

# **Wraith Rules**

**8th of December, 2018**

# The Basics

Once the game has started you are to stay in character at all times unless otherwise instructed by a referee or non-playing character (NPC).

The average game lasts approximately 36-48 hours so beginners would be well advised to create a character that will not become too exhausting. Playing a Viking with a hump, a foreign accent and an attitude problem might be fun at first but come 2.00am you'll be knackered. Try choosing something quite close to you to begin with, nothing too extravagant. Remember, there should be very few things that your character can do that you yourself can't do.

Don't play a vicar if you don't know the first thing about the Bible, or a magician if you can't do a single trick. For some of the game your conversation will be about your life and occupation so create an alter-ego that enables you to hold your own in the banter of the dinner table. Basically select something you can bluff for a couple of days. If you want to play something outside your own expertise then make certain you do a little research!

Possible characters include: Actor/actress, antiquarian, anthropologist, archaeologist, butler, author, detective, dilettante, doctor, entrepreneur, government official, journalist, lord/lady, lawyer, medium, photographer, politician, priest, private investigator, psychiatrist, scientist, soldier, sportsman, spy, society lady/gent, or anything else you choose to create.

Create a name, date and place of birth, occupation and life history – it need be no more than one side of A4. It should have information about your family and origins, education, occupation, major events in your life (be they mundane or sordid and scandalous) and focus particularly on the past year. It's worth doing a little research to really get your facts sorted. It is also useful to know a little about the period in which the game is set. (Usually between 1930-1949). Who's on the throne? Who is the PM? What's going on in the War at present?

Your character profile should be sent to the game organiser at least one week in advance of the adventure.

## Game Mechanics

During the course of the game the referees may require a momentary pause in the game or they may decide that a longer recess is required. To this end they may give one of the following commands.

- 'Time freeze!'** All players are to freeze in their current position, close their eyes, put their fingers in their ears and hum loudly. (Don't worry. You'll hardly ever be asked to 'time freeze' in a public place.)
- 'Time out!'** All the players may come out of character and relax. This is used at the end of the game and occasionally during a game
- 'Time in!'** The game has started / restarted and the players must assume their characters.

Failure to comply with these commands can result in severe HP and SAN loss. So do as you're told, okay?

# Character Creation

The first thing to do when you are designing a character is to decide what kind of character you want to play. There are four types of character:

*Physical* characters (Soldiers, sportsmen, bodyguards and ‘combative’ types.)

*Composite* characters (Journalists and agents.)

*Intellectual* characters (Academics, scientists and assorted boffins.)

*Dilettante* characters (Aristocrats, misfits, criminals, artists and vagabonds.)

Each character type has its own strengths and weaknesses. A physical character may be fine and dandy in a firefight but fall apart when confronted by an old book while an intellectual character may have a brain the size of a planet but be left barely conscious by a gust of wind.

## Levels

All PCs start at level one. Survival of an adventure usually results in an additional level.

Skill Points (SP), Hit Points (HP), Magic Points (MP), Grapple Score (GS), and Magic Resistance (MR) can be gained with experience but sanity (SAN) may decrease.

PCs start with HP, MP, GS and MR scores between 1-3, a SAN score no higher than 100 and 2-5 Skill Points.

## Hit Points

Hit points indicate the general health of the character, the higher the better. Hit points can be reduced through physical damage, disease, disability etc. and increased with healing and gaining levels.

*Physical* characters gain 3 HP/level.

*Composite* characters gain 2 HP/level.

*Intellectual* characters gain 1HP/level.

*Dilettante* characters begin with 1-3HP (determined either by GOs or by random) and gain 0-3HP per level afterwards (as awarded by GOs).

After level 3, all characters only gain 1HP/level. A 6th level physical character therefore will have a total of 12 HP (3/level until level 3 and then 1/level afterwards).

## Changing Class

Sometimes it becomes clear that a character you created as one class is actually better described by another class – for example, a character rolled up to be a composite turns out to lean heavily towards physical or intellectual. Characters can change character type, but **ONLY AFTER THE FIRST GAME AND BEFORE THE SECOND**. After that its too late. To change class costs 1SP.

Composites and dilettantes may switch to any character class but physicals may not switch to intellectuals (and vice versa). Physicals and intellectuals may, however, switch to composite.

# Damage and Combat

A character is unconscious if reduced to zero HP. If the damage taken is lethal (ie inflicted by gunshot or knife) as opposed to non-lethal (punch or blunt weapon) the PC/NPC will bleed at a rate determined by the referee (usually about 1HP/15mins).

Stanching wounds can stop bleeding but a PC must actually have something to staunch the wound with. (Anyone can staunch a wound.)

Hit Points can be healed with First Aid skills (see later) or recuperation (1HP per 3 days rest).

A PC on minus 5 HP is dead. Sorry.

If combat occurs the referee's decision is final. If you are told to fall over, be unconscious, play dead or actually be dead then you must do so without hesitation.

## Combining Grapple

Two or more characters may combine their GS and make a joint-attack. However, they may not hold down a target indefinitely. The referee or NPC will determine how long the combine grapple can last.

It is not possible to carry out a grapple and then attempt a knockout on a grappled target. Remember – knockout requires SURPRISE (and not a cat).

## Damage Guide

Weapon	Damage	Lethal
Fist (with Unarmed Skill)	1HP	No
Brick, bat, club etc.	1HP	No
Dagger	1HP	Yes
Small sword	1-2HP	Yes
Large sword	2HP	Yes
Handgun	2-3HP	Yes
Rifle	3-4HP	Yes
Shotgun	4HP	Yes
Grenade	5HP	Yes
Other explosives	5+HP	Yes

A PC hit by a weapon will be wounded, incapacitated or killed.

## Types of Damage

Non-lethal	The character is wounded but not bleeding. Their condition is stable. First Aid will help.
Lethal	The character is bleeding and will lose blood and further HP unless the wound is staunched. First Aid will help.
Vital	The character has been hit in the head or torso and is losing blood at the rate of 1HP every 15mins. While staunching may slow the process a little, the character must receive medical attention, usually within the hour. First Aid may not help. Only Advanced Medicine (surgery) can help here.
Critical	The character has received significant damage to the head or torso and is likely to be killed instantly. No skill will help. (Advanced magic or Divine Intervention may.)

First Aid skills will usually work with all types of wounds except critical wounds. The ref will determine whether or not first aid skills are effective in the case of vital injuries.

A close-range gunshot to a vital area inflicts 3HP damage, whereas longer-range shots (or less vital areas hit) result in 2HP damage.

## Examples of combat, damage and healing

*Example 1: A first level intellectual character with 1HP is shot by a handgun at close range while fleeing.*

The ref rules that he has been hit in the back of the torso. The damage type is vital. The character therefore takes the full 3HP damage and is immediately unconscious. He is now on -2HP and is bleeding to death at the rate of 1HP per 15 minutes. He will therefore reach minus 5 in 45 minutes and will die unless he receives major medical attention within this time. Basic First Aid may heal 1 point (bringing him to -1HP) and may slow down the bleeding. In this instance, the ref determines that the use of First Aid has bought the victim more time but serious medical attention is still needed within one hour.

*Example 2: A first level intellectual character with 1HP is shot by a handgun at medium range.*

The ref rules that the character has been shot in the shoulder. The damage is lethal but not vital. The character loses only 2HP (therefore now on -1HP) but is still rendered unconscious. If the character's wound is staunched the bleeding will stop but the character will be unable to use the injured arm for a while once brought back to consciousness. First Aid in this case can stop the bleeding, bring the victim up to zero HP and keep them stable. Only Advanced First Aid would revive them to consciousness.

*Example 3: A third level physical character is shot at close range in a gunfight.*

The ref rules that the character loses the full 3HP but having started on 9 HP, he has soaked up the shot immediately with little effect. (Now on 6HP.) The wound is lethal, not vital, and does not incapacitate the tough PC. This wound will still bleed until staunched but the character may then continue with moderate effectiveness. First Aid will bring the victim back up to 7HP and prevent further bleeding.

As a guide, characters who lose more than half their HP in one wound should be severely injured and their movement/skills therefore become impaired.

*Example 4: A fourth level physical character (10HP) is caught in an explosion and takes 7HP damage (knocking him down to 3HP).*

The ref determines the damage is lethal and the victim (though still conscious) is bleeding. Furthermore, the victim has taken more than half his HP in one blast. The ref, therefore, puts the character into shock and the effects of a temporary insanity. In this case, Basic First Aid heals the character back to 4HP and stops bleeding. It may be some time before he returns to his senses and can function normally again.

## **Critical hits**

Common sense is the prevailing rule in all combat. If you are shot in the head at point blank range it won't matter how many Hit Points you have – you're a goner. Critical Hits will cause death either immediately or within a matter of minutes.

## **Magic Hour and Staunching Wounds**

Staunching wounds will not heal or otherwise restore HP. Nor will it revive characters to consciousness. It simply stops bleeding, or in the case of serious vital wounds, slows down the rate of bleeding.

First Aid can restore HP and Advanced First Aid can revive unconscious characters. However, a character vitally hit and below zero HP is likely to be in the 'magic hour'. That character will die within the hour unless treated by a surgeon or specialist (Advanced Medical skill may be permitted but First Aid skills will not help here.)

## **The Knockout Rule**

In order to simulate knocking someone unconscious you must have a heavy object and the element of surprise. In other words, you must stand close behind the victim with some weighty implement and shout knockout. Be careful and be warned – this doesn't always work and really should be considered a last resort. Failed attempts may result in unexpected damage to the target.

*NB Only physical characters can knockout at level 1, composite and dilettante characters at level 2 and intellectual characters at level 3.*

Knockout is unreliable and should be considered a last resort.

## Grapple

A character's grapple score (GS) is equal to their level:

+2 if *physical*

+1 if *composite*

+0 if *intellectual*

Characters can boost their GS with Skill Points.

A wounded character cannot grapple.

When grappling an opponent, a player must shout their grapple score. If the target responds with a higher score, the attacker will be thrown back and must stumble. (They may even take damage if confronted by a very high score.)

If the target doesn't respond, it is because they have a lower score. The attacker may put the target in some form of hold or lock. (However, this might only last for a period of time.)

*Example: An attacker is a level 2 physical character and therefore has a GS of 4. (2 for level and a further +2 for physical status.)*

He attacks a target and shouts GRAPPLE 4. However, the target responds GRAPPLE 6 and throws him to the ground. (Had the target a lower score he would have allowed himself to be held or overpowered.)

As a guideline – if the target has twice the GS of the attacker – the attacker can take damage at the ref's discretion.

GS can be increased by spending SP on it. 1SP increases the GS by 2.

# Skills

Most characters will be concerned with two levels of skill expertise – *basic* and *advanced*. The benefits and costs are detailed below.

*Physical* characters begin with 3 SP.

*Composite* characters begin with 4 SP.

*Intellectual* characters begin with 5 SP.

