GURPS® Fourth Edition

How to Be a GURPS GM™ Ritual Path Magic™

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Introduction

The Ritual Path magic system first appeared in ***GURPS Monster Hunters 1: Champions.*** It quickly became a hit – thanks to its smoothness, and its ability to build spells consistently and logically – and spawned ***GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic*** ("***Ritual Path Magic***" to its fans), which expanded the rules and provided a slew of sample spells.

But Ritual Path magic requires significant GM involvement and careful consideration of consequences: A spell that's fine in one campaign may be abusive in another. A "harmless" ritual might have far more applications than originally intended. Spells to create endless supplies of valuables are theoretically possible, and ***Ritual Path Magic*** is mum on whether to allow such things.

Ritual Path Magic covers most of what a GM needs to know. *This* supplement seeks to fill its gaps, answer questions it leaves open, offer advice on avoiding its pitfalls, and provide tips and examples that reveal its secrets. Consider it a primer for moderate-to-advanced usage rather than a "bible" on how to use the system. That said, Chapter 2 *does* offer a quick way to create and cast spells on the fly, abrogating the need to flesh them out fully (and thus slow down play).

About the Author

Christopher R. Rice has been published in *Pyramid* many times. He co-authored ***GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 19: Incantation Magic,*** with Antoni Ten Monrós, and ***Dungeon Fantasy Traps,*** with Jason "PK" Levine. His first solo work was ***GURPS Monster Hunters Power-Ups 1.*** He also wrote additional material for ***GURPS Monster Hunters 6: Holy Hunters*** and ***GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic.*** Of course, if he's not writing about ***GURPS,*** he's blogging about it. Visit his site, "Ravens N' Pennies" (**www.ravensnpennies.com**), for more ***GURPS*** goodies.

From Portsmouth, Virginia, he's spinning words of whimsy into gold. He wishes to thank L.A., for being the wonderful, amazing, inspiring woman that she is – not every man gets his muse personified in the flesh! He also wishes to thank his gaming group, the Headhunters, for alpha testing; his family (especially his mother); and Elizabeth "Archangel Beth" McCoy, his Sith Editrix mentor.

Chapter One
Tips, Tricks, and More

Ritual Path magic offers many unobvious ways to get the effects you want. Making *good* spells sometimes involves knowing hidden principles . . . and there are things to avoid when considering player-created spells!

Tips

Ritual Path magic is a broad system with many implications and few hard-and-fast rules for dealing with outliers. Let's look at some of the bigger problems GMs might face when judging spells in their campaigns.

Lesser or Greater?

GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic is an "open" system, allowing nearly any conceivable spell. That's one of its greatest strengths . . . and greatest weaknesses. It relies on the GM to determine many things – including the dividing line between Lesser and Greater effects, which can be an overwhelming task. Each Path skill's description offers sample effects, but the rules cannot list *all* conceivable possibilities!

Some guidelines on how to determine whether a spell requires a Lesser or Greater effect:

- Does the effect obviously break the laws of physics (e.g., levitation, creating matter or energy, or teleportation)? If so, it's usually a *Greater* effect. If not – or if the spell's *impact on the situation* is extremely minor – keep reading.
- Could a person in the game world – with no relevant advantages or disadvantages, and minimal tools – produce the same effect within a reasonably short period of time (e.g., dig a hole with a shovel, chop down a tree with an axe, or balance accounts with access to scrap paper and maybe an abacus)? If anyone without special traits could produce the same results as the spell, within a modest amount of time, it's probably a *Lesser* effect.

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the ***GURPS Basic Set,*** *Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

• Could someone with traits that *hinder* them produce the same outcome anyway, given help, extra time, or better tools (e.g., someone with Claustrophobia mapping a small cave system, a low-ST person felling a tree with a chainsaw, or two people maneuvering heavy furniture up stairs)? If not, or if this would require a *lot* more time or *much* better tools (e.g., days to map that cave system, or a chainsaw in a world where that technology doesn't exist), it's probably a *Greater* effect.

• Will the spell obviously "break the campaign" if permitted as a Lesser effect? If so, it's a Greater effect! If even *that* would destroy the campaign's foundations – as raising the dead or turning matter into antimatter might – the GM is justified in ruling the effect *impossible*.

