armour proficiencies.

+1 Power Point: At 1st level and every three levels thereafter, the lord of the Black Ring's Base Power Points increase by +1.

Advanced Spell: At 1st level and every level thereafter, the lord of the Black Ring improves his knowledge of any one of the sorcery styles he already knows by gaining any one of the advanced spells listed under the style. The lord of the Black Ring may choose his advanced spell himself.

Note that when a lord of the Black Ring gains Advanced Spell and New Sorcery Style at the same time on gaining a new level, he may choose to gain the advanced spell in the New Sorcery Style.

At 3rd level, 6th level and 9th level, the lord of the Black Ring gains two advanced spells rather than one. If he prefers, he may choose to gain a New Sorcery Style instead of the two advanced spells. The lord of the Black Ring also gains the basic spell associated with the new style if he takes it.

Scholar Levels: The lord of the Black Ring may add his lord of the Black Ring class level to his scholar class level for the following purposes: gaining bonus spells for high Intelligence and determining effective level when casting spells.

Demonologist: The lord of the Black Ring is unusually adept at dealing with demons of various kinds. Whenever he casts the *summon demon* or *form demon* spell, he adds double his lord of the Black Ring class level to his scholar class level to determine the maximum HD of the demon he can *summon* or *bind*, rather than merely adding his lord of the Black Ring class level to his scholar class level (see Scholar Levels, above).



TABLE 44: THE LORD OF THE BLACK RING

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, Scholar Levels, Demonologist
2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+0	+0	+3	Advanced Spell
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	+1	+1	+3	Advanced Spell x2 <i>or</i> New Sorcery Style
4	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1	+1	+4	Advanced Spell
6	+3	+2	+2	+4	+2	+2	+5	Advanced Spell x2 <i>or</i> New Sorcery Style
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	+2	+2	+5	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
8	+4	+3	+3	+6	+2	+2	+6	Advanced Spell
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	+3	+3	+6	Advanced Spell x2 <i>or</i> New Sorcery Style
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	+3	+3	+7	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell

MASTER OF THE BLACK CIRCLE

Unlike most other groups of elite sorcerers, there is no requirement to be of a particular race to join the Black Circle, though its lower ranks are filled for the most part with rakhshas of Vendhya and the Himelians. The post of master can be filled by anyone who can take it. He may reassemble the remaining rakhshas who studied under the previous master, or he may recruit an entirely new Black Circle – it is not the people who make this sorcerous society what it is, but its master, and the lords of the Black Circle he commands.

The main bar to entry for most would-be masters of the Black Circle is the sheer expense of crafting the requisite *pomegranate altar of the Black Circle*. This quite literally costs many times a king's ransom. The sorcerer who wishes to replace the Master of Yimsha must have an enormous amount of monetary and other temporal power before he can gain the ultimate in magical power.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become the master of the Black Circle, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

Sorcery Styles: Must know at least five sorcery styles, including Summonings, Cosmic Magic and Oriental Magic.

Spells: Must know *ranged hypnotism*, *greater demonic pact*, *summon demon* and *form demon*

Magic Attack Bonus: +7.

Feats: Craft Magic Item, Craft Major Magic Item, Permanent Sorcery, Leadership

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 18 ranks, Perform (ritual) 18 ranks.

Corruption: 5 or higher.

Special: Must construct a *pomegranate altar of the Black Circle* (see page 72) – this may involve destroying the previous altar, since there can only be one in existence at any time. Must take and hold the castle atop Mount Yimsha, or construct a stronghold of similar strength, solitude and power elsewhere. If there is already a master of the Black Circle elsewhere in the world, must find and slay him. Must currently have a *greater demonic pact* in place with a demon lord.

CLASS SKILLS

The master of the Black Circle's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Perform (Cha), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Sleight of Hand (Dex).

Skill Points At Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.





CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the master of the Black Circle prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: The master of the Black Circle gains no new weapon or armour proficiencies.

+1 Power Point: At 1st level and every level thereafter, the master of the Black Circle's Base Power Points increase by +1.

Advanced Spell: At 1st level and every level thereafter, the master of the Black Circle improves his knowledge of any one of the sorcery styles he already knows by gaining any one of the advanced spells listed under the style. The master of the Black Circle may choose his advanced spell himself.

Note that when the master of the Black Circle gains Advanced Spell and New Sorcery Style at the same time on gaining a new level, he may choose to gain the advanced spell in the New Sorcery Style.

Scholar Levels: The master of the Black Circle may add his master of the Black Circle class level to his scholar class level for the following purposes: gaining bonus spells for high Intelligence and determining effective scholar level when casting spells.

Summon Lords of the Black Circle: The master of the Black Circle may use his *pomegranate altar of the Black Circle*, and his *greater demonic pact* with whichever demon lord he is allied to, to perform a great ritual of summoning. This calls up the four lords of the Black Circle (see page 162) to act as servants for the master of the Black Circle. They are tied to the Earth exactly as though affected by a *form demon* spell, thus losing their manifest special quality. The master of the Black Circle has complete control over them, so long as he remains in favour with his own demon lord.

New Sorcery Style: At 2nd and 4th levels the master of the Black Circle may choose a new sorcery style along with the basic spell associated with it.

Master Mesmerist: The master of the Black Circle is especially adept at spells of the Hypnotism type, his staring eyes and powerful personality combining to make his mesmerism almost irresistible. From 3rd level onwards, he may add his class level to his magic attack roll whenever casting a Hypnotism spell.

Spellcraft: At 5th level the master of the Black Circle learns a number of powerful new demonic techniques for creating magic items. He halves the experience point cost of creating any magic item, though the silver piece cost is unaffected.

TABLE 45 THE MASTER OF THE BLACK CIRCLE

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, Summon Lords of the Black Circle, Scholar Levels
2	+1	+1	+0	+1	+3	+0	+3	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
3	+2	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1	+3	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, Master Mesmerist
4	+3	+3	+1	+2	+4	+1	+4	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
5	+3	+3	+1	+2	+4	+1	+4	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell, Spellcraft



SORCERER OF THE SCARLET CIRCLE

The Scarlet Circle is the main cabal of sorcerers in the East, and draws in scholars and wizards from Khitai, Vendhya, the Himelians, some of the eastern Hyrkanian tribes, and doubtless certain additional, utterly mysterious lands, as yet unknown to those from the Hyborian Kingdoms. Unlike the sorcerers of the West, the members of the Scarlet Circle concentrate on martial arts as much as on wizardry, learning to perform incredible feats of combat skill. The more experienced sorcerers of the Scarlet Circle can be a match for many a soldier or barbarian in a fistfight, though inevitably their sorcerous studies suffer slightly.

As with many Eastern organisations, the Scarlet Circle is strictly hierarchical, with one master at its head in what might seem to outsiders to be an almost unassailable position. Though this hierarchy is respected by most of the acolytes, the higher-level sorcerers of the Scarlet Circle are often in a position to challenge the rule of the master, and will certainly consider doing so. They may prefer subtlety to open warfare, but the supposedly orderly ways of the Scarlet Circle can rapidly break down if two or more strong leaders come into conflict.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

Sorcery Styles: Must know at least three sorcery styles, including Oriental Magic.

Feats: Brawl, Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Unarmed Strike.

Skills: Knowledge (arcane) 8 ranks, Perform (ritual) 8 ranks.

Race: Must have been born east of the Vilayet Sea (includes Khitans, Vendhyans, Himelian tribesmen and some Hyrkanians).

Corruption: 1 or higher.

CLASS SKILLS

The sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis),

Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Sleight of Hand (Dex).

Skill Points At Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: The sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle gains no new weapon or armour proficiencies.

Unarmed Strike: A sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may make attacks with either fist interchangeably or even from elbows, knees, and feet. This means that a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may even make unarmed strikes with his hands full. There is no such thing as an off-hand attack for a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle striking unarmed. A sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may thus apply his full Strength bonus on damage rolls for all his unarmed strikes.

A sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may add his Wisdom bonus to all attack rolls made with unarmed strikes.

A sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle also deals more damage with his unarmed strikes than a normal person would, even more than is granted by the Brawl feat. His damage with an unarmed strike is 1d8 at 1st level, 1d10 at 4th level, 1d12 at 7th level and 2d6 at 10th level.

Scholar Levels: The sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may add his sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle class level to his scholar class level for the purpose of determining effective scholar level when casting spells.

Advanced Spell: At 2nd level and every level thereafter, the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle improves his knowledge of any one of the sorcery styles he already knows by gaining any one of the advanced spells listed under the style. The sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may choose his advanced spell himself.

Note that when a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle gains Advanced Spell and New Sorcery Style at the same time on gaining a new level, he may choose to gain the advanced spell in the New Sorcery Style.





Combination Attack: When unarmoured and attacking only with unarmed strikes, a sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may strike with a combination attack at the expense of accuracy. When doing so, he may make one extra attack in a round at his highest base attack bonus, but this attack takes a -2 penalty, as does every other attack he makes that round. This penalty applies for 1 round, so it also affects attacks of opportunity the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle might make before his next action. A sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle must use a full attack action to strike with a combination attack.

New Sorcery Style: At 3rd level and 8th level the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may choose a new sorcery style along with the basic spell associated with it.

+1 Power Point: At 5th level and 10th level, the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle's Base Power Points increase by +1.

Impenetrable Fortress: At 6th level, the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle's bonuses for his Defensive Martial Arts feat increase. He now gains a total of +8 dodge bonus to Defence Value if using the Total Defence action, and a +4 to all Strength and Dexterity checks relating to trips, grapples and overruns.

TABLE 46: THE SORCERER OF THE SCARLET CIRCLE

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Unarmed Strike (1d8), Scholar Levels
2	+1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+3	Combination Attack, Advanced Spell
3	+2	+2	+1	+1	+1	+1	+3	New Sorcery Style, Advanced Spell
4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+1	+4	Unarmed Strike (1d10), Advanced Spell
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+1	+4	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
6	+4	+4	+2	+2	+2	+2	+5	Impenetrable Fortress, Advanced Spell
7	+5	+5	+2	+2	+2	+2	+5	Unarmed Strike (1d12), Advanced Spell
8	+6	+6	+3	+3	+2	+2	+6	New Sorcery Style, Advanced Spell
9	+6	+6	+3	+3	+3	+3	+6	Arrow Fist, Advanced Spell
10	+7	+7	+3	+3	+3	+3	+7	Unarmed Strike (2d6), +1 Power Point, Advanced Spell





Arrow Fist: At 9th level the sorcerer of the Scarlet Circle may take a special full attack action as follows. He gains a +4 dodge bonus to Defence Value until his next action. He may move up to his usual movement rate, either before or after his attack, or by splitting his movement so as to move some of it before and some of it after his attack. He may make one unarmed strike attack that round, and no other attacks (even attacks of opportunity) until his next action. This one unarmed strike attack has a critical multiplier of x4.

'Keep off!' screamed Tsottha like a blood-mad jackal. 'I'll blast the flesh from your bones! You cannot conquer me – if you hack me in pieces, the bits of flesh and bone will reunite and haunt you to your doom! I see the hand of Pelias in this, but I defy ye both! I am Tsottha, son of-'

– *The Scarlet Citadel*

MASTER OF DEATH

Often, the price of a demonic pact with one of the lords of Hell is the sorcerer's own corrupt soul. Those wishing to stave off this hideous doom sometimes give up their very humanity by transforming themselves into undead horrors. The prospective Master of Death's body must be ritually mummified (see page 96), and then the sorcerer's soul must be placed in this preserved vessel. A sorcerer's soul can be drawn back using the *heart of Abriman*, or by the blessing of the demon who possesses the soul. Other rituals are said to have similar effects.

