

WONDROUS
WEAVINGS



WARPED
AND WEIRD

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**

AXIAN

SPICE





WONDROUS WEAVINGS ←—————→ WARPED AND WEIRD

An Alternate Arcane Magic System with Magical Mishaps
for Old-School Essentials by Giuseppe ROTONDO

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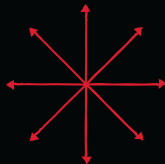
Mauro GATTI

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INTRODUCTION

The following rules modify the rules of arcane magic in Old-School Essentials. They are heavily inspired by how magic works in the stories by Jack Vance and Fritz Leiber, as well as by the relevant rules in the BECM set of the classic fantasy role-playing game. More than a little inspiration comes from fairy tales and folklore too.

These rules apply to both the magic-user and elf class, which are referred to as arcane spell casters or simply casters. The referee may of course decide to extend some or all of the following rules to other classes.

The overall result of these rules is that arcane casters are somewhat more versatile and powerful at the beginning, and a bit less almighty at upper levels. The larger impact on the game, however, is the introduction of Magical Mishaps, which gives spell casters the option to increase efficiency and power if they accept a certain degree of risk.

The obvious disclaimer: This document takes you and your group into the land of house rules. Two things you should keep in mind: first, make sure everyone at the table agrees to use these rules before playing; second, use, alter, ignore some or all of these rules as you see fit, but... see the first advice again and make sure everyone at the table agrees before playing.

SPELLCASTING

Arcane spell casters have the ability to prepare and cast magical spells. A spell consists of a weaved pattern made of raw magical energy that, once prepared and given shape through mystic words and gestures, manifests itself as a living entity inside a character's mind. When the spell is cast, the entity is released from the character's mind and into the physical world, manifesting itself as described in the spell's effect.

Arcane casters possess spell books containing the formulae used for preparing arcane spells. They often carry such books with them, or hide them in secret, safe places to protect them from harm and enemy casters.

Preparing Spells: The number of spells arcane casters may prepare and hold in their mind is **equal to the character's level, plus their language modifier** from Intelligence (with a minimum of one in case of a negative modifier).

No Duplicate Spells: A caster may only keep in their mind **the same spell once**. Reversed spells count as different spells.

Access to Spell Levels: Spell level represents the complexity of each magic formula. Preparing higher level spells requires a greater understanding of magic. First level casters may only prepare 1st level spells; subsequent spell levels become accessible every two character levels (i.e. 3rd level magic-users may prepare 2nd level spells, 5th level magic-users may prepare 3rd level spells and so on). This is **the same** as the standard Old-School Essentials rules for the magic-user and elf class.

Any Spell Level: A caster may prepare spells **regardless of the spell level**, up to their maximum number of spells and up to the spell level they understand and have access to. A fifth level magic-user, for example, may prepare five third level spells, or five second level spells, or five first level spells, or any other combination of those.

SPELL BOOKS

Arcane spell casters record the spells that they know in a spell book.

Number of spells: A character's spell book may contain **any number of spells**, regardless of the character or spell level.

BEGINNING SPELLS

Arcane spell casters begin play with as many spells in their spell book as they are able to prepare, which means **1 + language modifier** from Intelligence (with a minimum of 1), plus the Read Magic spell. The referee may choose these spells, determine them randomly, or allow the player to select them.

ADDING SPELLS

Arcane spell casters increase the selection of spells they can prepare by adding a new spell in their spell book. This is possible in **four** ways:

- * **Mentoring:** The character may consult an arcane guild or mentor to learn new spells. This process takes about **a week** of game time. The spells a character learns in this way are determined by the referee, who may decide to let the **player** choose. The mentor or guild usually requires a payment of 500gp per level of the spell (even though, as with any other transaction, different agreements can be made). The referee determines which spells the mentor or guild are willing to teach.
- * **Other Spell Books:** The character may **copy** any and all the spells contained in another character's spell book, once they have deciphered it with a Read Magic spell. This process requires **one week per level** of the spell for each spell, and **costs** 100gp per level of the spell (alchemical inks, candles and so on).
- * **Scrolls:** Same as spell books, but the copied spell disappears from the scroll as if it had been cast.
- * **Research:** It is also possible to add spells to a spell book by means of Magical Research, as per standard rules.