In general, Greater effects speed things up enormously *or* have a large effect on the situation: The tree is felled in seconds, lines of ink map the cave system as the explorer wanders through it, the accountant grasps the numbers at a glance, a mage hurls fireballs at foes.

Lesser effects boost abilities *or* have a small effect on current events: The tree is chopped down in half the time; the spelunker can sketch out each portion of the cave freehand, without needing measuring equipment; the accountant gets +5 to Accounting skill; a mage produces a small light source, which happens to be a sphere hovering behind their shoulder instead of a flashlight or torch.

When in doubt, the GM should err on the side of caution and charge a Greater effect. They can always reconsider after seeing the spell in play! Simply rule that the caster's successful use let them refine the ritual, so it will be charged as a Lesser effect going forward.

Fairer Bonuses and Penalties

Bestows a (Bonus or Penalty) (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 17) is one of the most versatile spell modifiers. It can represent weather magic (e.g., sleet as "Bestows a Penalty, -3 to Vision rolls, HT rolls for cold, and DX rolls for movement"), make a weapon hit harder (e.g., "Bestows a Bonus, +5 to sword damage"), and so on. It's because of this potential versatility that its energy cost starts out modest but quickly grows.

However, many bonuses and penalties are inherently self-limiting. For example, no matter how high a skill is raised, it's subject to automatic failure on a 17 or 18. Similarly, the energy cost for added damage should arguably flatten out at a certain point, since all other damage effects do the same. Because of this, the GM may allow the following *optional* change to the *Bestows a (Bonus or Penalty)* table. Even with this change, they retain the right to declare that a given modifier does *not* provide diminishing returns and therefore must use the cost from the original table.

Modifier	*Broad*	*Moderate*	*Narrow*
±1	5	2	1
±2	10	4	2
±3	20	8	4
±4	40	16	8
±5	60	24	12
±6	80	32	16
etc.	+20	+8	+4

For examples of this pricing in action, see Capturing Roots and Fortuitous Weapon (p. 10).

Spells Based on Technology Level

Ritual Path magic already assumes that hostile spells can – as a Lesser effect – inflict damage equivalent to hand-held weapons in the setting (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 8). But what about other effects, such as armor? Damage Resistance is *expensive* compared to damage in Ritual Path magic; compare Ghost Shirt (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 43) to Fireball (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 42). The difference is over *100* energy for protection that will stop only a little over half the Fireball's damage.

As an optional rule, to enable magical DR to compete with magical damage: If the campaign has equipment that would give the same benefit as an advantage bestowed by Altered Traits, the energy cost for an equivalent effect is 1/5 normal.

"You Allowed *That* to Be a Lesser Effect!"

The campaign has been running for a while, and you were a less experienced GM when it started. Maybe a player made their Fast-Talk roll way back then. Or perhaps someone suddenly realizes the game-breaking potential of a seemingly innocent spell, in use for many sessions. Oops!

If the campaign hasn't been irrevocably broken – or if the players are fine with "rewinding" events to *before* someone started turning dust bunnies into thermo-magical bombs – revamp the offending spell's limits and continue.

If fixing the limits would unwind too many of the campaign's prior events, you may have to tweak "the laws of magic." Unbeknownst to the caster, the spell has some other cost or drawback. Perhaps it's somehow draining the mage's vital essence (start inflicting disease-like disadvantages or penalties whenever it's used). Maybe it's *using up magic* in areas where it's cast, penalizing any other attempts at spells, or sickening mages for months or years afterward. Possibly it has a limited number of uses *ever,* and between the troublesome caster and anyone else who tries to duplicate the effects, that number will fall to zero when you decide a dramatic fizzle would be appropriate. Or each use could call the name of some eldritch abomination, causing cracks in reality that give everyone an excellent reason to not just stop using the spell, but also thwart anyone who tries!

Ritual Path magic is supposed to be a flexible magic system – not a way to make the game un-fun.

This will affect the available levels of DR. Use the *lower* value of split DR, if the campaign's best armor has it; e.g., in a TL9 setting where powered combat armor (***GURPS Ultra-Tech,*** p. 186) with DR 70/50 is best, the GM could allow DR 50 rituals at a reduced cost.