If the Master of Death is successful in his necromantic endeavours, then he has managed to lock his soul into a prison of eternally rotting flesh. He is a walking mummy, a withered horror that provokes revulsion and fear in all who look upon him. He will never again know pleasure, or taste, or joy, or any human feeling. He will never sleep, never find rest or ever find relief from his burdens.

But he shall never die.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Master of Death, a character must fulfil all of the following criteria.

Sorcery Styles: Must know at least three sorcery styles, including Necromancy and Summonings.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, Concentration 8 ranks.

Corruption: 5 or higher.

Special: Must have a *demonic pact*.

Special: Must be dead and mummified.

Special: Must have his soul returned to his body by a third party.

CLASS SKILLS

The Master of Death's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Sleight of Hand (Dex).

Skill Points At Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Master of Death prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: The Master of Death gains the Improved Unarmed Strike feat.

Scholar Levels: The Master of Death may add his Master of Death class level to his scholar class level for the following purposes: gaining bonus spells for high Intelligence and determining effective scholar level when casting spells.

+1 Power Point: At 1st level, 3rd, 6th and 9th levels, the Master of Death's Base Power Points increase by +1.

Advanced Spell: At 1st level and every level thereafter, the Master of Death improves his knowledge of any one of the sorcery styles he already knows by gaining any one of the advanced spells listed under the style. The Master of Death may choose his advanced spell himself.

Note that when the Master of Death gains Advanced Spell and New Sorcery Style at the same time on gaining a new level, he may choose to gain the advanced spell in the New Sorcery Style.





New Sorcery Style: At 2nd, 5th and 8th level the Master of Death may choose a new sorcery style along with the basic spell associated with it.

Undeath: The Master of Death is an undead creature, and gains the Sorcerous Mummy template (see page 96).

Improved Undeath: The Master of Death has grown stronger in his undead form, gaining the following extra benefits:

- ✿ His Strength increases by +2
- ✿ His Charisma increases by +2
- ✿ His DR increases to DR 4.
- ✿ He may add his Charisma modifier to the DC of the Terror of the Unknown checks he triggers.
- ✿ If the Master of Death makes a successful unarmed attack on a living victim, he gains a number of hit points equal to the damage inflicted.

Greater Undeath: The Master of Death grows stronger once again, gaining the following benefits:

- ✿ His Strength increases by +2

- ✿ His Charisma increases by +2
- ✿ His DR increases to DR 6
- ✿ The Master of Death's body begins to reconstruct itself. This is a long and slow process, requiring one month per hit point. If reduced to 0 or fewer hit points and dismembered, the Master of Death begins to reconstruct himself at the same painstaking rate. The Master of Death awakens once more at 0 hit points. He can still be destroyed if his body is burned to ash or otherwise completely obliterated.

Perfected Undeath:

- ✿ His Strength increases by +2
- ✿ His Charisma increases by +2
- ✿ His DR increases to DR 8
- ✿ His hit point recovery increases to one per week.
- ✿ The Master of Death will never die – even if his body is dismembered, burned or ground to dust, he will slowly reform over centuries. The only way to permanently destroy a perfected Master of Death is to somehow remove his soul from his body using mighty sorcery, or to have his demon patron demand the return of the sorcerer's soul.

TABLE 47: THE MASTER OF DEATH

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	Undeath, Class Levels, +1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+3	+0	+3	New Sorcery Style or Advanced Spell
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	+3	+1	+3	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
4	+2	+1	+1	+3	+4	+1	+4	Improved Undeath, Advanced Spell
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	+4	+1	+4	New Sorcery Style or Advanced Spell
6	+3	+2	+2	+4	+5	+2	+5	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	+5	+2	+5	Greater Undeath, Advanced Spell
8	+4	+3	+3	+6	+6	+2	+6	New Sorcery Style or Advanced Spell
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	+6	+3	+6	+1 Power Point, Advanced Spell
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	+7	+3	+7	Perfected Undeath, Advanced Spell





Games Mastering Sorcery

This chapter is intended to supplement *Conan* core book's Chapter 12: Campaigns in the Hyborian Age, by giving detailed guidelines for the gamesmastering of sorcery as used by both players and non-player characters.

DEALING WITH DEMONS

The Summonings sorcery style presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* gives the basic rules that govern interactions between mortals and demons but without dwelling too long on what demons are likely to ask for as part of the bargain, and how they are likely to avoid fulfilling their own obligations. This section fills in those gaps.

WHAT EVERY DEMON WANTS

Most demons have two main desires – human sacrifices, and willing souls. Sorcerers tend to find the human sacrifice angle by far the easier of the two. To accomplish this to the satisfaction of a demon, the sorcerer will need the Ritual Sacrifice feat. He will need to either slay a pre-arranged number of sacrifices, or raise a pre-arranged number of Power Points by sacrifice. In either case, any PP gained by the sacrifice goes directly to the demon, rather than the character.

Most demon lords will only settle for either a Herculean quantity of sacrifices, or the sorcerer being willing to give up his own soul, in whole or in part, either immediately, on death, or after a prearranged time period. In game terms this is represented by the sorcerer voluntarily accepting a number of Corruption points, usually 1 to 3 depending on the demon and the agreement, without attempting a saving throw.

It is also possible to offer up another willing soul in place of one's own. This is rare, because the character giving his soul away must be genuinely willing, not under threat or hypnotised. However, occasionally an acolyte will do it in exchange for promised magical power, or a loved one in a desperate and misguided attempt to save the sorcerer from

himself. This does not prevent the sorcerer from gaining Corruption points through his deal.

LAZINESS AND INTELLIGENCE

Most demons seem to be lazy in direct proportion to their intelligence. In fact this is not the case. Almost all actual demons are incredibly slothful, preferring to do the bare minimum of actual work they can get away with, though if the work is sufficiently bloody or degenerate they may work up a little more enthusiasm.

The confusion with regard to intelligence comes from the fact that any demon will always look for a loophole in an agreement, and the more intelligent ones are more likely to spot such a loophole. The sorcerer who calls up a demon lord and enters into a *greater demonic pact* with him will need to be supremely careful to cover all eventualities. Even a humble *demonic pact* spell can be risky, if an intelligent demon like a black fiend is called up. Likewise, *summon demon* can have its drawbacks, though these are usually less directly dangerous – a *summoned* demon will simply do his best to get out of doing the task at all, or do it in a half-hearted manner, returning to its place of origin the moment it has fulfilled the letter of its agreement.

The Games Master and player should agree on a written contract between demon and character, and the Games Master should be alert for any possible loophole in the document – anything that would allow the demon to gain a little more out of the deal, or better still work a little less hard. If he finds one, he may make an Intelligence check (DC 15) on the part of the demon to find it too. A demon with an Intelligence of 20 or higher may be assumed to be Taking 10 on the check, allowing it to find the loophole automatically. It may or may not take advantage of this loophole right away – this is always at the Games Master's discretion, and the more mischievous demons will wait for an opportunity to cause maximum embarrassment or harm before exploiting an ill-worded phrase.



While most demons summoned by sorcerers have something approximating a human mind, it is possible to call up entities for whom logic and contracts are impossible concepts. A sorcerer can enter into a pact with these weird beings, but the demon's actions will not be constrained by any bargains – it will do as it sees fit, according to its own bizarre criteria. Sometimes, sorcerers can make pacts with a small aspect of a cosmic entity, bargaining with a fraction of the horror's total awareness. The part the sorcerer bargains with may behave like a conventional demon, but the full entity is not bound by these agreements.

OVERCHARGING A SPELL

The first edition of *Conan* restricted overcharging a spell to those who possessed the Magic Power Attack feat. The new second edition allows all sorcerers to overcharge their spells, giving low-level sorcerers a better chance to have their spells hit home, and ensuring that the first spell from a powerful wizard is virtually irresistible. Some Games Master prefer the older, more uncertain style of sorcery, in which case the Overcharging Spells rules can be removed and the following feat made available.

MAGIC POWER ATTACK (SORCERY)

You can channel additional energy into your magical attacks to break down a target's defences.

Prerequisite: Cha 15, magic attack bonus +4

Benefit: Whenever casting a spell which requires you to make a magic attack roll, you may use up additional Power Points to gain bonuses to your magic attack roll. For every 2 PP you expend in this way, you gain a +1 to your magic attack bonus, to a maximum additional bonus equal to your Charisma bonus. Furthermore, for every 2 PP you expend in this way when casting spells that affect only creatures of a limited number of Hit Dice, that number is increased by +1.

THE RULES OF SORCERY REVISITED

The main aim of the Rules of Sorcery, as given on page 229-234 of the *Conan* book, is not to provide some annoying set of restrictions upon player character sorcerers. Rather, it is to give an unparalleled set of tools for the effective and dramatic portrayal of the effects of sorcery by the Games Master, and for the roleplaying of sorcerer characters by players.

These Rules can add depth to sorcerous characters and situations, making it clear that the role of sorcerer is not merely a career choice but a permanent alteration in the character's status. Many ordinary folk will no longer regard him as entirely human. Even a dilettante studying a little sorcery by perhaps taking a level or two of the scholar class or selecting the Dabbler feat will have taken an irrevocable step that renders him something other, something unknown, something to be feared.

THE RULE OF SUCCESS

The Rule of Success can be an incredible boon to the player who can use it tactically. To a Games Master, it can be even more useful. This is one way to get across the astonishing power of a sorcerer, particularly if he is significantly higher level than most of his adversaries. A perfect example of this occurs in the story *Queen of the Black Coast*, in which the winged devil transforms an entire Stygian war-party into were-beasts in one night. Here, he combines two useful rules – firstly the Rule of Success, so that each time he casts an *awful rite of the were-beast* successfully, the next one is cast at half cost, and secondly the rule within the spell description itself whereby he actually regains Power Points at each successful casting, as though he had sacrificed his victim.

These two rules allow him to cast this powerful spell fifty times while his subjects slumber. With judicious application of the same kinds of effect, the Games Master can easily account for almost any sorcerous activity, even on a very wide scale. A party which leaves their band of followers outside the tomb complex to guard their retreat may be a little surprised to return and find them all slain, or transformed into dreadful foes of some kind...

THE RULE OF IMPERMANENCE

This rule is crucial to emphasise the ephemeral nature of sorcery, but can also be used in an extremely dramatic



manner. Perhaps the finest example of this is in *The Tower of the Elephant*. Here, Yogah dies, and a few minutes later his *master builder* spell finally expires too, causing the entire tower to crumble at Conan's heels, burying the evil sorcerer-priest Yara along with unimaginable wealth in gems and precious metals.

This is a perfect conclusion to the tale, a superbly downbeat climax in which it is made clear from the outset of Conan's career that sorcerers are most often undone by their own ambition; that even the sorcery of a near-godlike being like Yogah has limits, limits which mean he and all he has ever done will be lost forever when he dies, with only Conan even remembering he existed at all; and that while riches beyond measure appear often in the milieu of Conan, they appear but fleetingly, as though to tempt characters with an agonising glimpse of ultimate treasure before permanently snatching it away from them.