OPTIONAL RULE: RITUAL CASTING

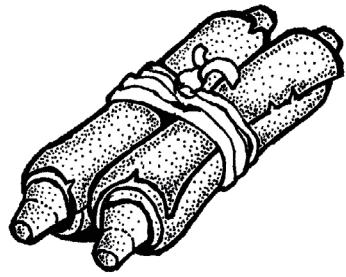


Arcane casters in the comfort of their abode don't need to prepare spells and keep them stored inside their minds: they simply take all the time they need to cast the desired spell straight from their book. This process requires several minutes or even hours, and is usually not well suited for adventures, but situations may arise when a specific spell becomes necessary.

Ritual Time: The arcane spell caster casts a spell they haven't prepared, straight from their book, which must be at hand. This requires a number of Turns equal to twice the spell level.

Interrupted Ritual: If the ritual is interrupted, the whole process is wasted and they must start again.

OPTIONAL RULES: MAGICAL MISHAP



These optional rules allow arcane spell casters to break the rules described above, at a cost!

Magical Mishap: Whenever any of the below conditions happens, the player must roll 1d20. If the result is **higher** than the level of the spell, no mishap happens and the spell is cast normally. If the result is **equal or lower** than the level of the spell, the referee rolls on the **Magical Mishap table** to determine the consequences. The spell is released from the caster's mind but has no other effect besides the ones listed on the table.

Disrupted Ritual: If a Ritual Casting is interrupted (for example by a wandering monster), the ritual is wasted and a **Magical Mishap** may also happen, as outlined above.

Disrupted Spell: If a regular casting is disrupted as a consequence of the standard disruption rules, a **Magical Mishap** may happen, as outlined above.

Duplicate Spells: An arcane spell caster *may* attempt to prepare the same spell more than once. Attempting to hold duplicate forms of the same spell-entity inside one's mind is dangerous, and the duplicate spells may mutate their form while inside the caster mind, resulting in a possible **Magical Mishap**, as outlined above. The player rolls when each duplicate spell is cast.

Higher Level Spells: An arcane spell caster *may* attempt to prepare spells from a higher spell level than they could normally prepare (assuming they have such spells in their spell book). Attempting to hold the complex form of a barely comprehensible spell-entity inside one's mind is dangerous, and the spell may mutate its form while inside the caster's mind, resulting in a possible **Magical Mishap**, as outlined above. The player rolls when the spell is cast.

Magical Research: A caster attempting **Magical Research** (as per standard Old-School Essentials rules) may decide to reduce the standard 15% chance of failure to 7%, but in case of failure an immediate roll on the **Magical Mishap Table** is added to the standard consequences.

Scrolls (Optional): The referee may decide to allow the use of arcane spell scrolls to all classes. If the class is not normally allowed to use arcane spell scrolls, however, attempting to use one may result in a possible **Magical Mishap**, as outlined above, but with three times the chances (i.e. a fighter attempting to activate a sleep scroll has a 3-in-20 chance of causing a Mishap).

MAGICAL MISHAP TABLE

Roll 1d100 to determine the effect.

Duration: Effects that explicitly refer to a spell, item or creature ability in Old-School Essentials have the same duration. All other effects are permanent, unless otherwise explicitly stated, and may at the Referee's discretion be reversed with a Remove Curse spell or equivalent effect.

Targets: Some effects apply to the target of the intended spell. If a spell does not target creatures, the effects of the Magical Mishap are applied to the caster.

Mutations and Charisma: Effects that severely alter a character's appearance may, at the Referee's discretion, cause a penalty to their Charisma.

D100

The target transforms into another being, as per the Polymorph Self spell, but ignoring the Hit Dice limitations. Roll 1d20:

D20 Polymorph in...

- | | |
|----|-------------|
| 1 | Bat |
| 2 | Ogre |
| 3 | Frog |
| 4 | Hydra |
| 5 | Stone Giant |
| 6 | Mule |
| 7 | Giant Toad |
| 8 | Warp Beast |
| 9 | Gargoyle |
| 10 | Hellhound |
| 11 | Mouse |
| 12 | Wild Horse |
| 13 | Rock Python |
| 14 | Boar |
| 15 | Elephant |
| 16 | Caecilia |
| 17 | Unicorn |
| 18 | Basilisk |
| 19 | Harpy |
| 20 | Red Dragon |

1

The spell creates (1d10 per spell level) items. Roll 1d10:

D10

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Floating candles (lit) |
| 2 | Wooden buckets |
| 3 | Butterflies |
| 4 | Frogs |
| 5 | Wardrobes full of elegant clothes |
| 6 | Gems (worth 100gp each) |
| 7 | Bats |
| 8 | Bubbling cauldrons |
| 9 | Skulls |
| 10 | Keys |

2

3

4

5

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7

8

The caster's shadow permanently becomes a Shadow (as per the creature) under their control.