When to Add Damage

Not all spells need all modifiers. An exception to this is *damage.* Magically damaging a target always requires adding the Damage spell modifier (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 17). For example, creating an anvil above a target's head using Greater Create Matter would require Subject Weight, Range, *and* Damage, because you're going to hurt a target directly – the damage is due to *Damage from Falling Objects* (p. B431), but the anvil's falling because of magic! In general, determine how much damage such an attack would do, then assign it damage using the rules for external damaging attacks.

When to Use Altered Traits

Knowing when to use Altered Traits – and when not to – can be tricky. Some guidelines:

• *Does the spell put the effect under the* ***caster's*** *control or the* ***subject's?*** If the effects are normally under the caster's control, Altered Traits isn't appropriate. Use Altered Traits to grant the *subject* control over the effects. For example, if a caster levitates ("makes fly") a target via a Greater Control Body effect, the *caster* determines where the subject is going; adding Altered Traits (Flight) grants the *subject* control over their aerial course.

• *Does the spell significantly modify the subject's native abilities?* For example, a mage might turn a human into a cat using Greater Transform Body, which lasts for the duration of the spell, and only the *caster* decides when the subject transforms during this period. Alternatively, the caster could provide Altered Traits (Alternate Form), allowing the subject to turn into a cat when they choose to.

• *Does the spell already do what you need it to do?* Some spells affect the target, but either the whole point of the spell is that it *isn't* under the subject's control, or the "added traits" are an *implicit* part of the effect. For example, a caster wouldn't need Altered Traits (Reprogrammable) to use a Lesser Control Mind effect to enslave a target – the spell effect does that already!

• *Does the spell require you to use Altered Traits instead of another ritual modifier to make sense?* When a spell affects both its target *and* those who interact with its target, Altered Traits may be appropriate to express *how* that interaction works. For example, a spell that simultaneously protects the target and damages others needs Altered Traits for the protection as well as Damage for the damage.

To summarize: If the GM needs to refer to specific ***GURPS*** traits to describe a spell's game mechanics, the spell needs Altered Traits (see, for instance, Agony, p. 10). If the GM can describe the spell's effects without referring to traits, it probably doesn't.

Tricks

Here are a few tricks for customizing your Ritual Path magic spells to function in different ways.

Conjuring, Enhancing, and Modifying Weapons

Conjuring weapons – or at least, improving existing weapons with magic – is a staple of fantasy. There are three basic possibilities:

Conjuring Weapons: Use Internal Damage (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 17) – adding an appropriate Melee Attack (p. B112) limitation – and combine it with Duration. If you'll *also* be adding your basic damage to this, include the ST-Based enhancement (***GURPS Powers,*** p. 103) as well. The GM might allow you to determine basic damage from an attribute other than ST; this uses a variant of Based on (Different Attribute) (p. B102), with half normal cost. Conjured weapons always require a Greater effect. For an example of a conjured weapon, see Burning Blade (p. 10).

Enhancing Weapons: Add Bestows a Bonus and Duration to the spell. This might enhance damage, Parry, *or* skill (all narrow categories) when using the weapon; all offensive *or* all defensive uses (both moderate categories); or *all* uses (a broad category). Since most weapons weigh less than 10 lbs., such spells aren't likely to need Subject Weight, except when affecting *groups* of nearly identical weapons. Enhancing weapons is usually a Lesser Strengthen Matter effect, but not always – see Fortuitous Weapon (p. 10). Enhancing a group of weapons might be a Greater effect, at the GM's option.

Modifying Weapons: The caster can add enhancements directly to a weapon's damage, without changing the amount or type of damage. This follows the rules for adding enhancements to a spell's damaging component (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 17), but *halve* energy cost for small piercing effects, or *double* it for corrosion, fatigue, huge piercing, or impaling attacks. Note this as "Damage, Direct (Enhancement, +*x*%)."

Leeching Spells

A spell can damage the target *and* heal the caster. This is as simple as adding two Transform effects: one for the Path skill the caster falls under, one for the Path skill the target falls under. For example, a human mage draining from another human requires Path of Body to cast, though this still requires two Transform Body effects – but a human leeching from a spirit would require Path of Body and Path of Spirit. Figure the amount of damage to be dealt, and then *double* the energy; this always uses the costs for Internal Damage. It requires a Lesser effect as long as the spell doesn't exceed the maximum damage of a handheld weapon in the campaign setting.

