

THE GUIDE OF SHADOWS FOR WICCANS, SOLITARY
WITCHES, AND OTHER PRACTITIONERS
OF MAGIC RITUALS



WICCA

BOOK OF SPELLS AND
WITCHCRAFT FOR BEGINNERS



ARIN CHAMBERLAINS



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Wicca

Book of Spells and Witchcraft for Beginners



The Guide of
Shadows for Wiccans, Solitary Witches, and Other
Practitioners of Magic Rituals

By Arin Chamberlains

Table of Content

INTRODUCTION

1. GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CRAFT

Wicca, Witchcraft, Paganism & Magick: The Differences

2. WICCA, WITCHCRAFT, PAGANISM & MAGICK, A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Evolution & Development of the Craft

3. THE CRAFT & ITS PHILOSOPHY

Inherent Power

An Introduction to Spells and Charms

4. THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE CRAFT

The Craft: Beliefs & Worship

The Idea of Reincarnation

Three Fold Retribution

The 13 Principles of the Craft

5. PREPARATION FOR PRACTICING THE CRAFT

Preparing Your Altar

6. BASIC TOOLS, EQUIPMENT& FURNITURE

Your Witch Knife

The Sword

The Bell

The Wand

7. PERSONAL ATTIRE, ADORNMENTS & YOUR NAME

8. CHANNELING

An Introduction to Channeling & Intuition

Becoming a Channel

9. THE BASICS OF MEDITATION

[An Introduction to Meditation](#)

[The Dynamics of Meditation](#)

[Mastering Meditation](#)

[Performing Meditation](#)

10. COVENS, RITUALS & TERMINOLOGY

[The Coven: Introduction & Terminology](#)

11. RITUALS, A BLUEPRINT

[The Initial Purification Ritual](#)

[The Sacred Circle](#)

[Erecting/Clearing the Temple](#)

[The Consecration Ritual](#)

12. RITES & CEREMONIES

[Coven Meetings –An Introduction to Esbats](#)

[Celebrations – An Introduction to Sabbats](#)

[Major Sabbat Rituals](#)

[Minor Sabbat Rituals](#)

13. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CRAFT ON BIRTH, DEATH & MARRIAGE

[Marriage](#)

[Birth Rite –Wicanning](#)

[Death Rite – Crossing the Bridge](#)

14. MAGICK

[Principles of Magick: Timing and Feeling](#)

[Preparing Your Body for Magick](#)

[The Moon & Magick](#)

[About Love Magick](#)

[About Sex Magick](#)

CONCLUSION: YOUR JOURNEY CONTINUES

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Introduction

Wicca is a religion. Witchcraft is a practice that can supplement the Wiccan religion and sometimes overlap with it, if you so choose. In this book you will learn the differences between Wicca and Witchcraft, and you will learn the principles and practices of both.

This book contains all the information necessary for you to grasp an understanding of the fundamentals of the Wiccan faith and to learn how to harness the power of nature and to command it to produce the results you desire. As you will come to know, Witchcraft is very unlike what the stigma associated with it compels people to believe. Rather, it is a holistic tradition that encompasses all facets of the natural and the spiritual world.

Much of the contents in non-denominational, and can be practiced by anybody of any faith. Think of this book as your first step towards an understanding of the Craft and ensure that you are open minded to recognize the beauty of the Craft and to accept the change it can bring to your life.



1. Gaining an Understanding of the Craft

Wicca, Witchcraft, Paganism & Magick: The Differences

Without clear definitions and a clear understanding of the terms Wicca, Witchcraft, magick and Paganism, you cannot find your footing to start learning about the practices. Here we begin by explaining the differences among all these terms, to help you build a foundation of knowledge on which to build upon as you read the entire book. If there is one chapter you decide to read before skipping to the others, please make it this one.

Paganism: An Introduction

Let us first make it clear that the term Paganism is an umbrella term for several religions. The term envelopes a number of spiritual beliefs; it was a term used to describe people who believed in a number of gods, goddesses or deities.

Basically, paganism refers to the pre-Christian religions that have stemmed from several ancient cultures.

Wicca and Witchcraft: The Differences

The terms ‘Wicca’ and ‘Witchcraft’ are often referred to and used interchangeably, but there are key differences between the two. The blurred lines between the two terms go way back, to as far back as the 1940s, when the origins of what is understood today as Wicca was actually considered Witchcraft. The term ‘Wicca’ is actually rooted in Old English, and describes a ‘diviner’ or ‘sorcerer’, coming from the Anglo-Saxon Culture. In the Anglo-Saxon culture, magical skills were deeply valued and with the evolution of the English language, the term ‘Wiccan’ and ‘Witch’ became one term. Today, we understand where the differences are as well as where the confusion occurred, and it is accepted that Wicca and Witchcraft are indeed very different things.

Wicca: An Introduction

Wicca is a religion, an earth-centered, nature-driven religion. It is a system of spiritual beliefs around deities, the Goddess and God and the Wheel of the Year. Wicca thus consists of worship of and observance to spirits and deities and is regarded as a subset of Paganism. Wiccan Rede is the 'one Law' principle of Wicca that can be summed up as 'harm none'. Wiccans believe in leaving karmic energy to take care of those who have wronged them, as their faith admonishes the harm of others, even those who have harmed or have the intent of harming them. Wiccans also believe that interfering with the free will of others is wrongful.

Witchcraft: An Introduction

Witchcraft, however, is a practice. Witchcraft is about harnessing the power in the Universe and using it to bring about changes in one's life. It incorporates meditation, prayer and magic and several activities like divination, astrology and spirit communication. Casting spells and the use of magic, channeling and meditation are all goals in Witchcraft. It is not necessary to be a Wiccan or a Witch to cast spells or practice magic. Even without a belief system centred on spirituality, Gods or Goddesses, one can use herbs and spells for protection, healing and love *etc.* – which means that even atheists could practice Witchcraft. So because of this, one may actually be a believer in any religion or none, but still be able to practice Witchcraft as an art of using energy and the power in nature for an end goal. Many nations and cultures have their own methods in Witchcraft, and there is much encompassed by the term.

Practicing Wicca and Witchcraft

Unlike Wiccans, who are encumbered by the Rede, Witches are independent thinkers and have no predefined ethics or morals that they follow. Witchcraft can either be practiced with intent to heal or with intent to harm. There are many forms of Witchcraft that entail protection, love and healing using herbs, minerals, alternative science and harnessing of energy to perform. However, there exists Witchcraft involving demonic forces as well, like that of St. Cyprian or King Solomon. There are Satanic practices like that of Anton LaVey of The Church of Satan, or Santeria or Hoodoo practices. Witchcraft is as diverse as the many cultures and peoples across the globe and can be as good or as bad as the person performing it. Unfortunately, in the English language, there is only one

word to describe a person practicing either healing or harming magick and that is a 'Witch'.

In essence, there is a difference in intent between Wicca and Witchcraft. Wicca's intent is alignment with the divine and a spiritual journey, while Witchcraft doesn't have to involve the divine or spirituality in any form since spells may be cast and meditation may be practiced or herbs used even without calling upon any divine spirits or deities. The bottom line is that not all Wiccans are Witches, and neither are all Witches Wiccans. This book offers an introduction to the principles of Wiccan belief as well as an introduction to traditional Witchcraft. It is interesting to see how traditional witchcraft can incorporate principles of Wicca and how they can overlap. However, it is easy to simply practice Witchcraft without any background in Wicca, beyond understanding the differences between the two.

As a result of centuries in history involving the persecution of Witches by Christianity, there is a stigma attached to the title of being a 'Witch', and the term became more of an accusation rather than an accepted, respected title. During such trying times, those practicing Witchcraft wouldn't even identify themselves as Witches or fear of their own safety, and while there is freedom to identify as a Witch today, the negative connotations that still hover around the term inhibit its proper use and obscure its true meaning. Most people are first introduced to the idea of Witchcraft or Wicca through Hollywood movies and the interpretation is a twisted one, not giving the entire true picture of the concepts. Wiccans and Witches are both alike in the struggles and challenges they face in their communities, where they are ostracized and even actively fought against for practicing.

Magick: An Introduction

There are several reasons for people being drawn towards magic. Some wish to understand their place in the vast universe, some are seeking answers to the questions they have about life and everything around it, and others are seeking a life of enchantment and heightened reality, which can be described as a life of wonder and mystery.

Let us first discuss why we sometimes come across the term 'magic' and how it is different from the term 'magick'. 'Magick' is actually a term coined by Aleister Crowley, founder of a Pagan religion called Thelema. He used the alternative spelling to differentiate the magic of the occult from that performed

on stage for entertainment. Other spellings have been adopted over time like “majick”, “majik” and “magik”, but for no specific reason. Thus the term ‘magick’ is essentially unnecessary, and all forms are interchangeable, but we have adopted his idea in this book simply by preference.

Magick can be loosely described as the manipulation of the physical world via metaphysics by using ritual action. However, the definition is not all encompassing as in some cases, even actions that are not metaphysical may be described as magick. It is a profound, deep and sacred art of conforming change using the power of will; an art of using the forces of nature to evoke change. It is a neutral art form – neither good nor evil. Instead, the practitioner of the magick decides on the intent or the focus of his natural energy.

Prayers are not considered magick – they are requests for divine intervention. When the names of Gods or deities are used in magick, it can become confusing, but it is important to recognize whether the name is used as a request or as a word of power.

Black Magick vs. White Magick

White magick and black magick are concepts that have existed for time immemorial. White magick, according to Alice Bailey, author of *Treatise on White Magic of 1934*, is a practice of the Craft that can only be performed by a healthy witch of a pure heart. It is a practice that serves others and is selfless rather than selfish. Black magick, on the other hand, serves the magician, and the definition of it can be narrow or broad. In broad terms, one can define black magick as that which the magician believes is immoral, unethical or wrongful in some or other way. In no way is black magick necessarily malevolent, it simply depends on the intention with which the magick is performed.



Wicca, Witchcraft, Paganism & Magick, a Historical Background

From here onwards, 'the Craft' will be a term making reference to Wicca and Witchcraft.

The Evolution & Development of the Craft

In Palaeolithic times, humans depended on hunting for survival. Without a successful hunt, there wouldn't be bones for tools and weapons, skins for shelter and warmth, nor there be meat to eat. At that time, there was respectful awe over the forces of nature such as the lightning, the wind, water and everything else. It made sense to the humans of the time that there was a God or a deity for every force and facet of nature. An example of the roots of hunting rituals that survived until as recently as about a hundred years ago is that of the Mandan Indians' Buffalo Dance or even the Penobscot Indians who donned horns and deer masks for their hunting rituals. These rituals stemmed from a sympathetic form of magick rooted in logic. It was thought that like attracts like, so attacking and killing a faux bison would result in a real kill, for example. With the evolution of Man came the evolution of the Craft and the deities connected with it. Certain things became less important as the times changed and so did the worship and rituals.

As the different rituals evolved, developed and progressed, there came a need for a kind of priesthood so that there would be selected individuals to serve as wise ritual leaders and be sources of knowledge regarding divination, magick and herbal lore. It is these individuals who earned the title 'Wiccans', meaning 'Wise Ones', and they were well respected to the point that kings would consult with them before making important decisions. They were viewed as the bridge between the people and the Gods.

The Root of the Stigma around the Craft

With Christianity there came about change. Temples of the 'Old Religion' were demolished and movements were made to convert the masses from the 'Old Religion' to the new. In so doing, the Gods of the Old Religion conveniently represented the demons of the new, like the horned Wiccan God that so closely resembles Satan – which is no coincidence. This is the root of the stigma that is so closely attached to Wicca and Witchcraft, the root of the misconception that these movements are demonic in nature.

The Suppression of the Craft

The term 'Pagan' was a direct translation to mean 'people who live in the

country', from the Latin word Pagani. 'Heathen' was simply 'one who dwells on the heath'. Both of these terms were straightforward, literal terms describing people who didn't follow the new Christian faith and lived in outlying districts, practicing their rituals in the heath. However, today they carry a heavy negative connotation - derogatory, even.

In the 1480s, German monks Heinrich Institoris Kramer and Jakob Sprenger set in motion a widespread onslaught on practicers of the Craft, hanging, burning and torturing nine million people on counts of Witchery. As Satanism was anti-Christian and so was Witchcraft, the two movements, though completely different in essence, were parcelled into one category.

By the late seventeenth century, any individual claiming to have occult powers faced charges of fraud as per a Witchcraft Act. This forced Witches to go into hiding, the Craft surviving only barely, through small covens usually in the form of close-knit families.

The Re-Emergence of the Craft

When the time for literary development came, it was only the Christian movement who got to document their perspectives on Witchcraft, and so everything that was first written on the Old Religion was from their perspective. It was only in 1951 that the laws prohibiting Witchcraft were lifted and Witches were given an option to come out. The first person to offer any literature on Witchcraft from the Witches' perspective was Dr Gerald Brousseau Gardner, who became the founder of Wicca. He published Witchcraft Today, then High Magic's Aid and then The Meaning of Witchcraft. Had it not been for Gardner's courage to emerge as a practicing Witch, the Craft will perhaps have died out by today, as it was surviving by a thread, as an oral tradition, becoming riddled with errors over years of suppression. Gardner rewrote the rituals of the coven he belonged to in a way he deemed they were meant to be, and thus was born 'Gardnerian Witchcraft'.

The first book of documented rituals was The Book of Shadows, which was passed from one coven leader to the next, but that too was erroneous through years of change in leadership. Very slowly, other practicers found the courage to emerge. Today, the denominations of Witchcraft include Gardnerian, Celtic, Alexandrian, Saxon, Druidic, Norse, Algard, Scottish, Irish, Huna and Sicilian.

3. The Craft & Its Philosophy

Wicca is a religion based on love, joy and empathy with nature. Witchcraft is also based on nature and on drawing energy from nature to orchestrate change. Witches are aware of the power in plants and of how our energy and emotions affect them. Witches use herbs and natural energy to activate the healing of the body, mind and the soul. Humans have lost their connection with nature, which was once an important tool of survival in primitive times. Today, even the shoes on our feet inhibit our ability to draw natural energy from the earth and to benefit from it.

Inherent Power

You may know people who have a psychic power of sorts, where they know certain things or sense them before they happen. You may even be a person like that Witchcraft harnesses the power inside of you to use it in different ways. Everybody has this power within themselves, and if it does not naturally come out as it does with 'psychics', you can draw out the power from within using the specific ways of Witchcraft. Some people can use their power dramatically, to bend objects without physical contact, for example. Others use their inherent power to see visions. Witchcraft is about awakening this inherent power and learning to control it, much like a baby learns to use its limbs.

In 1932, there was an interesting scientific report published in a science magazine titled *Everyday Science and Mechanics*. The report investigated the effect of human tissues on living yeast. It was found that blood, nose and eyes and fingertips emit radiation that killed yeast within a few minutes, without contact. This demonstrates the inherent power within people that Witches have always known of, collected, increased and utilized.

An Introduction to Spells and Charms

Of course, Witchcraft wouldn't be witchcraft without spells and charms! The casting of spells and charms is a practice most commonly performed by solitary Witches, but can also be performed by covens. The emotional drive is the crucial source of power when casting spells and charms. It is necessary to feel a strong desire for your spell or charm to work, and wanting it with your entire being drives the magick into action. For this reason, performing spells and charms as an individual for yourself is better than asking another to do it for you, as there is no way to generate the emotional desire in another person the way you can in yourself.