THE RULE OF DEFENCE

The rule of Defence ensures that slaying a sorcerer will never be an easy manner, as every sorcery style has its own particular method of preserving the practitioner's life. A sorcerer with multiple Defensive Blasts should choose the most appropriate for his current peril – *terrible fascination* coupled with a hidden passage allows a sorcerer to vanish from his secret sanctum even when surrounded by enemies, while using *blast wave* in a room with pits or spikes lets the sorcerer hurl his foes to their deaths. Learning which styles and spells a sorcerer possesses is key to defeating him (and some sorcerers will pick up an extra Defensive Blast or two from unusual styles – Oriental Magic's *vanish* is an excellent all-purpose escape).

Note though that a sorcerer will only use this in the direst peril, since he will be virtually defenceless once all his Power Points are expended in this manner. A party which sends some attackers in and hangs others back may tempt their enemy to see if he can tough it out, since if he uses all his Power Points in a defensive blast he will be unable to take on the remaining group.

THE RULE OF OBSESSION

The Rule of Obsession requires very careful handling, and a certain degree of discussion and trust between the Games Master and player. It is such a major issue, and so closely tied to the roleplaying of the character, that neither Games Master nor player should suggest its use lightly. When well played, though, it can grant a depth

and intensity of motivation to the character that is rarely available by other means.

In a non-player character, the Rule of Obsession can be used to enhance his threat to the characters, and perhaps to society, too. An obsessed sorcerer is weakened – but if he can achieve his aims, he becomes permanently strengthened. This can add an additional element of danger to any race-against-time, prevent-the-wizard-from-doing-the-ritual style of scenario.

THE RULE OF THE MASTER

This rule is one of the most serious incentives in the game for taking on apprentices or attempting to work one's way up the ranks of a sorcerous coven. The raw power available to any master is quite astonishing, and his acolytes can make a good substitute for or addition to the followers gained via the Leadership feat.

A master sorcerer who can ensure he is not attacked by the characters can continue to cast spells almost as often as he wishes, simply transferring power from his thralls for his own use. Working behind the scenes, he can also cast astonishingly powerful spells by using ritual magic, breaking down the sorcerous and other defences of even the most strong-willed character. This works best in the form of an assassination attempt or the threat of it with regard to the king or other character the party have an allegiance to, granting them both a major motivation for slaying the sorcerer and a serious insight into how dangerous he is.

THE RULE OF THE SORCERER'S SOUL

Simply by virtue of having Power Points, the sorcerer is immediately identifiable as a character of magical significance by whatever demons, magical beasts and rival sorcerers with whom he may come into contact. Once they have that knowledge they treat him differently – perhaps regarding him as a threat, or perhaps simply gazing hungrily at his soul.

Often two sorcerers or creatures of magical power will, on recognising each other, begin immediately to consider ways of making common cause. Even the presence of a sorcerer in an adventuring party can be enough to avoid otherwise terrible battles with powerful





foes, but it can also place the party under threats they would not otherwise need to face if a creature is interested in preying on only sorcerers.

EXPANDED WAR OF SOULS RULES

In a sorcery-heavy campaign, the basic rules for a War of Souls can be replaced with these more detailed rules, where War of Souls combat is as detailed as mundane combat.

In this variant, the participants in a war enter into a dream-realm where they clash using will and wit as weapons.

BEGINNING A WAR OF SOULS

To start a war of souls, you need to restrain your target mentally. Any sorcerer may declare a war of souls by challenging any other sorcerer who is within Evil Eye range (see page 237 of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). This is a full-round action.

Starting a war of souls requires a successful magic attack roll. Only sorcerers, outsiders and magical beasts may be targeted to start a war of souls.

You make a magic attack roll to lock your target in mental combat. If the target succeeds at his Will saving throw, the war of souls fails and is cancelled. If he fails his Will saving throw, the two of you are now engaged in a war of souls.

When the war begins, all the combatants enter a dream state. Initially, this dream looks just like the real world, and the combatants look like they do normally. Only the combatants are present in the dream-state.

For example, if Yara the Priest and Thoth-Amon engage in a War of Souls while standing in the *suq* under the noonday sun, then the dream-state begins with both men in a suddenly empty marketplace.

Each clash of the War of Souls has three parts – the Battle of Wits, the Battle of Will, and Resolution.

Each clash of the War of Souls takes one combat round in the real



world, although a Battle of Wits can take multiple subjective round.

While you are engaged in a war of souls, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited:

- ❖ **No Threatened Squares:** You do not threaten any squares while engaged in a war of souls.
- ❖ **No Dodging Or Parrying:** You cannot dodge or parry while engaged in a war of souls.
- ❖ **No Movement:** You may not move normally while engaged in a war of souls.
- ❖ **No Spells:** You may not cast any spells while engaged in a war of souls.

BATTLE OF WITS

In the Battle of Wits, the characters manipulate the dream around them, sculpting the battlefield to give themselves an advantage over their foes.

The characters may move and act normally in the dream-state during the Battle of Wits, with the following exceptions:

- ❖ A character cannot leave the general area of the combat by normal movement.



TABLE 48: BATTLE OF WITS

Changes to the character	Cost
Minor change to the character's appearance or abilities (increasing or decreasing size by one category, adding wings or other limbs)	-1
Transforming into a mundane creature or object of Small to Large size.	-2
Adding a new attack form like a bite or sting	-3
Transforming into a mundane creature or object of Tiny to Huge size	-4
Transforming into a supernatural creature, or a mundane creature of any size.	-5
Transforming into a demon or elemental	-5
Changes to the environment	
Minor changes to the immediate environment within twenty feet of the sorcerer, such as adding fog or changing the temperature.	-1
Creating an object no more than five feet long in any dimension.	-2
Minor changes to the whole environment.	-2
Considerable changes to the immediate environment, such as filling it with flames.	-3
Creating an object no more than twenty feet long in any dimension.	-3
Considerable changes to the whole environment.	-3
Major changes to the immediate environment, such as removing gravity.	-4
Creating an object no more than fifty feet long in any dimension.	-4
Major changes to the whole environment.	-4
Creating an object no more than one hundred feet long in any dimension.	-5
Creating an object no more than five hundred feet long in any dimension.	-5
Wiping away the whole dream-state and moving the participants to another battlefield drawn from the sorcerer's memories.	-5

❖ A character cannot inflict damage in any way. All damage waits until the Battle of Wills, below. He may perform hostile actions, like stabbing, biting and so forth, but his opponent can respond to these actions by changing the battlefield.

Characters act in *reverse* order of initiative.

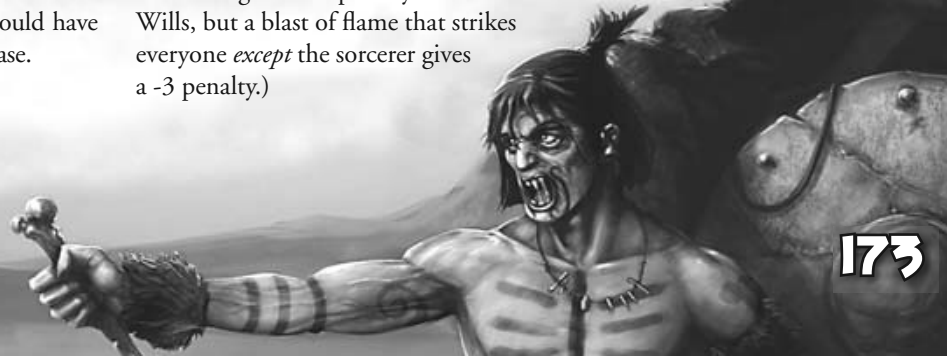
During the Battle of Wits, each character can shape the dream. Changing the dream takes a portion of the character's willpower, giving him a penalty on his magic attack roll in the coming Battle of Wills. Changing the dream-state counts as a standard action, so a character may move and change the dream-state once in each round of the Battle of Wits.

Sample changes, and the penalty incurred for such a change, are described in the Battle of Wits table. The character cannot transform or otherwise directly affect his foe. For example, Yara could not make the dream-image of Thoth-Amon explode into flames, but he could cause a flaming pit to open up beneath his foe. This would have no effect until the Battle of Wills in the next phase.

The characters in the War of Souls make changes in reverse initiative order. Each character may make one change, then if all the participants are ready, move onto the Battle of Wills. If a character is unwilling to move onto the Battle of Wills, then another round of changes may be made. However, the more changes the character makes, the more vulnerable he will be in the Battle of Wills and the more damage he risks in Resolution.

A character can choose to just act normally within the dream instead of making a change. Normally, this involves the character using the changes already made in the dream-world to his advantage.

Area changes affect everyone in the area, including the participant who made the change. A character can increase the cost of the change by one per target that he wishes to spare (for example, a blast of flames that strikes the character and everyone within twenty feet of the caster gives a -2 penalty to the Battle of Wills, but a blast of flame that strikes everyone *except* the sorcerer gives a -3 penalty.)





All costs of Battle of Wits changes are reduced by one if:

- ❖ The character knows a spell that mimics that effect (for example, it is easier to summon up an army of the undead in the dream-state if you know *Raise Corpse*)
- ❖ The change being made makes symbolic sense to all the participants (it is easier to change a rope into a snake than it is to conjure a snake from nothing).

When a character transforms into a new form, he gains all the abilities and characteristics of that new form. A dream-combat should be resolved with reference to the normal rules, but do not get bogged down in the minutia of reach and Defence Value – this is not a physical battle, but a metaphysical one.

Example: *Thoth-Amon has a lower initiative than Yara the priest, so he goes first. He takes a penalty of -2 to his Magic Attack roll, and visualises himself transforming into a man-serpent that rushes forward to attack the priest. Yara responds by conjuring up an image of his fabled tower, which bursts out of the ground and carries him into the clouds above (-3). Thoth-Amon spends another point to give his serpent-form wings and flies up after Yara (-1). Seeing the snake coming towards him, Yara decides to turn himself into a statue that is immune to the snake's venomous fangs (-2). Thoth-Amon lashes out with his tail, sending Yara toppling off the tower.*

The priest could elect to change the battlefield again, say by turning his statue-form into a cloud to ensure it does not plummet to the ground far below, but he decides that he's already expended too much strength in the Battle of Wits, and elects to move on to the Battle of Will. Thoth-Amon agrees.

THE BATTLE OF WILLS

In the Battle of Wills, the sorcerers try to seize control of the dream, to make their symbolical attacks into actual psychic damage. Mechanically, both characters make a War of Souls check, which is a magic attack roll modified as described in the Battle of Wills Modifiers table. A character makes a War of Souls check even if he takes no successful action in the dream-scape. After all, the dream-scape is just an illusion, and a character can destroy a foe by sheer force of will even if he has been outwitted.

In the example, Yara is not successfully attacking Thoth-Amon, but he can still win the War of Souls. This represents the sorcerer using the brute force of his psyche to overcome his foe instead of clever symbolic manipulation of their shared reality.

