

Magic

Runes

A rune is typically a pictorial representation of an idea. But this is not the only type of rune, since letters and numbers are also considered runes. There are two distinct types of runes in the world. One set of runes is considered magical while the other set is non-magical. The alphabet is contained within the set of non-magical runes, along with most common pictures and figures. This discussion will consider only the runes that are magical in nature.

All magical runes are divided into two categories. The categories are **active** and **inactive**, and they are concerned with the status of the rune in question. If a rune is **inactive**, its magical effect is considered to be in hibernation until the rune becomes **active**. The **inactive** rune is still magical in nature, except its magic cannot function until the rune is **active**. Only **active** runes can have their magic function. For example, if a magician creates a new magical rune, the rune would not operate until the magician made the rune **active**. When a new magical rune is created, it automatically is considered **inactive**. There are methods that enable an **inactive** rune to become **active**, and there are also methods that enable **active** runes to become **inactive**, though this is a much rarer process.

In this world, all magical effects are the result of the **invocation** of one, or possibly, a combination of runes. Each rune has only one possible magical effect. Two different runes might duplicate the same magical effect, but no single rune can have more than one magical effect. When a rune is properly **invoked**, its magical effect occurs.

Each rune has certain properties that detail what will happen when it is **invoked**, and how creatures can learn the rune. Each rune has a **complexity**, a **point cost**, a **range**, a **duration**, an **area of effect** and its magical effect. There is another property that is somewhat associated to the **point cost** of the rune. This property has to do with the **stackability** of the rune. Certain runes have a **definite point cost**, while others have a **variable point cost**. The ones with a **variable point cost** are **stackable**. This means that one rune might have a **point cost** of two while another might have a **point cost** anywhere from one to infinity. All **stackable** runes have a minimum **point cost** of one. Each rune also belongs to a category that details the method in which the magical effect operates. Each rune is also considered either a **minor** rune or a **major** rune depending on the type of magical effect that is used to **invoke** the rune.

Besides the properties and categories associated with magical runes, there are some special types of runes. These are **matrices**, **enchancements** and **gainspots**. They each represent a rune, but function differently because each possesses additional properties besides the properties that the represented rune possesses.

Categories of Runes

Each rune belongs to one of seven categories, which detail the generic methods in which magic operates. All runes belonging to a given category have similar methods of operation, and therefore have similar functions. Learning how to use magic in a category will aid in the **invoking** of runes within that category. The categories are as follows:

1. **Abjuration**: This is the magic of denial and negation. Runes will create protections against certain creatures or substances, and they can cause negation of currently **invoked** runes.
2. **Alteration**: These runes alter the form, abilities or traits of objects, creatures, and **invoked** runes.
3. **Charm**: These runes affect the minds of creatures in various manners.
4. **Conjuration**: These runes apport objects and in some cases provide limited control over apported creatures.
5. **Divination**: These runes are used to gain knowledge.
6. **Evocation**: These runes create objects and energies.
7. **Necromantic**: These runes deal with life and death forces.

Minor Magic

Minor magic is the most common form of magic in the world. It is the easiest to learn and the easiest to **invoke**. It is the most widespread form of magic, and it is found almost everywhere.

Learning a Minor Magic Rune

To acquire the knowledge of a **minor** magic rune, one must study the rune. Two of the rune's properties come into focus when attempting to study the rune. These properties are the **complexity** and the **point cost**. They determine whether the creature attempting to study the rune can learn it, and if so, how long it will take the creature to learn the rune in question.

When one studies a rune, one gains the knowledge of what the rune looks like, what the rune's magical effect is, and the basis to properly **invoke** the rune. One can be taught this information from another creature, or one can study this information from a text. Each can teach the student equally well. There is no benefit to go to one or the other. The majority of rune teaching is done by creatures though, because there are not that many texts that have the information necessary to teach runes. If a source of knowledge for a rune has information detailing a **variable point cost** rune, the source can teach any **point cost** value for the rune up to its limit. For example, if a creature knows four points of a **variable point cost** rune, it can teach any amount from one to four points inclusive.

After the student has found a method to be taught the rune, the student must first discover if it can understand the rune. This is accomplished by comparing the student's intelligence to the **complexity** of the rune. If the student's intelligence is equivalent to or greater than the **complexity** of the rune, then the student can understand the rune. Otherwise the rune is too complex for the student and the student will be unable to learn that rune until the student's intelligence is somehow raised.

