

MAGIC

There are many different types of magic possible using the *RuneQuest* rules, with many being specific to certain worlds and settings. Characters will have the chance to learn a variety of spells and supernatural effects using magic, enabling them to overcome obstacles and foes that cannot be beaten by sword and wits alone.

This chapter provides the rules for using rune magic, the most common form of spellcasting in both *RuneQuest* and the *Glorantha* setting. Other forms of magic use slightly different rules and these can be found in other supplements, such as the *RuneQuest Companion*. However, the list below gives a hint of what is possible using the *RuneQuest* system.

Rune Magic: By far the most common type of magic in Glorantha, this uses the innate power of divine runes in order to create effects beyond the natural. Various cults have spread throughout Glorantha, each worshipping a god tied to one or more of these runes. While anyone has the potential to learn rune magic, joining a cult allows them access to greater powers and deeper secrets. This is the magic system detailed in this rulebook.

Divine Magic: A variant of magic that bypasses the need for runes and allows practitioners to access the power of their god directly. This potentially very powerful form of magic is only taught at the higher levels of some cults.

Shamanic Magic: By establishing a connection and relationship with the spirit world, shamans can gain the ability to possess others, trap spirits and leave their bodies to walk through ethereal realms.

Sorcery: Eschewing the principle of runes, practitioners of sorcery treat their craft as a science, studying texts ancient and modern to bend the laws of the natural world to their own bidding.

Dragon Magic: Practised mainly by the mysterious race known as dragonewts, dragon magic is an exotic system that promises great power at the risk of the user's soul.

Demonology: There are fouler things than spirits walking through other realms. The demonologist actively seeks

to harness and bind the power of demons to his own bidding, temporarily gaining their strength to fuel his own abilities.

Magic Points

All living creatures possess a basic affinity with magic, whether or not they ever become trained in it. It is this raw magical power that is nursed and improved by spellcasters over time. This nascent magical power fuels spells and other magical abilities and can also provide protection against magical attacks. In *RuneQuest*, a character's magical power is measured by Magic Points.

All characters start play with Magic Points equal to their POW Characteristic score. A character's POW score also acts as a maximum limit for the amount of Magic Points a character can store at any one time (though there are certain items or artefacts that can affect this rule).

Regaining Magic Points

Characters will automatically regain Magic Points equal to their POW every 10 hours. They will regain this amount in 5 hours if they are fully resting (such as sleeping).

Rune Magic - A Brief Summary

Before leaping into the rules for using rune magic (which, in their own way, are just as involved and demanding as the rules for combat and wielding a sword), it is worth scanning through this summary to understand the basic concepts involved.

Before a spell can be cast using rune magic, the following process must be followed:

- ☒ The character must first acquire and integrate a rune (see page 59). The Runecasting skill is then automatically acquired.
- ☒ A spell using the rune in its casting must be learnt (see page 60).

Once these steps have been followed, the character will be ready to try casting the spells he has learnt.

- ☒ To cast a spell, the character must make a Runecasting skill test related to the spell in question.
- ☒ If the test succeeds, the spell's effects take place and a number of Magic Points are deducted from the spellcaster's total.
- ☒ If the test fails, the spell does not take effect and the spellcaster loses 1 Magic Point.

Locating Runes

Runes are said to be blood drops from the gods, who constantly war in the sky above. When their blood touches the earth, it is transformed into an item of potential – usually a stone, though runes can also take the form of leaves, a chunk of bark, a sea shell or other natural objects. All, however, will be marked with the symbol of the rune, the emblem that gives them power.

These runes are placed within adventures and Quests by the Games Master for the Player Characters to find. Indeed, the discovery of a powerful rune may be the subject of just such an adventure. For instance, the players may hear of a rune in possession of a broo shaman and decide to 'liberate' it for their own use. Runes can also be bought and sold in the marketplaces of the world but they tend to command very high prices.

Rune Integration

Once a rune has been found, a character must integrate with it, making its power his own. This is done simply by spending one hour with the rune in relative peace and solitude, and then succeeding at a Persistence test.

If this test is failed, the character will not be able to attempt to integrate that specific rune again (though he could try with another rune of the same type).

If the test is succeeded, the character has integrated the rune and is said to be Rune Touched. He permanently



loses one point of POW and no one else will be able to integrate with the rune until he dies.

The newly Rune Touched character gains the skill Runecasting (appropriate to the integrated rune) at its basic Characteristic-derived score (POW+CHA).

As long as the integrated rune is in the physical possession of the Rune Touched, he gains its runic power. As long as the integrated rune is being held by the Rune Touched, he may attempt Rune Magic linked to that rune.

Runes may not normally be removed once integrated, though it is possible that particularly powerful magic would be able to part a character from his rune (without killing him).