TABLE 49: BATTLE OF WILLS MODIFIERS

Condition	Modifier
Knowing the <i>entrance</i> Hypnotism spell	+2
Knowing any other advanced Hypnotism spell (only gain this bonus once)	+2
You are in a form or situation that gives you an advantage in attacking a foe, such as taking on the form of a vicious animal when attacking a human.	+3
You are in a form or situation that gives you a great advantage in attacking a foe, such as becoming a shark when submerged in water.	+6
You are in a form or situation that partially counters an opponent's attack, such as visualising yourself wearing armour when facing a swordsman	+2
You are in form or situation that should completely block an opponent's attack, such as becoming a salamander when your opponent is attacking with fire	+4
You are using a form that is especially potent against your foe, such as becoming a snake when facing an enemy who is deathly afraid of serpents	+4
Your dream-attack is ineffective.	-4



Remember, an 'attack' in a Battle of Wills does not mean that the character is directly striking at a foe. Everything in the dream-scape is a reflection of the minds of the sorcerers – an attack could be a bite, a claw or a thrown bolt of lightning, but it could also be a flaming pit opened in the Battle of Wits, or a falling tower, or a cloud of poisonous gas. A character who is caught in his own attack (for example, if he fills the area around him with fire, but is not immune to flame himself, or he enters into a melee combat with an equal foe) gains no bonus to his Battle of Wills check.

The character with the highest War of Souls check wins the Battle of Wills. Move onto Resolution.

If there are multiple conflicts in the War of Souls, they take place in initiative order. The character who gets the highest single total in any conflict gets to narrate the overall effect in resolution.

Example: *Thoth-Amon has knocked the stone form of Yara off the tower. The Games Master agrees that this gives him a +3 bonus to his War of Souls check. Thoth-Amon rolls 1d20+his Magic Attack Bonus, +3 for his advantage after the Battle of Wills, +4 for his mastery of Hypnotism, -3 for the effort spent in the Battle of Wills.*

Yara rolls 1d20+his Magic Attack Bonus, -5 for the effort he spend in the Battle of Wills. He also has a +4 bonus from having entrance and another Hypnotism spell, and a -4 penalty for not making a successful attack.

However, through a lucky roll, it is Yara who wins the War of Souls.

RESOLUTION

The winner of a Battle of Wills may choose to withdraw from the War of Souls, or he may continue the War.

If the character continues the war, then he may drain 1d6 Power Points from the loser, +2 per change after the first made by that character in the Battle of Wits. The winner gains the Power Points drained from the loser. If this reduces his Power Points to 0 or below, any further drain instead causes him 1d6 damage to Wisdom.

The winner may also narrate what happens in the Battle of Wills, describing how his dream-avatar injures his foe. Effectively, this is a free move in the Battle of Wits, which will likely give the character a major advantage in the next clash.

Example: *Yara won the Battle of Wills, and chooses to continue the War of Souls.*

Firstly, he drains Power Points from his foe. Thoth-Amon made a total of three changes, so Yara steals 1d6+4 Power Points from him (1d6 normally, +2 per change made after the first).

Secondly, Yara gets to narrate the ending of the clash begun in the Battle of Wits. He had transformed himself into a statue and had been knocked off the tower by the flying serpent form of Thoth-Amon. In the dream, Yara describes how the impact of the statue's fall causes the tower to collapse, and that the tower smashes into Thoth-Amon as it falls, knocking the flying serpent to the ground and crushing him beneath the rubble.

JOINING A WAR OF SOULS

If a target is already engaged in a war of souls with someone else, then a character can use a full-round action to join the war of souls as usual, as above. The new participant still has to make a successful opposed war of souls check to become part of the war of souls. He joins the War of Souls at the beginning of the next Battle of Wits, and his dream-self appears as he does in the real world.

If there are multiple opponents involved in the war of souls, the new participant picks one to make the opposed war of souls check against. The opponent can willingly forego this opposed check to let the new participant in.

MULTIPLE PARTICIPANTS IN A WAR OF SOULS

Multiple characters can take part in a battle of wills. If a character's attacks hit multiple people, then resolve each Battle of Wills separately. Note that area-effects may affect friendly targets. A character cannot choose to forego a Battle of Wills with an opponent who is caught by that character's attacks, but he may elect to drain the minimum possible number of Power Points.

A character who wishes to leave a War of Souls can do so freely as long as every other combatant is engaged with at least one other combatant. Otherwise, a character who wants to leave must beat every combatant who wishes to keep him in the dream in a Battle of Wills.





Example: An apprentice of Yara joins the War of Souls by making an opposed check against Thoth-Amon. The apprentice joins the battle just after the tower has collapsed, and finds his dream-self standing amid the rubble. The apprentice has 6 Power Points.

Again, each participant acts in the Battle of Wits. The apprentice has the lowest initiative, so he takes a -2 penalty to his Magic Attack Roll to cause a blast of flames, striking Thoth-Amon.

Thoth-Amon acts next, and decides that the apprentice is an easier target than Yara. His snaky form bursts out of the rubble (-1, a minor change to remove the 'buried in rubble' consequence of losing the last Battle of Wills) and attempts to devour the apprentice.

Yara makes a minor change to his physical form, turning it from a statue into an animated statue that can attack (-2 to the Battle of Wills) and grabs onto Thoth-Amon's tail, intending to drag the snake away from the apprentice.

The apprentice panics and visualises a wall between him and Thoth-Amon (-2), but Thoth-Amon makes a successful Jump check to hop over the wall and bite at the apprentice (no change). Yara and Thoth-Amon make opposed Strength checks as they grapple, and the statue pulls the snake away before it can bite the apprentice.

In the Battle of Wills, Thoth-Amon has a -1 penalty to his Magic Attack roll, and is fighting both Yara and the apprentice. He has a -4 penalty against the apprentice, as he has not made a successful attack against him.

The apprentice has a -4 penalty to his Magic Attack Roll. He must make attacks against both Thoth-Amon and Yara, as both were caught in his blast of fire. If the apprentice had accepted an additional -1 penalty, he could have avoided catching Yara in the fire, and so would not have needed to make an attack against Yara.

Yara is fighting only Thoth-Amon, and has a -2 penalty to his Magic Attack roll because of the changes he made. He also has a -4 penalty to his roll against the apprentice, as he has not successfully attacked the apprentice in the dream.

The three opposed rolls that must be made are:

- ❖ *Yara vs the apprentice.* Yara has a -6 penalty to his roll, the apprentice has only -4. Yara wins, and elects to drain the minimum possible from the apprentice (5 points – normally, it would be $1d6+4$ (2 for each change the apprentice made), but Yara willingly takes a 1 on the $1d6$ roll), leaving the apprentice with only one Power Point left.
- ❖ *Thoth-Amon vs the apprentice.* Thoth-Amon has a -5 penalty to his roll, the apprentice has only -4. The apprentice loses, and Thoth-Amon is not so merciful. He drains $1d6+4$ power points, and rolls a 3. The apprentice has only 1 Power Point left, so he loses that Power Point and takes $1d6$ points of Wisdom damage.
- ❖ *Thoth-Amon vs Yara.* Yara has a -2 penalty, Thoth-Amon has a -1 penalty. Thoth-Amon wins and drains Yara. Yara only made one change this round, so Thoth-Amon is able to drain $1d6+2$ points from his foe. Thoth-Amon also got the highest total this round, so he gets to narrate how the lashing of the serpent sends the apprentice stumbling into the flames, burning him.

A REMINDER: BUYING MAGIC ITEMS

Although it has already been pointed out that magic items are almost never for sale, this point bears re-iterating here, particularly when it is considered that these rules provide for characters to make their own magical items.

The High Living rule (*Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 142) always applies. Even sorcerers have their weird magical addictions and need for regular shipments of special incense, slave girls, and otherworldly substances. Though the player of a scholar might reasonably argue that so long as he is spending plenty of silver pieces on magical research of one kind or another, this clearly does not apply if he is making items for sale. Sure, it's quite fair to allow a scholar to spend time and High Living money making himself a *crystal ball* or similar item; but the moment he starts turning into a *crystal ball* factory, or making magic swords for all his friends, things have already gone too far. The Games Master should certainly enforce the High Living rule on any scholar who is making magic items for anything other than his personal use, and may choose to enforce it even then, if he feels it appropriate.



Likewise, non-player character sorcerers are not generally willing to make magic items for other characters. For one thing, by the time they are capable of achieving such tasks, they are rarely short of money. For another, more crucially, they have an interest in ensuring that to any non-scholar, sorcery is utterly mysterious and somewhat frightening. Put yourself in the sorcerer's shoes. Taking on a contract to make a magic sword for the local barbarian king soon destroys that mystique. Before you know where you are, every baron with a grudge or an ambition will be disturbing you at your tower, offering to shower you in gold he may or may not have in exchange for your magical help.

The one exception tends to be bane weapons. Though these are expensive and time-consuming for the sorcerer to manufacture, they are often necessary to save his whole country, people, or other things dear to him. Making a bane weapon does not generally risk placing a real source of power in the hands of some upstart warrior, since the weapon will be of value only against the threat it is designed to conquer.

MAKING MAGIC ITEMS AND GAME BALANCE

Unlike most d20 games, *Conan* does not make a default assumption that player characters will be able to make magic items for themselves or others. The game is perfectly well balanced even without magic items more powerful than the occasional crystal ball or arcane tome making an appearance. For this reason, the rules for making magical items are, if anything, balanced to make them less advantageous than simply keeping the experience points and using the feats for something else. This is crucial to keep the atmosphere of the Hyborian Age right.

It is recommended though that you make it clear to players before they select feats such as Permanent Sorcery, Craft Magic Item and Craft Major Magic Item that these feats are not as powerful as their counterparts in other d20 roleplaying games, although they play a larger role in a sorcery-centric campaign.

SORCEROUS CHARACTERS

R.E. Howard's *Conan* stories almost invariably present sorcerers as antagonists. Sorcery is something otherworldly and dangerous, something to be feared and abhorred. The few times Conan allies himself

with a sorcerer, such as Epimetreus in *The Phoenix on the Sword* or Pelias in *The Scarlet Citadel*, their association is brief and the barbarian is glad to be soon rid of his eerie ally. Most sorcerers are so warped by their arcane obsessions that they are no longer human, and spend their time engaged in bizarre experiments or staring into the cold gulfs of space and time. At its core, sorcery is a weird and disconcerting thing, a cosmic *wrongness* that reveals the trapdoors under the world.

Sorcerer characters in the *Conan* are a tricky proposition. On the one hand, they have to be playable characters, starting at 1st level and slowly climbing in power until they equal Thoth-Amon or Tsotha-Lanthe. A sorcerer has to be balanced with the other characters, and should not get too much or too little spotlight time in a game. However, to be true to the genre, sorcerers also need to be strange, mysterious, and otherworldly.

When playing a sorcerer, the player should try to be slightly off-putting in some fashion – not enough to cause strife within an adventuring group, but once in every game or two, there should be an opportunity to show just how different sorcerers are from common people. The Games Master should work with the sorcerer's player to plan such encounters in advance. For example, if one session ends with the characters discovering a buried temple from some primeval civilisation, then the Games Master and the sorcerer's player could agree on some details about what the sorcerer knows before the next session begins. They could even plan a scene where the sorcerer is momentarily possessed by the ghost of a temple priest. Having such details arranged in advance is much more effective than the player asking 'ok, what does my character know about this temple?' and the Games Master answering.

Ideally, the players of sorcerers and the Games Master should handle such things as new information from *sorcerous news* or the sorcerer's own research 'off-screen', between game sessions. Keeping sorcery mysterious for the other players is much easier if it is mostly hidden from them.