Damage the spell deals heals the caster on a 1-to-1 basis. For a sample leeching spell, see Soul-Eater (p. 10).

Optionally, spells can be crafted to leech *traits*, such as attributes or advantage levels; e.g., a spell could steal 3 ST from its target and give 3 ST to the caster. Use the above method, but with Altered Traits instead of Damage. Don't forget to add Duration, so you can keep what you steal for longer than a second!

When adding Duration to vampiric spells, two caveats apply: First, cost for damage or healing becomes ×4 (not ×2). Second, the spell can heal the caster for at most *twice* the amount of dice it's rated for; after that, it fizzles out no matter its original duration.

"Over Time" Damage or Healing

Spells that inflict damage or healing can be designated as working "over time." This means the effect is spread out over a specific duration, designated when the spell is made.

First, determine the number of dice of damage or healing the spell does. Next, set the *interval* between "bursts" of damage/healing. Finally, figure the total *number* of intervals and multiply the dice by that figure. For example, if you wanted to heal 1d per second for the next 10 seconds, the spell would need 10d of healing. Such spells do *not* require you to add Duration! See Resurgence (p. 10) for an example.

Keep *Visualizing the World* (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 8) in mind: Dice of damage over the campaign limit require a Greater effect.

Margin-Based Effects

A damaging spell can base damage on margin of victory over the target's resistance instead of inflicting a fixed number of dice; this is a zero-energy feature. Damage equals the margin; each +1 energy adds +1 damage, *if* the spell overcomes resistance. You can also use a *multiple* of the margin: Damage equal to *double* the margin costs +4 energy, *triple* the margin costs +8 energy, and so on. *The Rule of 16* (p. B349) applies to the *base* margin only; spells that inflict more damage still add to or multiply that. For example, rolling 11 when casting a spell at effective skill 20 on a target who fails their Will roll to resist produces a margin of 16 - 11 = 5 (not 20 - 11 = 9) – but if that spell does damage equal to four times margin of victory, it still inflicts 20 damage.

Margin-based spells may be external or internal. This doesn't change the amount of damage dealt – but for external spells, the caster may use the *higher* of their Path or Innate Attack skills to determine the margin!

For an example of a margin-based damaging spell, see Blight (p. 10).

Optionally, effects made by adding Bestows a (Bonus or Penalty) may be margin-based, too. This is a zero-energy feature for a narrow task or roll, but costs +1 energy for a moderate one or +3 energy for a broad one. Bestows a Penalty uses margin of victory over resistance to determine the penalty. For Bestows a Bonus, the subject may choose not to resist – roll against the better of their HT or Will, *or* your effective Path skill, to determine the margin. The modifier is ±1 per *two* points of margin for a narrow task or roll, ±1 per *three* points of margin for a moderate one, or ±1 per *five* points of margin for a broad one. In all cases, the minimum modifier is ±1.

Pitfalls

Ritual Path magic isn't perfect. In particular, it requires the GM to adjudicate *every spell in the campaign*. The learning curve can be daunting, as there are many rules and guidelines to follow (or consciously choose to ignore!). Here are some ways to stay on top of things.

Genius is another word for magic, and the whole point of magic is that it is inexplicable.
– Margot Fonteyn

Limiting Buffing Spells

"Buffing" is a time-honored RPG tradition, but it *can* get out of hand – especially if mages cast spells on not just allies, but also gear, weapons, etc. Often, it takes only a few seconds for a spell to influence its target's abilities drastically. Although this is just the system working as intended (it's *magic!*), it can be difficult for the GM to keep track of what's affecting what, and for how long. To make things more manageable, consider using the following *optional* rule for stacking buffing spells.

Optional Rule: Buffing Spells Stacking Limit

No one can be the subject of more than two buffing spells. This applies to all spells whose effects give the subject bonuses (Bestows a Bonus), advantages (Altered Traits), etc. If someone is the subject of two such spells when a third is cast, the two with the *highest energy total* remain; the lowest-energy spell fizzles. For example, if you cast Lesser Strengthen Body for +1 ST, then Greater Strengthen Mind for +5 IQ, and then Lesser Strengthen Chance for +1 to active defenses, the Body ritual would fade. Where energy totals are tied, the *oldest* spell disappears.

