

Special Chapter: Sorcery

Sorcery

For some there are different modes of approaching the world around them. Forces that are not understood by all but a select few tend to be viewed as the great art of magic. Spell casting itself can be a risky endeavor as it requires all sorts of risks. A caster uses their sorcery to achieve the spell of their choosing. Sorcery does carry a steep cost, which can be as deadly to the caster as it is the target.

What a sorcerer casts is completely up to them. Anything they choose to make up should be plugged into the sorcery chart and the player should merely have to roll to see if the spell functions as planned.

Requirements

A sorcerer requires the Arcane Background edge, Knowledge (Arcana) d8+, Smarts at d8+, and Spellcasting at a d4+.

Spell Casting Action

The target number for a casting Trait Test is the usual 4, but the penalties will vary based on the spell (see table below). Casting should at the least require the devotion of a full round meaning that a caster should not be able to move and cast. If a spell is done to a

living creature then it gets a save using the appropriate ability score, which is Vigor for a physical effect and Spirit for a mental effect. The Caster's penalty for strength is imposed on the saving roll.

Spell Limitations

One important component to not about the use of sorcery in Savage Worlds is that a spell cannot be cast with a penalty higher than the skill die type (i.e. a caster with a d4 may take no more than 4 points of penalties). A character that has unlocked magic, but is poorly skilled would not have a chance to channel their magic to cause a global epidemic.

Side Effects

In addition to the effects of sorcery side effects of a successful spell should be considered. If a character is healed through the use of magic, then consider aging them accordingly as if they have been repaired by a masterful surgeon. If somebody inhales the vapors on a spell that used fungal trappings then perhaps they will get a side effect as though they had used a hard drug. Sorcery is dangerous and thus the effects should keep casters rationalizing their decisions. Remember though, side effects should be considered optional no matter what.

Affected	Penalty	Duration	Penalty	Strength	Penalty
Nothing	0	Meaningless Short	0	Minor.(Annoy/Amuse) 1 Spirit die dmg	0
Object	1	1d6 rounds	1	Noticeable (Start Fire) 2 Spirit dice dmg	1
Person	2	Medium 1d6 minutes	2	Severe (Reshape Matter) 3 Spirit dice dmg	3
Small Burst	3	Long 1d6 hours	3	Major (Summon Spirit) 4 Spirit dice dmg	4
Medium Burst	4	Very Long 1d6 days	4	Awesome (Restore Soul) 5 Spirit dice dmg	5
Cone	5	Extreme Length 1d6 weeks	5	Legendary (Conquer Dragon) 6 Spirit dice dmg	7
Large Burst	6	Epic Length 1d6 years	6		
Half of Town	7	Permanent	7		
2 Square Miles					
Entire Town					
4 Square Miles					
Global					

Spell Failure

A sorcerer wields great power, but not without a cost. A sorcerer's roll is treated as a critical miss if both their die and the wild die fail to exceed 1. Furthermore, a roll of 1 on the sorcery die always counts as a failure regardless of the wild die. In the event of a critical miss a wild effect will take hold and threaten the caster. In the event that a player should wind up on the losing end of their spell gamble then the consequences can be dire and possibly fatal. Have a player roll a d6 on the table below should they critically miss their spell. A player can spend a benny to avoid having to roll off of this table.

Failed Cast Roll	Effect of Failure
1	Backfire (only if detrimental)
2	Vigor save versus Hazard
3	Change Target (Random target. If spell can't effect target nothing happens)
4	Shaken
5	-1 morale penalty for 1 round
6	Nothing

Backfire

This failure gives the player the exact opposite of what they want. If the caster was trying to set a foe ablaze then the caster combusts. If the caster was trying to mind control a foe then the caster falls under the foe's command.

Hazard

This failure punishes the caster as though they had experienced a hazard. Have the player roll a d10 and refer to the table below to see how the hazardous damage should be applied.

Hazard Roll	Effect of Hazard
1	The caster's body is jarred as if they just experience a violent fall. Take 2d6+1 damage.
2	The caster combusts into flames on one part of body. Treat as 1d10 spot fire and deal with fire hazard.
3	Caster suffers from dehydration as if they have not drunk water for 24 hours beyond the current time.
4	Caster suffers from an insatiable hunger for 1d4 days.
5	Caster is feels the effect of a paralyzing poison. Make a vigor roll.
6	Caster experiences the effects of radiation
7	Caster feels the effect as if they haven't slept for an additional 24 hours from their current time.
8	Caster is exposed to short term debilitating disease.
9	Caster is feels the effects of bitter cold for 1d4 hours
10	Double effect or subtract 1 (up to -3 max) from the casters vigor roll versus hazard and roll again.

Change Target

Count the heads in the casters field of view including the caster and roll the most appropriate die to account for them. From the game master's perspective, the targets should be counted from furthest away and left to right if the distance is equal. The intended target does not count. If the spell is area of effect than center the effect on

Spell Book

Another option a Game Master might consider when running a game with sorcery is the added device of a spell book, familiar or any other retaining force that may let a caster go back to the well on a spell they have learned over again with a +1 bonus to succeed. This lets them have fun building a spell book unique to them. You may require the spell go off successfully when learning it or that they succeed the spell by multiple degrees, but it is important to keep that sorcerer at the table engaged in the setting.

Research

A Game Master may require a magic user to search for spell components before being able to cast a spell. Say a caster wants to create an illusion of a great flame then a Game Master may require that the user voyage to a cave where a fungus grows that can be ground into a contraption that creates the deception. For a more high magic experience a Game Master may forego the act of using components to simply untether all of the magic and let the player gamble as they like it. The player may feel brave at first, but after a few failures they will be a touch more rational in their application of magic.

Concentration

A sorcerer has to negotiate a great deal of risk when deciding what to cast and how. A good technique to offset this is focusing all energy on a spell. As a counter to the steep penalty of casting, a sorcerer can devote a full round to concentrate on a spell, which will grant them a +2 bonus on their Sorcery trait test the following round.