Once the student can understand the rune, it must see if it has enough **free intelligence** to accommodate the rune. Each **point** that the rune costs takes up one intelligence point of the student. If the student has enough **free intelligence** to accommodate the rune, then the student can memorize the rune. In the case when a student is attempting to learn a **stackable** rune above the first **point cost**, a student may only be able to fit as many **points** as it has **free intelligence**. The following examples should help make these concepts clear.

A student who has a ten intelligence attempts to learn a rune that has a point cost of two. Since the student has already memorized a rune that has a point cost of four, the student only has six free intelligence points. The student is able to memorize the new rune that has a point cost of two because it has six free intelligence points. After the memorizing of this new rune, the student will have four free intelligence points.

This same student now wants to memorize a rune that has a variable point cost. The student has found a text that can teach six points of this rune. The student has only four free intelligence points. The student has three choices: 1) only memorize four points of the rune since it only has four free intelligence points; 2) forget points of a previously memorized rune so as to free up intelligence points, and memorize all six points of this new rune; 3) decide not to memorize any of this new rune. Actually, the student, in choice one, could have decided to memorize any number of points of the rune up to and including four. The student need not learn all the points of a rune that a source is capable of teaching if the rune has a variable point cost.

A student may know a certain point value of a variable point rune already and wants to learn a higher point value. This is accomplished by finding a teaching source that has the capability to teach a higher point value and by studying under it. The student must have enough free intelligence to accommodate the new points of the rune, but other than that there are no more checks, since the student already understands the rune.

Studying a rune takes a certain amount of time. The time is equivalent to the point cost of the rune in hours. This time is decreased a small amount if the student has a greater intelligence than the complexity of the rune. For every point of the creature's intelligence greater than the rune's complexity, the study time is decreased by one minute for each hour studied. The following examples will aid in understanding.

A creature with a twenty intelligence wants to learn a variable rune to the four point cost. This rune has a complexity of five. Since the creature has no memorized runes, its free intelligence is twenty. The creature understands the rune and has enough free intelligence to accommodate the rune. The creature now asks its

mentor to teach the rune. The mentor would normally spend four hours to teach the four points of the rune, but since the student grasps the concept of the rune quickly the student can decrease the study time by fifteen minutes for each hour normally studied. Therefore the student can learn four points of the rune in three hours instead of four.

If the same creature then wants to learn up to six points of the rune of which it knows four points the following time is spent. It would have to study a total of two hours, since it already knows the first four points. But, remember this creature can decrease the time spent studying by fifteen minutes for each hour studied because of its intelligence of twenty and the rune's complexity of five. Therefore the time needed to study is one and a half hours.

On the other hand, forgetting a rune takes a very short time. In fact it takes twelve seconds of concentration to forget a point of a rune. If the rune being forgotten is a variable point rune, then the points are lost one at a time from the top down. In other words, if a creature is forgetting a four point variable rune for one round then at the end of that time the creature will know three points of that rune. If a creature is attempting to forget a rune that is not variable, but has a multiple point cost, then the creature must spend a number of rounds equal to the point cost in uninterrupted concentration. Only at the end of that time will the rune be forgotten. If the concentration is broken before that, the rune is not forgotten.

The first time a creature learns a rune, the creature will gain a magical skill under the appropriate magical category. The skill is that of invoking the newly learned rune. The creature has learned one point of invoking the rune. This is the only percentage point of experience that the creature can be taught. All other experience at invoking the rune will be gotten by doing just that, invoking the rune in a stressful situation, just like other skills.

Invoking a Minor Magic Rune

To invoke a minor magic rune the creature must have two things, the knowledge of the rune and the fuel for the rune. The knowledge is explained above, while the fuel for minor magic runes is magic points. The minimum amount of magic points that must be used is equivalent to the amount of points of the rune the creature is trying to invoke. The creature need not invoke all the points of a variable point rune that it knows. When invoking a variable point rune, the creature can invoke anywhere from one point to the maximum number of points it knows. Whatever the point cost of the rune the creature is trying to invoke, that is the number of magic points the creature needs to supply in the invocation process. The creature can supply more magic points than necessary when invoking a rune. The only thing that this does, is to make the invocation stronger when opposing other runes in an offensive manner. In other words, if a creature was attempting to invoke a rune on an enemy who is protected by some other rune, the invoking creature might put more magic points into the invoking process to be able to affect the enemy. Since the rune being invoked is used in an offensive manner, then the magic points will aid in the task. On the other hand, if the rune being invoked is used in a defensive manner, then any extra magic points used go to no purpose.