It is not necessary to be a follower of the Wiccan faith to cast spells and charms. Anybody can learn to properly cast a Circle and work a spell or charm effectively, no matter what their religious beliefs are if any. There is a system of mechanics to spell casting and of working magick, and in this book; you will learn everything you need to begin casting your own. First, we introduce you to the fundamentals of Witchcraft.

4.The Fundamentals of the Craft

The Craft: Beliefs & Worship

All religions essentially acknowledge a genderless force, a higher power beyond human comprehension that we wish to communicate with and that we respect and request our inner desires from. Each religion has developed its own understandable and relatable forms of this life-ruling supreme power to which they direct their worship.

Since Wicca is a religion that is largely based on nature, it is only logical then, that the Wiccan deities are related to in both feminine and masculine forms, as all in nature manifests itself from this duality. Thus the 'Ultimate Deity' is divided into God and Goddess. Different denominations of Wicca stemming from different traditions have differing names for their deities and differing forms.

The names you select for labelling your deities are simply a matter of preference. When addressing the deities, it is important to be comfortable with the names you use and thus selecting your own is a suitable option. A deity's name is simply a label, what is most important is what the deity represents and the attributes that you are worshipping. Names are a means of identification and are personal as religion itself is personal. You may rest assured that the God or Goddess you are worshipping or praying to will not be confused as to whom you are addressing!

The Idea of Reincarnation

The idea of reincarnation is by no means new. The belief is ancient and forms a part of several religions, for example, Buddhism and Hinduism. Reincarnation is the concept of a human soul, a spirit, or a fraction of the divine that exists within us during our lifetime, and upon death, returns to the divine source. The belief continues that this soul, spirit or divine fragment is required to undergo all life experiences for the purposes of its own evolution. This belief may explain many things, like child prodigies for example. Looking at Mozart, the belief that, at five years old, he likely retained knowledge from his previous lifetime, enabling him to compose concertos of genius form, is an understandable explanation for the phenomenon that would otherwise make little sense.

Reincarnation may be extended to several other examples, another being homosexuality. Feelings and sexual preferences from a previous life may be carried over to the next, explaining why some people have tendencies that are considered 'unnatural' by scientific analyses.

In Wicca, it is a belief that not only humans possess souls, but all things. It is believed that each element of the earth has a reason for existing – a dog will always reincarnate to be a dog, a human will always reincarnate to be a human *etc.* This is unlike some schools of belief as in some religions, where there is an idea of rebirth in different forms, a human in one life, a plant or animal in the next; or some that believe in a graduating of species from one to the next with humans being at the top. In Wicca, it is believed that what changes is the gender in reincarnation, from male to female.

To explain the fact that the population is growing, Wicca acknowledges that there are also births of new souls, and thus existing in us are either 'old' souls, which have been reincarnated and experienced several lives or 'new' souls, which are beginning their journey of experience.

Three Fold Retribution

A concept closely linked to reincarnation is the concept of retribution or 'Karmic action'. Karmic action is thought of as a system that stretches throughout a soul's lifetime, in which any evil you do in one lifetime will come at the cost of paying for it through punishment in the next lifetime.

In Wiccan beliefs, retribution happens not across several lifetimes, but within the same lifetime, which means that in Wiccan belief, your reward or punishment for the way you have lived your life is not received after death, but rather, during your lifetime as you live it. Where things get even more interesting in Wicca is that the Wiccan belief system is based on not only a retribution for actions, but a three-fold retribution. A three-fold retribution means that for the good you do, you will be rewarded three times as much, but just the same, for any evil you do, you are punished three times as much. Of course, it is not literal, but the principle is such.

The Wiccan system of belief then resolves that a lifetime's experience is not dictated by the experiences of a previous lifetime and there may or may not be similarities between the experiences across your soul's lifetimes.

The 13 Principles of the Craft

In 1974, a group of approximately seventy pagans and witches, all from varying backgrounds and traditions, came together. They called themselves *Council of American Witches* and they attempted compiling a formal document with all the definitions and the common principles shared by the Witches. Here we list the statement as made by the association, with no amendments.

1. *We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the Moon and the seasonal Quarters and Cross Quarters. Usually in the form of Sabbat and Esbat celebrations.*
2. *We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfilment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.*
3. *We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than that apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary it is sometimes called "supernatural", but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.*
4. *We conceive of the Creative Power in the universe as manifesting through polarity - as masculine and feminine - and that this same Creative Power lies in all people, and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither (gender) above the other, knowing each to be supportive to the other. This next section of #4 is often omitted in recent copies, partly because of residual puritanical beliefs in the public and in some modern Witches, and partly because it is often misunderstood: We value sex as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of life, and as one of the sources of energies used in magickal practice and religious worship.*
5. *We recognize both outer worlds and inner, of psychological,*

worlds sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconscious, Inner Planes, etc.-and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfilment.

- 6. We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.*
- 7. We see religion, magick and wisdom in living as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it-a world view and philosophy of life which we identify as Witchcraft - the Wiccan Way.*
- 8. Calling oneself "Witch" does not make a Witch-but neither does heredity itself, nor the collecting of titles, degrees and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within her/him that make life possible in order to live wisely and will without harm to other and in harmony with Nature.*
- 9. We believe in the affirmation and fulfilment of life in a continuation of evolution and development of consciousness giving meaning to the Universe we know and our personal role within it.*
- 10. Our only animosity towards Christianity, or toward any other religion or philosophy of life, is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be "the only way" and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practice and belief.*
- 11. As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, the legitimacy of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present and our future.*

12. *We do not accept the concept of absolute evil, nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or "the Devil", as defined by Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor accept that personal benefit can be derived only by denial to another.*
13. *We believe that we should seek within Nature that which is contributory to our health and well-being.*

5. Preparation for Practicing the Craft

Several Witches work and meet outdoors, in spaces like the edges of a field, in a wood clearing or the like, but it is understandable that this is not always a possibility for others, especially those who live in urban areas where it is difficult to find a secluded natural space. However, your Temple can be in a space that is indoors as well, and here we will help you select a space and set it up for worship.

Preparing Your Altar

The area that you decide on using for performing magickal rituals and working as a Witch can be many types of spaces – it can be a whole building, just a room, or even as little as a section of a room. It is simply a matter of what is available to you. Shape and size are irrelevant when selecting a sacred space for your altar. Of course, it is ideal to have an entire room dedicated to your Temple, but it is not necessary. You may make use of even an apartment or any other room, with space cleared, for your altar.

What You Will Need for Your Altar

Candles– have one or two candles on your altar when working magick.

Incense burner & incense–The burning of incense adds to the atmosphere of your work, and it is a tradition thousands of years old. If all you have available is the stick or cone incense, you may use it; however, bear in mind that it is best to make use of charcoal briquettes and powdered incense for magickal work and performing of rituals. Use a hanging incense burner if you can, but a saucer-like vessel filled with sand will suffice.

Salt and water dishes–salted water is a representation of life. You may use any kind of containers or vessels for this, even getting creative and using seashells or coconut shells etc.

Libation dish–the libation dish is a vessel used during indoor magick work to contain the first pouring of wine or fruit juice, after a toast to the gods during rituals. The vessel is taken outside following the completion of the ceremony, and the contents are poured on the ground. These dishes may be of any type as well. If the ceremony is taking place outside, the toast offering is simply poured on the ground directly.

Goblet/s & Wine or fruit juice–On the altar, the goblets for the Priest and Priestess are placed. The goblets of other celebrants sit on the ground, at their feet. The goblets too may be any vessel you desire.

Statues or pictures to represent deities – it is not entirely necessary, but it is a

very good idea to have representations of the deities on your altar. The representations can be all sorts of things that remind you of or that resemble the deities the way you visualize them in your mind. Thus, there are many different depictions of the deities, and you can even get creative and make your very own representations. If you are skilled at sketching, draw pictures of the deities the way you see them in your mind's eye, or use decoupage and some pictures to make pillars of deities out of wood or even wax. You may even use items that are symbolic, like shells, rocks, plants, *etc.*

Defining & Preparing a Place of Worship

1. Before doing anything in the room, it is best to begin by cleansing it with a sea salt detergent scrub of the floor and the walls.
2. Perform the initial purification ritual (see Chapter Twelve 'The Initial Purification Ritual'). Both the cleansing ritual and the purification ritual are not necessary if you are fortunate to find a space in nature.
3. Using a compass, establish the room's alignment. Take note of the directions
4. Place the altar in the middle of the room and set it up so if you stand facing the altar, you are facing east.
5. On the ground, around the altar space, draw a circle (see Chapter Twelve, 'Casting the Sacred Circle')
6. Since the entry and the exit from the Circle will take place from the East side, it is good to plan a bit more room for that side of the altar.
7. In your Temple room you will need storage space for storing incense, candles, wine, charcoal, your tools and your Book. In an ideal situation, you will have open shelving and be able to leave your altar set-up permanently. However, several factors may make this not a feasible option. In this case, whenever you wish to use your altar, simply clear a space in the room (of at least five square feet) and pull up a table of any kind. Most important will be consecrating your Circle.
8. You may now decorate your sacred space as per your individual taste. Use whatever helps you engage, like vivid paintings, neutral colors, or paint the walls to resemble a cave, forest of starry night. There are magickal symbol colors as well, which are green for north, yellow for, red for south and blue for west – though this is usually applied to

rooms that are oriented very precisely to these directions.

9. Select a surface to use as an altar (refer to 'Choosing an Altar'). Ideally, have a white candle and representations, in the form of statues or pictures, of all the deities on the altar at all times.

Choosing an Altar

Practically any flat surface may be used as an altar, such as a coffee table, a board over bricks, a tree stump, rocks or a box. However, it is best that the altar is made from only non-conductive materials, like stone, gold, silver, brass, wood *etc.* This is because only the Witch's sword and knife may be made of a conductive metal like steel or iron.

6. Basic Tools, Equipment& Furniture

The tools that you will require to perform Witchcraft are dependent on the denomination of Witchcraft you choose to follow. In Gardnerian Witchcraft, eight working tools are used, including the Wand, Sword, Scourge, Cords, Pentacle, Athame and White-Handle Knife. The Saxon denomination simply requires the Spear, Seax (knife) and the Sword. It is also possible to have a denomination all your own, in which case you will decide what tools you prefer to use. What is of utmost importance is that whatever tools you do use are cleansed and purified ritually, before they are used to perform any magick or Witchcraft. This is performed so as to eliminate low vibrations from your Witchcraft tools and to charge them with your own energy and consecrate them. Store any uncleansed tools in clean white linen safely, until you are ready to consecrate them.

Your Witch Knife

A Witch must have a personal knife, commonly referred to as an 'athame'. It may be known by different names in different traditions, like 'yag-dirk' in Saxon and 'seax' in Saxon, but essentially, it is a double-edged steel blade. In the Frosts' tradition, the knife is a single-edged brass blade.

Steel or iron is the preferred blade material choice as the process of iron extrusion and steel making was considered a 'magic' skill in itself, as it was rare and not fully understood or commonly known.

Of course, when choosing the size of the blade, it is a matter of personal preference. The knife should be easy to handle and comfortable in your hand. It must be functional as well. You will be using this knife as a magickal personal tool, and thus it is very special. It is important to give the tool plenty of thought. It may be easier and rather convenient to go out and purchase a knife already made, but it will not be as special as creating one yourself, with your power of intent and creativity, and completely tailored to your preferences.

How to Make Your Knife

Making a knife from scratch is not as intimidating as it seems. First, you will need a piece of steel. For this, you could use any steel that can be worked into the form you are looking for. Look for a piece as close as possible to the size you desire your blade to be. A steel file or chisel could be worked into a suitable blade, for example. The first step will be to soften the steel enough so that you can change its shape. You will need to heat the steel until a dull red color is obtained. Do this over a fire or a gas burner or stovetop. This may take several hours, depending on how hot the heat source used is. Once it reaches the dull red color, switch off the heat source or remove from the heat source and allow to cool off naturally. The steel is now softened and you will be able to work it.

Use a pencil or similar tool to mark on the metal, an outline of the desired shape of the blade. Using a hacksaw or a powered bandsaw, cut along the outline you have drawn and then file off the rough edges as smoothly as possible. Now, you need to create an edge by sharpening the edges. Use a grinding wheel here, but if preferred you may use files of varying coarseness to achieve the sharp edge on your blade.

Once you have achieved the desired blade shape as well as the sharpness of the edges, it is time to harden and temper the blade. This time, you will heat up the blade in the same fashion as when softening the steel, but this time you will allow the color to change from dull red to a red-hot color. Very carefully take hold of the blade and plunge it in lukewarm water. It is important that the water that the red-hot blade is plunged into is not cold, else the steel will become brittle and crack. Instead of water, oil may also be used. Allow the blade to cool naturally and then clean it. This is the hardening step completed.

For the tempering, the blade is to reheat once again, but this time to a dull red as it was heated the first time. Now, plunge the blade into lukewarm water again, point downwards, moving it in the liquid in an up and down motion. Clean it and heat it up again. When heating this time, the color change is critical. Keep a close watch as the blade heats up as it will change rapidly, going to a light bright straw color and then to medium straw. After straw, it changes to blue, proceeding to purple, then green, but you are required to plunge the blade before it turns blue. Watch the point of the blade, and keep it farthest from the heat source, taking the blade and plunging it at the first sign of a blue tinge.

Now, take the cooled blade outside and plunge the blade into the soil a few times. In so doing, you have now moved the blade through air, fire, water and finally, earth.

Now, to craft a handle, take two pieces of strong wood, and onto the wood, you draw an outline to cut out for your blade to sit in. Chisel out the wood using the outline as a guideline, and continue chiselling out the wood until your blade sits perfectly sandwiched between the two pieces of wood. Once they fit satisfactorily, roughen the inside surfaces of the two pieces of wood and spread a strong epoxy resin glue across the surface to which the blade will adhere, as well as the rest, to which the other piece of wood will adhere. Clamp the wood together and allow to set for 3 days.

Once the blade has been dried completely, remove from the clamp and begin outlining the profile of the handle onto the wood, as per your preference. Begin carving the wood along the outline to your desired shape. You may use different files to smooth out the surface, and you may get creative with engraving the wood with mottos, or your Witch name or even decoration. Personalize your knife as far as possible, as it is your personal tool and should be as special as possible.

Etching or Engraving Your Knife

It is a good idea to etch your blade with your Witch name or design as well. This can be easily done. Simply coat your blade in wax to protect the blade, and then use a tool to scrape off the wax in the desired pattern or word, ensuring to expose the metal. Then pour sulfuric acid or an etching agent onto the blade, allowing it to go into the grooves you have made and etch the blade. Leave the acid on for a few minutes to etch well, then wash under running water. Clean off the wax and your blade is etched.

It may be helpful to use a piece of steel as similar as possible to your blade to practice on first, to get an idea of how long to allow the acid to etch the metal *etc.* Also, a far easier option is to use an etching pen, available at most hardware stores, if you prefer.

Engraving the blade is an effective alternative, though it is not as solid as etching. This simply requires an engraving tool or even a nail or object with a sharp metal point. The challenge with engraving is that the point has to be applied to the blade with considerable pressure to scrape a marking into the blade, and control can be very difficult, especially with the nail or object slipping and scratching your blade.

Using Your Knife

There are some Witchcraft traditions that use the knife only within the Circle, solely for ritual use, like the Gardnerian tradition. However, there are also the Scottish traditions, which recommend and encourage the use of the knife as often as possible, on the belief that with more use, there is more power injected into the tool.