Limiting Grimoires

The more spells in a character's repertoire, the more complex the GM's job. The following *optional* rule lets overwhelmed GMs restrict the number of spells a given caster "knows."

Optional Rule: Spell Familiarities

This rule adapts *Familiarity* (p. B169) to *magic*. Every two character points a caster has spent on *Magical Skills* (below) gives them one "known spell" at character creation. All other spells are *unfamiliar*, and suffer a penalty equal to -2 × (total number of spell effects).

Unfamiliarity penalties can eliminated by studying a spell for eight hours per -1. Natural Caster (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 12) gives the usual time reduction of 10% per level. A caster familiar with the spell can roll against Teaching to help; success reduces time by 5% per point of success. A suitable grimoire reduces time by 5% × *half* its bonus (round down). Reductions for Talent, teacher, and grimoire add, but minimum time is 20% of normal.

Limiting World-Changing Spells

Casters can create tons of "fairy gold" (fairy oil, fairy uranium, etc.) and give the stuff a duration of decades – all for a fairly low energy cost. Until someone dispels them, such valuables are no different from the mundane kind. This can radically change the campaign's scope! Ways to deal with it include:

- *Social Contract:* The GM and players agree not to wreck the campaign world because it isn't *fun*.
- *Large Changes Are Disallowed:* Mages simply *can't* create huge quantities of stuff!
- *Large Changes Are Expensive:* Energy costs become *exponentially* expensive for destabilizing spells, placing them in the realm of possible "plot points" for the GM's use only.
- *Large Changes Have Side Effects:* Spells producing large changes automatically inflict, say, one quirk on the caster per 10 points of energy from Subject Weight (round *up*).

All of this assumes magic isn't widely known! It's probably unnecessary if merchants can tell magically created matter from normal matter.

For less quantifiable campaign-trashing – e.g., a spell that makes many people immortal or brings back *all* the dead – the GM must decide on boundaries and *stick to them*. Be sure to tell players these boundaries, lest player and GM expectations clash mid-play.

In games where *none* of the above factors prevent mages from profoundly changing the game world, the GM should charge people with magical abilities a **huge** Unusual Background cost to represent the fact that they're effectively gods.

Magical Skills

Certain skills are as much magical theory as they are specialized training: Alchemy, Astronomy (Observational), Autohypnosis, Dreaming, Esoteric Medicine (any magic-related specialty), Exorcism, Fortune-Telling, Hazardous Materials (Magical), Herb Lore, Hidden Lore (any supernatural), Innate Attack, Meditation, Mental Strength, Occultism, Ritual Magic, Symbol Drawing, and Thaumatology; any "mystical" specialty the GM permits for other skills, such as Area Knowledge (any supernatural locale), Forensics (Occult), Heraldry (Magical), Law (Esoteric Contract), or Physics (Metaphysics); and all Path skills.

Summoning Monsters for Fun and Profit

Summoning beings requires no added effects in standard Ritual Path magic. With no limit on what can be summoned – or its power level – this can get out of hand! Adding Allies could balance this, but it gives casters the ability to summon specific creatures, which might not suit the campaign. To fix this problem, the following *optional* rule is *highly recommended*.

New Spell Modifier: Summoned

Use this modifier for summoning or conjuring beings. It relies on "Static Point Total," defined as the campaign's starting points. (The GM may prefer to use the current average point total of all the PCs, in which case more powerful creatures become gradually easier to summon.) The more powerful the being – expressed as a percentage of Static Point Total – the greater the energy required. Where point total is unknown, the GM may estimate it.

Power	*Added Energy*
Up to 25%	+4 energy
Up to 50%	+8 energy
Up to 75%	+12 energy
Up to 100%	+20 energy
Up to 150%	+40 energy
+50%	+20 energy

The GM sets the upper limit on power, and may declare that archangels, demon lords, and similarly powerful beings *cannot* be summoned in the usual sense, only contacted: Use a Lesser Sense effect – remembering to add the extra energy for crossing dimensions – and make a reaction roll. Bad reactions result in the being's minions appearing and causing havoc; good ones grant an audience of sorts.