*Dilettante* characters begin with 2-5 SP. (However, the dilettante has their own skill list and they may not select skills from the main skill list without the permission of a GO.)

PCs are allowed to add a further 1SP if they have seen War service (or have had some equivalent ‘other experience’) but they must also lose 15 points of SAN. Their extra SP must be spent on a skill relevant to their experience.

(It is possible to have seen War service as part of your character’s background and still choose not to have the extra SP and SAN penalty.)

All PCs gain 0-2 SP per level. Skill points are awarded by the GOs following a game.

New skills can be created with the permission and collaboration of the game designers.

On some occasions, actual skills may be awarded to players following a game.

New skills can be created with the permission and collaboration of the game designers.

## Skill Mastery

In order to master a skill you must already possess that skill at the advanced level. It costs 2SP to obtain MASTERY and the character *may no longer progress in or obtain any other skill*. Mastery is then worked out with the referees and game organisers. It is available to:

*Intellectual* characters from level

3 *Composite* characters from level

4 *Physical* characters from level 5

It is not usually available to *Dilettante* characters.

Mastery skills may include:

Weapon Specialisation – allowing more damage with a weapon of choice or particular assassination techniques.

Arcane Invention – the ability to create serious hardware.

Occult Mastery – for summonings and other spells that deal with the Gods themselves.

Unarmed/Martial Arts Mastery – for bullet catching and other extraordinary feats.

Specialist skills to be detailed include – weapon specialisation, sabotage, credit rating, etc.

## Dilettantes Skill List

These skills are only available for the *dilettante character class*, who may not select anything from the main skill list (either to begin with or as they progress) without the permission of the GO/ref.

A wealthy landowner may be allowed a Firearms skill as he is used to using rifles and shotguns. An actor may be allowed Disguise. Likewise, as dilettantes progress they may be allowed to add skills they have been exposed to in a game. (For example, an experienced dilettante may well be permitted to pick up Occult skill or may learn how to track if they have been taught.)

<b>Luck</b>	2 SP	The character has a basic level of good fortune. This will influence the referees decision making accordingly.
<b>Damned Luck</b>	3 SP	The 'Damned Luck' skill is used like a trump card to reverse a major decision. It could even save the character's life. Once used the skill must be rebought at the same cost. (Eg, 'I say that was damned lucky! The bullet hit the cigarette case in my top pocket.?) It can only affect the character who possesses the skill.
<b>Wealth</b>	1 SP	The character is deemed wealthy enough to have an effectively unlimited amount of money in the game.
<b>Charm</b>	1 SP	By flirtation or flattery, Charm draws a favorable response from an NPC. (NB It will only work where the NPC currently has a neutral attitude towards the player. It will not work on the irate or the insane.)
<b>Impress</b>	2 SP	By using their particular skill, the character creates a mass charm effect. For example, a successful recitation by an opera singer in a game will create a favorable response from listeners.
<b>Fame</b>	1 SP	The character is likely to be well-known and more likely to receive preferential treatment in certain social circles.
<b>Riding</b>	1 SP	Knowledge of horses and superb handling ability.
<b>Cars</b>	1 SP	Knowledge of cars/repair and superb driving ability.
<b>Misfit</b>	1 SP	The misfit is not on any register or list. They have no acknowledged identity and are effectively invisible to society.
<b>Idea</b>	1 SP	The dilettante can gain insight/information on absolutely anything by using their Idea skill. Once used, the skill must be rebought. (Eg. 'I say chaps, can't we redmodulate the wavelength to create a negative field? Just a thought!?)
<b>Gambling</b>	1 SP	The ref will determine how best to give bonuses and hints to the gambler. (It may be that their money has twice its value when gambling or they are allowed one extra card in their hand, etc.)

## Dilettante skill gain

Game Organisers will determine which skills a dilettante has gained following their game. They may be allocated skills as a result of what they have done during their adventure or they may be granted SPs to spend as they wish.

# Skill Lists

## Skill List

NB. A PC must possess a basic skill before he/she can develop an advanced one.

*Insight and information* means the PC may be given secret information concerning a person/place/object/situation.

Anthropology	<p>The study of peoples, races and cultures.</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Permits insight/info on an area of specialist knowledge. (Eg One race - such as the Mayan civilisation or Ancient Egypt.)</p> <p>Advanced 1 SP Allows major insight into any PC/NPC and the character is deemed to have mastered several cultures and races. (Eg You may determine that the butler is actually a distant descendant of the Chja-Chja tribe.)</p>
Archaeology	<p>The study of artifacts, ancient cultures and buildings.</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Insight/info on PCs specialist knowledge only. (See above.)</p> <p>Advanced 1 SP Major insight on any site or object. (Eg The dagger is definitely sacrificial and probably from the late Asesqua dynasty.)</p>
Biology	<p>This skill not only involves knowledge of the human body (anatomy) but also some mastery of botany (plants) and zoology (animals).</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Includes insight/info on zoology, botany etc. (Eg Identification of plant/herbs or animals.)</p> <p>Advanced 2 SP Allows manufacturing of drugs from plants/herbs/animals. (For example, extracting snake venom for poisons or mixing herbs to create cures and antidotes. The right time and equipment will be needed to create such concoctions.)</p>
Chemistry	<p>Know your acids from your alkalines, and get to mess around with testtubes and bunsen burners.</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Recognition of substances/compounds etc.</p> <p>Advanced 2 SP Allows manufacturing of drugs and chemicals. (As Biology)</p>
Disguise	<p>From simple stick on moustaches to full drag.</p> <p>Basic 2 SP Simple disguises. (Stock character types of same sex.)</p> <p>Advanced 2 SP Can change sex and race! Can also discern when someone is concealed with the use of Basic Disguise.</p>
Explosives	<p>Every day goes with a bang with this skill.</p> <p>Basic 2 SP Allows insight/info into defusing and handling of basic explosives such as grenades and dynamite.</p> <p>Advanced 3 SP Allows development and manufacturing as well as insight/info into scientific weaponry (eg rockets) and some of the most complex devices.</p>
Firearms	<p>The higher your degree of skill with a firearm, the more preferential the treatment you will receive in the referee's decision-making.</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Allows characters a basic competence with handguns.</p> <p>Advanced 2 SP Allows characters to use all firearms with some expertise. (Including ambidextrous and aiming.)</p>
First Aid	<p>Help your friends when you're 'In the field'.</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Will heal 1HP on self or other character. (Can only be used on a target once per day.) Must have first aid materials.</p> <p>Advanced 2 SP Revives unconscious characters where applicable. Can heal 1HP <i>per wound</i> suffered on self or other.</p>
Forgery	<p>The Truth may be out there but lies are with us here and now. Be prepared!</p> <p>Basic 1 SP Can detect and create basic forgeries (mostly documents/handwriting.)</p>

	Advanced 2 SP Can detect and manufacture forgeries of art, technology and photography, different languages etc. (A certain amount of equipment is required for creating forgeries - eg papers, ink etc.)
History	The study of the past. Basic 1 SP Insight/info on PC's specialist knowledge.
Invention	Advanced 1 SP Insight/info on any period of world history. The Daughter of Necessity. Sometimes you can't just buy that gizmo that you need to defeat the formless horror in the attic Basic 2 SP Allows PC to create minor inventions. Advanced 2 SP Allows PC to create major inventions. (to be discussed with game organisers)
Law	The Law is an Ass. And so are you when you get picked up on a charge if you don't have any grounding in the Law. Basic 1 SP Insight/info on specialist field of law. (Also counts as Basic Connections in Law.) Advanced 1 SP The character is granted insight/info on all fields of law, including those of other countries. The character's 'high credit rating' in legal circles may allow bartering with police/authorities. An advanced lawyer will be able to intervene in the affairs and cases of other characters in the campaign.
Medicine	For when First Aid just isn't enough. This happens often. Basic 1 SP Full anatomy/diagnosis skills. Can determine number of HP. ( <i>Must have Basic First Aid.</i> ) Advanced 1 SP Full treat disease/poison skills. ( <i>Must have Adv. First Aid</i> )
Meditation	Just Relax... Basic 1 SP Recovers MP at 1 per half hour of meditation or 1 per 3 hours of sleep. Advanced 3 SP Can develop further meditation techniques at ref's discretion - eg Negate temporary insanity in self or other.
Occult	The study of arcane mysteries and secret lore. Basic 1 SP Insight/info on occult or esoteric lore. Advanced 3 SP Allows development of spells (see Advanced Rules)
Photography	The camera never lies (except when you have Forgery as well) Basic 1 SP Allows PC to use a camera in the game. Advanced 1 SP Will permit development of supernatural images and detection of photographic forgery.
Psychology	The study of the mind. Basic 2 SP Permits recognition and identification of phobias and psychoses. Advanced 3 SP Can heal PC/NPC 1 SAN point/week of analysis and alleviate symptoms of temporary insanity (again - ref's discretion).
Repair Electrical	All valves, batteries and dynamos. Basic 1 SP For basic repair/understanding of electrical items/circuits. Advanced 1 SP For the most advanced technology. (Also can take less time and use less equipment.)
Repair Mechanical	Things go wrong sometime. You might need to fix them. (hmmm, the oxygen pump has stopped working and we're running out of air) Basic 1 SP For basic repair/understanding of mechanical items (guns, cars etc.) Advanced 1 SP For heavy duty technology. (Tanks etc.) Again, can take less time and use less equipment.
Tracking	The ancient art of determining who has been where and when. Basic 1 SP Allows PC to see if people/animals have passed. Also elementary orienteering. Advanced 2 SP Full details - how many/what speed etc. Advanced and specialist orienteering (such as naval/aircraft navigation.)
Trade	Everything has it's price Basic 1 SP Determines approximate worth and origin of item. Advanced 1 SP Permits bargaining and haggling - up to 50% discounts.
Unarmed	Be it the fisticuffs of the boxer or the blows from a trained martial artist, the unarmed

skill deals with attacks and parries with bare hands.

Basic 2 SP Allows the attacker to karate chop or stage punch for 1pt subdual damage. The attacker must shout 'Strike'. It also allows the character to block hand-to-hand weapons and punches with the forearm.

Advanced 2 SP Permits advanced knockout with the hand alone. Adds one to the character's overall grapple score and allows disarm.

## Weaponry

For when a gun just won't do

Basic 1 SP Permits characters to use hand-to-hand weapons (knives, swords, clubs etc.) and weapons 'to hand' (picking up a rock or using a poker from the fireplace.).

Advanced 2 SP Allows use of throwing weapons and archery. Also ambidextrous and double-damage with a two-handed weapon.

## Connections

It's all about who you know. (For example, black marketers will need to know where and how to get their goods.) Categories include - black market, high society, the arts, the criminal underworld, law enforcement, and royalty. A character selecting one of these areas will be deemed to have connections in that area.

Basic 1 SP The ability to influence the circle. (Eg Underworld bosses can put out contracts, black market traders can obtain items, lawyers can get clients off the hook and socialites can 'blackball'.) There is no advanced version of this skill.