The Sword

The Sword is not an essential tool in Witchcraft, since it may always be substituted with the athame. However, it is a preference that some Witches use Swords, and even some covens use a coven Sword, to be used by members of the coven and for the casting of the Circle. Again, as with the knife, a Sword may be purchased and simply personalized (by means of decorating, engraving or etching) by the solitary witch or the members of the coven, or it may be made from scratch. Before the use of either sword, cleansing, purification and consecration rituals are necessary as with the knife and any other tool to be used in Craft work.

The Bell

Some, not all, Witches use the Bell in their work. The Bell is a tool that has been considered to possess magickal characteristics for centuries long. It is scientifically proven that sound is a vibration, and in Witchcraft, these vibrations are believed to impart power and cause an effect. A small bell with a pleasant note is best used here, and it is advised to choose carefully as there are many cheaply made small bells that produce harsh notes. The Bell may be decorated or engraved as with the other tools, either by all members of the coven or by a solitary Witch.

The Wand

Whether the tradition you follow asks for the use of a wand or whether it is you who has decided out of preference that you would like a wand, there are many options available in acquiring one. You may take your pick of the wood that the wand is to be made from, for example, rowan wood, ash, hazel or willow. There is no need to go the great lengths to even acquire a specific wood of a specific length, and sometimes even at a specific time. In fact, the tool itself is not what produces the magick – the magick comes from the Witch performing the magick. It is an extension of the Witch, and there is ‘one correct way’ with anything as with every other aspect of Witchcraft. Use the resources you have available to you, get creative and don’t allow any obstacles to come between you and your perfect wand.

7. Personal Attire, Adornments & Your Name

Creating a Robe

There are several who prefer to work unrobed, or naked, otherwise termed as 'skyclad' meaning clad by nothing but the sky. Skyclad magick work is the commonly preferred method but should weather be non-permitting or should you feel uncomfortable for whatever reason, you may stitch a robe to use for magick work. The robe may be stitched from any fabric you desire and may be plain or elaborate and to any extent of either that you prefer. If you intend not to wear any clothing underneath your robe it is important to consider the fabric carefully, ensuring that you will be comfortable and that it will not itch, or scratch or irritate your skin in any way. It is an option to choose one fabric for the robe itself and then a lining to ensure your comfort.

Decide on the style of your robe, whether you wish to have a hood or not, or a cord around your waist. Consider pockets and the length of the sleeves. Select a color for your robe and any trimming you may desire. The robe may be embroidered or embellished to your heart's content, as well. This is a fun, creative and enjoyable project!

The Horned Helmet & The Goddess Crown The Horned Helmet is an item of headgear worn by the Priest when he intends to represent the God, just as the Priestess will wear the Goddess Crown when intending to represent the Goddess during rites or rituals. Both these items of headgear are simple to make and there are multiple ways of making them. The simplest way (apart from simply purchasing one, of course) is to select a copper or stainless steel mixing bowl that fits your head snugly as possible. Squeeze the bowl into the shape necessary to make the fit as comfortable as possible. Remove any unnecessary attachments if present, like handles, hooks or rings *etc.* Take two cow horns of roughly the same size and glue a wooden base at the bottom of the horns. Attach this base to the bowl that is now the helmet, using strong screws or epoxy glue, or both to be secure. That is the Horned Helmet done.

The second option is to make the helmet out of leather and then attach the two horns to the leather piece much the same way as with the mixing bowl. Purchase a basic pattern for a hat and follow the pattern using the leather piece. The third method is by making a copper circlet or a stainless steel circle that will sit on the

head, and attach the horns on either side of the piece. In any method you select, you may substitute the cow horns with deer antlers.

Your Name & Its Significance When beginning your path in Witchcraft, it is best to consider it almost like starting your life afresh. If you are looking at it like that, it only makes sense to have a new name. Of course, there may be nothing wrong with the name you have been given by your parents at birth, but perhaps you would like to select a name that reflects your personality better, or one that you identify with better than the name you have currently. It is not necessary, and you may choose to keep your current name, but in days gone by, to know a person's name was to possess power over them.

While the superstitions or the beliefs of the ancient times have indeed changed much over the years, and there is no real need to keep your Witch name a secret, it is still good practice to respect the Witch name you choose, and share it among your coven members or those close to you only., simply out of respect for the Craft itself.

A Witch name may be selected from mythology, history or simply a creative mix of different words. There is no limit to the means by which you can come up with a name. It is advised that once you select a name, check the numerology of the name to ensure that the Name you have chosen is numerologically correct, meaning that the number of your name matches your birth number. This is important so that the name you choose as your Witch name aligns with your vibration, the vibration of the moment you were born. This, in a way, reinforces your vibration.

Numerology

There are many different systems and methods of numerology. The one that follows here is one that is accurate and rather popular, and also very simple to use. You are not compelled to use this method though, and if you know of another method that you feel more comfortable using, by all means, you should use it.

First, you have to find your birth number. This is done by simply adding all the digit of the date on which you were born together, and if a two digit number is produced, the digits of that number are added until you have one number – your Birth Number. For example, if your full date of birth is 30 March 1973 (30-03-

1973), Your birth number is calculated as follows:

$$3+0+0+3+1+9+7+3=26$$

$$2+6=8$$

Thus the birth number of a person born on 30 March 1973 is 8.

Next, to find the Name Number of the Witch name you have selected, you follow the following key to equate the letters of the name to numbers and add them all together:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

For example, if your Witch Name is 'Edith', you will work out the Name Number as follows: E D I T H

$$5+4+9+2+8=28$$

$$2+8=10$$

$$1+0=1$$

Play with the spelling of the name and the arrangement of the letters until you achieve a name that is equal in Name Number to your Birth Number. Add or remove numbers as necessary and appreciate that it may take time before you settle on a suitable name with which you are happy.

8. Channeling

An Introduction to Channeling & Intuition

Each and every individual possesses what is interpreted as ‘psychic abilities’, that is, an ability beyond physical ability; of higher consciousness. While psychic ability may be apparent in some, it does not mean those who don’t exhibit these abilities don’t possess them; it simply means that it is dormant.

Just like with physical strength, for example, you need to test it by exerting your strength in different ways and by performing different tasks, so too is your psychic ability. In order to find out your psychic abilities, you have to test it and perform different tasks.

Channeling is a means of tapping into your higher consciousness, enabling you to obtain information that is otherwise inaccessible.

Physical Channeling & Mental Channeling

There are two broad categories into which channeling ability fall under. These two categories are simply Mental and Physical.

Physical Channeling – this relates to an effect on physical objects. Activities involving radiesthesia (the pendulum), cartomancy (card-reading), tasseography (tea-leaf reading) and psychometry, are physical channeling activities.

Mental Channeling –this relates to impressions that are received in conscious awareness, at some level. This category covers activities like clairsentience (sensing), clairvoyance (clear seeing), clairsaudience (hearing) and telepathy (thought transference). Also included herein is precognitive and retrocognitive functions in present time – which is knowing what is about to happen before it does, or knowing what’s happened after it has.

Trance Channeling & Conscious Channeling

There are also two types of channeling that exist. These types are 'trance' channeling and 'conscious' channeling. Within the category of 'trance' channeling, there are deep, medium and light states of trance. If a channeler is in a trance, the conscious mind is not engaged at all during the channeling activity, and the channeler will not recall any details or be aware of what they are seeing or saying during the time they are channeling. Of course, this does vary with deep, medium and light; from deep, meaning no engagement of the conscious, to light, meaning semi or partial engagement thus part of what is seen or said may be remembered.

In 'conscious' channeling, though, as it suggests, the conscious mind actively participates in the channeling. This means that the conscious mind is analysing the data that the higher conscious receives, and it analyzes and participates by facial expression, body language and voice inflection.

Becoming a Channel

In order to harness your channeling abilities and begin channeling, it is required to first remove all obstacles in the mind. Your mind is filled with accumulated obstacles, things like inhibitions, indecision, uncertainty, criticism and false values and all sorts of things that have developed and settled over your lifetime. These things impede the flow of energy and information in your mind, tying up our psychic ability.

Focus of the Conscious Mind

Mind Control – in order to begin clearing the way in your mind so as to communicate with your higher consciousness, it is necessary to learn the art of focusing and controlling your mind. If you have several thoughts running through your mind at once, that is a sign that you need to start focussing. Scattered thoughts result in scattered energy, which means that when you think you are concentrating on something, you are actually only giving it a fraction of your energy. Controlling mental energy allows you to use your undivided attention on something, giving you power. This power can be likened to a force of creation, which you use to bring your magick to life.

Elimination of Emotions

Emotions like fear, worry, anger, and envy are poisonous to your spiritual system as arsenic would be poisonous to your body. It is necessary to achieve complete elimination of these toxic emotions in order to obtain true spiritual quality. In total faith, there is no room for toxic emotion. Unrestricted love gives no room for envy, hate anger or greed.

Continuous Self-Examination

When seeking the truth, it is required to undergo constant self-examination. It is crucial to determine what your beliefs and ideals are and to achieve concise morals for yourself. Establish your goals, define them clearly and identify

specific objects to work towards. Thereafter, it is required that you prioritize your objectives and pursue them in the order you have thoughtfully placed them in. Ensure that your work adheres to the creed, '*An' it harm none*'.

Overcoming Materialism

For several, the most difficult obstacle may be materialism. People and things tend to rule over you, pretending as though they are slaves. These things demand money and time, tying you down and complicating your life. Material possessions can bring toxicities like greed, envy or hate. This is not suggesting that you should do away with material possessions entirely. Instead, the idea is to possess all things, and to share all things, so that there is a power of all things.

Learn Genuine Love

Learning how to genuinely love is important and there are many misconceptions surrounding this concept. Love itself is sometimes mistaken as selfish, or lustful. A higher love does exist, one that is unselfish and is about the release, instead of the attachment. Love is about understanding and forgiving. It is important to recognize that every person has their own path to follow and lessons to learn and that they need to be allowed to walk their journey at their own pace.

Master the Art of Meditation

Meditation is best understood as a silence through which you are able to listen to your higher self. Meditation helps with concentration and with focussing attention on the higher level of consciousness that exists in each one of us. A daily session of meditation can clear the mind of clutter and maintain a clear channel of communication.

9. The Basics of Meditation



An Introduction to Meditation

Meditation can best be described as 'listening'. It is the art of listening to the Higher Self or the Inner Self. Some describe it as listening to the Gods, or the Creative Force. It could be simply said that it is listening to the Higher Consciousness, even. All of these things may be meditation. When used properly, meditation leads to personal advancement. Meditation is the most simple of all the techniques of spiritual advancement, and it may be practiced in a group or even alone.

Meditation is a practice that quietens the conscious mind, the mind which is concerned with everyday activities and life as you know it, and allows you to channel your higher conscious, also referred to as subconscious, the part of your mind that is responsible for involuntary bodily functions, reflex actions and what you may call 'Universal Memory'.

The Dynamics of Meditation

To grasp the dynamics of meditation, first the make-up of the human consciousness needs to be realized, and it needs to be recognized that humans are both physical and spiritual beings. These two facets of human nature are tied together at the vital centres, which are referred to by their Sanskrit descriptions – *Chakras*. During the act of meditation, psychic energy travels through these chakras. The *kundalini* force is a potent force known as the ‘Serpent Power’, and once the *kundalini* flows within you, your chakras begin opening up in succession.

Mastering Meditation

You can fail at meditation if you approach the art with the wrong technique, or even by simply approaching the art with no technique at all.

It is believed that concentrating on your 'third eye', the area an inch above your brow line and an inch inwards of your forehead, is concentrating energy in your highest chakra. The direction you focus your eyes in also plays an important role in the technique of the Third Eye meditation technique. Turning your eyes upwards, above the horizon, relates to the energy in your higher consciousness and your spiritual energy. Focussing your eyes straight outwards relate to your conscious mind, while focus downward relates to the subconscious mind.

When performing meditation, it is best to select a position of your choice to meditate in. Conventionally, meditation is known to be performed in the lotus position, but this position is not always a comfortable one, and so it is better to be comfortable in another position of your own choice. So long as your spine is straight, you are free to assume any kind of position – either sitting up on the floor, on a chair or lying down on your back. The more comfortable you are, the better you can concentrate on your energy and your mind.

When you are selecting an area in which to perform your meditation, it is important that the chosen space is quiet and the best choice will, of course, be your cleansed and censed Circle. However, if you select another space for whatever reason, it is best if you cleanse the space and cense it as you did with your Circle. While it is not necessarily important to face a specific direction in meditation, it is sometimes suggested to face the east. However what is of most priority is your comfort, and so if you have a better view in another direction, feel free to face that way instead!

As is with the position you choose and the direction you face and the space you choose, you also are free to select the time of day you meditate. However, it is best to stick to that specific time of day every day to meditate so that your meditation is consistent. Thus, it is best to choose the most convenient time, one that will be quiet and peaceful but still attainable each day.

In order to remain successful and succeed in meditation, it needs to be done consistently. It is recommended by some that meditation is performed between fifteen and twenty minutes a day, twice a day. At the bare minimum, you could

probably get by with a single fifteen-minute session per day. Again, consistency is key – so it is important to stick to the number of sessions and to the times as well.

Performing Meditation

Step-By-Step Meditation Method

1. Position yourself comfortably, without slouching or bending the spine.
2. Allow your head to roll forward, onto your chest. Take a deep breath in and out. Repeat three times. Return to the original upright position.
3. Allow your head to roll backward. Take a deep breath in and out. Repeat three times. Return to the original upright position.
4. Allow your head to fall to the left as far as possible. Take a deep breath in and out. Repeat three times. Return to the original upright position.
5. Allow your head to fall to the right as far as possible. Take a deep breath in and out. Repeat three times. Return to the original upright position.
6. Allow your head to fall forward again, but now move it counter-clockwise in a circle. Repeat three times.
7. Allow your head to fall forward once more, but now move it clockwise in a circle. Repeat three times. Return to the original upright position.
8. Breathe in, in several short intakes of breath, until your lungs are filled, ensuring that you are breathing through your nose. Hold the air in your lungs briefly then exhale with a 'Hah!' noise, through your mouth. Repeat three times.
9. Breathe slowly and fully, in through the right nostril while holding the left closed. Allow your stomach to balloon out. Hold the breath briefly, and then exhale gently and slowly from the mouth, flattening your stomach. This is a good exercise for removing stale air from the bottom of your lungs. Repeat three times.
10. Breathe slowly and fully, in through the left nostril while holding the right closed. Allow your stomach to balloon out. Hold the breath briefly, and then exhale gently and slowly from the mouth, flattening your stomach. Repeat three times.

Now that your body is relaxed and you are breathing deeply but normally, concentrate the thoughts in your mind and imagine your entire body surrounded by a globe of white light. Envision and actually feel the energy charge your entire body.

Now it is time to focus your attention on your toes. Relax them and feel the tiredness or the tension slip away from them.

Do the same with the balls of your feet, the heels, the arches, the ankles. Relax your entire body completely, focussing on releasing the tension from it a section at a time. Work up your entire leg, to your groin and up to your buttocks and spine and through your stomach and chest, your upper limbs and then your throat, face, jaw and chin. Don't forget your eyes and even your scalp. The intention is to relax every nerve and fiber in your whole body. The relaxation technique is to end at your forehead.

Now, focus your energy on your third eye. Allow your eyes to roll up if possible. As far as you can, try to go deeper and deeper into the third eye. With all the concentration you can muster, release yourself from the material world and yield to a magnetic pull if you feel it. There is no need for prayer or visualization; you simply have to concentrate on relaxing your entire body. Allow your energy to flow from inwards to outwards and to a higher power. Whatever sensations you experience, move into it and through the source of it.