When a creature attempts to invoke a rune, it must check its skill at invoking the rune. This skill is

modified by three factors. The current power of the invoking creature is added to the chance to invoke. The complexity of the rune is subtracted from the chance to invoke, and the gamemaster might have some other modifications depending on the circumstances. The creature attempting the invocation must spend time invoking the rune equal to one second for each magic point used to fuel the rune plus a number of seconds equal to the creature's dexterity strike rank. The dexterity strike rank symbolizes the somatic component of drawing the rune necessary at the invocation. This drawing can be the motion of a finger following the lines of the rune and not necessarily be actual drawing of the rune. After this time is spent, the chance to invoke the rune is compared to the die roll.

If the chance was a success then the rune is invoked with its effect as described in the description of the rune itself. Also, all the magic points used are drained from wherever the creature invoking the rune chose to drain them. There are a few other effects that occur, but they are described in a later section. If the chance was a critical success, all the above happens except that only one magic point is drained from its source, no matter how many were normally to be used. If the chance was a failure, then one magic point is drained from its source and the rune does not get invoked. If the chance was a fumble, then all the magic points that were to be used are used, similar to a success, but the rune does not get invoked, similar to a failure.

Invoked Runes

A rune that has been invoked creates a magical aura around the target of the invocation. The aura is not detectable by normal means. The aura has a magical color and other information can be gained by analyzing the aura with the appropriate use of divination runes.

Matrices

A matrix is a special type of rune. It is a rune that has been placed upon an object, and has within it the knowledge necessary for the invocation process. A matrix is normally invisible except creatures that know how to invoke the rune that the matrix represents can see the matrix. A matrix can be detected with the proper divination runes.

A creature can use a matrix if the creature already knows the rune that the matrix represents. For example a creature knows the Heal rune to the 3rd level, but has a matrix for Heal 6. The creature can use the matrix for Heal 6 because the creature knows Heal and can see the matrix.

A creature can also perform a ceremony to link to a matrix. The linking process creates a bond between the creature and the matrix. This magical bond provides the knowledge of the invocation process of the rune. Therefore, a creature after linking with a matrix can choose to forget the knowledge of the rune so as to gain Aptitude.

The linking ceremony requires that the creature spend Mana points concentrating on the matrix. For each Mana point spent the linking ceremony takes one minute. Once the linking ceremony is complete the

creature is linked to the matrix and gains all the benefits of the link. Any creature that has been linked to the matrix previously is no longer linked to the matrix. A creature can be linked to any number of matrices at the same time. On the other hand the vast majority of matrices can only have one creature at any time linked to them.

The link will remain in effect as long as the matrix and the creature remains in close proximity for the majority of the time in any day. If the two are separated, the link will remain in effect for a number of days equal to the amount of Mana that was originally used in the linking ceremony.

If a link is broken, the knowledge gained by the link is lost. This does not affect knowledge that the creature may also have. In the previous example the user gained the Heal 6 knowledge due to the link. If the creature decided to forget the Heal 3 knowledge and the link is broken the Heal knowledge is all gone. If however the creature decided not to forget the Heal 3 knowledge and the link is broken the creature still retains the Heal 3 knowledge. In any case, the experience of casting the rune is not lost.

To use the matrix for invoking the rune the creature must have physical contact with the matrix. The somatic component of the invocation process is usually tracing the outline of the matrix itself, as this satisfies both requirements of touching the matrix and tracing the outline of the rune itself.

Enchantments

An enchantment is a special type of rune. It is a rune that has been invoked and made to have a permanent duration. It has all the attributes of any other invoked rune. If the rune represented by an enchantment is made inactive, the enchantment's effects are nullified. However if the rune made active once again the enchantment is active and its effects are active. A good example of an enchantment is a blade that has an enchantment on it so that it is very sharp and works better in combat.

Gainspots

A gainspot is a special type of rune. Like a matrix and an enchantment, a gainspot is invisible to the unaided eye. With the appropriate divination runes much knowledge can be gained about a gainspot. A gainspot is a rune from which a creature can gain the capability to use Major Magic. The details for gaining the knowledge and resources to invoke a Major Magic rune are detailed in the section on Major Magic runes.