Advanced 0 SP

# Level Caps

Upon reaching level 6 the character stats freeze – they may gain no more HP, MP etc *but their SAN freezes too* – they have become saturated in the mythos and no longer lose SAN – nor do they ever gain any SAN – nor do their phobias get better – their stats completely freeze.

Level 6ers may go up further levels but nothing changes. They are likely to have a very low SAN and be completely bonkers by this point and their (now incurable) insanities should make game play very difficult. Level 6 therefore becomes a status target – special rewards are available to the player by questing and spending SP. (They may continue picking up phobias etc as they disintegrate into complete unplayability...) Playing with a level 6 character should be like playing with an Old One – you never know if they are going to save you or destroy you all!

Also, upon reaching level 6 a PC becomes in touch with the Mythos to such a degree that he/she may be partially controlled by the ref, receiving insane insights and random knowledge/instructions during a game which are beyond the player's control. Perhaps this could be the beginning of a MYTHOS skill.

# Sanity

All players begin with 100 SAN.

If they opt for 'War Service' or 'Other significant experience' as part of their background they may gain 1 extra SP but lose 15 SAN. (This deduction does not affect their MAX SAN.)

SAN can be lost when killing or confronting horrors. A sudden, significant SAN loss can cause *temporary insanity*. Your referee will inform you if this occurs and will tell you the consequences.

Characters can gain sanity as a result of defeating the minions of chaos. (Certainly intellectual characters and sometimes others too.)

A character on zero SAN is no longer playable. They cannot be cured and become NPCs entirely ruled by the refs.

SAN is regained in the following ways:

The player may spend 1SP to regain 15 SAN. The effect is immediate. However, 15 SAN is then deducted from his/her MAXIMUM SANITY. (In other words, if a PC does this twice in their game life their MAX SAN can never be higher than 70.)

Immediately after a game, the player may book their character into therapy. This excludes them from campaign play for exactly 1 year. At the end of that year, the character receives 15 SAN. This does NOT affect their MAX SAN. A character can be called out of therapy and brought into play but the SAN gain is negated. It is not possible for a character to leave therapy voluntarily .

In regaining SAN, a character may be able to downgrade from acute phobia back to a mild stage (or extreme to acute) at GOs discretion.

## Phobias

For every 25 SAN points lost a PC can develop a phobia. Phobias are mild, acute or extreme.

In the mild stage, your phobia will only affect you if triggered. (If you suffer from Mild Claustrophobia you will probably panic when in an enclosed space or underground.)

In the acute stage, your phobia will affect you in anticipation. (If you suffer from Acute Claustrophobia you might suspect that walls could easily close in at any time and even a sizeable room could always get smaller. The acute stage of a phobia should affect the playability of your character. You may even become a hazard to yourself or others.)

In the extreme stage, your phobia will almost always be present. (If you suffer from Extreme Claustrophobia you might never go indoors without a fit. This level of phobia should make your character virtually unplayable! Get therapy – fast.)

# Magic

*The Secret Doctrine is the common property of the countless millions of men born under various climates, in times with which History refuses to deal, and to which esoteric teachings assign dates incompatible with the theories of Geology and Anthropology.*

- H. P. Blavatsky

The world of Wraith contains Magic. Over many years, humanity has developed some schools and methods of study, using faith, natural philosophy and intuition to pursue the use of the Magical mysteries. Players may wish to employ these lost and shadowy arts to aid them.

They do so at their own risk. But as ever, the rewards for risks may be great indeed...

A rare few have pursued the study of human Magics to the point where Spell Casting is possible. Players wishing to develop Characters who can cast spells must use the Player Magic rules below. However, it is important to remember that anyone can cast Non-Player Spells, or 'Mythos' Spells as some call them. The Magic Rules deal with Player Magic only. Mythos/Non-player Spells follow no rules but those that the GO or Ref declare for them, though of course, there is nothing to stop GOs/Refs using these rules in structuring Mythos/Non-Player magic.

If there is one Rule to remember about Magic in Wraith Games, then it is this: Magic is about Story, not about Power. Player Magic is therefore best based on research and, ultimately, rich and unusual characters. The study of Magic tends to remove people from the everyday world, requiring years of study or commitment to strange and possibly socially unacceptable or revolutionary methods. The player will be responsible for complex and believable Spell writing, construction and (as the necessity/opportunity occurs) performance of rituals and invocations. Props and physical spell components are essential. Special Effects are highly encouraged and can count towards the 'Success' of a spell.

There are no rules for what kind of 'Magician' you are. Players are encouraged to research any field or school of magic – be it an academic Dee obsessive who dreams of speaking to the Seraphim or a Wiccan priestess raised in the ways of Pagan pre-history. Whatever the choice it is vital that Player Magic meets the storytelling style of Wraith – be subtle and base your choices in truth. Areas of inspiration are rich and obvious, but with Magic it is often best to step to one side of the easy, and dare to investigate the esoteric, the complex and the downright odd.

Spells can save the day. They can also attract the attention of things barely able to be observed, let alone understood.

The British Secret Intelligence Service may well be aware that Magic is a powerful force in the world. Indeed, P7 has been rumoured to employ Magic Users to boost the potential success of a party of operatives. Certain classified Operation files suggest Magic is very much a two edged sword...

Shadowy institutions are believed to work within Governmental structures for the assistance of Occult experts, but 'Wraith' itself is also thought to have resources and access to esoteric methods of sorcery.

As for the Axis powers little is of course known – but one name persistently appears in the dossiers of P7 and British Intelligence reports: The Thule Society. To what extent this secret Nazi group have studied Magical methods is entirely unknown, but it is generally understood that Archangel fears the worst...

# Who Can Use It?

*A sorcerer's ticket to freedom is his death. I myself have paid with my life for that ticket to freedom, as has everyone else in my household. And now we are equals in our condition of being dead. You too are dead. The sorcerers' grand trick, however, is to be aware that they are dead. Their ticket to impeccability must be wrapped in awareness. In that wrapping, sorcerers say, their ticket is kept in mint condition.*

- Don Juan (Yaqui Sorcerer)

To cast spells as a Player takes dedication and commitment. Any Class of character can gain the skill of Spell Casting, but to do so requires a degree of specialization.

Nobody fully understands the Magical power humanity can access. The harnessing of it is rare indeed. It is worth bearing this in mind regarding ALL of your dealings with Magic and it's 'rules'.

There are two ways to gain Spell Casting the skill/ability:

1. The player advances along the path of an Occultist.
  - The character first takes Basic Occult (1 SP cost)
  - The Character then must take Advanced Occult (3SP cost)
  - The combination of both Basic and Adv. Occult allows the Character the option to buy the skill Spell Casting (2 SP cost)
2. At starting level ONLY, the player chooses to be a Dilettante and then selects the Skill of Savant (3 SP cost). This gives the player Spell Casting and allows them access to all it entails, but the rules of Savant apply. You cannot take Savant as a skill at any other level but Level 1 and you do not count as having Occult skill at either Basic or Advanced. Generally speaking Savant magic should be confined to psychic abilities, or non-academic/book based magic.

Both ways of gaining the skill Spell Casting allow the player access to a Spell List.

All spells require the use of Magic Points (MPs). A spell, no matter how it is Assisted or sourced, always costs a minimum of 1MP to the caster(s). Usually, they cost more. Character Class defines the resource of Magic Points. There is no rule that says Intellectuals are finer spell casters, however, they do stand a chance of casting spells more ably due to their higher MPs, and can buy the spell casting skills required more easily due to their higher starting SP quota.

Only Intellectuals and Dilettantes can ever be spell casters at Level 1. This is only due to Skill points and options at starting level. Any character class can gain the skill of Spell Casting by the usual expenditure of SPs.

Intellectuals have 3MP/Level, Composites and dilettantes have 2MP/Level and Physicals 1MP/Level.

Magic Points are the raw energy that fuels Spell Casting, but in fact both HP and SAN can be 'converted' into MPs. All human sentient life has an innate magical force within it.

Magic Points as recorded on the character sheet actually only represent the pure psychic power of the character, beyond the integral magical consciousness and life force in us all. It may be useful, as a spell caster, to think of ALL your stats as a 'pool' of would be MPs...

(See Spell Cost for more on this).

Losing or spending all of your magic points leaves you susceptible to magical assault. As your MPs are spent, your Magical Resistance remains constant (equal to your Starting MPs). However, as soon as you hit 0 MP, your MR immediately drops to 0 also.

Losing points past 0 MPs either knocks you unconscious or results in either the loss of 1 hit point or 5 SAN loss for every point lost past 0 (Ref's discretion). See 'Assisting' spells and 'Shortfall' below.

### *Examples*

**Marmaduke Thing** is a first level intellectual with an extra SP for war experience. Those SP were spent on *Basic and Advanced Occult* and *Spell Casting* (Christian Qabalah) – and nothing else. He can cast spells and has access to a full spell list from level 1.

**Felicity Thrubb** is a third level intellectual, an anthropologist specializing in North American Indians. She has had *Basic Occult* from the start and picked up *Advanced Occult* after her first game. With her 2SP after her second game she has elected to take the plunge buy *Spell Casting* (Amerindian Shamanic 'Reverser' magic). She gets full access to her list

**Mary O'Reilly** is a first level dilettante. She's a psychic/professional medium (spent 3 points on the *Savant* skill, 2SP on *Impress* and 1SP on *Fame* – she gained an extra sp for 15 san loss in consultation with the ref – not strictly war experience, but, as will become clear in later examples, she's a bit 'flakey'.)

# The Stars are Right

It is not possible for the fragile Human consciousness to fully comprehend the ways of Magic. Random swells and changes in the rhythms of the Magical universe exist beyond our current understanding.

The stars can actually be wrong, right or Indifferent – each state affects magic. A Player will almost never know the state of the Stars. Occult Mastery allows the player to determine if the stars are indifferent, but not if they are right or wrong...

Refs/GOs may choose to reveal the condition of the stars as they see fit for game purposes (Eg. An ancient manuscript pointing to some planetary alignment or other on the 18th February 1943)

The effect of the three states of the Stars is as follows:

1. The Stars are wrong... All characters have their MPs halved.
2. The Stars are indifferent... All characters have starting quota of MPs.
3. The Stars are right... All characters have their MPs doubled.

This can impact upon spell casting quite considerably – when the Stars are Wrong, Magic users are likely to have to use Group magics to succeed in spell casting (see below in Spell Casting). With the exception of Occult Mastery (or Ref intervention) only casting a spell will give any insight into the state of the Stars...

At the beginning of every Game in which a Spell Caster is taking part, the Organisers will randomly define the status of the Magical Rhythms in the world at the time of play. This is called “The Stars are right...”. The mechanics of determining whether ‘The Stars are Right’ are up to the game organizer. It is suggested the following probabilities are adhered to.