Unless the GM deems otherwise, all summoned creatures use the base template. You *cannot* add traits to pad the point total!

More than one being can be summoned at once. Add together the energy – not point values! – for *all* the conjured creatures.

Controlling Minds

Like summoning (above), controlling minds requires no additional energy cost in standard Ritual Path magic. This makes it easy to control most IQ 1-5 minds with Lesser Control Mind, and IQ 6+ ones with Greater Control Mind, which can be abusive in many campaigns. To reduce cases of "instant henchmen," the GM may require the following modifier for *all* Control Mind spells.

New Spell Modifier: Controlled

If the spell's target would effectively have the +0% Minion modifier (p. B38), the spell requires additional energy equal to *half* that required to summon that being. If they would effectively have the +50% version of Minion, and require no micromanaging, add the *full* summoning cost.

Chapter Two

Ritual Path Magic Ultra-Lite

Ritual Path magic can be intimidating! Spell creation is simultaneously "hard" (requiring math) and "soft" (requiring GM approval). This dichotomous approach can discourage newcomers. To help GMs and players get used to the process, here's a quick-start system.

In regular Ritual Path magic, creating spells involves adding effects and modifiers, applying any Greater effects multiplier, and assigning an energy cost and bonus or penalty to cast. In *this* system, follow the rules for effective skill, safe threshold, and modifiers in *Quick-and-Dirty Rituals and Charms* (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 26), but use these energy cost guidelines instead of tallying up everything:

- Spells that afflict targets with detrimental effects (pp. B35-36) cost 8 energy, +1 energy per +5% the Affliction modifier is worth. This is a ranged effect.
- Divination or information spells generally cost 7 energy. Consult *Divinations* (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 24) after a successful roll. This is an instant effect.
- Spells to move a subject are typically 15 energy for 10 lbs. or less, with a speed of up to 10 yards/second. Add +2 energy for each order of magnitude increase (e.g., 19 energy for up to 1,000 lbs.). *Triple* these values for unnatural movements (e.g., making a bowling ball fly). This is an instant effect.
- Spells that heal human-sized subjects up to 1d are 9 energy. Add +12 per +1d of additional healing. For larger subjects, increase energy cost by +6 for each ×10 in mass.
- External spells (e.g., fireballs or balls of force) that damage a subject cost 6 energy per die of crushing or burning damage, up to 3d. *Halve* the energy cost for small piercing attacks; *double* it for corrosion, fatigue, huge piercing, or impaling attacks.
- Internal spells that damage a subject cost 24 energy for 1d of crushing or burning damage. Each additional 1d costs +12 energy. *Halve* the energy cost for small piercing attacks; *double* it for corrosion, fatigue, huge piercing, or impaling attacks. This is a ranged effect.
- Protective spells that take the form of magical force fields are 78 energy to stop 1d of damage, +60 energy per additional 1d prevented. If the spell's manifestation is "tough skin," temporary armor plating, etc., each 1d of damage stopped costs only 1/3 as much.
- Dispelling spells costs 35 energy and wipes out any spell whose energy is 35 or less. Add more energy to remove more powerful spells. See *Magic vs. Magic* (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 24). This is an instant effect.
- Spells that create spatial gates cost 129 energy. This allows any number of SM 0 beings to pass through the gate one at a time, and instantly transit to a location up to a mile away. Every ×10 to distance adds +36 energy.
- Protective spells that ward against magic cost 15 energy for +3 to rolls to resist. Add +6 energy per further +3 they grant. Such a spell also gives a penalty to *cast* magic, equal in size to the bonus it grants.
- Buffing spells that give +1 to specific activities are 8 energy for narrow subsets of tasks (e.g., Climbing or Stealth rolls), 10 energy for moderate subsets of tasks (e.g., rolls to hide or Vision rolls), or 13 energy for broad subsets of tasks (e.g., active defenses). *Double* required energy per additional +1.
- Spells that physically transform the subject cost 11 + 3 × (point cost of traits granted). If this breaks Path skill barriers (e.g., turning someone to stone is Path of Body *and* Path of Matter), use the *lower* of the two skills to determine safe threshold.
- Spells that create matter from nothing are 18 energy for 10 lbs. of material. Add +6 energy per ×10 weight (24 energy for 100 lbs., 30 for 1,000 lbs., etc.). This assumes *bulk* matter. If you're conjuring, say, a sword or guillotine from nothing, add +16 energy to the base cost, but you get +5 to rolls to craft it; see the *Crafting Penalties Table* (***Ritual Path Magic,*** p. 16).