In the beginning, your conscious mind is undisciplined and it may difficult for you to quiet it, like a nagging child. However, with practice and consistency, you will eventually start to see results in the form of a deepening in intuition, and this will be proof of your Kundalini awakening.

It is not uncommon for beginners to have difficulty in remaining still at first, for more than a couple minutes at any given time. Also, it is normal for your mind to want to wander and for you to feel like fidgeting. Very common is the developing of a massive itch that really needs to be scratched! Ignore all these things as best you can and soon you will be in control of your mind and your body. It is a difficult process but it is a transition from allowing your mind and body to rule over you, and now you trying to rule over your mind and body.

Ending a Meditation Period

It is in the best interest of your physical well-being that you end each session of meditation by re-awakening your conscious and physical self. This is simply

done by performing the relaxation technique in reverse, which means pulling away from the third eye and proceeding down the length of the body, section by section, commanding them each awakened and vibrant.

It is likely that you will be rather surprised by how pleasant you will feel after you perform meditation using the proper technique. Thus there are not only spiritual benefits but physical as well.



10.

Covens, Rituals & Terminology

The Coven: Introduction & Terminology

While there most certainly are individual witches, several witches prefer to work in groups, which are designated as ‘covens’. A coven is commonly no more than thirteen, which is the traditional size of a coven, but it may be smaller or larger than this. It is advisable that you spend a lot of thought and time selecting the members of your coven to ensure that they are people who you will get on well, feel comfortable around and completely at ease with. This is because oftentimes, the members of your coven will eventually be closer to you than even members of your family.

Forming a Coven

Every group needs a leader, and the coven is no different. The leaders of a coven are considered the priests of the coven. It makes sense to select a female and a male leader to represent the God and Goddess. Typically, the leaders are chosen by the vote of the members and serve for a year before re-election. The leaders have no more power than the others in the coven, they simply are leaders – all members of the coven participate. It is better when each member has a task to perform, like topping up goblets, lighting incense *etc.* According to your preference, those in your coven may be referred to as ‘Lad’ or ‘Lord’ and their Witch name, or simply by their Witch name alone. Alternatively, only the leader could be referred to as ‘Lord’ or ‘Lady’ and addressed as ‘My Lady’ *etc.* Again, it is a matter of preference.

Covendoms & Covensteads Covensteads are the place where the coven meetings regularly take place, within which is the Temple. The Covendom is the radius extending from the covenstead. Traditionally, covendoms would not overlap, but today this rule is no longer strictly honored.

The Book of Shadows

For the age-old rituals of the witches not to be lost forever, witches wrote their

rites and rituals in a book that was later called The Book of Shadows - a collection of rituals from various witches of differing backgrounds, to be kept safe and protected furiously. There used to be one per coven, but today it is not uncommon for every Witch to own a Book of Shadows of their own.

Make one for yourself from binding in any color you like and blank pages of any design you prefer, even crafting your own book from scratch if you would like. Fill the book with rituals you would like to perform in your Circle and ensure that it is written so clearly that you can read it in the candlelight.

11. Rituals, a Blueprint

The Initial Purification Ritual

This ritual is to be performed on the night of the New Moon.

1. Fill a flat dish like a saucer with water.
2. Kneel down and place the water in front of you.
3. Place the forefinger of your right hand – or left hand, if you happen to be left-handed – into the water.
4. Visualize a bright beam of light streaming from above and into the crown of your head. Imagine the beam surging through your whole body and direct it through the arm you are using to make contact with the water. Visualize the light spilling into the water through your finger.
5. Direct all the power you can into the water, closing your eyes if it helps to focus. Now chant the following (from)

*Here do I direct my power,
Through the agencies of the God and the Goddess, Into this water, that it
might be pure and clean As is my love for the Lord and Lady.*

6. Take a teaspoon of sea salt; pour it into the water and stir clockwise nine times with your finger. Chant the following three times:

*Salt is Life. Here is Life.
Sacred and new; without strife.*

7. Now dip your fingers into the water and sprinkle every corner of the temple room with the purified water. If there are alcoves or cupboards, sprinkle water in each of those corners as well. While sprinkling, chant the following (or chant your own incantation, along these lines):

Ever as I pass through the ways Do I feel the presence of the Gods.

I know that in aught I do

They are with me.

They abide in me.

And I in them,

Forever.

No evil shall be entertained,

*For purity is the dweller
Within me and about me.
For good do I strive
And for good do I live.
Love unto all things.
So be it, Forever.*

Another incantation you may use, instead of the one above: *Soft is the rain, it gently falls Upon the fields beneath.*

*It lulls the heart, it stills the wind, Gives Solitude I Seek.
It patters down, so gentle yet It ne'er does bend a leaf,
And yet the water that is there Will wash away all grief.
For smoothness follows in the wake, And quiet and peace and love
Are all around in freshness new, Come down from clouds above.
All evil go, flow out from here And leave all fresh and plain.
Let negativity not come
Into this room again.
For love I now find all around, So soft, so still so sure;
I can perform my rituals
As peace and quiet endure.*

8. It is now time to light incense. Swing the burner in every corner, as was done with the sprinkling of the water. Repeat the following incantation three times again:

*Salt is Life. Here is Life.
Sacred and new; without strife*

The Sacred Circle

Circles have been used in several cultures and religions as a boundary marking of sacred space, or as a designation of space for rites; circles keep the undesired out and keep the desired in the Circle. In Witchcraft, the Circle is a sacred space within which the magickal power and energy are retained and concentrated.

There are instances in Witchcraft when a precise Circle is required, but that is only during Ceremonial Magick. Usually, precision is not required, but it is always good practice to exhibit care when drawing the Circle and to do our best to make it as exact as possible. The dimensions of the Circle being drawn depends on how many coven members will be within the Circle and also the purpose of the Circle. When magick is to be performed within the Circle, it is especially important for the sword to follow precisely on the marking of the Circle, and the reinforcing of the energy in the Circle may even be performed twice (but censing and sprinkling for the second reinforcement is not necessary).

The Circle Size

The Coven Circle is commonly nine feet across the diameter, while a solitary Witch's Circle would typically be five feet in diameter. However, what is most important when considering the size of the Circle is whether the Circle comfortably fits the number of members that will be within it. A good guideline is for all members to stand, holding hands in a circle and facing inwards. Members should outstretch and move outwards until their arms are extended to the maximum, and this should be the ideal size of the Circle to be marked. This is so that there is enough space that there is no fear of breaking boundaries during movement like dance etc., and also that there is no unnecessary space.

Drawing the Circle

The drawing of the Circle must begin at the east each time, and of course, end in the east as well. The Circle is always drawn clockwise. Outdoors, the Circle may be marked with the point of a sword directly on the ground; indoors, first mark the Circle either with a cord, chalk or even have a permanent marked Circle on the ground if it is a permanent Temple. The marked circle on the

ground is then charged with magickal power or energy by the Priest or Priestess walking around the marking, directing his or her energy into the circle, using the point of the sword.

On the Circle marking itself stand four candles, unlit. The candles are placed specifically in the north, east, south and west. For extra illumination or a preferred ambience, other candles may be lit and placed between these points, outside of the Circle.

Entry & Re-Entry of the Circle During the working of Magick, it is crucial that the Circle is not broken. In other instances, it is not preferred that any member leaves the Circle, but if it must be done, it is possible. There is a specific manner by which the Circle is entered and exited.

Exiting the Circle

Stand in the East, with the athame in hand. Perform a motion with the athame as though you intend to cut across the lines of the Circle, beginning on your right and then going to your left. You now may leave the Circle between those lines. If preferred, you may imagine a gateway that you have created, in the east, through which you pass. While not necessary, an alternative can be to start at the ground on one side, come up to your full height and curve all the way down the other side to 'cut' a doorway – but it is not necessary.

Re-entry of the Circle

Should you wish to return to the Circle, you enter through the same gateway or doorway you imagine that you have cut in the eastern side of the Circle. It is necessary to 'close' the opening behind you – this is done by reconnecting the 'cut' lines. When reconnecting the lines of the Circle it is important to take note that three lines were in fact cut – one made with the point of the sword, another with the salted water and another with the censuring. Reconnect the lines by moving athame blade across the lines backwards and forwards.

Sealing the break with a Pentagram To 'seal' the break, raise your athame and draw a pentagram by drawing the point of your athame from the top to the bottom left, diagonally to the right, straight to the left, diagonally to the bottom

right and then back to the point you started at. Kiss the tip of your athame and return to your position in the Circle.

Erecting/Clearing the Temple

This is actually the opening and closing of the Circle, but can be referred to as the erecting and clearing of the Temple.

Opening the Circle or Erecting the Temple This ritual is performed at the beginning of every meeting. It is the consecration of the meeting place and the coven members partaking in the meeting. Before the erecting of the Temple, you will have your Circle marked on the ground already, with a candle at each quarter. The altar is to be set up in the centre of the Circle, such that when you face the altar you are facing the east direction.

Step One: If your altar is not a permanent one, place one or two altar candles, as per your preference, the incense burner, salt and water dishes, representations of the deities, anointing oil, goblets of wine or juice, your tools and the libation dish.

Step Two: The censerer lights the incense in the burner or thurible, as well as the altar candles. At this point, the four candles on the Circle are not yet lit. He then leaves the space to join the rest of the coven north-eastern of the Circle.

Step Three: The designated priest and priestess enter the circle first and stand before the altar. The priest rings a bell, giving it three rings. The priest or priestess says the following: *Be it known that the Temple is about to be erected; the Circle is about to be cast. Let those who desire attendance gather in the east and await the summons. Let none be here but of their own free will.*

Step Four: The priest and the priestess take a candle each and they move around the altar. Going to the east. The priestess then lights the East candle on the circle from the lit altar candle she carries with her. As she lights the candle she states: *Here do I bring light and air in at the east, to illuminate our temple and bring it the breath of life.*

Step Five: The priest and priestess go to the south and the priest lights the south candle of the Circle, stating: *Here do I bring light and fire in at the south, to illuminate our temple and bring it warmth.*

Step Six: The priest and priestess move west, where the priestess now lights the west candle, stating: *Here do I bring light and water in at the west, to illuminate*

our temple and wash it clean.

Step Seven: The priest and priestess move north, where the north candle is lit by the priest, who states: *Here do I bring light and earth in at the north, to illuminate our temple and to build it in strength.*

Step Eight: the priest and priestess move to the east and back to the altar, completing the Circle and replacing the altar candles.

Step Nine: Either the priest or priestess takes up the athame or sword and returns to the east. With the sword point on the east of the Circle, the priest or priestess slowly walks around the marked line, concentrating energy and power through his/her sword point into the Circle line.

Step Ten: Once complete, he or she returns to the altar. He or she rings the bell three times.

Step Eleven: The priest places the point of his athame into the salt and states: *As salt is life, let it purify us in all ways we may use it. Let it cleanse our bodies and spirits as we dedicate ourselves in these rites, to the glory of the God and the Goddess.*

Step Twelve: The priestess takes the salt dish and uses the tip of her athame to drop three piles of salt into the water. The priestess stirs the salted water with the same athame and states: *Let the Sacred Salt drive out any impurities in this Water, that we may use it throughout these rites.*

Step Thirteen: The priest takes the incense burner while the priestess takes hold of the salted water. Each move around the altar to begin at the east, slowly walking clockwise around the circle, with the Priest passing the incense along the marked circle, and the priestess sprinkling salt water along the line. When they return to their starting point at the east, they return to the altar and replace the tools.

Step Fourteen: The priest places a pinch of the salt into the anointing oil, stirring it in with his finger. The priest anoints the priestess with the Keltic Cross in Circle if she is robed, or the Pentagram and Inverted Triangle if skyclad. He states: *I consecrate thee in the names of the God and the Goddess, bidding you welcome to this their Temple.*

They salute.

Step Fifteen: The priestess now anoints the Priest with the oil and states the

same words, followed by a salute. The priest and the priestess then move together to the east, with the priestess carrying the oil and the priest carrying his athame.

Step Sixteen: The priest makes two cuts across the line of the Circle with his athame, symbolizing the ‘opening’ of the Circle. The coven members now enter one at a time and are each anointed as they enter the Circle. Males are anointed by the priestess and females are anointed by the priest. Each is greeted with the following: *I consecrate thee in the names of the God and of the Goddess, bidding you welcome to this their Temple. Merry Meet.*

Step Seventeen: The coven members move to the altar, around which they all stand, alternating male and female as far as possible. After the last member enters, the priest closes the Circle using his athame to draw across the line, connecting the ‘broken ends’ of the Circle. The priestess sprinkles a little anointing oil on the ‘join’. The priest raises his athame and draws a pentagram, sealing it. The priest and priestess return to the altar. The bell is rung three times.

Step Eighteen: The priest or priestess state the following: *May you all be here in peace and in love. We bid you welcome. Let now the Quarters be saluted and the gods invited.*

Step Nineteen: The member of the coven closest to the east turns outward and faces the east candle of the Circle, raising his or her athame. He or she draws an invoking pentagram, stating: *All hail to the element of Air; Watchtower of the East. May it stand in strength, ever watching over our Circle.*

He or she kisses the blade of his or her athame and returns to the Circle.

Step Twenty: The member of the coven closest to the south turns outward and faces the south candle of the Circle, raising his or her athame. He or she draws an invoking pentagram, stating: *All hail to the element of Fire; Watchtower of the South. May it stand in strength, ever watching over our Circle.*

He or she kisses the blade of his or her athame and returns to the Circle.

Step Twenty One: The member of the coven closest to the west turns outward and faces the west candle of the Circle, raising his or her athame. He or she draws an invoking pentagram, stating: *All hail to the element of Water; Watchtower of the West. May it stand in strength, ever watching over our Circle.*

He or she kisses the blade of his or her athame and returns to the Circle.

Step Twenty Two: The member of the coven closest to the north turns outward and faces the north candle of the Circle, raising his or her athame. He or she draws an invoking pentagram, stating: *All hail to the element of Earth; Watchtower of the North. May it stand in strength, ever watching over our Circle.*

He or she kisses the blade of his or her athame and returns to the Circle.

Step Twenty Three: The priest or the priestess raises his or her athame and draws a pentagram, stating the following: *All hail the four Quarters and all hail the Gods! We bid the Lord and Lady welcome and invite that they join with us, witnessing these rites we hold in their honor. All hail!*

All coven members join saying “*All hail!*”

Step Twenty Four: The priest or priestess sates: *Let us share the Cup of Friendship.*

The priest takes the goblet of wine or juice and pours a little onto the ground or into the libation dish, in the name of the gods. He takes the first sip and passes it to the priestess. The priestess takes a sip and passes the goblet to the coven member on her left, and so it continues until it is returned to the altar. Note that it is the first person who pours the libation only. The bell is rung three times.

Step Twenty-Five: The priestess states: *Now we are all here and is the Temple erected. Let none leave but with good reason, till the Temple is cleared. So Mote It Be.*

All members repeat, “*So Mote It Be!*”

Closing of the Circle or Clearing of the Temple This is performed at the end of every meeting **Step One:** The priest or priestess states: *We came together in love and friendship; let us part the same way. Let us spread the love we have known in this Circle outward to all; sharing it with those we meet.*

The priest or priestess then raises his athame or sword in salute. All members then raise their athames.

Step Two: The priest or priestess states: *Lord and Lady, our thanks to you for sharing this time together. Our thanks for watching over us; guarding and*

guiding us in all things. Love is the Law and Love is the Bond. Merry did we meet; merry do we part; merry may we meet again.