The target becomes 2d10 years younger.

The target becomes 2d10 years older.

The spell summons a Wandering Monster.

The target is teleported to the last place where they slept.

The target's left hand becomes a fully functional Spitting Cobra head.

The target's skin changes color. Roll 1d8:

D8

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Purple |
| 2 | Light blue |
| 3 | Deep green |
| 4 | Bright yellow |
| 5 | Crimson |
| 6 | Jet black |
| 7 | Pearl white |
| 8 | All the above, in stripes |

9

10 The caster's legs become a giant slug's tail. Movement is halved. They can't ride a horse, but can now crawl on vertical surfaces and leave a trail of slime.

11 The target grows a pair of horns on their forehead (d4 damage).

12 The caster's beard or hair becomes prehensile (no more than one item or manipulation at a time).

13 The target's head becomes invisible except for the skull.

14 The spell creates a pocket-sized duplicate of the caster ($\frac{1}{2}$ HD, no equipment) under the caster's control. This duplicate can prepare and cast one extra spell for the caster.

The target develops an extra, fully functional eye. Roll 1d4:

D4

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------|
| 15 | 1 | On their forehead |
| | 2 | On the palm of their right hand |
| | 3 | On the back of their head |
| | 4 | On their chest |

16 The spell is cast normally, but another random spell from the caster mind is cast along with it. The caster may decide the target of the second spell.

17 The spell transforms all prepared spells inside the caster's mind into their reversed version, if applicable.

18 The spell creates a duplicate of every other spell prepared inside the caster's mind.

19 The targets suffer the same effects of a Potion of Diminution.

20 The targets suffer the same effects of a Potion of Gaseous Form.

21 The caster's eyes become telescopic and can be protruded up to 10' in any direction.

22 The spell freezes time for 1d3+1 rounds. The caster is the only creature who isn't affected.

23 The target's eyes become glowing red and they gain Infravision to 60' (or lose Infravision if they had it).

24 A circular pit (10' large, 1d12 x 10' deep) opens in front of the target.

The target develops a tail. Roll 1d6:

D6

- | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|
| 25 | 1 | A pig tail |
| | 2 | A horse tail |
| | 3 | A Killer Bee stinger |
| | 4 | A rattlesnake tail |
| | 5 | A prehensile monkey tail |
| | 6 | A giant scorpion tail |

26 The caster mutates and must reroll their Strength and Dexterity scores.

27 The spell activates an Anti-Magic Shell spell on the target, which cannot be dismissed.

28 A complete banquet table with delicious food for 10 people appears in front of the target. Double chance of Wandering Monsters who may be attracted by the scent.

29 The caster fails to release the spell at this time, but it remains prepared inside their mind.

30 The caster and target swap positions. Reroll if there is no target.

31 The caster suffers a magic hiccup (treat as a curse). All their spells have a 1-in-20 chance of becoming a Magical Mishap.

32 The target shifts forward in time: they disappear and reappear after 1d4+1 rounds.

33 The spell activates, but drains the caster's essence. They lose one level as per the Energy Drain ability of a Wight. If the caster dies, they simply crumble to dust.

The caster (with all their equipment) transforms into a magic item. They can still talk and are aware of the item's properties and use, but cannot cast spells nor activate the item's effects on their own. After 1 turn and at every subsequent turn, they must roll a save versus spell to revert the transformation. Roll a d10.

D10

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| 34 | 1 | Horn of Blasting |
| | 2 | Drums of Panic |
| | 3 | Broom of Flying |
| | 4 | Bag of Holding
(Anything inside the bag when the caster reverts the transformation vanishes from existence) |
| | 5 | Sword +1, Flaming |
| | 6 | Sword +3 |
| | 7 | Flying Carpet |
| | 8 | Girdle of Giant Strength |
| | 9 | Mirror of Life Trapping |
| | 10 | Ring of Telekinesis |

35 The caster becomes bald. If already bald, they grow a lion's mane.

36 The caster's legs become equine. Movement is doubled.

37 Five Magic Missiles appear around the caster, who may activate them at any time. Until they do, they cannot cast other spells.

38 Glowing nodules, the same as a Fire Beetle's, grow on the caster's palms.

39 Tentacles grow in place of the caster's beard. The caster can make 1 attack with the tentacles. A hit by the tentacles causes paralysis for 2d4 turns (save versus paralysis).

40 The caster's right hand now has the same effect of a Rust Monster's feeler, and the caster can now eat rusted metal.

41 The caster's left hand now has the same effect of a Wight's Energy Drain ability, but a creature that is slain by this effect crumbles to dust instead of becoming a Wight.

