



HackMaster



SpellSlinger's Guide

Book One



Unbeknownst to all but those learned in the arcane, magic flows dynamically and wends its way around and through Tellene. These unseen flows occasionally fuse and then disperse. With enough coalescence, they collect into channels, though this magical energy tends to gather and align more readily in proximity to certain topographical formations. Even the energy that Tellene seems to produce naturally will gravitate into and fortify the magical streams, enlarging and stabilizing them. Undetectable by most beings, only those with an Advanced Skill in Arcane Lore or higher may perceive them and then only under certain conditions: if within 100 yards, an unobstructed line of sight, and with 5 minutes of concentration ending with a successful competing check (versus the Veiled value – akin to an Observation versus Hide check – of the Ley Line at that location as described below). For the thaumaturgist that succeeds, the flow appears as a thin bar of color that twists its way through the air. Scholars of the arcane know these thin, colored flowing bars as Ley Lines.

Wizards have discovered methods of tapping into Ley Lines and employing their energy to improve the efficacy of their magical spells. Using a Ley Line in this manner can reduce the SP cost to cast, enhance and/or maintain a spell. Proximity to a Ley Line does not compel a mage to utilize its magical reservoir; a spellcaster may certainly opt to cast spells in the standard fashion.

These academics agree on and have definitively documented several types of Ley Lines.

The first appears as an azureous blue line that tends to follow the tips of mountain ranges and skirt the edges of cliffs. Diaphanous and as slim as a strand of spaghetti, this pale blue line twists and corkscrews around and around as it meanders along its path. Magic-users refer to this type as an *Air Line*. Gossamer Air Lines are challenging to locate, their Veiled score ranges from 75% to 150%.

The second type of Ley Line is rarely encountered by human mages. Shining a brilliant cerulean blue,

magicians dubbed it a *Water Line*, due to its connection to the ocean. Diffuse and meandering, Water Lines trace underwater currents invisible to the naked eye. Water Lines primarily reside in the deepest parts of the ocean. However, particularly large and stable whirlpools occasionally contain a Water Line at their epicenter, such phenomena plentifully extant in the perilous Sea of the Dead. This type of Ley Line generally has an even flow, with a Veiled score ranging from 50% to 75%, though their typically submerged locations make them exceedingly difficult for terrestrials to find.

The third form of Ley Line is barely visible, even to mages. A thin auburn line that hugs the dirt, only Tellene's largest forests contain these wonders. This type of Ley Line is really two parallel leys in the form of enormous, concentric cone-like spreads, radiating out from the center of the planet. These Ley Lines are in fact so large that mages only see a cross-section of their surface, which appears to them as a thin thread that runs in a vast (near) circle just at the outskirts of the forest it occupies with another concentric, smaller circle nearer the heart of the forest. This type of Ley Line, known as an *Earth Line*, has Veiled score ranging from 100% to 150%, although elves, gnomes and other sylvan-types gain a +10% bonus (+40% for pixie-fairies) when searching for these Ley Lines. Fairy and fairy-kin homes and communities will almost invariably be located in proximity to an Earth Line.

THE RAREST LEY LINES

In addition to the Earth, Air and Water Ley Lines, three other very exceptional Ley Lines exist, at least periodically.

The fourth Ley Line is referred to as a *Fire Line*. The difficulties in studying this phenomenon are fairly obvious. Glowing red, Fire Lines can only be found in the depths of volcanoes, lava rivers, geysers and other fire-related phenomena dangerous to view except from such a distance as to make standard detection less likely. Fire Lines glow a radiant vermilion and their Veiled score ranges from 100% to 150%, but if they can be seen



from closer range (25 feet or less), their Veiled score drops by a full 50%.

The fifth Ley Line exists along particularly large veins of native minerals, known as an *Ore Line*. Discovered first by dwarven mages, these shimmering-metallic lines can only be seen beneath the earth and are only ever discovered by wizards visiting active mining sites. Sages theorize that dwarves and other underground races that (typically unknowingly) live in close proximity to these lines for generations as they mine the ore absorb its energies into their bodies, imbuing them their greater resistance to magic. Ore Lines reputedly allow dwarven mages to most easily fashion magical arms and armor from the metal, however, this is a closely guarded secret if true at all.