All of these guidelines assume a 10-minute duration for spells that aren't instant or damaging. Ranged effects can be targeted up to 100 yards away; other spells require the target to be within two yards.

For spells with assorted trivial or surreal intentions, the GM can charge 10 energy for *most* minor effects (cutting someone's hair, doing laundry, etc.), 20-30 energy for moderate effects (changing a car's color, souping up its engine, etc.), and 31+ energy for broader effects (turning a lake to Jell-O, making a tree bloom in winter, etc.). The greater the effect, the more energy it needs.

Chapter Three
Examples

Here are the sample spells mentioned in Chapter 1, in one place for quick reference.

Agony

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Body + Lesser Destroy Body.
Inherent Modifiers: Afflictions, Agony, Suspendable + Altered Traits, Low Pain Threshold and Negated High Pain Threshold.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Subject loses any High Pain Threshold, gains Low Pain Threshold, and suffers agony (p. B428). The caster can start or stop the pain at will while the spell endures (10 minutes).

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Body (5) + Afflictions, Agony, Suspendable* (24) + Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Altered Traits, Low Pain Threshold and Negated High Pain Threshold (4) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *126 energy (42×3).*

* New modifier to accompany Afflictions or Altered Traits: While the spell endures, the caster can start or stop its effects without canceling it entirely. *+4 energy.*

Blight

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Body.
Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Toxic, Margin-Based.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

If the target fails to resist, they instantly take 3 × (your margin of victory) in toxic damage.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Body (5) + Damage, Internal Toxic, Margin-Based (8) + Range, 20 yards (6) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *66 energy (22×3).*

Burning Blade

Spell Effects: Greater Create Energy.
Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Burning (Melee Attack, Reach C, 1, ST-Based).
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Summons a fiery blade that does swing+1d or thrust+1d *burning*. The thrust is considered *tight-beam* burning (p. B399) as a zero-energy feature. The blade lasts for 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Energy (6) + Damage, Internal Burning 1d (Incendiary, +10%; Melee Attack, Reach C, 1, ST-Based, +80%; Tight-Beam Thrusting Damage, +0%) (18) + Duration, 10 minutes (1). *75 energy (25×3).*

Capturing Roots

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Body.
Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Bonus, +5 to Binding rolls.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

Animates existing roots to grab anyone nearby – an area-effect Binding with effective ST equal to Path of Body+5. If the roots attack laterally (from a wall, fence, etc.), any active defense is allowed; if they attack from below, only a parry with the feet or a dodge at -3 is permitted. Cannot animate *sapient* plants.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Body (5) + Bestows a Bonus, +5 to Binding Rolls (12) + Area of Effect, 5 yards, Excludes 12 allies (10) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 1,000 lbs. (4). *36 energy (36×1).*

Fortuitous Weapon

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Chance.
Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Bonus, Next attack roll.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The forces of fate guide the caster's weapon, giving them +10 for a *single attack*.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Chance (5) + Bestows a Bonus, +10 to next attack roll (32). *37 energy (37×1).*

Resurgence

Spell Effects: Greater Restore Body.
Inherent Modifiers: Healing.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Heals subject 1d HP every second, for the next 3d-1 seconds. This spell uses *Modifying Dice + Adds* (p. B269) to give a variable duration.

Typical Casting: Greater Restore Body (4) + Healing 10d (36). *120 energy (40×3).*

Soul-Eater

Spell Effects: Lesser Transform Body ×2.
Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Vampiric.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

Drains subject of 4d HP and heals the caster for the same amount. If the subject resists, they suffer no injury and the caster receives no healing.

Typical Casting: Lesser Transform Body (8) + Lesser Transform Body (8) + Damage, Internal Vampiric 4d (24). *40 energy (40×1).*

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