For the most part, though, sorcerer players should be encouraged to let other characters take the lead. It is much more in keeping with the sword-and-sorcery genre for the sorcerer to lurk in the shadows and make dire prophecies and portents while manipulating the others into serving his ends, and he should only reveal his power when



absolutely necessary. While every character should get a chance to shine in the course of a game, the sorcerer's time in the spotlight should be brighter, but shorter, than more mundane characters.

CODES OF HONOUR

Few sorcerers have a code of honour. To be a sorcerer requires that you accept concepts and perform deeds that soil the very soul, and sorcerers are lucky if they can hold onto their own *humanity*, let alone their sanity or honour. Still, it is possible for a sorcerer to at least begin with a code of honour, but it is an open question as to how long he can cling to it.

Two such codes are presented here. Both are variants on the Civilised code of honour (see the *Conan* rpg, page 79).

THE SCHOLAR'S CODE OF HONOUR

This code values knowledge above all else, and enjoins the sorcerer to put his wisdom and learning in the service of others.

- ✦ Respect alliances with other honourable civilised characters. May also respect alliances with honourable barbaric characters but this is not required.
- ✦ Respect an alliance with a dishonourable civilised character up until that character breaks it.
- ✦ Obey the laws of his homeland and co-operate with lawful authorities in other lands wherever possible, unless at war with those lands. This applies even if such behaviour would be to the detriment of his friends or allies.
- ✦ Protect those weaker than himself, if such protection is formally requested and if the person requesting protection is highborn.
- ✦ Have no in-principle objection to slavery, being willing to keep or free slaves as it suits his purposes.
- ✦ Respect religious authorities.
- ✦ Offer healing to those who are injured, regardless of who they are or what enmity they hold towards the sorcerer.
- ✦ Use his powers only for the good of others and the advancement of knowledge, never for base personal gain.
 - ✦ Take on at least one apprentice or write a spellbook during his career, to ensure that his knowledge of sorcery is preserved.

- ✦ Maintain and care for a library of books, and use the knowledge from these books to improve the lot of his fellow men by offering counsel and wise advice.
- ✦ Use his powers to battle evil sorcerers and demon-worshippers.

A character with a scholar's code of honour will not:

- ✦ Break the law of the land, unless he has formally thrown in his lot with an organised and (in his opinion) legitimate force of rebels.
- ✦ Slay an honourable foe who offers a ransom or throws himself on the character's mercy, unless ordered to do so by a legitimate authority. Even in the latter case, if the character believes that such an order indicates that the authority is no longer legitimate, he may at the Games Master's discretion be able to avoid killing the foe, so long as he immediately attempts to remove the illegitimate authority from power; this may involve something along the lines of the rebellion mentioned above.
- ✦ Slay a dishonourable foe of noble birth who offers a ransom or throws himself on the character's mercy, unless ordered to do so by a legitimate authority.
- ✦ Knowingly work for a dishonourable employer.
- ✦ Attack peasants or ordinary civilians and tradesmen, unless those folk have openly rebelled against a lawful authority.
- ✦ Use his magic unnecessarily, without forethought, or in anger.
- ✦ Use his magic to control, enslave or deceive others, except in self defence or to prevent a greater harm coming to the person he enchants.
- ✦ Use his magic to harm others, except in self-defence
- ✦ Bargain with demons or raise the dead
- ✦ Allow knowledge of any sort to be destroyed. If the destruction of a book or other piece of information is unavoidable, then the scholar first make as perfect a copy as possible and save whatever lore can be saved.
- ✦ Teach sorcery to anyone who does not follow a Code of Honour
- ✦ Refuse to aid those who seek out his wisdom or help.

THE RELIGIOUS CODE OF HONOUR

This code of honour is for priests and the devoted faithful of a cult, such as that of Mitra. It has tenets relating to sorcery, but is not restricted only to sorcerers.

A character with a religious code of honour will:

- ✦ Respect alliances with other honourable civilised characters, as long as they do not follow an enemy god. May also respect alliances with honourable barbaric characters but this is not required.





- ✱ Respect an alliance with a dishonourable civilised character up until that character breaks it.
- ✱ Obey the strictures and commands of his religion, and obey the commands of more senior figures in that religion such as priests. The orders of such figures can override other tenets of this code.
- ✱ Obey the laws of his homeland and co-operate with lawful authorities in other lands wherever possible, unless at war with those lands. This applies even if such behaviour would be to the detriment of his friends or allies.
- ✱ Protect those weaker than himself.
- ✱ See to the spiritual well-being and healing of those around him.
- ✱ Study the scriptures and beliefs of his religion, and preach their virtue.
- ✱ Attain the Priest feat if possible.
- ✱ Give at least 10% of his earnings to the church.
- ✱ See to the spiritual well-being of those around him.

A character with a religious code of honour will not:

- ✱ Break the law of the land
- ✱ Shed blood or cause injury if it can be avoided.
- ✱ Bear arms, except when battling enemies of his religion.
- ✱ Practise any form of sorcery that is not sanctioned by his religion.
- ✱ Lie to or otherwise oppose those senior to him in his religion
- ✱ Blaspheme, swear, fornicate or act in any way proscribed by the tenets of his religion
- ✱ Associate with demons or the corrupt

SORCERY AND REPUTATION

A sorcerer's reputation works just like normal reputation, with two exceptions.

Firstly, thanks to the widespread use of *sorcerous news*, sorcerers are aware of distant events. Normally, reputation drops off with distance. Sorcerers, however, can discern the effects of distant magical events. In game terms, this means that if a sorcerer has access to a source of *sorcerous news*, then the Reputation bonus of the deeds of those he meets is not reduced by distance.

For example: Lo Wen, a demon hunter in far Khitai, has slain many demons. He has ten Deeds, each of which gives him +4 Reputation for a total of +40 from deeds. All of these deeds are magical in nature, as they involve demons. If Lo Wen travels to far Stygia, on the far side of the continent, then the bonus from each deed is reduced by 4 for the distance, giving him a Reputation bonus from deeds of +0 – no-one has heard of the strange little scholar from the East. However, a Stygian scholar with sorcerous news will have sensed the ripples from the demon hunter's deeds, and so Lo Wen's deeds are not reduced by distance in the eyes of the scholar. To sorcerers, there is no such thing as distance.

Secondly, sorcerers care little for Social Standing. A sorcerer may use Sorcerous Standing instead of Social Standing when dealing with other sorcerers.

TABLE 50: SORCEROUS STANDING

Modifier	Examples
-2	A notorious outcast from sorcerous society
-1	A member of a rival cult
+0	A non-sorcerer
+1	A mere dabbler
+2	An apprentice
+3	An initiate in a cult
+4	An independent sorcerer of moderate power
+5	A master in a lesser cult
+6	A powerful independent sorcerer, Yara
+7	The grand master of a lesser cult, a master in a greater cult, Thoth-Amon, the Master of Yimsha
+8	An infamous sorcerer, Tsatho-Lanthi
+9	The grand master of a greater cult, Xaltotun.
+10	A figure of infamy and legend like Skelos himself.





SORCERERS IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

On the one hand, it is easy to counsel a Games Master to restrict the amount of sorcery in your campaign. Keep sorcery rare and mysterious, and remember that most folk in the Hyborian world will never encounter a spellcaster. Magic is a thing of far-off lands like Stygia and Hyperborea and Khitai, and of forgotten civilisations like Atlantis and Acheron. As soon as sorcery becomes common, it becomes trivial and familiar instead of exciting and weird.

On the other hand, sorcery is *fun*. Twisted monsters, flashy and fearsome magic, mad sorcerers cackling as they prepare to sacrifice some poor girl to their blasphemous ancient gods – you simply can't run a *Conan* game without such things! An ordinary person never encounters sorcery, but the player characters are never ordinary people, so you should not stint on including magic in your campaign. What you must never do, though, is let that magic get *familiar*. There are no magic swords in *Conan*, for example, because a magic sword you use every day is just a tool, as exotic and wondrous as a garden trowel. A magic Bane sword that the character retrieves from the monastery of the Masked on the forbidden Plateau of Leng and uses to slay a demon, though, is something to be remembered – just as long as the sword is destroyed or has to be returned at the end of the adventure. Always look towards the next weird thrill instead of letting magic become familiar.

Similarly, there are only a handful of sorcerers in the world. Unlike other fantasy settings, there is not a wizard in every court and every town (well, every town no doubt has a witch or wise man who pretends to have some power, but the vast majority will be charlatans). Sorcerers are as rare as hen's teeth if you look at the demographics of Aquilonia – but that does not mean that the characters cannot run into them all. Always ensure, though, that each sorcerer is unique. Consider the various archmages encountered by Conan – each one has his own memorable attributes, even though they were all high-level scholars and relatively similar if you just look at their game statistics. Yara has his imprisoned demon and the *heart of the Elephant*, Thoth-Amon had his ring and his rivalries with the Black Circle, Tsoth-lanti has his monster pits

and citadel, and Xaltotun was a reanimated mummy from Acheron. Your own sorcerers should have their own strange origins and habits – the players should always think of them as 'the sorcerer who was a floating head in a jar of chemicals' or 'the insane necromancer count who murdered his whole family, went bad, and brought them all back as zombies' or 'the mad priest with the burning beard in the temple above a volcano' instead of 'the one with Telekinesis' or 'the one with Necromancy'. Even if you are just using a particular sorcerer for a single adventure, be as grand and strange as possible. Have the sorcerer be the daughter of demons, have his fortress be the last standing shard of vanished Atlantis, make him a member of race that predates mankind.

PATRONS

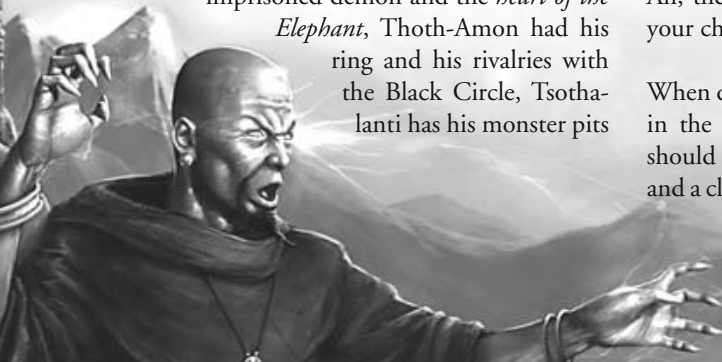
Sorcerous patrons work best in moderation. While having a powerful sorcerer send the characters off on a mystic quest for some lost relic, rare herb or other source of magic is a great plot for *Conan* games, you should not overuse it, as players will quickly grow tired of being pushed around for seemingly nonsensical purposes. A sorcerous patron should either hide his powers (pretending to be a wholly mundane sage, priest or noble), or else appear only when he has a new mission for the characters. Above all, ensure that the characters do not end up treating their patron as a resource. If every adventure begins with the players saying 'right, well first we get old Zorath to cast *dream of wisdom*' for us, then kill off the sorcerer.

While it can be tempting to have a powerful sorcerer show up to hand the characters an adventure ('Epimetreus appears in your dreams and tells you...'), it is best not to overuse that plot hook. For one thing, while characters in fantasy stories may listen to the cryptic words of the old wizard and nod sagely when he tells them he will explain later, most player characters are more likely to nod sagely and nail the old wizard's beard to the table until he explains the plot to them in bullet point format. A better approach is to take a hint from *Black Colossus*, and have the mysterious old wizard instruct someone else to beg the characters for help.

VILLAINS

Ah, the evil sorcerer! Can there be a better nemesis for your characters?

