### Magic Items in Bostonia

In Bostonia, the primary source of magic is runic mages – where elemental power is bound to a living being. However, magic can be bound to items as well. Spirits can be trapped in a ring or a sword. Runes can be etched into a wand, storing spells to be released by speaking words of power. Certain materials have unique properties that allow them to steal energy from the living to power magical effects. Finally, the world is littered with relics from ancient times, waiting for the clever (or unwary) to unleash their powers.

#### Artifacts Skill

The primary means of detecting and analyzing magic items in Bostonia is the artifacts skill. This skill permits the artificer to study an unknown item, note the materials from which it is made, any markings or runes engraved on it, research tomes and manuscripts for hints on the item’s history and experiment with different ways of unleashing its power.

Each item has a DL associated with it. This DL indicates how difficult it is for an artificer to understand and activate the item. Analyzing an artifact takes a week of dedicated study. At the end of the week, the artificer can make a skill test to learn one characteristic of the device. A characteristic can be a single power (and how to activate that power), the device’s history, or how to recharge it.

###### Suggested DLs and Modifiers for Artifacts

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| **Activity** | **DL** |
| Artificer has tools and equipment | -2 |
| Artificer has library at his disposal | -2-6 |
| Artificer is rushing to analyze the object (3 days) | +2 |
| Artificer is rushing to analyze the object (1 day) | +4 |
| Artificer is rushing to analyze the object (instant) | +8 |

#### Item Types

Magic items can be classed into wands, jewelry and clothing, miscellaneous items and weapons. Items of a like class have certain features and behaviors in common. Each class and the rules that apply to them will be described below.

##### Wands, Rods and Staves (charged items)

Wands, rods and staves differ in size and material. However, they all have two things in common. First, all have runes of power and command carved somewhere on them. If these runes are deciphered, they often indicate the wand’s method of activation and sometimes, its purpose. Second, all items in the wand category have limited uses that are replenished by the consumption of minerals, gems, crystal or precious metal. The mineral consumed and the manner of consumption varies with each item.

##### Rings, Amulets and Clothing (alteration items)

Items worn close to the body are often ensorcelled with alteration magic. These items have spirits bound in them. These spirits are trapped in the item and forced to lend their magic to the wearer. However, they power this magic by stealing some of the life force of the wielder, so there is almost always a trade-off.

Because of the parasitic nature of alteration magic, all magic rings, amulets and similar items all have side effects. The effect will begin once the item’s magic has been activated for the first time. It grows quickly to its maximum effect. Once they has taken hold, the item’s side effects are continuous and will last for as long as the host wears the item and for several weeks after (regardless if he uses the item’s powers or not). Once you put such a device on, you must deal with the consequences for some time.

##### Swords and Other Weapons

Weapons come in a variety of types and powers. In Bostonia, magical weapons are all created from a meteoric metal called spirit iron. This is a strong metal that alloys easily with many other materials. These weapons are hard to break and hold their edge well. Spells and runes can be etched into the metal to bind spells to the weapon. In addition, spirit iron has the unique property that it attunes itself to its wielder. This is a gentle process that takes many years, but over time such a weapon will gain power due to the deeds and legends associated with their owners.

##### Miscellaneous Items

These items are hard to classify. They come in all manner of shapes and sizes and can exhibit a wide variety of powers. A small number of these are deliberately created by mages. Others are of ancient origin, or the result of magical experiments or backlash. In general, these items do not have charges and do not have the same deleterious side effects of jewelry.

Instead, these items work on a balanced effect principle. Each time they are activated and cause an effect, another nearly opposite effect occurs. Unlike alteration magic, this effect is not necessarily bad and it does not have to occur to the user of the item. It will affect something close to the item, but otherwise the target of the balancing effect will be random. The GM should try to have fun with this whenever possible.