All members state: “*Merry meet; merry part; merry meet again.*”

Step Three: The priest or priestess state: *The Temple is now cleared. So Mote It Be.*

All members state: “*So Mote It Be!*”

Step Four: All members of the coven kiss their athame blades. Members then move around the Temple to kiss one another farewell.

The Consecration Ritual

Your tools and your jewelry carry various vibrations in them, thus before they can be used it is mandatory that you perform a consecration ritual in order to dedicate them to your purpose of Witchcraft and Magick and to cleanse them. The process is to sprinkle and to cense the items. Sea salt is first charged with energy and then mixed with water to make what we can call 'Holy Water' for lack of a better term. This water combined with the incense smoke act as spiritual; cleansing agents.

Consecration of an item is done only once. The first step is to cast a Circle. Follow the ritual and go so far as the step where you state: *"Now is the temple erected. I shall not leave it but with good reason. So be it."*

From here onwards, you continue with the consecration ritual as follows: **The Consecration Ritual Step-by-Step**

Hold the item you are consecrating up high in salute and state: *God and Goddess;*

Lord and Lady;

Father and Mother of All Life.

Here do I present my personal tool for your approval.

From the materials of nature it has been fashioned; Wrought into the form you now see.

I would that it henceforth may serve me

As a tool and weapon, in thy service.

Place the item on your altar and kneel or stand for some time with your head bowed in respect and thoughtfulness over the construction of the item and going over the little things you did to personalize the item.

Dip your fingers in the salted water and sprinkle the item. Turn it over and repeat.

Pick up the item and hold it in the incense smoke, engulfing it thoroughly.

State the following:

*May the Sacred Water and the smoke of the Holy Incense drive out any
impurities in this knife, That it be pure and cleansed,
Ready to serve me and my gods in any way I desire.
So mote it be.*

Holding the item in your hands direct all the energy you can muster towards the item. State the following: *I charge this [item], through me,
with the wisdom and might of the God and Goddess.*

*May it serve us well, keeping me from harm, and acting in their service, in all
things.*

So mote it be.

Close the Circle by raising the now consecrated item in your right hand, and state the following: *My thanks to the gods for their attendance.*

*May they ever watch over me, guarding and guiding me in all that I do Love is
the Law and Love is the Bond.*

So Be It.

The ritual is now complete. However, you need to keep the item on your person for twenty-four hours after the ritual and sleep with the item beneath your pillow for three nights in a row. Nobody is to borrow your item for use whether within or out of the Circle, though it may be held, touched and looked at by them.

12. Rites & Ceremonies

Coven Meetings –An Introduction to Esbats

The Esbat Rite This is a ritual that may be used each weekly meeting or however often the coven intends to meet.

First, the Erecting of the Temple is performed.

The Priest or Priestess then states, *“Once more we meet together, one with another, to share our joy of life and to reaffirm our feelings for the gods.”*

A coven member then states, *“The Lord and Lady have been good to us. It is in this meet that we thank them for all that we have.”*

A second member of the coven then adds, *“They also know that we have needs and they listen to us when we call upon them.”*

The Priest or Priestess then says, *“Then let us join together to thank the God and the Goddess for those favors they have bestowed upon us. And let us also ask of them that which we feel we need; remembering always that the gods help only those who help themselves.”*

What then follows is three or four minutes of silence while each member gives thanks and requests to the gods. The bell is then rung three times.

The Priest or Priestess then says, *“An’ it harm none, do what thou wilt.”*

All members of the coven repeat, *“An’ it harm none, do what thou wilt.”*

The Priest or Priestess then says, *“Thus runs the Wiccan Rede. Remember it well. Whatever you desire; whatever you would ask of the gods’ whatever you would do; be assured that it will harm no one – not even yourself. And remember that as you give, so it shall return threefold. Give of yourself – your love; your life – and you will be thrice rewarded. But send forth harm and that too will return thrice over.”*

Now music and song is played. If there is a favorite chant or song that the Lord or Lady prefer, it may be sung here. Alternatively, instruments may be played or a song or chant made up on the spot. If all these options are not appealing, the coven may clap hands and chant the names of the gods and goddesses. This should be enjoyed, for a few minutes even.

The Priest or Priestess then closes with the following, *“Beauty and strength are in the Lord and the Lady both. Patience and Love; Wisdom and Knowledge.”*

Now follows 'Cakes and Ale' or the New Moon or Full Moon Rite as appropriate.

The Full Moon Rite For Esbats that take place during the full moon, the 'Full Moon Rite' is performed after the Esbat rite.

The Priestess now assumes a position with her legs apart, raising her arms upwards and outwards, as though reaching for the sky. The Priest then kneels before the Priestess. All members of the coven kneel, raising their arms high as well.

A member of the coven then says: *"When the Moon rides high, As she crosses the sky, And the stars on her gown trail behind, Then we Wiccans below Are with love all aglow, Just to see her so brightly enshrined."*

On the night of the Full Moon, As we sing to the tune Of the Lady who watches above, We raise high our song As she glides by so strong, And we bask in the light of her love."

The New Moon/Dark Moon Rite The Priestess stands with her head bowed and arms resting across her breast. Coven members begin moving clockwise around the Circle three times, all the while chanting the name of the Goddess. Once all halt, the Priest stands in front of the Priestess and says, *"Dark is the night as we reach this turning point. Here is a time of death; yet a time of birth."*

A member of the coven says, *"Endings and beginnings."*

Another coven member says, *"Ebbing and flowing."*

The coven member says, *"A journey done; a journey yet to start."*

The coven member says, *"Let us honor now the Crone – Mother darksome and divine."*

The coven member says, *"Let us give our strength and in return see rebirth."*

The Priest now says, *"Behold, the Lady of Darkness; Mother, Grandmother. Old yet ever young."*

The Priestess then slowly raises her head and then spreads her arms upwards and outwards. All members kneel.

The Priestess says: *“Hear me! Honor me and love me now and always.*

As the wheel turns we see birth, death and rebirth. Know, from this, that every end is a beginning; Every stop a fresh starting point.

Maiden, Mother, Crone... I am all of these and more.

Whenever you have need of anything, call upon me. I, and my Lord, are here – for I abide within you all. Even at the darkest of times, when there seems no single spark to warm you and the night seems blackest of all, I am here, watching and waiting to grow with you, in strength and in love.

I am she who is at the beginning and the end of all time.

So mote it Be.”

All members then repeat, *“So mote it be!”*

The priestess again folds her arms and there is a moment of silence observed. Now follows the Cakes and Ale ceremony.

The ‘Cakes & Ale’ Ceremony The ‘Cakes and Ale’ ceremony is one that can be best described as the ceremony that transitions from the ritual ceremonies to one more social. Discussions between members regarding magick, the Craft, divination, healing, and problems – either personal or coven-related – as well as socializing, all come after the gods have been worshipped as that is of primary importance.

This ceremony is known by different names, like ‘Cakes and Wine’, but it is simply a matter of preference as you may have either cake or cookies at the Altar beside the goblets, and any beverage you prefer between wine, ale, fruit juice or even beer.

Performing the ‘Cakes & Ale’ Ceremony One of the coven members is designated with the duty of keeping the goblet filled at all times. At the beginning of the ceremony, the coven member responsible for this fills the goblet and states, *“Now is the time for us to give thanks to the gods for that which sustains us.”*

The Priest then states, *“So be it. May we ever be aware of all that we owe to the gods.”*

The Priestess then calls two coven members, a male and a female, to come and

stand before the Altar.

The female coven member takes hold of the goblet with both hands and stands to hold it between her breasts. The male coven member takes the handle of his athame between his palms and points the blade downwards. He lowers the blade point slowly into the wine (or ale, juice, beer etc.) and states, *“In like fashion may male join with female, for the happiness of both.”*

The female coven member then states *“Let the fruits of union promote life. Let all be fruitful and let wealth be spread throughout all lands.”*

The male covener raises the athame out of the goblet and the female covener holds the goblet for him to drink from it. The male then holds the goblet for the female to drink from it before the Goblet is passed around to other coven members to take a sip. The Priest and Priestess are the last to drink from the Goblet.

The male coven member takes hold of the platter of cakes and holds it before him. The female coven member then touches each with the point of her athame and states, *“This food is the blessing of the gods to our bodies. Let us partake of it freely. And, as we share, let us remember always to see to it that aught that we have we share with those who have nothing.”*

The female coven member then takes a piece of cake from the platter and eats it, before offering the plate of cakes to the male to take and eat from it. After this, the platter is passed around to all the other coven members to have cake. The Priest and Priestess are the last to eat cake. The female and the male coven members return to their positions in the Circle.

The Priestess states: *“As we enjoy these gifts of the gods, let us remember that without the gods we would have nothing.”*

The Priest then states: *“Eat and drink. Be happy. Share and give thanks. So Mote It Be.”*

All coven members then state: *“So Mote It Be!”*

All members of the coven then sit down and if it is desired, everyone may enjoy socializing and filling individual goblets for each member. This time is good for discussion and for talk, for questioning and to obtain or hand out advice. It may also be a time where planning for magick can be done, or maybe even just to enjoy dance and song. Once whatever it is the coven decides to do is over, it is required to perform the Clearing of the Temple ritual.

Celebrations – An Introduction to Sabbats

During the course of a year, there are eight periods known as ‘Sabbats’. A Sabbat is a time for celebration, a time to rejoice and have a good time with the gods and other coven members. Magick is not worked during a Sabbat, not unless in dire emergencies such as if desperate healing is required or something to that effect. Plenty merriment and feasting surround the Sabbat. The Sabbat celebration can be enjoyed as an individual, solitary Witch, as a coven or even as a large group of several different covens.

Sabbats begin the same manner all Circle rituals begin, and that is by performing the Erecting of the Temple rite. If the Sabbat is occurring during a full moon, you may even perform the New Moon ritual. The specific Sabbat ritual is then performed and then the Cakes and Ale ritual, and then feasting, games, entertainment *etc.* before the Clearing of the Temple.

Major Sabbat Rituals

The Samhain Ritual This time of the year is for ridding yourself of weaknesses. For this ritual, coven members are required to attend with a page of all the bad habits or weaknesses that they would like to rid themselves of written on it.

Have the Circle decorated with flowers, and with autumnal berries and fruit like pumpkins, or even pine-cones and branches. The Altar should be decorated with flowers and it is important for the Altar cloth or at least the candles on the Altar to be orange in color. Have the Horned Helmet resting on the Altar as well. Stand a caldron containing fire material.

Perform the Erecting of the Temple. Thereafter, follow with either the New Moon or Full Moon rite, whichever is appropriate. Have the bell rung three times by a coven member who is designated as the ‘Summoner’.

The Summoner then states, *“Haste! Haste! No time to wait! We’re off to the Sabbat, so don’t be late!”*

The Priest or Priestess then says, *“To the Sabbat!”*

All coven members follow suit and state, *“To the Sabbat!”*

The Priest and Priestess then lead the entire coven clockwise around the Circle, dancing or walking as per individual preference. Carrying small instruments like tambourines or drums for a beat is appropriate. The coven may circle around the Circle any number of times they wish. At any point, the Priest or Priestess should start singing a hymn worshipping the gods, like repetitive chanting or a song of praise or even a chant in melody. As the procession progresses, all coven members may join in the song. If it is preferred, what may also be done is that the members may circle the Altar a specified number of times and then simply halt to sing and dance in place.

The Priest then states, *“Now is a time of change. Now do we leave the light and enter the darkness. Yet we do so gladly, for we know it to be but the turning of the mighty Wheel of the Year.”*

The Priestess then states: *“At this time of the year the gates between the worlds are open. We call upon our ancestors, our loved ones, to pass through and join with us at this time. We invite them to delight in celebration with those they love.”*

Thereafter, the enactment of a seasonal motif is performed. The enactment may vary considerably and it may be founded on local practices or beliefs. Some examples include the death of an old ruler and the crowning of the new, or life-death-new life, or even of the turning wheel of the year. The enactment is performed in the form of a play, a dance or even as a mime. After the performance, the bell is rung seven times. One of the coven members then says: *"We are at the crack of time, for this day belongs neither to the old year nor to the new. And as there is no distinction between the years, so is there no distinction between the worlds. Those we have known and loved, in ages past, are free to return to us here in this meeting place. Reach out, each and every one of you, in your own way, and feel the presence of one you have known and thought lost. From this reuniting gather strength. Know, all of you, that there is no end and no beginning. All is a continuous turning, a spiralling dance that goes and returns, yet moves ever on. In that turning, Samhain is the sacred festival marking the end of the summer and the beginning of winter: a time to celebrate; a journey down the tunnel of darkness that bears the light of our Lady at its end."*

The Priestess then states: *"The Old Year ends."*

All coven members then say, *"The New Year Begins"*

The Priest/Priestess says, *"The Wheel turns"*

All coven members say, *"And turns again."*

The Priest or Priestess says, *"Farwell to our Lady"*

All coven members say, *"Welcome to Our Lord."*

The Priest or Priestess says, *"Goddess-Summer draws to a close."*

All coven members then say, *"God-Winter sets his foot upon the path."*

The Priest or Priestess says, *"Hail and farewell!"*

The coven members all repeat, *"Hail and farewell!"*

The Priest and Priestess then proceed to lead the coven members around the Circle in dance. This may either be accompanied or followed by chanting or singing. The Priestess then takes the Horned Helmet up and then stands with it before the Altar.

The Priestess says: *Gracious Goddess, we thank thee for the joys of summer.*

We thank thee for all thy bounty; The fruits, the crops, the harvest.

Return again as the Wheel turns And be with us once more.

Even as our Lord accepts the mantle, Walk with him through the darkness, To

come again into the light.

The Priest then stands to face the Priestess, who is holding the Helmet high over the Priest's head. A coven member stands with the cauldron and the fire set up for lighting. The Priestess says: *"Here do I display the symbol of our Lord: He who rules Death and that which comes after; The Dweller in the Darkness; The Husband/Brother of the light.*

May he guard us and guide us in all that we do, Within and without this Circle.

*With our Lady at his side, may he lead us through hardship And bring us, with
hope, into the light."*

The Priestess then places the Horned Helmet on the head of the Priest. As she places it, a coven member lights the cauldron fire.

The coven member says, *"Now is our Lord among us. Speak, for we are your children."*

The Priest says: *"Behold, I am he who is at the beginning and at the end of time.*

I am in the heat of the sun and the coolness of the breeze.

The spark of life is within me, as is the darkness of death.

For I am he who is Gatekeeper at the end of time.

*Lord-dweller in seas, You hear the thunder of my hooves upon the shore And see
the fleck of foam as I pass by.*

My strength is such that I might lift the world itself to touch the stars.

Yet gentle am I, ever, as the lover.

*I am He whom all must face at the appointed hour, Yet am I not to be feared, for I
am brother, lover, son.*

Death is but the beginning of Life, And I am he who turns the key."

The Priestess now salutes the Priest. One at a time, coven members move around, placing an offering on the altar or before it if they please. They embrace or kiss the Priest and then return to their positions. As the burning cauldron is passed around, each throws into the fire the paper which they kept with their bad habits or weaknesses. The Priest meditates for a moment on the position that is his for the half-year to come. The Priest then takes the Helmet off his head and replaces it on the side of the Altar. The bell is rung three times.

Now follows the ceremony of Cakes and Ale, then the Clearing of the Temple. Games, fun and entertainment may continue around the Altar if so preferred. The

entire evening's festivities end with a feast, commonly a potluck with an assortment of dishes from all the coven members.

The Beltane Ritual For this ritual, the very outer edge of the sacred Circle may be decorated with flowers if desired, as well as the Altar. In this ritual, the altar cloth and the candles on the altar should be dark green in color. Place a crown beside the altar. The crown may be a silver tiara type of crown, encrusted with crescents or something similar, or it may be a simple crown of flowers.