Dwarves, being protective of their mines, always deny requests from outsiders to study their rich veins of metal in search of Ore Lines.

The final Ley Line is discussed in whispers, if at all. These brilliant opalescent Ley Lines were discovered in 643 YK by Kameron the Black, a necromancer who lived in Pekal. He discovered, quite by accident, that the death of a sentient being releases a large surge of energy that can be harnessed and exploited by magic-users. He kept the discovery to himself, and experimented with human sacrifice until one of his horrified apprentices reported these activities to the College of Magic. They arrived at Kameron's tower to find it virtually empty. Burning what remained to the ground, the Wizards decided to bury this knowledge as

Affects of Ley Lines on Magic Use

	One Ley Line	Vortex	Evran Knot	Double Vortex (4 Ley Lines)
Spell Point bonus (+ mage levels)	+3 levels	+6 levels	+9 levels	+15 levels
Base Spell Cost reduction	-(Spell Level) x2	-(Spell Level) x3	-(Spell Level) x4	-(Spell Level) x5
"Amping Up" cost reduction	- 5%	- 10%	- 20%	- 30%
Casting Time reduction (min 1s)	- 1s	- 2s	- 3s	- 4s
Opposed Save enhancement	+1	+3	+5	+7
Spell Cognition bonus	+1%	+3%	+5%	+10%
Magic Item Spell Point Usage discount	-25%	-50%	-75%	-100%
Ritual Time reduction	-20%	-40%	-60%	-80%
Increased Chance of Spell Mishap	see Extended Spell Volatility Rating chart			

LEY LINE AFFECTS EXPLAINED FOR THE LAY MAGE



Spell Point Bonus: When on a Ley Line, a mage has access to the spell points of a higher level mage. *For example, a 10th level mage on a single Ley Line may employ the Spell Points of a 13th level mage (1510 as opposed to his customary 1030). For accounting purposes, these bonus spell points are consumed first should the mage later exit the Ley Line.*

Base Spell Cost reduction: Ley Lines reduce the “Base SP Cost” of spells as listed in their description. *For example, Should a mage opt to cast Magic Projectile whilst on a single Ley Line, the Base SP Cost of the spell is reduced by (2nd level spell)x2 or 4 SP making it 56 instead of 60.*

“Amping Up” cost reduction [applies also to “Overamping”]: Should the above mage choose to Overamp his Magic Projectile to maximum effect (by adding 120 SP for an additional 4 projectiles), said cost is reduced by 5% (120x.05 or 6 SP). The total SP cost of the spell is now 56+114 or 110 SP instead of 120 SP. These discounts scale with the number of Ley Lines present.

Casting Time reduction: Spells cast on Ley Lines may be executed faster reducing the mage’s window of vulnerability (both whilst casting and incidentally lowering Spell Fatigue time). This is of primary benefit to higher level spellcasting as casting time cannot be reduced below one second.

Opposed Save enhancement: Spells cast whilst on a Ley Line are also more difficult for their targets to resist. When computing the saving throw threshold, a mage roll d20p adding *both* his level and the value in this row applicable to the number of Ley Lines he is situated upon.

Spell Cognition bonus: Being on a Ley Line adds to the mage’s ability to comprehend magical phenomena. This bonus is added to the values presented in the Mage Spell Cognition Table on p. 61 of the *Player’s Handbook*.

Magic Item Spell Point Usage discount: Certain magic items (wands most prominently) may have an option to limit charge depletion by expending SP. Whilst on a Ley Line, this can be favorably exploited. For example, a *Wand of Fire and Flame* requires 4 charges (or 2 charges + 60 SP) to produce a *Fireball*. On a single Ley Line, this option may be chosen for a 45 SP expenditure.