42 The target suffers the same effects of a Tarantella's bite (save versus poison to avoid).

43 The caster's tongue becomes the same as a Giant Toad's.

44 The caster's Intelligence is increased by 1d4 (up to 18).

45 The caster's Intelligence is decreased by 1d4 (down to 3).

46 All of the gold carried by the caster becomes copper.

47 All of the copper carried by the caster becomes platinum.

48 All prepared spells disappear from the caster's mind.

49 The caster and target swap all the prepared spells within their mind (if any), and are able to cast them. Reroll if there is no target.

50 The spell summons a white rabbit in the caster's hands.

51 All food in a 30' radius around the caster rots.

52 The spell summons 2d6 Skeletons 10' away from the caster, armed with hand weapons (1d6). They obey the caster for 2d6 rounds, then disappear.

53 The spell summons 2d6 Skeletons 10' away from the caster, armed with hand weapons (1d6). They attempt to kill the caster for 2d6 rounds, then disappear.

54 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Lesser Fire Elemental for 2d6 rounds or until its Hit Points are depleted. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Elemental. Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

55 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Lesser Earth Elemental for 2d6 rounds or until its hit points are depleted. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Elemental. Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

56 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Lesser Air Elemental for 2d6 rounds or until its hit points are depleted. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Elemental. Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

57 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Lesser Water Elemental for 2d6 rounds or until its hit points are depleted. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Elemental. Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

58 The spell damages the caster's mind. The number of spells they can prepare is reduced by 1.

59 The spell appears to work, but it actually only creates a magic illusion mimicking the expected effects. If the intended spell actually was an illusion, it becomes real.

60 The spell manifests itself as a sentient entity: a spherical, luminescent, quadridimensional rune. Its HDs are equal to the spell level. Roll for Reaction towards the caster. It can cast itself with contact range, but in doing so it ceases to exist.

61 The caster is blinded for 1d4+1 rounds as the spell's weaving blurs their vision.

62 After that, the caster may ignore the specific cause the resulted in this effect (i.e. if the Mishap was caused by a duplicate spell, the caster can now prepare that same spell twice without risking a Mishap; if the Mishap was caused by a higher level spell, the caster can now prepare that same spell as if it had a spell level they can prepare without risking a Mishap).

63 The caster releases the spell's raw energy in the form of a breath attack (a cone, 30' long, 1' wide at the mouth, 30' wide at the far end). All caught in the area suffer arcane damage equal to 1d6 per spell level of the intended spell (save versus breath for half). The caster may target the breath in the direction they prefer.

64 The target of the spell is miniaturized and trapped inside a corked glass bottle. While inside the bottle the target is immortal and impervious to all effects, but completely unable to act in any way. Opening or breaking the bottle releases the target, which returns to their normal size.

65 The spell activates normally, but its duration is altered by a time paradox. Temporary effects become permanent (and treated as a curse), while permanent effects and consequences are reverted after 1d6 rounds. This includes cancelling damage inflicted by magic missiles, fire balls, and similar spells, which "rewind".

66 The spell fails, but all other prepared spells inside the caster's mind become duplicates of the attempted spell (and are thus subject to further possible Mishaps).

67 The spell activates as a Feeble-mind spell targeted on the caster, but they can attempt the save versus spell (at a -4 penalty) every round to end the effect.

68 The caster suffers a curse of undeath: when they die, they will rise immediately as a Wight. The caster is immediately aware of such fate through a vision.

69 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Living Statue for 2d6 rounds or until its hit points are depleted. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Living Statue that matches their alignment (Lawful: Crystal; Neutral: Iron; Chaotic: Rock). Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

70 The caster (with all their equipment) becomes a Killer Bee until it dies or a Remove Curse is cast upon them. While transformed, the caster is unable to cast spells, but acquires all the characteristics and abilities of the Killer Bee. Lost hit points don't carry over when the transformation is over.

71 A newborn baby appears in the caster's hands. The baby has the same appearance and characteristics of the caster, and grows (physically, intellectually and emotionally) by one year per month, until becoming an adult.

72 The spell creates a duplicate of the caster's body (without equipment). The caster's mind is not duplicated, but it controls both bodies. If one body dies, the other must save versus death or die as well.

73 The spell activates as a Contact Higher Planes spell, except the caster may ask only one question, and the chance for insanity, and its duration, are halved. The plane contacted is the 12th.