Stand a cauldron with fire material in the north quarter of the Circle. In the east quarter of the Circle will be a Maypole, for which the Circle may be drawn even larger in order to accommodate.

Erecting of the Temple is performed to begin with, followed by the New Moon or Full Moon rite as appropriate. The bell is rung three times by the coven member designated as 'Summoner'.

The Summoner then states, "*Haste! Haste! No time to wait! We're off to the Sabbat, so don't be late!*"

The Priest or Priestess then says, "*To the Sabbat!*"

All coven members follow suit and state, "*To the Sabbat!*"

The coven members move clockwise around the Circle, with the Priest and Priestess in the lead, dancing or walking as per individual preferences. Again, small instruments for a beat are appropriate, like the tambourine or drums. The members may circle around the Circle as many times as they wish before finally coming still, halting song and dance.

The Priest then says, "*The Lord has reached the end of his journey.*"

The Priestess states, "*The Lady sets her foot upon the path.*"

Then a seasonal motif enactment is performed, like the start of one of the animal breeding seasons, the Goddess' triumphant return from the world between lives, or even a dance around the Maypole. The bell is then rung seven times.

A Coven member states: "*The gates swing back and forth and all may freely pass through.*"

*Our Lord has reached the ending of his journey, To find the Lady awaiting him,
with warmth and comfort.*

*This is a time for joy and a time for sharing.
The richness of the soil accepts the seed; And now is the time that seeds should
be spilled.*

*Togetherness brings joy and abundance fills the earth.
Let us celebrate the planting of abundance; The turning of the Wheel; The
season of the Lady.*

*Let us say farewell to the darkness And cry greetings to the Light.
Lord and Lady become Lady and Lord As the Wheel turns and we move ever
on.”*

The Priest then says, *“The Wheel turns.”*
All coven members say, *“Without ceasing.”*
The Priestess says, *“The Wheel turns”*
All members say, *“And turns again.”*
The Priest then states, *“Farewell to our Lord,”*
All members of the coven say, *“Welcome to the Lady.”*
The Priestess says, *“God-Winter ends his reign.”*
All coven members say, *“As Goddess-Summer turns to face the light.”*
The Priestess says, *“Hail and Farewell!”*
All coven members repeat, *“Hail and Farewell!”*

The Priest and the Priestess proceed to lead coven members in a dance around the Circle that leads towards the Maypole. Each member of the coven is to take a ribbon and to dance around the Maypole with the ribbon, intertwining the ribbons as they dance around it. This dancing and intertwining is continued until all of the ribbons are tied and it symbolizes the union of male and female – that is, the joining of everything together. It is appropriate to chant or to sing while dancing and suitable songs may be found in Gardenarian books.

Here is a version of Rudyard Kipling poem, by Gerald Gardener: *Oh, do not tell the priests of our Art For they would call it sin.*

*But we shall be in the woods all night A-conjuring Summer in.
And we bring you good news, by word of mouth, For women, cattle and corn;
Now is the sun come up from the south, With oak and ash and thorn.”*

The Priest and the Priestess go back to their positions at the Altar. The Priestess

bows her head and crosses her breasts with her arms. The Priest then takes the crown from the Altar and holds it over the Priestess' head. He states: *"Our Lord, with the lady at his side, Has brought us through the Darkness to the Light.*

*It was a long journey that was not too easy.
Yet did the Gods show strength And, through them, did we all grow and prosper.
Now may they both continue.
Now may the Lady, with her Lord at her side, Move on down the path,
Spreading the Light and driving out the Darkness."*

The Priestess stands with her legs astride and her arms outstretched skywards. The Priest then lowers the crown onto the Priestess' head. As he crowns the Priestess, a coven member lights the fire in the cauldron.

The coven member says, *"Now is our Lady among us. Speak, Lady, for we are your children."*

The Priestess then drops her arms and spreads them wide open to the members of the coven. She says: *"I am she who turns the Wheel, Bringing new life into the world And beckoning those who pass along the way.*

In the coolness of the breeze you hear my sighs; My heart is in the rushing of the wind.

When you thirst, let my tears fall upon you as gentle rain; When you tire, pause to rest upon the earth that is my breast.

Warmth and comfort do I give thee And ask for nothing in return Save that you love all things even as yourself.

Know that Love is the spark of Life.

It is always there; always with you if you see it.

Yet you do not seek afar, for love is the inner spark; The light that burns without flicker; The amber glow within.

Love is the beginning and the end of all things...

And I am Love."

The Priest and Priestess kiss. One at a time, each member of the coven is to move around the Circle to kiss the Priestess and also to lay offerings at the Altar. When all members have gone back to their positions, the Priest and the Priestess hold hands and proceed to lead the coven into dance around the Circle either in singles or in couples. As the members approach the cauldron of fire, they are to hop over it. After a number of times, they stop. The bell is rung three times.

Thereafter, the Clearing of the Temple is performed and there is time then for entertainment, fun or games as desired, and this may take place around the Altar as well if it is preferred. The evening ends with a feast.

The Imbolc Ritual The Imbolc Ritual is actually a fire festival, celebrating a feast of lights. For this ritual, there is also a cauldron containing materials required for making a fire. The cauldron is placed in the north quarter and lying beside it is a broomstick – referred to as a ‘besom’. The ritual marks the midpoint of the dark half of the year, otherwise understood as the halfway point through God’s predominance. It is largely a festival celebrating the goddess. Beside the altar a ‘crown of light’ is placed, which is actually a circlet of candles. During this ritual, the altar cloth and altar candles are to be brown in color.

The erecting of the Temple is done. This ritual may then be followed by the appropriate rites – Full Moon or New Moon as suitable. The bell is rung three times by a coven member who is designated as the Summoner.

The summoner says, *“Haste! Haste! No time to wait! We’re off to the Sabbat, so don’t be late!”*

The Priest or Priestess then says, *“To the Sabbat!”*

All members of the coven then say *“To the Sabbat!”*

With the priest and priestess in the lead, the coven moves clockwise around the sacred Circle either dancing or walking, as preferred. Everyone goes around as many times as desired. The Priest or Priestess starts a hymn for the Gods to join in. Eventually, all stop dancing and singing or walking.

The coven member then says, *“Now has our Lord reached the zenith of his journey.”*

The Second Covener says, *“Now does he turn to face the Lady.”*

The Priest then says, *“Though apart they are one.”*

The Priestess says, *“They are both the shadow and the light”*

After this, an enactment of a seasonal motif is performed, like the midpoint in the sun’s winter journey, or the running of the priests of the Lupercalia, the Roman festival, or sweeping out the old and beginning the new. The bell is rung seven times.

A member of the coven then states, *“Our Lord now has reached mid-journey. Ahead he sees the light of our Lady, And the start of Life anew, after this period of rest.*

*This was the first festival of the Keltic year.
This is the time when spring lambs are born And ewes come into milk.
Spring itself is scented in the distance.
And thoughts are on the Goddess as much as on the God.
Burn, now, the evergreens – the ivy, mistletoe and holly; The rosemary and the bay.
Clear out the old, that the new may enter in.*

The priestess or priest then says, *“Light to dark.”*
All coven members say, *‘Darkness to light.’*
The Priestess or Priest says, *“Darkness to light”*
Again the coven members say, *“Darkness to light.”*
The Priest or the Priestess says, *“Farewell Lady, welcome Lord.”*
All members of the coven say, *“Farewell Lord and welcome Lady.”*
The Priestess or the Priest says, *“All hail!”*
All members of the coven say, *“Farewell!”*
The Priest or Priestess says, *“Farewell!”*
All members of the coven then say, *“All hail!”*

The Priest, as well as the Priestess, leads the whole coven in a dance around the Circle. This performance may be either followed by or accompanied by singing or chanting. The Priestess then stands in front of the altar, having her arms crossed over her breast. The priest kneels in front of her and kisses her feet. The Priest then takes the crown, then stands up to place it on the Priestess’ head. The Priest then dances clockwise around the Circle three times. As the Priest passes over the cauldron in the second circuit, the cauldron contents are lit by a coven member. Now, when the Priest comes to the burning cauldron on his third circuit around the Circle, he is to jump over the cauldron. The Priest stops in front of the Priestess. The Priest uses an altar candle to light the candles on the circlet around the Priestess’ head. The Priestess now opens her arms wide and positions herself with her legs wide and arms raised skywards.

The Priest then says, *“All hail, Our Lady of Light!”*
All coven members then say, *“All hail, Our Lady of Light!”*

The coven member then says, *“Welcome, thrice welcome, Triple Goddess of Life.”*

The covener says, *“Mother of the Sun, we welcome thee.”*

The other covener says, *“Goddess of Fire, we invite thee in.”*

The Priest and the Priestess now move around to the cauldron. The coven member hands the besom to the Priestess. The Priestess passes the besom to the Priest, kissing him. The Priest goes clockwise around the Circle, sweeping out all that is not needed. When the Priest returns to the north, he Returns the besom to the Priestess and kisses her. The Priestess then gives the besom to the coven member, kissing him. The covener sweeps around the Circle and this is repeated with all members of the coven. Once all have had a turn to sweep, the Priest and the priestess again assume their positions at the altar. The bell is rung three times.

Now follows the Cakes and Ale ceremony, the Clearing of the temple and any fun, games, or entertainment as desired. The evening is concluded with a feast.

The Lughnasadh Ritual The altar and the Circle are decorated with summer flowers. The altar cloth and altar candles are to be yellow in color.

The Erecting of the Temple ritual is performed, followed by the suitable New Moon or Full Moon rite. The bell is rung three times by the coven member designated as Summoner.

The summoner says, *“Haste! Haste! No time to wait! We’re off to the Sabbat so don’t be late!”*

The Priest or Priestess then says *“To the Sabbat!”*

All members say, *“To the Sabbat!”*

The Priest and Priestess lead the coven around the Circle in a clockwise motion, either dancing or walking as per preference. All may circle as many times as desired. The Priest or the Priestess starts singing a hymn to the gods and then all

members join. They all finally halt from dancing or walking and singing.

The coven member says, "*The powers of life and death are held by the gods.*"

Another coven member says, "*Great is the power of the Mighty Ones.*"

The covener says, "*God is old yet young.*"

The covener says, "*And the power is his.*"

After this follows an enactment of any seasonal motif preferred, like the death and rebirth of one of the gods, or the thinning of plants towards a better crop harvest, or the killing of older gods by younger gods. The bell is then rung seven times.

The coven member says, "*In the midst of our Lady's rule do we remember her brother/lover/husband. Great is his power through his union with the Goddess. And through his death and rebirth, as the younger son, Is the harvest assured and the power passed on, To grow and spread wide to all he loves. Remember the Lord, yet in him ever see the Lady. Praise the Lady and, through her, the Lord.*"

The Priests says, "*Blessed be the Lady of the Circle.*"

All members of the coven then say, "*And blessed be her Lord.*"

The Priestess says, "*May the surplus be drawn from the land.*"

All members then say, "*That the body may be filled with strength.*"

The Priest says, "*Power to the Lord.*"

All members of the coven then say, "*And power to the Lady.*"

The Priestess says, "*Let the old wane.*"

All members say, "*That the young may wax anew.*"

The Priest says, "*Ever turns the Wheel.*"

All members say, "*Ever onward.*"

The Priest and the Priestess lead the members of the coven in a dance around the Circle. This dance may be accompanied by a chant or a song if desired.

All sit, except for a male covener and the Priest. The Priest then dances around, clockwise, all between the members that are seated and the line of the Circle.

The male coven member also dances, dancing around counter-clockwise and towards the altar, inwards of the Circle. Each time the male member and the Priest pass each other, they clap hands over the members' heads. Seated coven

members may engage by clapping a beat for the Priest and the male covener to dance to, even shouting out “Lugh” whenever the male covener and the Priest’s hands strike.

This circling and striking goes on for twelve circuits of the Circle. At the twelfth strike, the Priest drops himself to the ground and the male covener jumps over the seated members to run around the Circle once, clockwise this time, along the path of the Priest. When he returns to the Priest, he helps the Priest to his feet and the two embrace. All seated members cheer and get back onto their feet.

The Priest says:

“Lady and Lord, we thank thee, For all that has been raised from the soil.

May it grow in strength from now until harvest.

We thank thee for this promise of fruits to come.

*Let the power of our Lord Be in each and every one of us At this time and
throughout the year.”*

All members then say, “So mote it be.”

The bell is rung three times and then follows the ceremony of Cakes and Ale, then the Clearing of the Temple. Thereafter there may be entertainment, fun, and games and a feast to conclude the evening.

Minor Sabbat Rituals

The Spring Equinox Ritual

It is quite fitting to decorate the altar with wild spring flowers either on it or beside it. If desired, coven members may even decorate their hair with spring flowers. Lay the Priapic wand on the altar, with a bowl filled with soil and any type of large seed. Place a sheet of parchment on the altar or under the altar as well as a writing tool or a pen. The altar cloth and altar candles are to be light green in color.

Perform the Erecting of the Temple. Ring the bell three times.

The Priest now says, *“Blessed be all within this Circle.”*

The Priestess then says, *“Merry meet we at this Springtime Rite.”*

All members of the coven say, *“Merry meet.”*

The Priest then says, *“Brothers and Sisters, hear my words. Awake and greet the Spring. Lord! Lady! Hear us, for we are here. We are here to celebrate with you and for you.”*

The Priestess says, *“Welcome, welcome beauteous Spring! Welcome the time for birth. Welcome the time for planting seeds.”*

The Priest and Priestess lead all the coven members to dance clockwise around the Circle. While they all dance the coven members then bend down, dropping their flowers on the outline of the Circle, continuing in this manner until the entire Circle is decorated. If desired, all may sing while they dance. Once everyone stops, the bell is rung three times.

The Priestess says, *“Springtime is seedtime. Now is the time for each of us to plant that which he or she wishes to come to flower.”*

A coven member then says, *“Springtime is for hopes and desires; for new ideas; for balance and inspiration.”*

Priest or Priestess then says, *“Let us now meditate on that which we wish to bring forth. Let us consider our hopes and opportunities and direct our energies to one, or more, things we would start upon the road of life.”*

All members of the coven sit and meditate in a comfortable position of their

choice. During the meditation, it is required to concentrate on the ‘seed’ of an idea that you wish to ‘plant’, which may grow into opportunity. It may be a seed of a quality, like Perseverance or Patience, or it may be a seed of opportunity to do something or create something. The seed will require tending, nurturing and attention to develop and ‘blossom’.

After sufficient time elapses, the bell is rung. The Priest or Priestess takes the pen and the parchment and writes on the top, a condensed form of his/her ‘seed’. Thereafter, the parchment is passed around the Circle for all coven members to add their ‘seeds’. Once returned to the Priest or Priestess who first wrote, he or she then lights the corner of the parchment on an altar candle flame, holding the parchment such that the entire parchment burns to ashes and that the ashes fall into the bowl with the soil and seed. As this is done, the Priest or Priestess says, *“Lord and Lady, receive these our seeds.”*

*Let them germinate in our minds and our hearts.
Let them prosper and grow to maturity, For we will care for them and encourage
them in your name.”*

The Priestess takes her athame and uses the tip of it to mix the ashes into the soil in the bowl, then makes an indentation in the centre and lays down the athame. The Priest now takes the Priapic Wand, holding it over his head and proceeds to dance three times around the Circle. For the first circuit around the Circle, the Priest dances slowly, for the second faster and for the third and last, very fast. The Priest then returns to the Priestess and holds out the Priapic Wand vertically in front of him.