Extended Spell Volatility Rating

Spell Level	Normal Casting	Amped Up Casting (or normal casting on 1 Ley Line)	Overamped Casting (or normal casting on Vortex or “Amped up” casting on 1 Ley Line)	Danger Zone 1 (normal casting on Evran Knot, “Amped up” casting on Vortex or “Overamped Casting” on 1 Ley Line)	Danger Zone 2 (normal casting on Double Vortex, “Amped up” casting on Evran Knot or “Overamped Casting” on Vortex)	Danger Zone 3 (“Amped up” casting on Double Vortex or “Overamped Casting” on Evran Knot)	Danger Zone 4 (“Overamped Casting” on Double Vortex)
apprentice	1	3	6	10	15	21	28
journeyman	2	5	12	17	23	30	38
1	3	8	18	24	31	39	48
2	4	10	24	31	39	48	58
3	5	13	30	38	47	57	68
4	6	15	36	45	55	66	78
5	7	18	42	52	63	75	88
6	8	20	48	59	71	84	98
7	9	23	54	66	79	93	108
8	10	25	60	73	87	102	118
9	11	28	66	80	95	111	128
10	12	30	72	87	103	120	138
11	13	33	78	94	111	129	148
12	14	35	84	101	119	138	158
13	15	38	90	108	127	147	168
14	16	40	96	115	135	156	178
15	17	43	102	122	143	165	188
16	18	45	108	129	151	174	198
17	19	48	114	136	159	183	208
18	20	50	120	143	167	192	218
19	21	53	126	150	175	201	228
20	22	55	132	157	183	210	238

Extended Spell Failure Checks	
Spell Volatility Rating	Threshold (INT+d20p Save Roll)
1-4	14
5-14	15
15-24	16
25-34	17
35-44	18
45-54	19
55-64	20
65-74	21
75-84	22
85-94	23
95-104	24
105-114	25
115-124	26
125-134	27
135-144	28
145-154	29
155-164	30
165-174	31
175-184	32
185-194	33
195-204	34
205-214	35
215-224	36
225-234	37
235-244	38
Bonuses to Spell Failure Check Rolls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elves get a +1 bonus to all rolls (<i>as do Pixie-Fairies</i>) <i>One's Arcane Lore Mastery is also emminantly useful in avoiding spell failure. Apply the following bonus based on mastery level of the caster:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Arcane Lore +1 • Advanced Arcane Lore +2 • Expert Arcane Lore +3 • Master Arcane Lore +4 	

completely as they could. The apprentice disappeared quietly one night, his fate known only to the College's assassins. The others swore a god oath of silence, banning any discussion of the Ley Line that Kameron had discovered and referred to in some of his remaining notes as 'Blood Lines' or more uncommonly



EXTENDED VOLATILITY

Though Ley Lines offer many advantages, they are not without their drawbacks. The concentration of magical energies induces far greater volatility in the dweomeric field. Practitioners of the magical arts, most notably those with but a poor to middling comprehension of the powers into which they blithely tap, would be wise to respect the invigorated energies present upon a Ley Line. Even those gifted with puissant aptitude should beware the roiling maelstrom present within an Evran Knot.

The practical upshot is that all spellcasting becomes inherently more volatile upon a Ley Line and exponentially more so with each additional line (e.g. Vortices, Evran Knots and Double Vortices). Each Ley Line shifts a spell's volatility one column right in GMG Table 4.2: Spell Volatility Rating. As it is likely my admonitions will be disregarded as the alarmist ranting of an fainthearted old man, I have here published an determinatively accurate extension of said table incorporating the effects of Ley Lines.

As incautious spellcasters are likely to push the envelope and risk spell failure, it is incumbent upon any thaumaturgist to refresh his understanding of the risks involved by reading my uncredited dissertation on Spell Mishaps appearing as Chapter Four of the GameMaster's Guide.

'Soul Lines'. Kameron the Black was never found, yet Blood Lines persist to this day, existing only for a few days after the ritualistic murder of a specially prepared sentient being. The Line itself runs straight up to the heavens, making it only useful while standing at a very specific point (barring levitation), unless created over another Ley Line (thus creating a Vortex or even Evran Knot, as described below) or when created in tandem with another Blood Line. If two lives are taken a distance apart at the same time using the same precise rituals, a Blood Line will form running between the two murder sites. Such a Ley Line will last for 28 days, rather than only 2-4 as in a singular Blood Line.

The different Ley Lines of Tellene very seldom touch one another, but when they do, there occurs a phenomenon called a *Vortex*. At that point, visible to those that can see it (via Arcane Lore check as described above), there gleams an incomprehensible tangle of multi-hued energy about the size of a wagon.

When three or more Lines intersect, they cause a phenomenon known as an *Evran Knot*. Evran was the mage who first discovered these massive power sources.