When designing a villain, consider what role he is to play in the campaign. For a single-adventure sorcerer, you should just focus on his evil plan, a few choice minions and a climatic set-piece battle. Choose the sorcerer's spells



accordingly – give him a few offensive and defensive spells and items, a utility spell or two, and he is good to go. A one-shot sorcerer should only be two or three levels higher than the characters.

For a long-term villain, it is best to put him five or ten (or more, depending on how long you plan your campaign to be) levels ahead of the characters, and pick one or two signature sorcery styles for him. Do not bother giving statistics to your villain at first – instead, give him the spells he needs when he needs them. A long-term villain will usually have lots more utility spells, like Hypnotism and Divination, than a one-shot bad guy.

Build your villain up over time – let the characters hear rumours of his awfulness, have them clash with his minions, let them thwart his schemes and hear rumours of his wrath, but only bring the villain on-screen rarely. By the time the characters finally get to fight their nemesis, they should already have encountered him or his agents many times. Always give your villain at least two escape routes.

Running villains should have more than just their sorcery – give them a cult, a noble title, evil allies, a tie to the player characters, a unique blessing from a demon patron or some other source of power and minions. The bigger a villain's potential bag of tricks, the more flexible you can be in responding to the character's actions. Do not worry about making the villain appear too powerful – the players will find a way to bring him down.

MINIONS

Sometimes, you will need to introduce a sorcerer as a minion instead of an arch-villain. Your evil nobleman might need to scry on the characters, or you want a Pictish shaman to inspire your degenerate warlord. Minion sorcerers should be given the minimum level needed to accomplish their tasks, so as not to overshadow their masters.

One important question is why is the minion helping his master? Sorcerers are notoriously independent-minded and unconcerned with mundane lures like money or loyalty to a cause. There must be something the minion wants – a book of spells, a relic, a woman – and if the characters can discover what that prize is, they can drive a wedge between minion and master. Look at how the conspiracy in *The Phoenix on the Sword* collapsed when Thoth-Amon recovered his ring – sorcerers cannot be trusted!

THE ALL-SORCERER CAMPAIGN

Standard *Conan* games revolve around a group of mismatched heroes wandering around Hyboria, getting into the sort of trouble that can only be resolved with swift swords and bloodshed. Such games will usually only include one or two sorcerer player characters, such as a priest of Mitra who knows a few spells, a noble who dabbles in magic, or an eccentric hermit with a line in Nature Magic. The focus of the game will be on adventure and slaughter, not on research or magic. The sorcerer's arcane studies and experiments will be a small side plot in the larger campaign.

However, it is also possible to focus a campaign on a particular theme. An all-noble campaign (with a few high social-standing temptresses, soldiers and scholars) can revolve around political intrigue, running domains, and affairs of state. An all-thief game (with a few pirates, barbarians, temptresses or nomads) could involve heists and larceny on the streets of Zamora. By mandating that all the player characters are related to a particular theme or concept, the game can be focussed on that theme.

An all-sorcerer campaign means that the Games Master and players can delve deep into sorcery. All the characters should be scholars of some sort, or at least have the dabbler feat. That does not mean that all the characters have to be identical – with the multiclassing rules, you can create a wide range of scholars. There's the effete noble dilettante (noble/scholar), the book-thief (thief/scholar), the former soldier with a gift for magic (soldier/scholar) and so forth. All the scholar characters could have the acolyte background so they can share the same master.

SETTING UP AN ALL-SORCERER CAMPAIGN

The characters' cult or master will be the link that brings the characters together at the start of the campaign.

If the characters are part of a cult, then the players should design the cult collaboratively – give them a budget of 10-15 cult characteristic points and let them pick what their cult's strengths and weaknesses are.

Good cults for such campaigns are the cults of Asura or Ibis (both of which are steeped in sorcery and pro-active in terms of going out and smiting evil), or any of the numerous small cults in Shem



or Zamora (which let the Games Master throw other sorcerers at the characters on a regular basis, and has plenty of scope for intrigue). Alternatively, the characters can be part of a secret magical school or arcane order which is not tied to a particular deity.

If the characters are all the apprentices of a single master, then that master will be the main Non-Player Character in the early stages of the campaign, so the Games Master should lavish attention upon him. Make sure that the master is not so powerful or free to act that he can solve all the characters' problems with a wave of his spell – nothing is more boring than the characters sitting around while a Non-Player Character does cool stuff in front of them. Even if the master's magic is necessary for the adventure to be completed, it should be the player characters who are the centre of the action. For example, in *The Phoenix on the Sword*, it is really Epimetreus who defeats the conspiracy – he warns Conan in a dream, and blesses Conan's sword to slay the demon. If Epimetreus had appeared to blast the demon himself while Conan just stood there and watched, it would have been a much poorer tale.

For a sorcery-heavy campaign where all the characters serve the same master, you should provide a range of spells for them to study. Each time the characters gain a new spell, there should be several options available so not everyone ends up picking the same one. You should also reward those who study topics like alchemy, arcana and engineering, but also give plenty of opportunities for characters to succeed using their non-occult skills and abilities. Even if the characters are cloistered scholar-sorcerers, they still live in a world of silk and steel, and a beautiful woman or a sharp sword holds as much power as any incantation.

The characters will be studying sorcery between missions for their master and their own activities. You can play up this element of the campaign (*Conan and the Philosopher's Stone*, anyone?) with some games set at the characters' temple or school, or you can just use it as a background element and focus solely on their adventures.

Ideas:

- ✿ The characters are acolytes in the cult of Asura in Aquilonia, following the events of *The Hour of the Dragon*. The cult now works closely with the Black Dragons to protect the King and

his family from magical attack. When the characters' master dies, though, they must travel to far Vendhya to complete their training.

- ✿ The characters' master is a wandering scholar, who transports his laboratory and library in a procession of ox-drawn caravans. The characters travel from one land to another, gathering lore.
- ✿ As part of the cult of Bel in Shem, the characters are all thieves of knowledge, who must steal the secrets of the other cults as part of their rituals. According to their masters' divinations, One of the other cults is secretly plotting an arcane apocalypse, and the characters must find out which one it is before it's too late!

SORCERER ADVENTURES

Most *Conan* adventures work perfectly well for sorcerers, although obviously sorcerers are less likely to solve problems with swords and more likely to use magic to bypass or blast through obstacles. (Investigative scenarios can often be beaten easily with spells like *mind-reading* or *the dead speak*, so the Games Master should keep track of what spells the characters have to avoid being surprised.)

With sorcerers, there is great scope for more mystic adventures. You could run whole games sessions that take place in lotus-dreams or mystic visions. Riddles, puzzles and philosophical debates should be as common as sword-play, but never forget that these are the days of high adventure. Mix demons, assassins, weird cults and human sacrifices into the most intellectual and refined of games. Perhaps one scholar can distract the demon with poetry or riddles while the rest prepare a banishment spell.

Mix in both mundane and supernatural challenges and encounters. Keeping an earthy foundation for your game is important. Even the most powerful sorcerer is still but a man – or else, he has deliberately chosen to become something inhuman. Tempt the characters with power and knowledge at the price of their souls or their humanity – corruption should be a constant theme in the campaign. Ideally, set up situations where the characters have to choose between their desires and avoiding corruption.



Ideas:

- ❖ A child is stolen, and a strange bat-winged fiend was spotted flying over the rooftops that night. The common folk blame the characters – everyone knows that sorcerers consort with demons and sacrifice children in their rituals. The characters need to find out what really happened before a mob of torch-wielding peasants tries to burn them at the stake! The child was actually stolen by its true father, a local noble who does not want his bastard child to be raised by a commoner. The noble's father, the local ruler, is using the crime as an excuse to get rid of the troublesome characters.
- ❖ In the bazaar, the characters find fragments of a book of ancient lore being sold on a stall. The merchant claims that he bought them as a curiosity in a village nearby from a farmer who found the pages in a buried box. How did the pages get there – and why do some of them appear to be recently written?
- ❖ The characters' teacher is poisoned by a rival. The characters need to gather the ingredients for a cure – but first they need to find out which poison the rival uses, so they need to break into the rival's laboratory and identify the poison.

OTHER WORLDS

'But what of the worlds beyond the river of death?', she persisted.

'There is no hope or hereafter in the cult of my people,' answered Conan. 'In this world men struggle and suffer vainly, finding pleasure only in the bright madness of battle; dying, their souls enter a grey misty realm of clouds and icy winds, to wander cheerlessly throughout eternity.'

Bêlit shuddered. 'Life, bad as it is, is better than such a destiny. What do you believe, Conan?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'I have known many gods. He who denies them is blind as he who trusts them too deeply. I seek not beyond death.'

– *Queen of the Black Coast*

Conan's world is our world. It is the Earth, solid and round, girdled by seas and orbiting the fiery Sun once a year. The lonely satellite of the Moon revolves around the Earth once each month, waxing and waning over the course of its passage. Other worlds also orbit the Sun, little specks of stone or gas floating in the void of space. Beyond the planets and the reach of the Sun is the endless interstellar void.

Strange creatures dwell on these distant worlds, demonic horrors from other regions of the cosmos. Conan encountered the elephant-headed god-thing Yogah of Yag, and the hellish plant Yothga as well as other monsters from beyond. Our world is guarded by a belt of light that most demons cannot pass through, but some do filter down from the heavens. In previous ages, many creatures came to Earth from the darkness beyond; they built strange cities and wonders, and now sleep in lightless tombs beneath the mountains and oceans.