The Priestess says, *“By the power of the raised Wand doth the Seed find the furrow. Blessings be upon this handsome Wand.”*

The Priestess then kisses the tip of the Wand.

The Priestess says, *“All honor to it. May it be ever thus.”*

The Priest then lays the Wand down and takes the seed from the altar. The Priest holds the seed for a moment between his palms, directing all the energy he can muster into it. The seed is then passed around to all coven members in the Circle until it is passed back to the Priest. The Priestess then takes the bowl from the altar and raises it high.

The Priestess then states, *“Of old would we celebrate by together planting the*

seed, one with another. Here do we symbolize that act, in veneration of our Lady and our Lord."

The Priestess faces the Priest and brings down the bowl to hold between her breasts.

The priest then says, *"These rites of Spring belong to us all; To us and to the Gods. This is a time of joy and a time for planting."*

The Priest then places the seed in the hollow space and then closes it.

The Priest ends the ritual by saying, *"This seed do I place in the womb of the Earth, that it may become a part of that Earth, A part of Life and a part of us."*

The Priest and Priestess kiss and replace the bowl on the altar.

The bell is rung three times. Now follows the Cakes and Ale ceremony. The evening may be concluded by a feast.

The Summer Solstice Ritual For this ritual, the altar cloth and the altar candles are to be white in color. The Circle can be decorated with flowers, fruits and whatever else is summery. A cauldron with water and an aspergillum in it stands in the south quarter of the Circle. There should be an extra-large candle on the altar and the Priest's Horned Helmet.

Perform the Erecting of the Temple. Ring the bell three times.

A coven member says, *"Cease all sorrows!"*

Another member says, *"Cease all strife!"*

Another says, *"This day is for living."*

Another adds, *"For living this life."*

The Priest places the Horned Helmet atop his head and moves in front of the altar. He lights an extra candle, lighting it from the altar candle and raising it in his right hand, high. The coven members raise both their hands and say out: *"Hail, Lord! Hail the Sun God! Hail the Light!"*

The Priestess moves to stand by the cauldron, the Priest remains in the centre of the Circle. All members join hands and dance clockwise. The Priestess sprinkles the members with cauldron water as they pass. All members and the Priest and

Priestess sing together, *"Comes the Lord of Greenwood, Greenwood, Comes the Lord of Greenwood, Greenwood, To court the Lady Fair.*

In the heat of their passion, passion, In the heat of their passion, passion, In the heat of their passion, passion, The grain shall rise again.

Comes the Lord of Greenwood, Greenwood Comes the lord of Greenwood, Greenwood Comes the Lord of Greenwood, Greenwood To court the Lady Fair."

After the song is sung, the bell is to be rung seven times.

The Priest returns the lit candle to the altar and dances slowly clockwise around the Circle twelve times. He says the following as he does this, with the members of the coven repeating after him: Priest: *"I am He who is the Lord and the Light."*

All: *"You are He who is the Lord and the Light."*

Priest: *"I am he who is the Sun."*

All: *"You are He who is the Sun."*

Priest: *"Let your love shine as does my radiance."*

All: *"We let our love shine as does your radiance."*

Priest: *"Let your love spread throughout the world, as does my light."*

All: *"We let our love spread throughout the world, as does your light."*

Priest: *"Together with the sun we must also know rain."*

All: *"Together with the sun we must also know rain."*

Priest: *"So together with joy we must also know pain."*

All: *"So together with joy we must also know pain."*

Priest: *"I am the Life and I am the Hope."*

All: *"You are the Life and you are the Hope."*

Priest: *"I am the Death and the Life anew."*

All: *"You are the Death and the Life anew."*

Priest: *"Without me there can be nothing"*

All: *"Without you there can be nothing."*

Priest: *"With me, you can have all that you desire."*

All: *"With you, we can have all that we desire."*

Priest: *"I am He who is the Sun."*

All: *"You are He who is the Sun".*

Priest: *"I am He who is the Lord and the Light"*

All: *"You are He who is the Lord and the Light."*

Priest: *"As I give light and life to you, so is it meet that you should give to others. Let us all share all that we have with those who have nothing."*

The priest returns to the altar and assumes the God positions. The Priestess leads the coven members to bow before the priest and lay offerings at his feet.

The Priest says, *“Now may you know the true joy of giving. So be it.”*

All members of the coven say, *“So be it.”*

The Priest or Priestess says, *“We Wiccans give thanks to the Mighty Ones For the richness and goodness of life.*

*As there must be rain with the sun, To make all things good, So must we suffer
pain with our joy, To know all things.*

*Our love is ever with the Gods, For though we know not their thoughts, Yet we
do know their hearts – That all is for our good.*

Mighty Ones, bless us now.

Keep us faithful in thy service.

We thank you for the crops; For life; for love; for joy.

We thank you for that spark That brings us together – and to you.

Help us to live with Love And with Trust between us.

Help us to feel the joy of loving you And of loving another.”

All members of the coven then say, ‘So be it!’

The bell is rung three times. Now follows Cakes and Ale ceremony, Clearing the Temple, fun games and entertainment and then a feast to conclude the night.

The Autumnal Equinox Ritual For this ritual, the altar cloth and the altar candles are to be red in color. Decorate the Circle if desired, with autumnal fruits and branches, pine cones or corn sheaves *etc.* Place a bowl of fruit on the altar, with offerings around the altar.

The Priest or Priestess says, *“Now do we enjoy the fruits of our labors.”*

A coven member says, *“Now do we celebrate the harvest.”*

A Coven member says, *“As we sowed in the spring, now do we reap.”*

The Priest or Priestess says, *“Now let us pay our dues and enjoy our just rewards.”*

The bell is rung three times. All present join hands and slowly move clockwise around the Circle. Simple skipping is suitable if preferred. This is done three times. As they move, the Priest or Priestess says: *“Here is the balance of Day and Night.*

*At no point does time stand still.
Ever does the wheel turn and turn again: Children are born and grow, age
advances.
Death will come to visit as surely as the sun doth rise.
Since Death is inevitable, greet him as a friend.
Remember, he it is who opens the door That leads forward into life.
Life unto death and death unto life: Balance and harmony; ever moving on."*

Once the circling is over, the Priest moves the bowl of fruit around the Circle for each member to take one. At the giving, an embrace and a kiss are exchanged and the member says, *"I give thanks to the gods for this sign of a joyful harvest."*

The Priest ends the ritual by giving fruit to the Priestess, who in turn gives the last to the Priest. The bell is rung seven times. All members sit and enjoy fruit and socialize.

The bell is rung three times and all present stand up.

The Priest says, *"Although the season of plenty draws to a close, yet are the Gods ever with us. Our Lord watches over us, as does his Lady."*

The Priestess says, *"To the good seasons that have already passed."*

All members say, *"The Lord and Lady give blessings."*

The Priest then says, *"To the beauty of Autumn and to those friends we treasure."*

All members say, *"The Lord and Lady give blessings."*

The coven member says, *"Peace, joy and love to the world."*

Then all say, *"To that do we give our blessings"*

The Priest says, *"How is the ground?"*

All say, *"Well cared for."*

The Priest asks, *"How are the crops?"*

All answer, *"Beautiful and plentiful."*

A covener asks, *"What are our lives?"*

All answer, *"The harvest of the gods."*

The priest or Priestess then says, *"While we enjoy the fruits of our labours, the harvest of our lives, let us never forget those who are not so fortunate."*

A coven member says, *"We offer, here, a portion of our fortunes to go where it may be needed."*

All members then say, *“So mote it be.”*

The Priest or Priestess says, *“Then may the Lord and the Lady bless these offerings, bless the givers and bless those who will receive.”*

The bell is then rung three times. Then follows Cakes and Ale ceremony and the Clearing of the Temple, so that there may be fun, games entertainment and a feast to close the evening.

The Winter Solstice Ritual The altar cloth, as well as the altar candles for this ritual, is to be purple in color. If desired, the Circle and the altar may be decorated with mistletoe, holly, ivy etc. In the south is a cauldron filled with fire materials. The Horned Helmet of the Priest’s is laid beside the altar. A short taper candle lies on the altar for each coven member. The bell is rung three times.

The Priest sits or kneels in the middle of the Circle.

The coven member says, *“Blessed are the Gods who turn the mighty wheel.”*

The covener says, *“Welcome, thrice welcome, to Yule; the turning point of winter is upon us.”*

The covener says, *“Here is an end to the solar year.”*

The covener says, *“But here, too, is a new beginning.”*

The Priestess says, *“Brothers, Sisters, Friends. Let us show our love by sending forth our power and our strength to he who is the Sun God. At this turning of the year’s tide, let us join our energies with his, that he may be reborn to ascend once more unto his rightful place.”*

The coveners and the Priestess join hands and move clockwise around the Circle, while chanting the following: *“Turn, turn, turn the wheel.*

Round and round; around it goes.

The flame that died, it now doth heal.

Round and round; around it goes.

Return, return, return to life.

Round and round; around it goes.

Welcome sunlight; farewell strife.

Round and round; around it goes.

The Sun Lord dies; the Sun Lord lives.

Round and round; around it goes.

*Death opens hands and new life gives.
Round and round; around it goes.
Turn, turn, turn the wheel.
Round and round; around it goes.
The flame that died, it now doth heal.
Round and round; around it goes.”*

This may be continued for as long as it is wished. While circling, the Priestess says, *“Let us kindle fresh fire to light our Lord upon his way.”*

A covener says, *“Fire for strength!”*

Another says, *“Fire for life!”*

Another says, *“Fire for love!”*

As they pass the altar, the Priestess first, followed by each member of the coven, each takes up a taper candle and lights it up using the altar candle. They continue around the Circle, and once each reaches the cauldron, the taper candle is thrown into the cauldron, to light the fire and add to it.

Once all the tapers have been thrown into the cauldron, the circling halts, with the Priestess positioned at the altar. The Priestess picks up the Horned Helmet and moves to stand before the Priest, who kneels.

The Priestess says, *“May all our power, Witches all, strengthen the new-born Lord.”*

The Priestess then places the Horned Helmet onto the head of the Priest. The Priest gets to his feet and he raises his hands up high.

The Priest says, *“Life! Love! I am the Sun Lord!”*

The Priest lowers his hands and moves slowly around the Circle, speaking as he does so, as though speaking to the members of the coven individually. He says: *“I fell into deep darkness and death I knew.*

Yet was I of star-seed.

On the tail of a comet I rent the velvet darkness of everlasting light.

Ablaze with glory, I was reborn, To start again the perennial cycle of guardianship That evermore drives me through death and birth alike.

With the companionship of our Lady I face into the wind, Knowing that we fly upon wings of time, Through timeless worlds, together.”

The coven member says, *“All hail, the Sun God!”*

All members say, *“All hail, the Sun God!”*
The covener says, *“All hail the death and birth of Yule.”*
All say, *“All Hail!”*

The bell is rung seven times. The Priest and the Priestess now join hands and proceed to lead the coven members in a dance around the Circle. The Bell is rung three times.

Now follows the ceremony of cakes and ale, Clearing of the Temple and any fun, games, entertainment as desired. The evening is concluded with a feast.

13. The Principles of the Craft on Birth, Death & Marriage

Marriage

In Wiccan belief, instead of a marriage like that of Christendom, where husband and wife are bound for the span of their lives until “death do us part”, the Wiccan marriage ceremony is one that commits a man and woman to each other only for as long as they love each other. Should it happen that they later find they have fallen out of love with each other, the man and woman freely separate with no risk of ‘sin’ or the like. This is a very practical arrangement as relationships often evolve and nobody wants to be guilted into remaining with a partner they no longer really want to be with. The Wiccan marriage ceremony is called the Handfasting Ceremony.

In modern times, most people prefer to write out their own Handfasting rites. Here we will provide the Seax-Wicca Handfasting rite as a guideline – feel free to either follow the rites as they are or to use them as a guideline for creating your own Handfasting rite.

Seax-Wicca Handfasting Rite The most suitable time for performing the Wiccan marriage ceremony is during the waxing of the Moon. If possible, it is nice to have flowers decorated the Altar and the inside of the Circle. It is also preferable for all coven members to be skyclad for the Handfasting rite. If the coven in question are usually robed and do not wish to be skyclad, it is suggested that at least the Bride and the Groom be skyclad for the duration of the rite.

Much like the ‘traditional’ marriage today, so too are rings exchanged in the Seax-Wiccan traditional marriage ceremony. The rings are usually bands crafted from gold or silver and inscribed with the Bride and Groom’s witch names on the rings in runes. At the beginning of the rite, these rings are to rest at the Altar, with The Priapic Wand.

The Handfasting Rite Step-By-Step Perform the Opening of the Circle or Erecting of the Temple .

The priest and priestess kiss. A coven member states: *There are those in our midst who seek the bond of Handfasting.*

The priestess then says, “*Let them be named and brought forward*”

The coven member responds with “*[Groom’s witch name] is the Man and [Bride’s witch name] is the Woman.*”

The man and woman in question across the Altar, to stand to face the priest and priestess, with the Groom opposite the priestess and the Bride opposite the priest

.

The Priestess addresses the Groom, “*Are you [name]?*”

The groom responds., “*I am.*”

The Priestess asks, “*What is your desire?*”

The groom shares, “*To be made one with [Bride’s name], in the eyes of the Gods and the Wicca*”

Now the Priest turns to the Bride. He asks, “*Are you [name]?*”

The Bride responds, “*I am.*”

The Priest asks, “*What is your desire?*”

The Bride answers, “*To be made one with [Groom’s name], in the eyes of the Gods and the Wicca.*”

The Priestess takes hold of the sword and raises it up high. The Priest hands over the Priapic Wand to the Bride and Groom, who hold it with both hands between them.

The Priestess says, “*Lord and Lady, here before you stand two of your folk. Witness, now, that which they have to declare.*”

The Priestess places the sword back onto the Altar, takes her athame and then holds the tip of it to the chest of the Groom.

Then she says the Groom: “*Repeat after me: ‘I [Groom’s name], do come here of my own free will, to seek the partnership of [Bride’s name]. I come with all love, honor, sincerity, wishing only to become one with her whom I love. Always will I strive for [Bride’s name]’s happiness and welfare. Her life will I defend before my own. May the athame be plunged into my heart should I not be sincere in all that I declare. All this I swear in the names of the gods. May they give me the strength to keep my vows. So Mote It Be’.*”

The Priest lowers his athame and the Priestess takes the rings from the Altar and sprinkles them both with salted water and censes them with the thurible. She then passes the Bride’s ring to the Groom and the Groom’s ring to the Bride. The

man and woman take them in their right hands, holding the Priapic Wand with their left.

The Priest states: *As the grass of the fields and the trees of the woods bend together under the pressures of the storm, so too must you both bend when the wind blows strong. But know that as quickly as the storm comes, so equally may it leave. Yet you will both stand, strong in each other's strength. As you give love; so will you receive strength. Together you are one; apart you are as nothing.*

The Priestess then states: *Know you that no two people can be exactly alike. No more can any two people fit together, perfect in every way. There will be times when it will seem hard to give and to love. But see then your reflection as in a woodland pool: when the image you see looks sad and angered, then is the time for you to smile and to love (for it is not fire that puts out fire). In return will the image in the pool smile and love. So change your anger for love and tears for joy. It is no weakness to admit a wrong, more is it a strength and a sign of learning.*

The Priest then states: *Ever love, help and respect each other, And then know truly that you are one In the eyes of the Gods And of the Wicca.*

All coven members declare, *"So Mote It Be!"*

The Priest then takes the Priapic Wand from the Bride and Groom and returns it to the Altar. The Bride and Groom place the wedding ring on each other's fingers, and then kiss. The Bride and Groom then kiss the Priest and the Priestess across the Altar and move around the Circle to accept congratulations from the coven members. Afterwards follows the *Cakes and Ale* ceremony, and games, and plenty of merriment and celebration.