1. 50% – the stars are indifferent
2. 25% – the stars are right
3. 25% – the stars are wrong

For example, the GO may elect to toss two coins. 2 heads would determine that the stars are right, 2 tails that they were wrong, and one of each that they were indifferent. Of course, the use of tarot cards, I Ching yarrow stalks, tea leaves etc. is encouraged. On occasion, the referee may simply decide the stars on a whim...

# Spell Cost

All spells have a cost which determines how much magical energy is required for success. This cost is measured in attribute points – Primarily Magic Points, but possibly others as well.

Each spell has a target in MP that is fixed at either 2 or 10 MP...however, when the caster's Player Spell List is defined, the caster has an option to use HP and / or SAN to meet the Pts cost in combination with MPs. See The Lists for more regarding this choice.

Although characters have a fixed starting number of Magic Points, Hit Points and Sanity Pts can be 'converted' into MP for the purpose of casting – this represents the mystical nature of both life and consciousness used in the dangerous and metaphysical game that is Magick!

As long as the Spell cost is met in points – whatever the combination – the spell should be successful.

# Time and Magic

All 'Human' Magic takes time, concentration and probably invocation of some form as well as the drain of magical energy. Generally, the expenditure of a single point towards the Spell Cost takes FIVE minutes.

All spells therefore take at least 5 minutes, irrespective of how the spell is assisted or sourced (more of this later), since the spell will always cost the equivalent of IMP.

The Ref, as ever, reserves the right to allow exceptions, but it is best to consider that there is no such thing as an 'instant effect' spell that a Player character can call upon using Player Magic.

Postpone Result – This effectively allows for an immediate casting to occur some time after the initial ritual or invocation has been completed. The Spell Caster must always remain focused on the spell and or it's components during the time between casting and 'release' – although they may move, they can really take no other action than walking (it is somewhat like balancing an egg during an egg and spoon race). Loss of concentration will count as an Interruption A Postponed Result increases the cost of a spell by 1SC, unless stated otherwise. Only Basic spells can be postponed. For a similar effect with advanced spells, imbued artifacts must be used.

# Choosing a List

*The Path that leadeth on is lighted by one fire – the light of daring burning in the heart. The more one dares, the more he shall obtain.*

- H. P. Blavatsky

Once the player has the ability of Spell Casting, that player may choose a personalised Spell List which reflects the character's style and personality. The Caster chooses 8 spells from The Lists. All Spell Casters have the Spell Regeneration.

The Lists represent the spells that human minds have developed over years of study and intuition. By default, they are general in description of game effect. Their sources and details of casting are deliberately not revealed – that's up to the player and their GOs to imagine. There are 9 Spells in a player's Personal Spell List:

- 4 low cost Basic Spells
- 3 high cost Advanced Spells
- 1 Grand Gesture spell
- 1 Regeneration spell

The player should choose their list wisely and in discussion with their Game Organiser or a player with some experience of Magic. Put character first –using magic is much like using firearms -often the best way to get hurt or even killed is to carry a gun or to cast a spell!

For detailed descriptions of the four kinds of spells, Basic, Advanced, Grand Gesture & Regeneration, see The Lists below.

The description of a spell in the Lists will always appear with the costs for casting it alone and unassisted (see 'Group Magic' below).

Only a Ref or Game Organiser can approve any other form of Spell List.

The Caster gains access to the WHOLE of their list as soon as they purchase Spell Casting. The limits of casting are therefore defined by Level and access to MPs, not in terms of knowledge. Refs have been known to advise first time casters to tackle just two or three spells until the player feels more confident working with the system. However, ALL of the 9 are accessible. Choice and temptation lie with the player...

## Conversion Casting Lists

A Caster can elect to convert HP or SAN to MPs to assist spell casting.

The golden rule of conversion is: 1 HP = 1MP and 5 SAN = 1MP.

When the Spell list is chosen, a player elects to make up the cost of a spell from any selection of MP/HP/SAN. At least 1MP must be spent, but the combination of stats is elected wholly by the player.

A Player Spell List can consist of a mixture of 'vanilla' spells (spells that only employ MP directly) and 'conversion' spells (spells employing HP or SAN).

Casters tailor their own in-built balances of Points expenditure as declared at the time of Player Spell List creation. It is perfectly acceptable for a 10MP Advanced Spell to be defined as needing 6MP, 2HP and 10SAN to be 'spent' in order for the casting to work.

However, it is a tricky balance to strike well – and remember, Regeneration only works for

MPs, it does not replenish SAN or HP which have been ‘converted’ into MPs.

Casters can vary the amount of HP or SAN spent on a casting by casting basis as long as the minimum requirements (if specified in the spell list) are met.

Casters can use conversion during ‘vanilla’ spells but the ref may choose to consider this to be less effective than conversion used during conversion specific spells.

Spells which are specified as conversion spells must always use conversion. Vanilla casting is not an option.

Hit Points or SAN voluntarily sacrificed, using self or Group Magic, and converted into MP, should be marked in game terms. The manner in which these are put in to play is down to the individual. It should be clear to any Ref present that HPs are being Sacrificed and the process should fit into some part of the Casting being undertaken as a central act.

One minor act of damage (a deep cut, a flagellation, etc.) is equal to the loss of 1HP to reduce MP costing. 1HP = 1MP.

The ratio works as a wound per MP – so 2HP would mean two different cuts etc. This expenditure will still require 5mins per point duration (assuming that the caster is acting alone).

SAN sacrifice is more intangible in terms of game effect – anything from hallucinogens to periods of insanity following casting will meet the expense. The ref may determine that this SAN loss is temporary (for example, hallucinogens may only last an hour or two). SAN loss from forced conversion in the event of a shortfall, however, is permanent. The ref, at his or her discretion, may offer the caster using SAN conversion an additional MP if the caster agrees to take a permanent as opposed to temporary SAN hit.

Making the conversion clear is the Caster’s responsibility.

### Examples

#### Marmaduke Thing

No conversions of HP or SAN in any spells

- Basic spells
  - 1. Heal
  - 2. Spiritual Guidance
  - 3. Protection
  - 4. Bless
- Advanced spells
  - 1. Cure
  - 2. Astral Projection
  - 3. Imbue
- Artifact
  - 1. Grand Gesture
  - 1. Apotheosis
- Regeneration spell

#### Felicity Thrubb

HP and SAN conversion required in some spells

- Basic spells
  - 1. Insight – requires SAN conversion (hallucinogenic herbs smoked in pipe)
  - 2. Sense Spirit – requires SAN conversion (hallucinogenic mushrooms)
  - 3. Spiritual Guidance – requires SAN conversion (hallucinogenic mushrooms)
  - 4. Hex – requires HP loss (blood)
- letting) Advanced spells
  - 1. Shape Shift – requires SAN conversion (hallucinogenic Jimson weed)
  - 2. Influence
  - 3. Spirit Guide – requires HP loss (ritual involves pain)
- Grand Gesture

1. Ascension  
Regeneration spell

**Mary O'Reilly**

HP conversion required in some spells (takes the form of 'self harming' – cutting arms and legs with nails or whatever is to hand)

Basic spells

1. Insight
2. Sense Spirit
3. Spiritual Guidance – requires HP conversion
4. Sense

Magic

- Advanced spells
1. Banish Entity – requires HP conversion
  2. Divination – requires HP conversion
  3. Spirit Guide – requires HP

conversion

1. Grand Gesture
2. Stopping the Wheel

Regeneration spell

# Success and Failure

*Indubitably, Magic is one of the subtlest and most difficult of the sciences and arts. There is more opportunity for errors of comprehension, judgment and practice than in any other branch of physics.*

- A Crowley

## Success

As long as the Cost of the spell can be met, Success is largely down to the quality of the player's in-game casting performance. An inclusive/scary/impressive/well researched spell has the best chance of working. As long as the Caster (and' or Group) have at least half of the target SC, there is a chance of success. However, there will be times when mere theatrics are insufficient to guarantee success.

## Failure

Any major event distracting or interrupting the caster from the complex or ritual processes of spell casting, may result in a failure. The removal of items from a casting or the misplacing of words can be crucial. At best the spell will simply Fail and must be either started again or abandoned. At worst, the Spell will suffer a Catastrophic failure (see below). The Ref will decide if the case is standard or catastrophic. Standard Failures usually result in the Magic not happening or in reliance upon the Shortfall.

## Catastrophic Failure

The priceless 3rd dynasty chalice was smashed; the demon's irreplaceable blood was thrown out of the goblet etc– these are potentially catastrophic... Catastrophic failures often lead to unintended consequences (eg. A heal spell becomes a hex spell) Again, the nature of this failure is at the ref's discretion. Catastrophic Failure can result in any number of best not considered horrors – the Caster may be killed, lost in Time & Space – or worse.

## Shortfall

The caster may not have the Points at his or her disposal to complete the spell. If the player has less than half the required points then the spell simply fails. No Magic points are lost, and everyone involved probably feels a bit silly.

Alternatively the player has more than half but less than the required points. In this case there are three possible outcomes to be determined by the referee.

1. The Ref declares that the spell fails as standard but the available points are expended anyway.

2. The spell succeeds but the point debt is covered by the player losing HP or SAN loss (5 SAN for each point). This is known as the Shortfall. For a shortfall of a single point it is at

the ref's discretion whether the debt is paid by HP or SAN. For a debt of more than 1 point the loss should be shared as evenly as possible between HP and SAN, again at the ref's discretion, and always starting with the Caster when meeting the deficit in a Group casting. Both SAN and HP can be taken to meet Spell Costs not met by MPs, just as with the tailoring of the Player Spell List. The difference is that the Spell Cost conversion is a voluntary choice. In the shortfall, the conversion is involuntary. It is at the Ref's discretion and all effects must be played as normal. The points taken immediately count as MPs and require the usual 5 minutes to be expended as Cost & will satisfy the minimum 1MP Cost for a Spell rule.

3. The shortfall can be made up as above but the spell doesn't merely fail, instead the Ref rules

there is a catastrophic failure

The golden rule of the Shortfall is: 1 HP = 1MP and 5 SAN = 1MP, as per conversion casting.

Falling unconscious due to Converting of HP or suffering temporary insanity due to Converting of SAN both count as failures.

In a Group Casting, the Caster is always first to lose 1HP and/or 5/10 SAN before any other participant. As of the first Attribute point taken, the remainder are shared equally amongst all participants point by point until the deficit is paid. So, for a caster and 4 assistants, a deficit of 3points would incur an additional 1HP/5SAN hit on the caster, and additional 1HP/5SAN hits on two of the assistants at the ref's discretion. A deficit of 6points would give a 1HP OR 5SAN hit to all assistants and a 1HP AND 5SAN hit to the caster.

SAN lost from making up a shortfall is permanent. SAN loss from deliberate conversion is generally temporary.