magic

Runic Powers

Random D100 Roll	Rune	Runic Power
01–04	Air	Rune Touched reduces damage from falling by half and adds +10% to Athletics skill when jumping.
05–09	Beast	Rune Touched gains Survival (or +10% to Survival is already possessed) and +5% to Lore (Animal) and Resilience.
10	Chaos	Any spells with the Instant trait cast by the Rune Touched inflict a –30% penalty on attempts to resist or counterspell them.
11–13	Cold	Rune Touched ignores negative effects from exposure to cold environments.
14–17	Communication	Rune Touched gains +10% to Influence skill and gains new Language skill.
18–20	Darkness	Rune Touched gains Dark Sight and +10% to Stealth skill.
21–22	Death	An opponent suffering a Major or Serious Injury inflicted by the Rune Touched's close combat attack suffers a –10% penalty to Resilience tests to stay conscious or avoid death.
23–25	Disorder	Rune Touched adds +2 to all Strike Rank rolls.
26	Dragon	Rune Touched gains +20% to Resilience.
27–28	Dragonewt	Rune Touched will reincarnate as a dragonewt upon death.
29–32	Earth	Rune Touched gains +1 to STR, CON and SIZ.
33–36	Fate	Rune Touched may re-roll one dice roll each day.
37–40	Fertility	Rune Touched heals and recovers in half the normal time.
41–44	Fire	Rune Touched reduces damage from fire, magical or otherwise, by half.
45–47	Harmony	Rune Touched may grant a single ally +20% to a single skill test, once per day.
48–50	Heat	Rune Touched ignores negative effects from exposure to hot environments.
51–52	Illusion	Rune Touched gains Disguise skill and +5% to Sleight and Stealth skills.
53–54	Infinity	Rune Touched doubles the duration of all spells with the Duration trait.
55	Law	Any spells with the Permanent trait cast by the Rune Touched inflict a –30% penalty on attempts to resist or counterspell them.
56–58	Light	Rune Touched gains Night Sight and +10% to Perception skill.
59–62	Luck	Rune Touched may re-roll one dice roll each day.
63	Magic	Rune Touched gains +5% to all Runecasting skills.
64–67	Man	Rune Touched gains +1 to DEX, INT and CHA.
68–69	Mastery	Rune Touched gains +10% to all opposed tests.
70–72	Metal	Rune Touched's iron close combat weapons gains +1 damage, but only when wielded by the Rune Touched.
73–74	Moon	Rune Touched gains +5% to Influence, Perception, Persistence and Stealth.
75–77	Motion	Rune Touched's Movement increased by +1m.
78–81	Plant	Rune Touched gains Survival (or +10% to Survival is already possessed) and +5% to Lore (Plant) and Resilience.
82–84	Shadow	Rune Touched gains +10% to Sleight and Stealth skills.
85–87	Spirit	Any spells that target spirits cast by the Rune Touched inflict a –30% penalty on attempts to resist or counterspell them.
88–90	Stasis	Rune Touched is unaffected by Knockback, though they may still cause it themselves.
91–92	Trade	Rune Touched gains +10% to Evaluate and Lore (World) skills.
93–94	Truth	Rune Touched gains +10% to Perception and Persistence skills.
95–96	Undead	Any spells that target undead cast by the Rune Touched inflict a –30% penalty on attempts to resist or counterspell them.
97–00	Water	Rune Touched's Athletics skill is considered to be +50% when swimming.

any spells cast at the target. It will not have any effect on spells that are already affecting a character. The effects of Countermagic Shield depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell – see the Countermagic Shield Results table for more details.

Cover of Night

Casting Time 1, Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Touch

Runes: *Shadow*

This spell grants the target a 10% bonus on all Stealth tests per point of Magnitude and also provides them with the benefit of being partially obscured (–20% to most attempts to target or strike the character).

Darkwall

Area 5, Casting Time 2, Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged

Runes: *Darkness*

By casting this spell, the character creates an area of pitch blackness filling the target area. Light sources within this area shed no light and normal sight ceases to function. Other senses such as a bat's sonar function normally.

If the caster also possesses the Movement rune, he may move the Darkwall one metre per Combat Action. If this option is chosen, the spell gains the Concentration trait.

Demoralise

Casting Time 1, Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

Runes: *Disorder*

The target of this spell will become demoralised, losing all hope of victory and losing faith in its own abilities. It has all Weapon skills halved (before modifiers) and may not cast offensive spells. If this spell takes effect before combat begins, the target will try to avoid fighting and will either run or surrender. The effects of this spell are automatically cancelled by the Fanaticism spell and vice versa.

Detect X

Casting Time 1, Concentration, Magnitude 1, Ranged

Runes: *Truth*

This is actually several spells, though they all operate in a similar fashion, which allow the caster locate the closest target of the spell within its range. This effect is stopped by a thick substance such as metal, earth or stone that is at least one metre thick. It is also blocked by Countermagic Shield, though the caster will know the target is somewhere within range (though not its precise location) and that it is being protected by Countermagic Shield. The separate Detect spells are listed below.

Detect Enemy: Gives the location of one creature who intends to harm the caster.

Detect Magic: Gives the location of the nearest magic item, magical creature or active spell.

Detect Species: Each Detect Species spell will give the location of the nearest creature of the specified species. Examples of this spell include Detect Duck, Detect Rhino and Detect Trollkin.

Detect Substance: Each Detect Substance spell will give the location of the nearest substance of the specified type. Examples of this spell include Detect Coal, Detect Gold and Detect Wood.

The Games Master should provide the rough power of the detected subject ('weak magic' or 'rich gold lode') and require further Runecasting test for any further details or specifics. Keep in mind that magical creatures may have magical protections that penalise this test.

Dispel Magic

Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

Runes: *Disorder, Magic*

This spell will attack and eliminate other spells. Dispel Magic will eliminate a combined Magnitude of spells equal to its own Magnitude, starting with the most powerful affecting the target. If it fails to eliminate any spell (because the spell's Magnitude is too high), then its effects immediately end and no more spells will be eliminated. A spell cannot be partially eliminated, so a target under the effects of a spell whose Magnitude is higher than that of Dispel Magic will not have any spells currently affecting it eliminated.