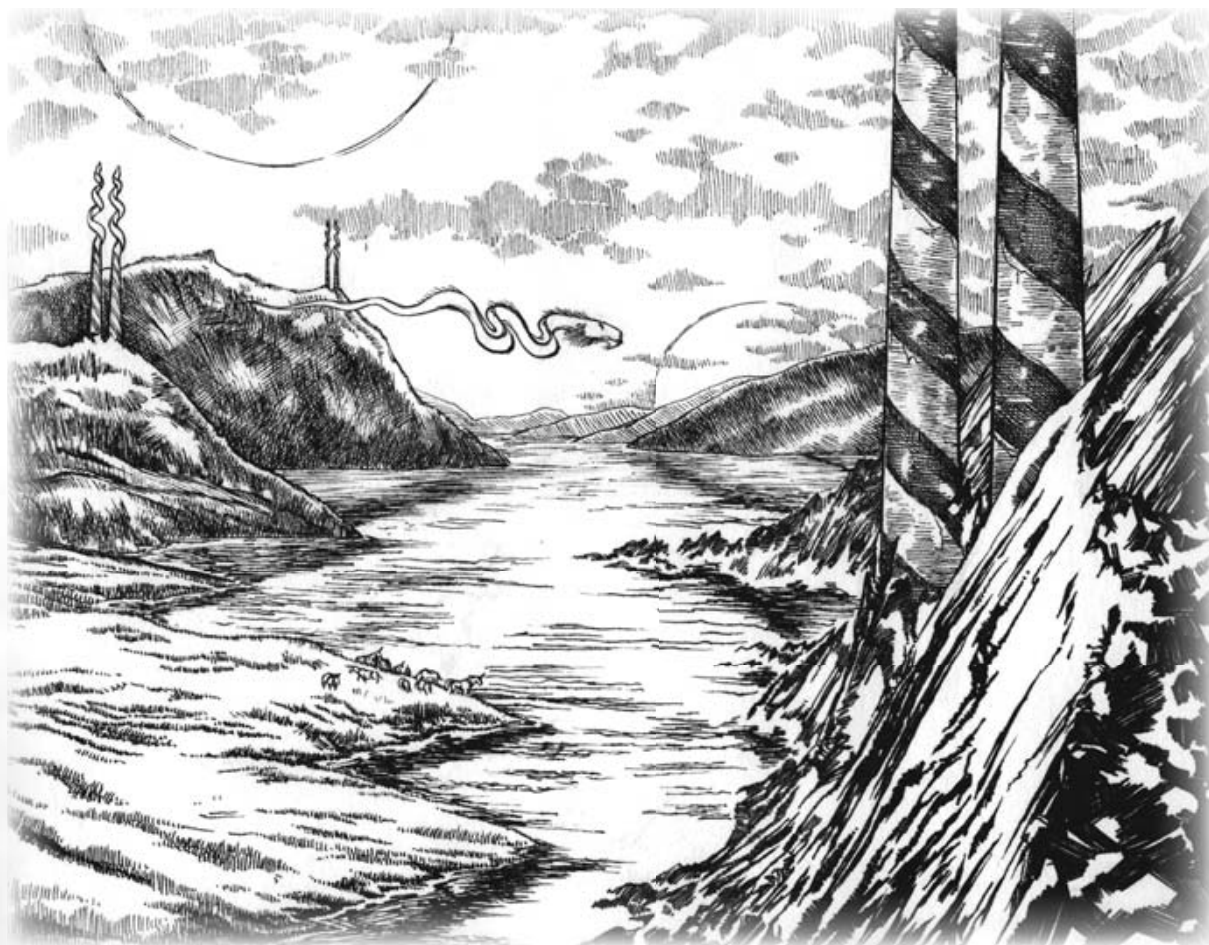
As well as the planets of our solar system, there are dimensions and realities invisible to science, but accessible to sorcery. A wizard can open up gates to Hell and to other strange realms of elemental power, into parallel realities and across the gulfs of space and time. Some of these dimensions are quite close to what humanity knows as reality – dreamers are said to descend the Seventy Steps of Deeper Slumber and enter the Dreamlands, while Conan blundered into some Ymirish otherworld when he chased Atali across the snows of Nordheim.

It is possible for a sorcerer of great power to travel to other worlds and dimensions. There are several common methods for doing so -

- ❖ Using the *dream vision* or *send dreams* spell to enter the Dreamlands.
- ❖ Using *travel beyond* to jump from one world or dimension to another.
- ❖ Finding a place where there is a natural portal leading to another world or dimension.
- ❖ Using lotus-smoke to send the mind into the Dreamlands or another world, even to hell.
- ❖ Bargaining with a demon to carry the character with it through the airless gulf of space or between the dimensions using the manifest ability.

Even among the mightiest sorcerers of Earth, travel to other worlds is a rare activity. Other worlds are not always *dangerous*, but they are strange and alien. Most sorcerers are content to observe and study the distant dimensions, and





risk travel only when their need is most dire. There are great rewards in other dimensions, such as magical lore belonging to races a billion times older than humanity, or magical ingredients of unthinkable power.

CONAN THE TRAVELLER

Other dimensions are only touched on tangentially in Robert Howard's *Conan* tales, so this section is speculation and inspired by Howard's contemporaries like Lovecraft. Most Conan games should never involve the characters physically travelling to another dimension, no matter how appealing the idea of *Conan of Mars* sounds. A sorcery-heavy game, though, can include a lot more cosmic weirdness!

THE DREAMLANDS

Descend the Steps of Lighter Slumber, and you enter the realm of mortal dreams. These are passing fancies, fragile fantasies that vanish with the dawn. The eternal Dreamlands lie beyond these common dreams, and only accomplished dreamers can descend the much longer Steps of Deeper Slumber each night. The Dreamlands are a series of fantastic and strange kingdoms, thronged with magic and horrific monsters. Most of the denizens of the Dreamlands are native to the plane, even the humans who live there. However, especially skilled dreamers have managed to transfer their souls to the Dreamlands upon death, to dwell in crystal palaces and marvellous sunset cities. Life in the Dreamlands is quite literally unreal, and there is a hollowness to many dreams that makes them unsatisfying, but there are wonders here too.

Sorcerers from both the mortal world and other dimensions visit the Dreamlands on occasion.



ADVENTURING IN THE DREAMLANDS

Adventures in the dreamlands use the normal rules, but a character slain in a dream is not automatically killed in the waking world. The character must make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC of 15. If this saving throw is failed, the character suffers 2d6 damage from the stress of dying in the dream. If successful, he awakens with no injury. On a natural one, the character suffers a heart attack and dies.

Adventures in the Dreamlands should be surreal and magical. The land of dreams is a beautiful, shimmering vision, containing all that humanity can aspire to create, but it also holds the worst nightmares and terrors. Characters in the Dreamlands will find themselves drawn into epic dream-quests across spider-haunted mountains and misty fens, or sidetracked to dance with nymphs and dryads in sun-spangled glades. There are kingdoms and civilisations of men in the Dreamlands, and for the most part they are like the folk of the waking world, but there is always a strange feyness to them. A fisherman in the Dreamlands might suddenly engage the characters with a debate on philosophy, a merchant might have a phoenix's egg for sale amid his pots and pans, and an innkeeper's daughter might transform into a swan with the slightest provocation.

Characters who spend time in the Dreamlands may gain the Dreamer feat.

DREAMER (GENERAL)

You are an experienced dreamer, and can warp the stuff of dreams to your desires.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Concentration 6 ranks.

Benefit: This feat works like the Dabbler feat, allowing you to use your Concentration skill to create effects that mimic spells while in the dreamlands. When you take this feat, choose any three of the following styles of sorcery: Hypnotism, Divination, Nature Magic, Necromancy, Prestidigitation, Serpent, Fire or Frost Magic.

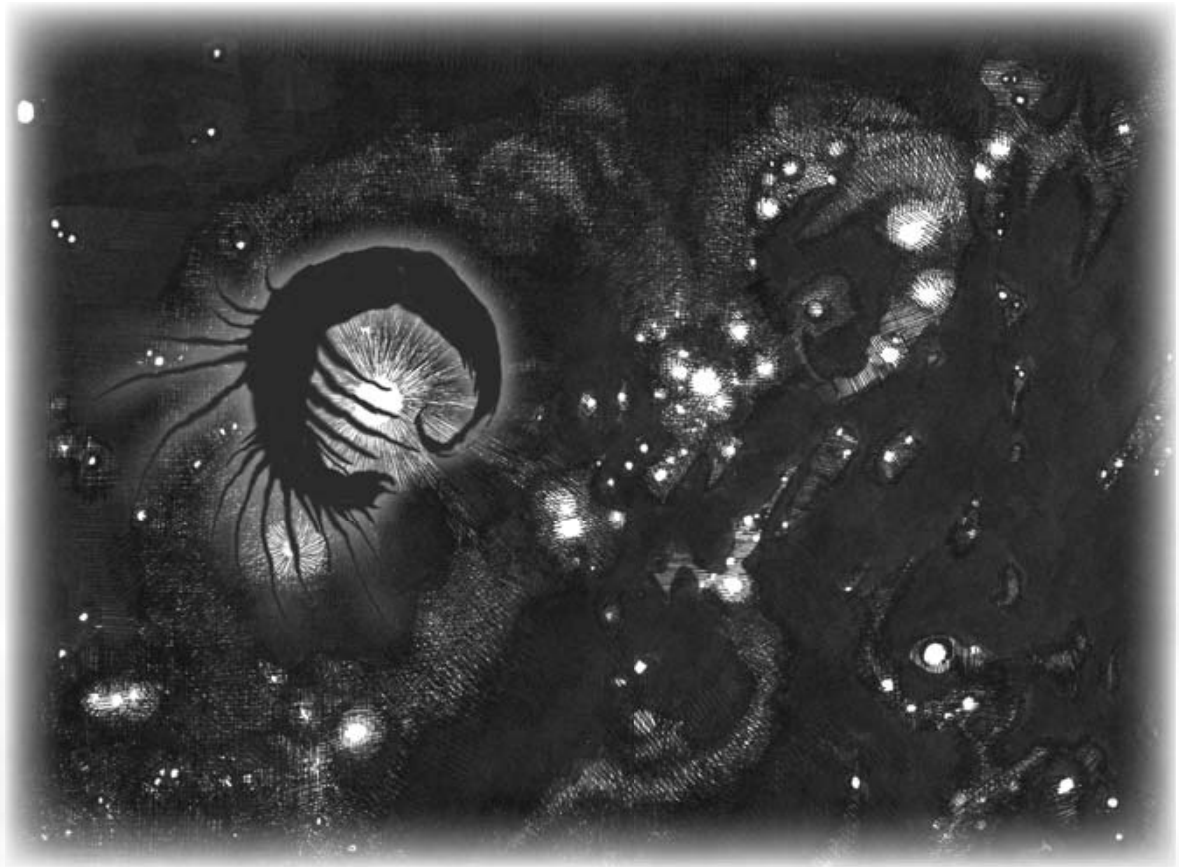
Once per dream, you may make a Concentration check to cast a spell from one of your chosen styles.

The DC of the check is 15 for basic spells, or 25 for advanced spells. You need not meet any prerequisites for the style, except those that require a certain number of ranks of a particular skill. If you succeed in the check, the Games Master will select an appropriate sorcerous effect from among the advanced and basic spells derived from that style, to which you are granted temporary access – enough to cast once and once only. This will be something useful to the situation, though in most cases it will not be sufficient to completely defeat your opposition on its own.

You may also spend a Fate Point to cast a spell using this feat. If you do so, you do not need to make a Concentration check, and this does not count towards your limit of one spell per dream.

Special: You expend power points to cast the spell as usual. If you do not already have any Power Points when you select this feat, you immediately acquire a Base PP of 2 + Wisdom modifier. These Power Points are only available when you are in the dreamlands.





THE OUTER DARK

'A devil from the Outer Dark', he grunted, 'oh, they're nothing uncommon. They lurk as thick as fleas outside the belt of light which surrounds this world. I've heard the wise men of Zamora talk of them. Some find their way to Earth, but when they do they have to take on Earthly form and flesh of some sort. A man like myself, with a sword, is a match for any amount of fangs and talons, infernal or terrestrial.'

— *The Vale of Lost Women*

The Outer Dark is the all-encompassing term used for the gulf between planets and stars. Creatures of fearful aspect dwell here in the darkness. The belt of light prevents most from entering our world, but summoning spells or mischance can call them down from above. Characters who find themselves drawn into the Outer Dark will die in a variety of horrible ways – normally asphyxiation in the vacuum of deep space, but they can also freeze or burn or fall for all eternity. Space Mead (see page 82) can protect a traveller here for a while, but without magic or wings to beat against the ether, a character cannot move in the Outer Dark.

Few sorcerers ever travel to the Outer Dark, but there are cold citadels and strange nests orbiting the world that are the abodes of demon lords. Demons like the child of the dark are common here, but almost any sort of horror can be found wriggling through the pitiless depths of space.