### *Examples*

**Dick Underhill**, 1st level physical, has been hurt in an altercation with a gardener (lost 2HP after being hit in the face with a pair of long-handled secateurs). First Aid has restored one of these HP. **Marmaduke Thing** has 3MP if the Stars are Indifferent, 6MP if they are Right and 2MP if they are wrong. He decides to cast Heal (cost 2MP). Fortunately the stars are Right. He spends 2MP (over the course of the 10 min ritual utilising his John Dee pentacle – involving incense and calling on YHWH) leaving him on 4MP. The spell works and Dick is restored to his full 3HP.

**Felicity Thrubb** has been cornered in an attic by a bunch of marauding ghouls from the nearby Jewish cemetery, while the rest of her party have gone off for yet another meeting with Mr Fairy. She's going to have to fight her way out alone. She reckons she probably has at least 9MP (if the stars are indifferent or right) and elects to shape shift into her were-form – a grisly bear. Alas the stars are wrong – she only has 5MP She downs a large handful of jimson weed, (a pouch of which she keeps tied to her waist at all times though she's running a little low at the moment – this gives her a temporary SAN loss of 10SAN in exchange for 2MP – this still leaves a shortfall of 3MP, but at least the spell will work), and starts beating her bear-skin drum while calling out to Wakantaka. After half an hour of this, and as the drug begins to take hold, she sits and takes out the bear-tooth pendant which hangs about her neck. She spends the remaining 20 minutes alternatively focusing on the tooth and being wracked by pain as the shape shift begins (and getting into costume, of course). In her bear form she gets 5 added to her grapple and 5 extra hit points. She makes short work of the frankly rubbish ghouls, taking 3HP damage as she does, and escapes, making her way to a nearby forest in search of honey. She awakens in the forest, cold and hungry, some time later as naked as the day she was born. Her temporary SAN loss has been restored and she returns to her previous HP (the 3HP damage being absorbed by the temporary 5HP she had during her change) The ref determines that she loses 2HP and 5SAN to make up the shortfall – a cracked rib and a mild aversion to matzos and gefilte fish.

**Mary O'Reilly** has been captured by an evil cabal of umbrella manufacturers and is locked, all alone, in a storage room. She seeks advice from her long time Spirit Guide Talking Bull (actually, her previous contacts with Talking Bull have been entirely imaginary – self-delusion being the product of a fragile mind like hers). She takes an umbrella and uses it to cut some fresh scratches on her already scarred arms. She still has 'Arthur' a tatty old teddy bear and her 'blankey' a security

blanket, which along with the umbrella (a cutting instrument) make up the three components required. She has 2MP (the stars being indifferent), and she converts 1HP from the cutting to make 3MP spent. She's at this cutting for a full 50mins reciting half remembered nursery rhymes and rocking back and forth as she does. The spell costs 10MP and she has less than half the points required and so the spell fails. She has lost her 1HP but keeps her 2MP. Being a bit of a loon, though, she imagines that Talking Bull does indeed talk to her – but only to suggest she steals an umbrella when she does finally escape as it looks like rain.

# ‘Assisted’ Casting

It should be clear that meddling with esoteric forces is a pretty dangerous activity. For this reason, spell casters may choose to share the cost (and the risk) with their fellow players, or to find other sources of magical power to supplement their MP.

The following rules are for the experienced player to wrestle with. New players who are determined to cast spells should check with their Game Organiser regarding the use of these.

There are ways to improve the chances of successfully casting spells. Players can use ‘**Group Casting**’, ‘**Sacrificial Magic**’ or ‘**Other Sources**’, when not enough MPs are available to cast safely.

## Group Casting

Group Casting is only effective at 2nd Level and above.

Group Casting is the casting of any spell using more than one person to do so. This helps to bring both the individual cost to the caster down, AND reduces the time taken to cast the spell, rounding up to the nearest 5 minute interval.

A Spell Caster can use a number of people in a ritual equal to their level.

A Level 1 Caster can use only 1 person (themselves!).

Lvl 2 can use 2 people (themselves and one other)

Lvl 3 can use 3 people (themselves and two others) etc.

The cost of a spell cast using Group Casting is shared out equally between those involved in the ritual, rounding up. The Caster is always first to make up any deficit in the sharing out of costs. So, if a spell has a cost of 10SC, 2 casters must pay 5MP each, 3 or 4 casters 4MP each (to make a total of 12MP), 5 casters 2MP each and 6 casters 2MP each (to make a total of 12MP).

The duration of the spell’s casting time is also divided by the number of those involved in the ritual, to the nearest multiple of 5, rounding up. See An Example of Magic, for further details on this.

## Sacrificial Magic

Animals may be sacrificed (animal should be at least the size of a chicken and ideally have a face and be warm blooded). 2MP are gained for sacrificing an animal.

The Sacrifice of another person’s HPs is also possible. This is either voluntarily undergone in Group Casting, or indeed involuntarily ( i.e. by use of force – although doing so will nearly always result in SAN loss at the ref’s discretion).

The fatal Sacrifice of any sentient life will provide a considerable number of Magic Points. The shock of witnessing voluntary life sacrifices, however, is rarely forgotten and could lead to temporary insanity at the ref’s discretion. The horrendous Sanity loss for forced examples of such acts is even more serious. The following are suggested guidelines for the effects of human life sacrifice. Such things are not consistent however:

Voluntary Fatal Sacrifice – 10 plus victim’s level are contributed towards the spell cost.

Involuntary Fatal Sacrifice – 10 minus victim’s level are contributed towards the spell cost. A virginal first level character involuntarily sacrificed therefore provides 9 points, while a cranky 6th level old codger voluntarily offering up his life will provide a 16 points. SAN loss is guaranteed but to be determined by the ref according to circumstance.

The time taken to cast spells using sacrifice is the same as if the required points were sourced from MP. Eg. A solo caster casting a 10SC spell will take 50 mins regardless of whether 7 of

those points came from knocking off the rookie in the party.  
Sacrifice should only be allowed within Occult Schools that don't frown on that sort of thing.

## Other Sources

There may, on highly rare occasions, be other sources of MP available for the Player to draw on. Some legends suggest certain objects, people or places may be able to either store magical power or indeed be a permanent source of Magical energy. The discovery of such foci would be of great interest to many occult groups and diverse cults across the globe (and possibly beyond). The acquisition, accessing and use of such things may well prove more costly than their value suggests...

### *Examples*

**Marmaduke Thing** has reached 4th level and now has 12MP (if the stars are indifferent). The party have to find out the missing ingredient for a magic soup, the recipe for which is pinned up by the cauldron in the wicked witch's house. Marmaduke decides to Astrally Project. Being a cautious chap, and unsure if the stars are any good he decides to rope in 3 members of his party to assist in the ritual (2 composites and 1 physical – all 4th level with MP of 8, 8 and 4 if the stars are indifferent). With 4 casters the spell will cost 12MP – 3MP each. If the stars are wrong the physical character will only have 2MP but he's fit as a fiddle and relatively sane (surprisingly) so they decide it's worth the risk. (The stars are actually right – Marmaduke actually has 24MP and the others 16, 16 and 8 respectively). The spell takes 15mins (60mins divided by 4 – rounding up not required). He dons the Cap of Christian Rosycross, takes out his 'Seeing' crystal and lights the incense, while instructing his comrades in the simple Hebrew verse they must chant. 15 minutes later he's floating ethereally just above the ground attached by a silver cord to his corporeal form lying motionless on the floor. He has 21MP remaining, his companions 13,13 and 5. He has 4 minutes in this form. He slips through the solid oak door into the witch's kitchen. The witch is stooped over her cauldron talking to her cat. When the cat answers back he realizes that it is her familiar and spends some time listening in to their conversation (about sourcing gingerbread for the loft extension, and the best way to cook children). He feels a tug on his silver cord – his 4 mins are up and he hasn't looked at the recipe! In a panic, he decides to extend the projection for one more minute for a cost of 2MP and uses the extra time to commit the recipe to memory. His time up, he awakens back in his body, his concerned comrades gathered around him. Excitedly, he tells them that they have to find some tarragon – and quick – no easy task what with rationing and all.

**Felicity Thubb** has regenerated after her jaunt as a bear and has 5MP. Her and her party are have arrived at the home of Rabbi Jenkins to find the place deserted. A quick search reveals nothing of interest and the party are at a loss as to how to proceed. She suggests she contacts her Ancestral Spirit (Spirit Guide) who may be able to assist. She suspects (with her broken rib and aversion to Jewish cuisine that the stars may be wrong), and therefore asks (well, demands, actually – she's 'feisty') that some of her party 'volunteer' to assist. Having gained the agreement of two 2nd level physicals (with only 1MP each) she gets out her stone knife, face-paints, and bear-skin drum, informs them that the ritual won't hurt too much, and instructs them in the simple dance and chant they must perform on her signal. Spirit Guide costs 12MP between 3 – 4MP each. Felicity is aware that the three of them may still have difficulties powering the spell so she decides that they will each convert 2HP into MP. During the course of the ritual she makes 2 deep cuts on the faces of her assistants and 2 deep cuts on her own with the stone knife, mixing the copious amounts of blood with the face paints and decorating her and her companions skin with abstract symbols. They then begin the dance and chant to the frenzied beating of the drum. The spell takes 20 minutes (60mins divided by 3). The ref decides the spell is successful. Felicity contributes 2MP and 2HP for her 4points, her assistants contributing 2HP and their only MP (leaving them both on 0MP and 0MR), leaving a shortfall of 2MP – the ref gives her 1HP further damage from excessive blood loss and a permanent 5SAN loss to whichever of her assistants he thinks had it coming (he feels feint from the sight of all the blood and has to have a lie down). Felicity's ancestral spirit speaks to her, and in a round-about and at times ambiguous way informs her that there's a trapdoor hidden beneath a rug in the hallway leading down to a secret cellar, and the chintzy Toby mug on the mantelpiece is a source of great malevolence and power (turns out it was fashioned by Wizard Weinstein in the 19th century). The party have their clues (but at a cost) and they can continue with their investigations.

**Mary O'Reilly** and her party have discovered that the head honcho of the evil Umbrella Cabal, Mr Toogood has actually been possessed by a demon, originally summoned by his hunchbacked maid Gladys. They have Mr Toogood bound and gagged in a chair, and Gladys' son Harry (1st level physical NPC), appalled by his mother's behaviour, has agreed to help them. Mary wants to drive the demon out and make all the bad things stop. She remembers that she can make bad things stop sometimes by hurting herself and singing songs with Arthur her teddy. She has a measly 2MP and 2HP but Banish Entity requires 10MP. She's not strong enough to drive the demon out and being only first level she cannot group cast. If only there was someone else who could help with the hurting. Harry, having taken a shine to Mary (he's not too bright and she's a bit famous) says he will do whatever he can to help. He feels somewhat responsible for the sins of his mother and wishes to atone. Mary tells him it may kill him but he insists. Mary begins her spell, gently singing the nursery rhymes with 'Arthur' while wrapping Harry in her 'blankey'. With grandmotherly kindness she begins scratching Harry with her nails (she left the stolen umbrella on the bus – no matter – only one item, Arthur the Teddy is required for this spell). The spell takes 50 minutes. Yes, 50 minutes of nursery rhymes and scratching – while Harry sobs for his mother's soul and screams from the pain of the increasingly deep wounds Mary is making in his flesh with her nails. Thankfully after 40 minutes Harry slips into unconsciousness. But Mary continues, whispering 'Jack and Jill went up the Hill' between sobs, knowing that demon has still to be driven out. At last, Harry gives up the ghost – contributing 11MP, and the demon is expelled from Mr Toogood (who turns out to be quite a nice man). Felicity loses 1MP (all spells must cost the caster at least 1MP directly) and the ref determines that she loses an additional 10SAN for being a nutter and killing a friend (well, he's feeling generous).