Handparting Rite As mentioned, many religions see marriage as a one-time lifetime commitment, meaning the husband and wife are to stay together no

matter the circumstances and even if they themselves resent each other for it. In Wiccan belief, casual partnerships are in no way encouraged, but it is recognized that over time, relationships change and perhaps a husband and wife are no longer happy together later on. After all attempts at salvaging the relationship are first made, then the last resort is a Handparting ceremony, which can be likened to a divorce.

Before performing the rite, the husband and wife sit with the Priest and Priestess to come up with fair divisions of their assets and to arrange support for children if there are any. A scribe is present to record everything. If one of the spouses cannot be present for whatever reason, their position may be represented by another Witch of the same sex if there is a signed agreement from the missing party, and the wedding ring.

The Handparting Rite Ste-By-Step The Opening of the Circle or Erecting of the Temple is performed.

The priest and Priestess kiss.

A coven member states, “*[Husband’s name] and [Wife’s name], stand forth.*”

The husband and wife move forward to stand before the Altar, with the Husband in front of Priestess, and the Wife in front of Priest.

Priestess asks the Husband, “*Why are you here?*”

The Husband responds, “I wish a Handparting from [Wife’s name]”

The Priest now asks the Wife, “*Why are you here?*”

The Wife responds with, “*I wish a Handparting from [Husband’s name]*”

The Priestess asks them both, “*Do you both desire this of your own free will?*”

The husband and Wife respond with, “*We do.*”

The Priest asks, “*Has a settlement been reached between you regarding the division of property and (if appropriate) care for the children?*”

The Husband and Wife respond saying, “*It has.*”

The Priest asks, “*Has this been duly recorded, signed and witnessed?*”

Now the covener Scribe confirms, saying, “*It has.*”

The Priest then says, *“Then let us proceed, remembering that we stand ever before the gods.”*

The Husband and the Wife join hands and repeat the following together, line by line, after the Priestess: *“I, [Name], do hereby most freely dissolve my partnership with [Spouse’s name]. I do so in all honesty and sincerity, before the Gods, with my brothers and sisters of the Craft as witnesses. No longer are we as One, but now are Two individuals, free to go our separate ways. We release all ties, one to the other, yet ever will we retain respect for one another, as we have love and respect for our fellow Wiccans. So be it.*

The Priest then announces the instruction, *“Handpart!”*

The husband and wife release their joined hands, remove their rings and give them to the Priestess. The Priestess sprinkles the rings and censes them. The Priestess then states, *“In the names of the Gods do I cleanse these rings.”*

The priestess then returns the cleansed rings to the man and woman to do with them as they please.

The Priestess says, *“Now are you handparted. Let all know you as such. Go your separate ways in Peace and in Love – never in bitterness – and in the ways of the Craft. So mote it be.*

All coven members repeat, *“So mote it be.”*

After the ritual follows *Cakes and Ale* ritual then clearing of the Temple or closing of the Circle.

Birth Rite –Wicanning

Witches do not believe in forcing the Craft on anybody, not even their own children. Children are taught the ways of the Craft and may even be initiated when they are old enough to make the choice, and they may then either continue practicing the Craft or give it up. If they resume the Craft later, there is no second initiation necessary.

A ritual is normally performed for a child for the parents to ask the gods to watch over them, protect them and guide them. The ritual may be performed at any time, at any ritual or even on its own. As with any ritual, first is the erecting of the Temple, then the ritual, then the Cakes and Ale and the Clearing of the Temple.

The Birth Rite Step by Step The Priest and Priestess kiss.

A coven member states: *“There is an addition to our number. Let us give her/him due welcome.”*

The parents of the newcomer position themselves across the Priest and Priestess, on the other side of the Altar, holding the baby to be initiated.

The Priest asks, *“What is the name of the child?”*

The parents of the child then supply a name by which the child shall be known within the Circle until which time the child may decide to adopt a new name, when older, if preferred.

The Priest then states, *“We welcome you, [Name].”*

The Priestess states, *“Welcome, and much love to you.”*

The Priest and the Priestess then proceed to lead the child’s parents clockwise around the Circle three times. The Parents then hold the child above the Altar, as though ‘offering’ the child.

The parents then state, *“We here offer the fruit of our love to the gods. May they*

watch over her/him as s/he grows.”

The Priestess then dips the tips of her fingers in the salted water, then wipes them gently across the child’s face. The mother then passes the baby through the incense smoke to cense the baby.

The Priestess then states, *“May the Lord and the Lady ever smile upon you.”*

The Priest states, *“May they guard you and guide you through this life.”*

The Priestess states, *“May they help you choose that which is right and shun that which is wrong.”*

The Priest states, *“May they see that no harm befalls you, or others through you.”*

The Priestess then says to the parents of the child, *“We charge you both, in the names of the God and of the Goddess, to lead this child, with love, through the highways and byways of life. Teach him/her the ways of the Craft that s/he may learn to honor and respect all life and to harm none.”*

The Priest then states: *“Teach him/her of the Lord and the Lady; of this life, of all that went before and what may come after. Tell the tales of the gods and teach the history of our Craft. Teach her/him to strive for that perfection which all desire and, when the time is right, hope –but do not press – that s/he joins with us and becomes truly one of our beloved family.”*

The parents then state, *“All this we will do. So do we pledge.”*

he Priest and Priestess then state together: *“We bid welcome to [Name].”*

ll coven members then state, *“Welcome!”*

*Now follows the ceremony of Cakes and Ale

Death Rite – Crossing the Bridge

This may be done as a rite in and of itself, in which case it is preceded by the Erecting of the Temple and followed by Cakes and Ale then Clearing of the Temple. If performed during other rituals, it should be performed before Cakes and Ale rite.

The Priest and Priestess kiss.

Using the horn, a long note is sounded once, by a coven member.

A coven member states, *“The horn is sounded for [Name of deceased Witch]”*

All coven members respond with, *“So be it.”*

The priestess then says, *“That today [Name] is not with us, here in the Circle, saddens us all. Yet let us try not to feel sad. For is this not a sign that s/he has fulfilled this life’s work? Now is s/he free to move on. We shall meet again, never fear. And that will be a time for further celebration.”*

The Priest then adds, *“Let us send forth our good wishes to bear him/her across the Bridge. May s/he return at any time s/he may wish, to be with us here.”*

All members of the coven take hold of their athames, pointing them at a position behind the Altar, while facing the Priest and the Priestess. All members imagine, in their mind’s eye, the image of the Witch who is deceased, as though she is standing on the very spot. The members concentrate on channeling joy, happiness and love from their innermost being, through the line of their athame and out of the point into the imagined body.

This proceeds for a few moments. The end is signalled by the Priestess when she replaces her athame and states: *“We wish you all the Love and Happiness we may. We will never forget you. Do not you forget us. Whenever we meet here, you are always welcome.”*

All coven members then finish by saying, *“So mote it be.”*

Now all coven members sit. Should there be any members who wish to say a few words in respect of the deceased, may they do so. If there is nobody willing to do so, the Priest or Priestess should speak kind reminiscent words of the deceased Witch, specifically placing focus on happy times.

The rite is followed by Cakes and Ale ceremony

14. Magick



Principles of Magick: Timing and Feeling

Timing & Magick As you may or may not already know, the phase of the Moon is critical in working magic properly. The two main phases of the moon are the Waxing Moon and the Waning Moon. The Waxing Moon describes the period between the New Moon, going through the First Quarter and till the Full Moon. The Waning Moon describes the phase from the Full moon through the last quarter and till the New Moon. Basically, this means that moon increasing in size when it is waxing, and decreases in size when it is waning.

Feeling & Magick As was mentioned in the introduction to spells and charms, a deep set emotional desire for something to happen is crucial for magick to be effective. Placing every minute particle of your existence into desiring the magick to work is the fuel that drives your magick. Rhyme and chant are tools for amplifying the power of your desire. The rhythmic chanting serves to intensify your feelings and helps you concentrate on your desire better. Dance is another amplifier, which can help raise the power behind your magick. Sex is long considered a natural powerhouse for magick, and more will be discussed on sex magick later in this chapter.

Preparing Your Body for Magick

Having a clean body is very important before working magick. A clean body is achieved through both external as well as internal cleansing. Bathing the body is, of course, the first step, and it is advisable to add a teaspoon of sea salt to the bathing water for cleansing properties. The inner body is prepared by abstinence from alcohol, sexual activity and nicotine. This is to be done as a twenty-four hour fast before you intend to work magick.

The Moon & Magick

Constructive and Destructive Magick

The two phases of the moon determine what type of magick is to be properly performed. During the waxing moon, constructive magick is performed. Constructive magick is magick that include rituals and spells based on love, protection, fertility, success and health. Naturally, then, during the waning moon, destructive magick is performed, like magick based on elimination, separation and extermination, or the casting of binding spells.

About Love Magick

This magick is intended for permanent soul mate seeking, and is not intended for finding somebody to have an affair with.

When it comes to magick, perhaps one of the categories of magick that generates the most interest is love magick. There is much interest in love potions and in love philtres, though most of the interest is rooted in fiction. However, there are some love magick spells that do actually work, like the magick involving ‘poppets’. Poppets are used to represent the lovers that are in question, and the idea is that whatever is done to the poppets is done unto the lovers.

The poppet is a specially prepared doll made from cloth, even if it is a rough cut figure. While cutting out the cloth and preparing the poppet, it is important to be mindful of the person the doll that is being prepared is intended to represent. The doll may be made as elaborately as desired – embroidery, beadwork and facial features *etc.* are all acceptable. Make the poppet from two pieces of cloth and leave the top open so it may be stuffed with herbs. The poppets are to be stuffed with vervain, verbena, feverfew, yarrow, artemesia, valerian, rosebuds, motherwort, damiana or elder, as they are all herbs governed by Venus. Once stuffed, the top may be sewn to seal.

Prepare two poppets in this manner, one male and one female. The preparation is all performed within the sacred Circle, and it may be performed by a solitary witch or all coven members.

Since it is an ideal mate that is being sought, the second figure is to be made with all the qualities desired in them. The poppet is nameless but can display all physical desires and attributes. Once prepared, the poppets lay on the altar, with one at the left-hand side of the sword and the other on the right-hand side. The poppets are to be positioned in front of the sword. On the altar, there is to lay a red ribbon, 21 inches long.

The petitioner then states, “*O mighty God and Goddess, Hear now my plea to you.*”

My plea for true love for [name] and for his/her desire.”

The Petitioner then picks up the appropriate poppet and sprinkles the poppet with salted water and censes it well. While doing this, the petitioner says, “*I*

name this Poppet [petitioner's name]. It is him/her in every way. As she lives, so lives this poppet. Aught that I do to it, I do to her."

The petitioner then replaces the poppet, to pick up the other one. As with the previous, it is sprinkled and censed and the petitioner says, "This poppet is her desired mate in every way. As he lives, so lives this poppet. Aught that I do to it, I do too to him."

The petitioner replaces the poppet and moves to kneel before the altar with one hand on each poppet. The petitioner closes their eyes and imagines the two represented people coming together slowly, meeting, embracing and kissing. This is a step not to be rushed. The poppets are to be moved slowly along the length of the sword and towards each other until they meet. At the point that the poppets meet, the petitioner may open his/her eyes and while holding the poppets face to face still, say: "Thus may they be drawn

One to the other,
Strongly and truly.
To be together always
As One.
No more shall they be separated; No more alone,
But ever fast together
As One."

The poppets should be laid together on the altar, in the centre, with the sword across them, on top of them. The petitioner or the whole coven may now dance around them and work magick for ten minutes, directing the energy of their song and dance to bring the two represented people together. Alternatively, all may sit and meditate on the thought of the two represented coming together.

This ritual is best performed on three consecutive Fridays during the waxing moon, or perhaps even on a Friday, Wednesday then Friday. The full ritual is intended to be performed as nearly to the Full Moon as is possible.

On the final Friday, the Petitioner says, "*Now may the Lord and the Lady bind these two together, as I do bind them here.*"

The poppets are taken up and bound with red ribbon numerous times around both the poppets, tying the ends together around them. The petitioner then says, *“Now are they forever one, even as the Gods themselves. May each truly become a part of the other that, separated, they would be incomplete. So Mote It Be!”*

The bound poppets are once again placed beneath the sword and left for some time while the petitioner performs meditation. Once the ritual is completed, the poppets are to be wrapped in a clean white cloth and then stored carefully, never to be unbound.

About Sex Magick

Sex magick is a highly potent form of magick as it is dealing with the life forces. The orgasm is considered the most critical psycho-physiological event in humans. Sex magick is about harnessing the power of the orgasm and using that and the entire sexual experience for magickal purposes. Success in sex magick is determined by four criteria:

- i. All facets of extrasensory perception to be heightened in the course of sexual excitation.
- ii. The mind is to be in a state of hypersensitivity before, during as well as after the climax.
- iii. The consistency of peak sexual sensations aids access to the realm of the unconscious.
- iv. During the climax, an experience of timelessness or total ego dissolution may be experienced, as well as sensations of being 'absorbed' by the sexual partner

The act of sexual intercourse is the most natural method to generate the power required to perform effective magick. The entire process of copulation follows the process of beginning slowly and a gradual building up, increasing in rhythm, until the final climatic explosion. This act may be performed within the Circle either by a couple or by the entire coven, or even by a solitary witch.

Begin as usual with a period of meditation in order to focus on what you desire to achieve. Take up positions in couples and kneel facing one another. All close their eyes and gently caress their partner's bodies with light hands, stroking them gently. The object is to achieve sexual arousal and thus this may be performed for as long as necessary and is not to be rushed through. When arousal has reached its peak, the man is to sit cross-legged, the woman facing him and sitting on top of him, with the man's penis inside the woman's vagina. The couple is to rock gently, with the man maintaining his erection yet not reaching climax.

The focus is now to be concentrated on the object of the magick, the purpose for which it is being performed. This shift in focus may also help in delaying climax. This is the time in which both man and woman fix in their minds a picture of the desire and concentrate their energies on it. Feel the power build

within you as you focus it on your desire, and hold off the climax to the very last second possible. When the man knows he cannot resist the urge to orgasm, he can throw himself backwards to lie flat on the floor and release the power that built within him as he climaxes. He should see the power flashing as white light in a line. It is best if the woman can orgasm at the same time, even stimulating her clitoris simultaneously to achieve this. On climax, she too will fall forwards to lie over her sexual partner. The couple remains united this way for several minutes.

Of course, for the solitary witch, the act is performed through masturbation, and the longer the orgasm can be held off, the more power is generated for performing the magick. For couples, mutual masturbation or oral sex are two alternatives, both generating intense power.



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Conclusion: Your Journey Continues

This marks the end of this introductory book to Wicca and Witchcraft. You are now equipped with the necessary basics and the knowledge to take your first steps in the Craft and in understanding the fundamentals of the religion of Nature that is Wicca. The best thing you can do for yourself is to obtain as much knowledge as possible on the Craft and Wiccan religion to train yourself in the practice and to forge your journey with enjoyment and fulfilment.

Throughout your journey and through every step of the way, always bear in mind the Wiccan Rede, *“AN’ IT HARM NONE, DO WHAT THOU WILT.”*