THE UNDERWORLD

There are labyrinths of caverns and tunnels deep beneath the ground. Whole civilisations have risen and fallen on the shores of underground oceans, in mile-high caves lit by glowing crystals. The crystals that provide light and heat in the underworld sometimes fade, plunging a whole cave into darkness unless they can be reignited by sacrifice and sorcery. Huge worms gnaw passageways through the earth, and pale-skinned, dark-eyed men follow along behind, searching for newly-opened caves. There are few connections between the Underworld and the surface, but sorcerers know of certain caves in Hyperborea and Ghulistan where a man can descend into the darkness below the world.

Ancient races, such as the folk of Lemuria, have taken refuge in the darkness below. To survive, they have taken on the worship of strange gods not known in sunlit lands. Other races have never travelled to the surface, and regard daylight and open skies with as much horror as a common man sees graves and lightness caverns.

The wealth of the underworld is legendary. It is said that gold and jewels are as dross in the caves below, and even the least inhabitant of one of the underground cities is richer than the kings of Turan or Hyrkania. Unlike the other locations in this section, it is theoretically possible to just walk to the Underworld, but it is far easier to be transported there by magic.

HELL

'It is my whim to keep you for my slave.'

The daughter of a thousand proud emperors gasped with shame and fury at the word.

'You dare not!'

'The king dares not trample a worm in the road? Little fool, do you not realise that your royal pride is no more than a straw blown on the wind? I, who have known the kisses of the queens of hell!'

– The People of the Black Circle

The realm of hell lies beyond this world, or this life. Demon lords dwell there, and in the religion of Mitra and other gods evil souls are consigned to the fires of Hell as punishment for their misdeeds. Sorcerers can call demons out of hell, and even travel there themselves by means of magic. It may be that hell is but another aspect of reality, a dimension that exists beside this one like two pages in a spellbook, or perhaps hell is the Outer Dark seen from an alternative perspective. More likely, though, that hell is exactly what the priests claim it to be – the abode of the damned, where evil holds sway.

Perhaps because of the role in punishing the guilty and tempting the living, the demons of hell are more *human* than their cousins of the Outer Dark. A demon from hell is more likely to take on human guise or offer bewitching gifts than a cosmic horror from beyond the belt of light. Most Summoning spells reach into hell, and the demons they call forth are the lords of hell.

An adventurer can only reach hell by magic, or by the embrace of a demon. Some sorcerers are said to rule domains in hell, but these may be desperate boasts, self-deceptions to hide the truth about the fate that awaits sorcerers in the afterlife. Hell is said to be a realm of fire and sulphur and burning stone, like the heart of a volcano. Nothing good can exist in hell.

SATURN

The ringed planet of Saturn is known to the wise astronomers of Khitai and Vendhya, who regard it as the patron star of sorcery. When Saturn is in the ascendancy, it is a provident time to make mighty invocations. The many moons of Saturn are home to a convocation of powerful alien sorcerers, and some sorcerers of Earth – like Eibon – have taken refuge there in the weird living cities. A web of magical gateways connects the various moons, allowing a man to step from one to another as if passing through a doorway. Not all of the moons can sustain human life.

Of the other worlds of our solar system, all are said to sustain life. Sorcerers dread whatever dwells below the roiling caustic mists of Venus, and Mars is dismissed by most as a land of barbarians and ruined cities. Some sorcerers dare consult the ancient sessile intelligences that float in the clouds of Neptune, but going that far out, either physically or psychically, runs the risk of encountering the minds of Yuggoth.



YUGGOTH

The distant world of Yuggoth is at the remote edge of our solar system, so remote that the Sun appears to be a tiny and cold spark amid the chill of space. It is inhabited by a race of fungoid aliens, but they are not native to Yuggoth – they came from a far more distant and stranger part of the universe. They have established an outpost on Yuggoth for their own cryptic purposes, and appear to be obscurely hostile to humanity. Certainly, most scholars who have had dealings with these creatures have ended up dead and missing a brain.

YAG

'I am very old, oh man of the waste countries; long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world, from the green planet Yag, which circles for ever in the outer fringe of this universe. We swept through space on mighty wings that drove us through the cosmos quicker than light, because we had warred with the kings of Yag and were defeated and outcast. But we could never return, for on earth our wings withered from our shoulders.'

– The Tower of the Elephant

From this description, given by the demon Yag-kosha, Yag appears to be a world far beyond our solar system. Nonetheless, the demons of Yag have followed the outcasts to Earth, for the demon plant Yothga also came from 'accursed Yag' according to the scholar Pelias. Therefore, it seems that travel between Yag and Earth is possible, and a door opened one way may be passed through in the other. Physical travel from Yag requires wings to beat against the ether of the Outer Dark, but sorcerers can use spells of dimensional travel to leap from one world to another.

Yag-Kosha and his brothers were kindly alien gods who helped primitive humanity, but they were banished from their home. The Kings of Yag, then, must be cruel and hostile beings who have no love for the folk of Earth. Perhaps Yag is coming closer to Earth as it rolls around the universe...

20 MAGICAL INGREDIENTS

1. The blood of a virgin.
2. Pollen or juice from the lotus blossom.
3. Quicksilver, also known as the Flying Slave.
4. The skull of a sorcerer, demon or other potent entity.
5. Antimony, the universal alkahest.
6. Cinnabar.
7. Horse manure.
8. Insect cocoons.
9. Lead ingots.
10. Silver, refined in moonlight.
11. Gold, refined at noon.
12. Acid, also known as the stomach of the ostrich.
13. A compound of dusts and ground stones called the Powder of Projection.
14. Sulphur.
15. Rare herbs and spices, like saffron and myrrh.
16. Sap from a holy tree.
17. The birth caul of an infant.
18. The tongue of a snake.
19. Sea-cucumber.
20. Ground dragon's horn.

20 WEIRD THINGS ON A SORCERER'S SHELF

1. An aludel, an alchemical vessel, also known as the Philosopher's Egg
2. A crucible.
3. A green jewel in the shape of a human eye, called an utchat.
4. A mummified cat.
5. The hand of a condemned criminal.
6. A map of vanished continents.
7. A pyramid of polished glass. From certain angles, it seems as though there is a face in the heart of the pyramid.
8. A set of several geometric solids – cubes, octahedrons, dodecahedrons, marked with strange runes.
9. A hemispherical vessel, with a map of the heavens painted on it.
10. A large canopic jar containing the organs of a mummy.
11. Jars and jars of spices and dusts.
12. A set of tiny swords, shields and suits of armour, all finely made, suitable for men no taller than a finger.
13. A large crystal vessel that contains what appears to be a woman's head, made out of pinkish clay.
14. A large chart of genealogies and bloodlines, cryptically annotated.
15. A twisted piece of stone or fossilised planet matter.
16. A bezoar.



17. Seven amber rods, each one a different length.
18. A burning brazier.
19. A small statuette of a god.
20. A book of lore.

20 SORCEROUS MOOD-SETTERS

Sorcery impacts on all the senses. Pick one of these descriptions to add an unusual edge to your descriptions of sorcery.

1. The smell of incense or spices.
2. The smell of sulphur.
3. The smell of musty books.
4. The smell of blood and hot iron.
5. The smell of the lotus, like a rare perfume.
6. The taste of honeyed wine.
7. The taste of mint.
8. The taste of blood.
9. The taste of hot bile.
10. The taste of ashes and salt.
11. The sound of rhythmic, sonorous chanting.
12. The sound of dissonant and shrill flutes.
13. The sound of distant whispers, just at the edge of hearing.
14. The sound of voices muttering in strange, demonic tongues.
15. The sound of your own heartbeat, magnified a thousand times.
16. The sight of inked characters on a page, twisting and writhing like insects.
17. The sight of strange stars in the sky.
18. The sight of silk and smouldering fires.
19. The sight of hieroglyphics and strange runes.
20. The sight of vistas unimaginable.

20 SORCEROUS TRICKS

Choose one of these ideas when the sorcerer is trapped or caught unawares by attackers.

1. Flame-powder (or Kothic demon-fire, or Acheronian demon-fire, or blue devil's flame, depending on the skill of the sorcerer), coupled with an especially flammable wall-hanging and a hidden rope that causes the hanging to fall on attackers.
2. A false panel in a chest or wall, which conceals a weapon or magical device.
3. A ring with a poison needle, coated in Purple Lotus Juice.
4. A gemstone that the sorcerer offers to a dishonourable character as a ransom. (Possibly a globe of Yezud or globe of the amber serpent.)

5. Claiming to know a secret of the player characters. 'I know who your true father is!' 'I know who killed your lover!'

6. Offering to serve the characters as their abject slave.

7. The characters have not actually caught the sorcerer at all – it is a decoy, a slave disguised as the sorcerer (or, at higher levels, an alchemical duplicate).

8. The sorcerer reveals a chest of gold and jewels hidden in his sanctum. The gold is poisoned (or cursed).

9. The sorcerer screams that he knows the *curse of Yizil* and will use it if attacked.

10. The sorcerer opens a cabinet, and a swarm of poisonous spiders scuttle out.

11. The sorcerer claims that he has prisoners or slaves hidden in a secret vault in his sanctum – if the characters slay him, they are condemning those prisoners to starve to death.

12. The sorcerer begs a final boon before the characters slay him – a draught of wine. The wine is actually a potion that makes the sorcerer appear to be dead, so it looks as though the sorcerer committed suicide with poison rather than die at the hands of the characters.

13. Claiming to have trapped the soul of one of the character's loved ones. 'Slay me, and she will never love you!'

14. Escaping through a secret passage.

15. Loosing a wild animal, like a pack of dogs or nest of serpents on the characters.

16. Throwing a handful of leaves on a brazier, filling the room with thick smoke.

17. Suddenly revealing some secret that one of the player characters thought was known to him alone. 'That man there – he is the one who betrayed you to the King of Koth!'

18. A voice rings out from a statue, saying 'I am a god – this man is under my protection, and ye shall not harm him.' The voice is actually a dwarf servant of the sorcerer, hiding in a hollow statue. If the characters fail to fall for the ruse, then the dwarf goes to the backup plan of bursting out of the statue waving knives.

19. The sorcerer vanishes in plain sight – he was never there at all, and the last several minutes or hours were all a lotus-dream.

20. The sorcerer risks severing the silver cord that binds his soul to his body. His body becomes an empty husk, which will starve to death. His spirit wanders the world until it finds a way to affect the physical realm again.





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'EVEN THE ARTS YOU CALL SORCERY ARE GOVERNED BY COSMIC LAWS,' ANSWERED THE MAN IN THE GREEN TURBAN. 'THE STARS DIRECT THESE ACTIONS, AS IN OTHER AFFAIRS. NOT EVEN MY MASTERS CAN ALTER THE STARS. NOT UNTIL THE HEAVENS WERE IN THE PROPER ORDER COULD THEY PERFORM THIS NECROMANCY.' WITH A LONG, STAINED FINGERNAIL HE MAPPED THE CONSTELLATIONS ON THE MARBLE-TILED FLOOR. 'THE SLANT OF THE MOON PRESAGED EVIL FOR THE KING OF VENDHYA; THE STARS ARE IN TURMOIL, THE SERPENT IN THE HOUSE OF THE ELEPHANT. DURING SUCH JUXTAPOSITION, THE INVISIBLE GUARDIANS ARE REMOVED FROM THE SPIRIT OF BHUNDA CHAND. A PATH IS OPENED IN THE UNSEEN REALMS, AND ONCE A POINT OF CONTACT WAS ESTABLISHED, MIGHTY POWERS WERE PUT IN PLAY ALONG THAT PATH.'

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