# The Lists

*Using words to describe magic is like using a screwdriver to cut roast beef*  
- tom robbins

Although perhaps seemingly devoid of character the spells contained in The Lists are designed as templates with which to build your own ideas for how YOUR magic user works. Effects are described in Game terms. All of the details as to how the casting occurs are provided by the choices of the spell caster. It seems unlikely that a Mage would call a spell ‘Spiritual Guidance’ or ‘Create Emotion’. You are encouraged to personalize the character of your list.

Each spell has a description of effect, a record of cost, a Component quota and an additional description covering any special rules or exceptions. Components are important according to differing schools – but be reasonable. It is unlikely that a standard pint of beer would be a component for the spell Insight (although some may argue otherwise, Ed.). A hand mixed herbal brew poured from an ancient cask however... See Some Practicalities at the end of these rules for more tips on how to kit out your caster.

Bear in mind that the finding of components should be written in to your character or found during play. The pursuit of a rare item could possibly even prove to be the sub-plot of a game in itself (where does one find the skull of a Bon-Po Shaman, for instance...?).

The low cost ‘basic’ spells have been given loose groupings of Physical, Mental, Spiritual and All Class titles to help give an idea of what areas a Character is studying in their spell craft. These are not ‘rules specific’ categories, more a nod towards the kind of magical classifications possible.

When personalizing a spell list for a specific character, the player should make note of the following

- Spell Cost
- Conversion or MP only
- Components
- Solo casting Time
- Details of the ritual or process involved (for solo and group casting)
- Details of the use of sacrificial or other sources

Because some spells can seriously affect game play, players should inform GOs of their spell lists at the earliest opportunity. If you simply turn up at a game and inform the GO that you have a spell which turns out to be a game breaker, the GO will probably decide that it’ll never work during the game or will have catastrophic consequences. The some forewarning, though, the ref may have time to come up with solutions that keep everyone happy (or they may STILL decide it won’t work/lead to disaster).

# Basic Spells

There are 9 Basic (Low Cost/Minor Arcana) Spells.

Heal  
Hex  
Sense  
Magic  
Insight  
Sense Spirit  
Spiritual Guidance  
Protection  
Curse  
Bless

There is also the mandatory Spell: **Regeneration**.

## Physical Spells

### Heal

1 HP healed for 2MP spent.  
Minimum 1 Physical component for casting style and school of magic (varied).  
Does NOT cure poisoning or insanity.  
A further HP can be healed for every extra 2MP spent up to and equal to the caster's level.

### Hex

1 HP damage caused for 2MP spent.  
Minimum 1 Physical component.  
A further HP damage can be inflicted for every 2MP spent up to and equal to the caster's level.

## Mental Spells

### Sense Magic

2 MP for a single 'Yes/No answer' regarding inanimate objects and their possible magical 'identities' only.  
Minimum 1 Physical component.  
A further question can be asked for every further point spent if the Ref approves – in the case of further questions, the expenditure is immediate.

### Insight

Seek a Ref and gain A SINGLE insight regarding an inanimate object or place. Does not allow fortune telling.  
Minimum 1 Physical component.  
A further insight can be gained for every further point spent if the Ref approves – in the case of further insights, the expenditure is immediate.

## Spiritual Spells

### Sense Spirit

Can sense if a spirit or spirits are in a given location or item, and may well give some impression of their alignment relating to the caster and something of their purpose, object lives or history as the Ref indicates. A 'sensed' spirit is liable to be of more use if Spiritual Guidance is sought of it, since the context of its answers are known.

2mp cost.

Minimum 1 Physical component.

### Spiritual Guidance

A Spirit (based in the caster's given tradition) gives a single answer to a question the caster asks, specific to the spirit's own knowledge regarding a thing a PERSON or a place.

2 MP cost.

Minimum 1 Physical component.

A further question can be asked for every further point with immediate effect and at the Ref's discretion.

## All Class Spells

### Protection

An invisible barrier gives protection to the caster's **fixed** location from all damage (Mental, Physical AND Spiritual) equal to the points expended. (In effect it adds the points expended to the target's virtual SAN, HP and MR – so 2 points spent will allow the target to take the equivalent of 2HP damage, 10SAN loss (1 point is equivalent to 5SAN, remember) without ill effects, and be able to resist magic 2 points above his or her MR) Caster cannot move and the barrier must remain at the point where the caster maintains it.

2MP cost Minimum

2 physical components.

Remains as long as caster remains in location and focused on spell (i.e. stands, awake, focused on component or chant etc). Number of individuals able to be protected by the barrier is only ever ONE person, although it does not have to be the caster. Any recipient of the spell must, however, be in direct contact with the caster. The duration of protection may be extended by expending more points.

The strength of the protection cannot be increased.

### Curse

"Bad Luck" on a single target – Ref's decisions will go against target, shots that would have missed target will hit etc.

Costs 2mp.

Cannot be cast on self.

Minimum 1 Physical component.

Duration is equal to level in hours

### Bless

"Luck" cast on to a single target.

Costs 2mp

Cannot be cast on self.

Minimum 1 Physical component.

Duration is equal to level in hours

## **Regeneration**

The only mandatory spell in the Lists, it represents the Caster's innate ability to draw on the energy that remains within themselves and the environment to fully replenish their MP supply. All Human systems of Magic have realized this process is necessary at times – it is a distinctive part of the character of Magical Energy as studied by all races and cultures.

**This spell is always *extreme in process*.** Although the cost is 0MP, the performance of the Casting is often quite unlike any other in the magic user's personal Spell List. It may require dancing skyclad, ingesting unusual substances, fasting, maintaining a specific posture, blindfolds, masks etc. See the entry in The Lists for more detail. It should be demanding.

This is the only mandatory spell. It allows the Spell Caster to replenish their magic points to their full starting quota. The details of a caster's Regeneration spell are agreed upon by Game Organiser and Player in conjunction, looking to suit school of magic and character choices.

It is a spell that should ALWAYS enrich game action and be witnessed by a Ref or another player to be effective.

It ALWAYS takes a full hour to cast and the DURATION of casting cannot be reduced by the use of Group Casting.

Cost 0MP.

Interruption always means failure though never catastrophic or partial failure.

The spell can only be cast once per 24 hours (ie with 24 hours between each casting).

NB. **Meditation** skill still also regenerates MPs, but it is capped at only 2MP in a single sitting (must be half an hour between each hour of meditation). Non spell casters can still take this skill and thus regenerate MP.

# Advanced Spells

There are currently 13 Advanced (High Cost/Major Arcana) Spells:

- Summon
- Entity Bind
- Entity Banish
- Entity Cure
- Divination
- Warding
- Control Time
- Channel Spirit
- Influence
- Imbue Artifact
- Astral Projection
- Spirit Guide
- Shape Shift

All Advanced Spells and their workings are subject to Ref input as to effectiveness, to be judged during play. NOTHING has a guaranteed affect.

## Summon Entity

- 10MP, Min.
- 2 Components,
- Verbal command.

The calling forth of an astral or other denizen is a dangerous business indeed. Essentially, it is a simple calling spell. However, once present, any Entity from the nether/astral/unknown realms is not bound by any rules but those of its own (or the Ref's)making.

Summoning is a spell on its own. It does not include Binding or Banishing.

NOTE: It is the player's responsibility to provide the Ref with the FX for the Entity in question.

## Bind Entity

- 10MP,Min.
- 2 Components

From the moment the spell is begun, the Entity becomes somehow enthralled by the process -for whatever insane purposes such a thing may have – if indeed such things even have purposes. This is not, however, an immediate effect spell – the binding is not complete or successful until correctly cast in the usual manner. The Entity will nevertheless be unlikely to take any action other than observing the casting of the Binding. Not unlike a cat watching a bird dance before it, transfixed with surprise and amusement...

Once complete the Entity is bound for either a number of hours, days or minutes equal to level depending on the Ref, though the duration can be extended by expending more points. This spell may be cast as a Postponed Result, for the usual 1MP cost.

## Banish Entity

- 10MP, Min.

1 phys Component,  
Verbal Command.

In some ways this is the simplest of the Entity spells. A command spell of great power, it is ONLY possible to be used on such Entities as are covered in the above description, bound or otherwise. How one keeps an unbound Entity busy for 40 minutes of casting time is up to the players...binding is usually the best option. This spell may be cast as a Postponed Result, for the usual 1MP cost.

*A Note on 'Entities':*

*Over the millennia Man has sought power and understanding through speaking to Demons, Angels, Spirits and more. The normal world mostly thinks of these conversations as nothing more than trickery and witchcraft, delusional ramblings or metaphysical speculations. To a rare few they are a mind-bending reality.*

*Strange and awe-full things exist beyond time and space. Some ancient ways of reaching them are also to be found.*

*An Entity itself is defined by the Player's style of caster – reductively it should be stated that it is probably of a very minor 'level' of Entity, as these things go. Exactness is important. Some respond to their Name being spoken, others to the key that binds them to this plane of existence, others still respond to worship or sacrifice. Summoning, Binding or Banishing an entity usually involves knowing something of it – simply attempting a Banishment on the first Horror encountered may well have no effect what so ever. Merely confronting such Entities can prove too much for some – appearing as they are to be beyond human comprehension. Actually being responsible for and communicating with such denizens has led to the collapse of the finest of minds. No entity will perform a task without seeking remuneration, in some form or other. Be cautious in your truck with spirits.*

## **Cure**

10MP, Min  
1 Component

A powerful healing energy, as well as restoring one hit point, Cure halts the process of any injury, poison, mutation or disease. It does not reverse their effects – thus a leper would no longer suffer from leprosy, but any loss of flesh or limbs through the disease would still remain, to heal through the usual process.

Cure also halts the process of insanity and entirely stops the process of temporary insanity. It does NOT restore SAN.

## **Divination**

10MP, Min  
1 Component

The caster gains a minimum of 5 detailed insights in answer to a SINGLE question into both the past and/or future. The question can be asked of people, places, objects and even of time periods – the limits lie with the ingenuity of the caster. Although the knowledge is always impressionistic and ambiguous (at the Ref's discretion) the spell may well have later affects of association for the Caster – flashing memories or visions as the Ref sees fit (not unlike a Sixth Sense regarding what the Caster first saw on completion of casting). The ref may hint at what the party should do next. Part of the power of Divination is in its interpretation – and casters should be wary that this spell has tendency to sew the seeds of obsession and worse still of destiny itself..