74 The spell disintegrates whatever the target is holding in their hands. If their hands are empty, their clothes are disintegrated instead.

75 The spell is cast in its reversed version. Reroll if not applicable.

76 The spell creates a duplicate of whatever the target is holding in their hands. If their hands are empty, their clothes are disintegrated instead.

77 The spell creates a duplicate of the target with identical characteristics, level, items, etc, with opposite alignment. If the target is neutral, so is the duplicate, but it never agrees with the original.

78 The spell burns a scar on the caster's mind: they can never again prepare this spell.

The target's body matter becomes the same as a type of slime. Shape is maintained. They acquire all relevant special abilities. Roll 1d4.

79

D4	
1	Ochre Jelly
2	Gray Ooze
3	Green Slime
4	Black Pudding

80 The spell becomes a permanent image inside the caster's mind. They can prepare the spell without a spell book, and it doesn't count for the limit of spells they can prepare.

81 The spell expands the caster's mind. The number of spells they can prepare is increased by 1.

82 All the prepared spells leave the caster's mind and become magic tattoos on their skin. These work exactly like scrolls, so they disappear when cast.

83 The caster's alignment is immediately determined by rolling 1d6 on the following table, and a new roll is required everyday when they wake up (treat as curse).

83

D6	
1-2	Lawful
3-4	Neutral
5-6	Chaotic

84 The spell produces a terrifying roar. The caster and all creatures up to 100' away suffer the same effects of the Drums of Panic.

85 The caster's shadow permanently becomes a Shadow (as per the creature) and parts from its owner, whispering that it'll return to kill them. The Shadow returns at night after 2d6 days. If defeated, the caster gains their normal shadow back.

86 The caster's eyes now project a beam of light that illuminates up to 15' away.

87 All locking devices within 30' of the caster are opened. This includes door locks, chests, secret doors, and also belts, buckles, knots, pins and buttons.

The caster believes they are another type of being, and behave accordingly, for 1d4 rounds. Roll 1d6:

D6

88	1	A hen
	2	A giant octopus
	3	The last friendly NPC they've met
	4	A brave, mighty warrior
	5	A Golden Dragon
	6	A divine entity, immortal and almighty

89 All ropes within 30' of the caster become snakes, with the same statistics as the Conjured Snakes created by the Sticks to Snakes cleric spell.

90 Everything and everyone within 30' of the caster becomes tidy and squeaky-clean.

91 A twisted tree magically grows in front of the caster.

92 The caster's bag or backpack becomes a Bag of Devouring.

93 The spell activates normally but drains 1d6 charges from each wand, staff, and similar items the caster is carrying (if any).

94 The spell's energy is discharged into the wands, staves, and similar items the caster is carrying. Each item gains 1d6 charges.

95 The caster's body is cleansed of all disease, poison, curse, and any alteration derived from this table, and they must reroll their total hit points.

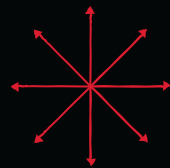
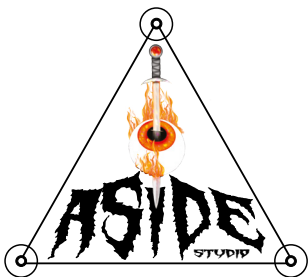
96 Lighting arcs from the caster to nearby creatures. The caster and everyone within 30' suffer 1d6 damage.

97 The spell entity appears in the physical world, trapped inside a bottle. Opening or breaking the bottle releases the spell and casts it with contact range.

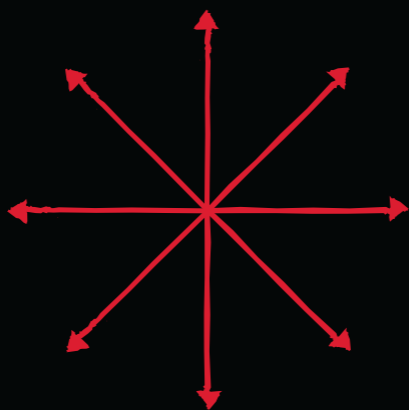
98 The spell sends a mental image of the caster into every existing mind. Every sentient being in the universe now knows the caster's name (followed by "the Great") and appearance and will recognize them immediately. Even the fiercest enemy will now consider at least one round of parley when meeting such a famous person.

99 The caster's hair (and facial hair, if any) immediately grows 10' long. Trimming or braiding everything requires 3 turns, assuming the right tools are available.

100 The caster's skin becomes pale, and their aura becomes tainted with a death mark. All undead perceive them as one of their own. Mindless undead will completely ignore them.



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