## **Warding**

10MP, Min  
2 Components

Warding is basically a more advanced version of the basic spell Protection. Warding boosts 2 of the 3 possible stats (HP, SAN, MR) virtually by 10 points (50 for SAN) as determined when the spell list is written OR the Caster elects to gain immunity from a single stated foe for a number of minutes equal to casting time, also as stated when the spell list is written. Neither Stat choice nor the Foe choice can be changed.

The Caster must focus the spell on a specific place or person or item component. The enemy (assuming its mode of attack has been protected against) cannot enter within the space if the warding is on a location and cannot touch the caster or their dependents if the warding is centered on an object.

A single warding can protect a number of people equal to the caster's level. The warding remains as long as the caster remains in location or in contact with the item and focused on spell (i.e. awake, focused on component in some way – chanting, inscribing etc). Movement of a Warding spell is only possible if it has been attached to an object using Imbue Artefact, but only walking would be possible – any reckless activity will count as an Interruption. Any recipient of the spell must be in direct contact with the caster. Duration is a number of hours, days or minutes equal to Level depending on Ref.

Warding is a spell that can be taken more than once in a list regarding different specific stat combinations or versus different foes.

2 spell casters can cover all three realms but the increases are not cumulative. So, if one caster wards against physical and mental, while the other wards against mental and spiritual the beneficiaries of the warding receive 10HP, 10MR and 50 SAN (not 100 SAN).

Warding begins after the first point has been spent (ie it takes at least 5 mins to set up). However the ritual must be completed/continued until the required cost has been met even if the threat has passed otherwise it will be considered to have a shortfall with the outstanding deficit being made up with HP and SAN loss as previously described.

## **Control Time**

10MP, Min  
2 Components

The caster can temporarily slow time or even halt time (if that's not a contradiction).

The spell only affects the caster.

The duration for time slowing is equal to the caster's level in minutes. All people affected must move in slow motion (half speed) with the exception of the caster. Who moves at a normal speed maintaining the Casting process.

When halting time, the Caster gains a time Freeze for as long as the caster can hold his or her breath. Like in Kabaddi, the caster must repeat a simple 'magic' word (specified in his or her list) on a single breath – during which time the caster can move at any speed they wish and interact with both environment (doors and so on) and objects. However, they cannot interact with sentient creatures – to do so automatically breaks the spell, as does getting tongue-tied or taking a breath.

## **Channel Spirit**

10mp Min  
2 phys components minimum.

This spell requires a body through which to call the spirit into being – it may be the dead body of the spirit in question or it may be the Caster themselves as temporary host. The connection lasts a number of minutes equal to level. Spirits can be hostile and only an unwise magician would dare challenge one

without prior knowledge of its intentions.

## **Influence**

10mp,  
2 Components

Lasts a number of minutes per lvl. Induces emotional response (specified when spell list is written – eg terror, awe, ecstasy, contentedness etc. ) in living creatures. DOES NOT alter Sanity pts – however, can increase chances of/counter affects of temp insanity. A further minute’s duration occurs for every further 2MP expended.

## **Imbue Artifact**

10MP + the cost of the spell to be imbued,  
3 Components including Artifact itself.

Allows for an object to contain a spell. The item would then act as an immediate spell casting item, triggered as Ref and Caster see fit. The item itself should be of importance to the belief system or style of the caster or victim/beneficiary of the spell. Imbue Artifact MUST be cast in Game – items cannot be classed as prepared the night before etc.

Items imbued with advanced spells are one use only.

## **Astral Projection**

10MP,  
3 components minimum.

The caster can move through Physical Space in Astral Form for a number of minutes equal to level, + 1 minute for every additional 2MP spent. Caster moves ‘invisibly’ with hand raised as per Ref, while their body remains semi-unconscious back at the place of casting. Normal physical paths and routes must be respected in Astral space. And locked physical doors may well be Astrally locked as well. Alternatively, the caster can spend a minimum of 100mins non-group casting to attain a Dream State in which they may employ their Dream Form. This allows the character to move across Dream Space for a number of hours equal to level, +1 hour for every MP up to level. The Caster’s real body sleeps during this time.

## **Spirit Guide**

10MP, min  
min 3 components.

An advance on the Basic Spiritual Guidance insight system, the Guide is attached to the Summoner and exists as an astral entity in its own right. The player can gain a number of insights to places, people and objects according to the Spirit’s perspective equal to level. The Guide also offers a semi-permanent connection to the Astral plain for a number of hours equal to level. In game terms, this means the player will gain an effective ‘Sixth-Sense’, warning him/her of Astral and/or physical dangers for those hours, at Ref’s discretion.

## **Shape Shift**

10mp,

3 phys components.

The caster can change into a specific were-creature for number of mins equal to MPs spent, (+ 1 minute per 2 additional points spent).

The caster has 10 points to spend on HP, Grapple, MR or time dilation (double speed for 5 points).

Skills: Tracking, Martial Arts (basic), Armed Combat:Claws, teeth etc.

In were-form, the player is capable of no human intellectual acts and cannot be controlled by others (except magically), although the Were-form will pursue the basic intentions of the Caster (attack, defend, infiltrate, steal etc). At the end of the period of 'possession' the player's stats return to normal, the Ref calls an MR check of their choice. If failed there is a high chance the caster will remain a permanent were-creature, prone to lapsing in and out of were-form according to Lunar or feeding influence. However, if the actions of the caster whilst 'changed' showed singularly animalistic intent or high disregard of human life, the caster could fail ever to return to human form, and changes fully into animal form. This spell may have restrictions as to whether it can be cast on others.

It is unknown as to whether the bite of a were-form is infectious.

Wereforms frequently have an 'Achilles heel' (eg. silver bullet)

NOTE: The player, in discussion with the Ref, is responsible for the provision of costume for this spell.

# Grand Gestures

*The spirit only listens when the speaker speaks in gestures. And gestures do not mean signs or body movements, but acts of true abandon, acts of largesse, of humor. As a gesture for the spirit, sorcerers bring out the best of themselves and silently offer it to the abstract.*

- Don Juan (Yaqui Sorcerer)

All Grand Gesture spells are unique and tailored to the specific caster. Grand Gesture spells can only ever be cast once by the caster as they always involve the Caster being removed permanently from the world (at least as a Player Character). They are therefore, by their nature, selfless. They do not cost MP per se, rather every aspect of a character (physical, mental, spiritual) is converted into MP during the spell.

Grand Gesture spells may only be cast during the endgame (the final hour of a game) and require a SAN of 50 or more.

Grand Gesture spells are usually not Group Castable.

Grand Gestures take 1 minute to cast.

Cults and religions have a way of springing up after Grand Gestures are cast.

Catastrophic Failure very occasionally lead to Grand Gestures being triggered.

## Stopping The Wheel

The caster essentially reverses the Wheel of Causality by setting time back by minutes equal to the caster's level. Observers in the immediate vicinity may 'remember' the previous course events and act differently. The caster departs from the universe once the minutes have been used up.

## Apotheosis

The caster becomes an avatar of his/her God(dess) for a period equal in minutes to the caster's level, at which point he/she departs this plain of existence. The details of this avatar should be decided when the spell list is written. (The Ref may wish to set limits on the God's actions/powers).

## Resurrection

If the player is dying slowly he/she may elect to resurrect (after death) for a period of minutes equal to level after which he or she departs from this plain of existence.

## Ascension

Much like resurrection, but without the need to die. The caster(s) simply depart for another plain of existence – the caster may take Group Casters with him or her.

This list can of course be added to over time in consultation with ref's/game organizers.

# Some Practicalities

*...in dreams begin responsibility*  
- W.B.Yeats, notes on an unknown 'Old Play' 19\*\*

## Components

Being a Magic User can be expensive in reality. Talk to your GO about what props can be borrowed, but bear in mind that Components should be portable and, preferably, concealable. As with Costume, make an effort. Good props will improve your chances of spell success. It may be wise to prepare a third bag or case containing just your 'Spell Casting Kit'.

Adapt the normal to meet your mystical needs. A flask of brandy with ribbons and bells attached can become a Wiccan tonic. A walking stick with a jar of bone tied to it can become a Reliquary. A pack of cards, worn and marked by notes and symbols can become a system of divination.

## Research

Be thorough in your understanding of your own tradition. Chances are that you will be your own best expert. But find out some facts about how the Magic started, how it came to develop. Throw in legends and myths found in the real world to add layers and mystery to your own castings, without necessarily seeking to aggrandize any part your tradition may have had to play in their coming to pass. Your caster need not know the name of any Demons, to know that they are of a certain kind of appetite or that they may hail from a certain part of Hell, etc.

## Insular Traditions

Try to 'celebrate' the Magic as much as 'wielding' it. Involve others wherever possible. Be obscure as to the how or why but also pursue the truth of the information you do gather. Magic thrives on secret knowledge, but guard yourself as to when and how such knowledge is revealed. Names of things should be respected – books are invaluable (even Shamans know that). Make things celebratory in their insular nature, rather than insular in your own celebration.

## Wands, Grimoires and other Aids

These are perhaps the best props, since they can probably aid all Castings as a good component. Books of spells are especially rich with opportunity. Choose some items that are integral to your Spell Caster's way of life – the dagger, the wand, the master's notebook, the wooden ladel – even the 1888 Colt owned by your grandfather. It can be a multifaceted item that is precious to your character, but by providing a good back story you offer something to the game-world.

## Magic, Semantics & other Truths...

Good game play is the only law. The terms used in these rules are an attempt at a shared language to enable understanding. They are NOT terms to be used In-Game – Magic is beyond such logical

constructs.

Similarly, the terms 'Basic' and 'Advanced' to describe the Spells themselves are guides only. All Magic is complex. The rituals for a Basic Heal spell could be very simple for a Catholic Priest and very complicated for a Ming Dynasty Demonologist. Use your imagination in alliance with common sense. Create beautiful set pieces. And always accept the Ref's judgement.

## **Reffing the Magic**

These rules are not set in stone. Different refs will have different styles and these rules should grow and evolve over time as refs make in-game decisions, contributing to the lore of how magic works. Ref's decisions are always final, and magic by its nature is unpredictable. Certainly, use these rules as a rough guide in resolving in-game magic but feel free to refine and nuance it as you wish.

As regards spell lists and character creation – again, use these rules as a guide. There will certainly be spells that we'll wish to add to the basic, advanced and grand gesture lists. The current lists are offered as a kind of basic template to be used if possible and expanded upon if necessary. If adding to these lists we should endeavour to maintain a similar balance of cost, risk and potency to those already set down. Magic should be rare, dangerous and unreliable.

*Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.*  
- A. Crowley

# Props and Costume

It's simple and inexpensive to assemble accurate 1940's appearance. A couple of charity shops should provide most of what you need. Accessories are critical – handbags and jewellery, hats, coats and canes. Such details help to create an atmosphere and make for bloody good photos so please give it some thought. It is worth noting that players who don't make an effort with their costumes are frequently penalised. The game creators go to great lengths to ensure you have an authentic and enjoyable experience so please don't turn up in a pair of jeans. If you have any problems with your costume, contact your game organiser who will be able to help you. There are some useful links to period and military costume suppliers on the Links page.

Have two sets of luggage – one with your own belongings for your stay (mark these with your real name), and a second set which is marked with your character name and contains all of your character's personal effects (e.g. a flashlight, a passport). It might only be a handbag or a small case but it doesn't matter.

***You must have a reason to bring a prop.*** Don't bring a gun if you are a ballet dancer invited to a dinner party. Why would you? On the other hand, you may be a PI or military officer, or previous experiences might have made you excessively paranoid. *If you wish to bring a gun you must contact the game organiser who will decide if it is valid for you to own one.* You may also need a permit. The gun itself must fire caps or make an appropriate bang upon firing. *Do not bring starter pistols or blanks, as they are dangerous.* Needless to say, never reveal guns in public.

Your security is a priority. Therefore please be prepared to have your luggage checked and searched. Please don't bring any items that you have not cleared with your organiser.

Try to bring props in keeping with the period of the game. For example, if you bring a torch, bring the bulkiest one you own (not a nifty pocket-sized Maglite).

# Rules for PCs

## The 13 Golden Rules for Players

1. Know the basics. Have at least a page of information regarding your background.
2. Know some current affairs and recent history.
2. Safety first. You are responsible for your own safety and financially responsible for damage you cause to any property so please remember that it is just a game and don't go mad. The game has been designed in such a way that you won't have to leap out of a third floor window onto a moving truck or set fire to the curtains. (Please be aware of other people's safety as well.)
3. Make an effort with your costume. Contact someone if you lack a hat or coat. With enough warning, the GOs may be able to get one to you.
4. Have two sets of luggage – one with your own belongings for your stay (mark these with your real name) and a second set, marked with your character name, which contains your character's personal effects (eg a torch, a cigarette case, Identity Card, etc).
5. Check all props you want to bring with your game organiser.
6. Guns. You must have a reason (and GOs permission) to bring a gun. The gun itself must fire caps or make an appropriate bang upon firing. Do not bring starter pistols or blanks without permission, as they can be dangerous. You may also need a document on Bespoke Reality headed paper explaining that your gun is being used as part of a game.
7. Try to bring props in keeping with the period of the game. For example, if you bring a torch, bring the bulkiest one you own. Don't forget you should probably be travelling with your gas mask (usually carried in a plain brown cardboard box and worn like a satchel).
8. Stay in character at all times.
9. The game can be paused if a referee or non-playing character declares – Time Out. The game recommences upon the command – Time In. If you hear the instruction Time Freeze- you must stay exactly where you are with your eyes closed and humming until Time In. Players should only call Time Out in an emergency.
10. If you have not determined your skills (or allocated your skill points) before a game, you cannot do so during one. So get everything sorted in advance.
11. Role-play. Even if it kills you (or someone else). Play your phobias.
12. Don't talk about adventures you have played to other people yet to play them. Remember – Careless talk costs surprise.
13. A tip. Even though you will be fed, carry a snack with you.

# Rules for NPCs

## The 13 Golden Rules for NPCs

1. Just like the referee, your job is to facilitate the best game experience for the players.
2. Have a good working knowledge of the rules so you can apply them if no referee is around.
3. Put safety first.
4. Have an objective for your character. What do they want? What drives them? Make it tangible and obtainable. (Eg 'To steal the blueprints and get back to Moscow' is fine – 'To see what happens' isn't very dynamic.) Talk to the GO to clarify your objective(s).
5. In any NPC role you must know:
  - What you should say.
  - What you can only reveal if triggered.
  - What trigger(s) reveal that information.
  - What you must not, under any circumstances, reveal. (ie what gives the plot away and ruins the game.)
  - The strengths and weaknesses of your role. (For example, they may be afraid of falling down the social ladder and will do anything to avoid disgrace.)
6. Do some research or ask a colleague for specific historical details that your character would know.
7. Make sure your prop and costume requirements have been discussed with the GO. Be clear about what you are expected to bring.
8. Pay attention to personal props. Players will often search jacket pockets, coats, bags and bins! Don't leave a copy of the scenario where they can find it.
9. Know where the Out Of Bounds area is.
10. Know in advance where all your props will be kept or set.
11. Let the players play the game. Don't give them clues to begin with. Let the ref tell you how much to lead or mislead them.
12. If dead, stay out of the way – preferably in the Out of Bounds area. (Please don't play football with other dead NPCs in the garden. The players are still in the experience.)
13. Bring a book and a torch. NPCing involves waiting. Make sure you are warm/have food.

# Rules for Refs

## The 13 Golden Rules for Referees

1. The referee's job is to facilitate the best game experience possible for the players.
2. Know the rules. You can't bend them unless you know them. You don't always have to abide by them but they should serve as the basis for your decisions.  
Safety first. (At all costs.) Playability and commonsense second. The rules come third.
3. Always have access to a copy of the rules. Have them on you or nearby.
4. Like a football referee, you should always aim to play on. Don't stop the action unless you have to or unless it enhances the experience for some reason. (Safety is the best reason to stop.)
5. Argue later. Keep the flow going. A decision can be reversed with hindsight and analysis. People can even be killed or resurrected if necessary. But don't break up the flow of the game to argue about something. Make the decision first and then, if necessary, amend it later.
6. Use Time Freeze and Time Out sparingly. Brief asides and written notes can be used to communicate secretly and effectively without disrupting the game.
7. Stay in the shadows. The Ref should mostly be invisible. A servant-like eye and ability to pre-empt things is useful, but mostly the ref will simply respond to players' questions. Be clear and decisive.
8. Do anything if you think it adds to the atmosphere. (Calling fake Time Freezes to put the wind up the players if they are getting slack.) You are given liberty to mislead them if necessary. (Playing the role of their fears, thoughts and sixth senses is often effective.)
9. Know your players and their skills. Which have better gun skills? If someone has tracking, know exactly what you will say to them when they reach a certain area. Pre-empt their use of skills. Have their character sheets handy.
10. Be discreet about concealed PCs/NPCs. A simple glance or poorly chosen position can give away a hidden gunman/lurking horror.
11. Blackmarking. (Optional) If a player is given the benefit of the doubt early on you might like to blackmark them for later. You will know that the next 50-50 call can be given against them.

# Designing a Game

## The 13 Golden Rules for Game Designers

1. Make sure you have a good knowledge of the complete rules, ref notes and NPC notes. (Check that you are using the most up-to-date versions.) If you are unclear about any of the rules or would like to suggest changes or additions, please communicate your thoughts/questions far enough in advance for issues to be resolved and information passed to others in the game world.
2. If you are designing a game for the first time, get hold of a written copy of an existing game, preferably one you have played so you have a working guideline of how one is put together.
3. Collate all relevant campaign information that may relate to your setting. (Date, recent events etc.) What were the players' previous assignments and how might they affect this game?
4. Don't try to design and organise the game on your own. Work with someone else or a small group. This is a faster process and it gives others a chance to contribute and, where necessary, point out the flaws in your design.
5. Once you have a rough idea of your scenario you will want to select your players and NPCs. Think carefully about the maximum/minimum numbers of people that can be involved. (For example, how many beds are there at the location? And consider sleeping arrangements. For that matter consider number of cars, parking arrangements and luggage movement.)
6. What level-range should players be? Is it suited to beginners (level 1 and possibly 2)? Or is it a more advanced game? Try to keep the party balanced in terms of their levels, hit points and skills. For more advanced games, keep a track of people's phobias and sanity points as they may well come into play under duress.
7. Fit your game to the players you have. If there is a lot of combat make sure at least one PC has first aid, or some form of hit point recovery is designed into the game. (A doctor or medical kit etc.) If a lot of spell casting is required, make certain the party have enough magic points. Some of your NPCs may need to 'fill the gaps' for the party if necessary. If your game is designed so that the finale requires someone to fix the 'Death Ray Machine' by using Advanced Mechanical skill and no-one in the party has that skill – think again.
8. Safety Please. You'll be amazed what players in the heat of the moment think they can do. If you imprison them in a 60 foot tower, consider that someone may forget themselves and try to climb out of the window. **ANTICIPATE EVERY POSSIBLE DANGER AND ELIMINATE IT FROM THE GAME REALITY.**
9. For every scrape you deliberately put the players into you must have thought of at least one possible way out. Of course, if they get themselves into trouble then they're on their own.
10. Create a props list well in advance of the game. Make certain you have what you need or know where and when you are going to get it. Consider things like gaffer tape, out of bounds signs, spare guns, ammo, torches, emergency costumes etc. You should also have one or more copies of the scenario in a folder clearly marked 'out of bounds'.

11. Leave enough time to go through the entire scenario with your full NPC team AT LEAST ONCE. Make sure everything is on the out of bounds room, all clues set and all bins emptied well before you begin.
12. E-mail the essentials to your NPCs so they know what they are expected to bring.  
Make certain you know what you are to provide for them.
13. Make sure the players know what they need for their safety and comfort. Do they need waterproofs, towels, sleeping bags and sturdy shoes? Will it be an extreme game? Some players will be genuinely uncomfortable with certain types of game. Make sure they know the parameters. (You don't have to give away any details.)

## **A Note on Budgets**

In the Wraith campaign world a member should never pay more than £100 for a typical 2-day game. If the game is devoid of the usual luxuries (ie bedrooms, bathrooms and free booze) the cost should come down. Consider also that most players will pay for their own transport on top of the fee.

Ideally NPCs should not pay and, where possible, game designers should take a small fee for their time. However, this is not always possible and it seems reasonable for NPCs to pay anything up to £40 each, especially if they are getting good food/drink or playing good roles.

Again, work out your budget well in advance so you know the game is feasible. Give PCs and NPCs plenty of warning about the cost of the game and what they will get for their money.

Think through the number of meals that will be eaten as part of the game and how many people will be at each. Also, who in the game will prepare these meals? And when? And make certain the basics are covered – tea, milk, bread, toilet roll etc.

Your costs will be – location, props and costume, food, travel, sundries. Your income will be – players' fees, other contributions.

Try to balance it with money to spare, in case of last minute emergencies. It is bad form to ask the players for more money than they were expecting to pay, simply because you didn't budget properly. Getting players to pay in advance is a good way round this and gives you some money to work with up front. A deposit some time before the event is advisable.

If the players are to eat out in a nearby town (and therefore pay for a meal) this should be considered and ideally the cost deducted from the amount they are charged for the game. (Likewise if they are expected to pay for entry to museums or car parks.)