He found an island off of Cosdol where Water, Air and Earth Ley Lines met. At that point, there was an unfathomable tangle of energy about the size of a cottage. Evran found that, at this point, the three Ley Lines complemented one another's power, allowing him to draw on arcane energy sufficient to cast any of his spells with minimal effort.

A mage searching for a particular Ley Line has a non-cumulative chance per day of locating one if searching in the proper terrain. For Earth Lines the chance is 5%, for Air Lines 3%, and for Water Lines 1%. If the magic-user has a map leading to a Ley Line, then the percentages given above are multiplied by his Intelligence Modifier (from skills). Thus, a mage with a map and 16 Intelligence searching for an Air Line has a non-cumulative 9% (3% times +3=9%) chance per day of finding it. Vortices and Evran Knots can only be found by first locating a Ley Line, then following it to an intersection (and successfully locating the second line). Note the difficulty here arises because the mage cannot know when an interesting line will appear other than educated guesswork (based on terrain changes, perhaps), luck or both. Maps make this location far easier, of course, since the mage will not only have a better chance to locate, but also will know roughly where to search in the first place.

Powerful mages on Tellene often try to build their towers and homes on Ley Lines in order to be able to use them when the need arises. In fact, fierce competition can spring up when two or more mages each desire to build on the same Vortex. A player attempting to homestead on a Ley Line, Vortex or Evran Knot will find himself challenged by a number of wizards. The draw of these seemingly inexhaustible sources of energy is powerful. Even the weakest of mages might take great risks in order to secure one. A magic-user living on an Evran Knot can expect to be beset frequently by challengers.

USE OF LEY LINES

Once found, a mage can set about taking advantage of the Ley Line's properties. In order to use the Line (or Vortex, etc), a mage needs to stand on the Line (or within the intersection) itself. Those with the Supernatural Affinity Talent can also use the Ley Line if they are lucky enough to have a companion point out where to stand (or if accomplished enough in Arcane Lore so as to discern the Line without the aid of another).

Additional Spell Points are gained immediately (as is the increased chance of mishap). Other powers must be learned through study, trial and error. This works precisely as a spell cognition check (and yes, the Ley Line spell cognition stimulus itself assists if a mage masters the power of improved spell cognition prior to

the particular check). After a month of experiment, practice and study, the mage can make a cognition check. If successful, he has unlocked one *random* power of the Ley Line (i.e., the mage does NOT choose which power he has mastered). There is no penalty for trying again the next month.

Roll (d8)	Additional Ley Line Benefit Unlocked
1	Base Spell Cost reduction
2	"Amping Up" cost reduction
3	Casting Time reduction (min 1s)
4	Opposed Save enhancement
5	Spell Cognition bonus
6	Magic Item Spell Point Usage discount
7	Ritual Time reduction
8	Roll twice and treat subsequent 8s as no benefit
If a die result indicates a previously unlocked benefit, the spellcaster has not succeeded in learning anything new	

NEW TALENTS

ESPY LEY LINE (5 BP)

This talent provides the character with a heightened sensitivity to the presence of Ley Lines. In practice, it provides a +1% bonus to the chance of locating a Ley Line. It is of particular use when equipped with a map as the mage's Intelligence Ability Mastery Die Roll Modifier then *multiplies* this bonus.

This talent may be taken multiple times to gain an ever greater likelihood to espy Ley Lines. Each subsequent purchase costs 5 BP more than the previous one (10, 15, 20...)

LEY LINE VOLATILITY ABATEMENT (10 BP)

Possessors of this talent have an intuitive non-cognitive appreciation of the eccentric magic field warping effects of Ley Lines and thus are capable of ameliorating the initial tranche of heightened dweomeric volatility induced by a Ley Line.

As such, any spells they cast — ones normally subject to heightened proximal volatility — are treated as one increment less volatile. For example, spells he casts in the presence of a single Ley Line are not subject to any additional volatility above and beyond that which he himself introduces by bolstering the baseline effects of a chosen spell (e.g. 'amping up' or 'overamping'). Similarly, spells he casts on an Evran Knot (ordinarily a three column shift in increased volatility) are treated equivalently to a non-gifted caster on a Vortex (a two column volatility shift).

NEW PROFICIENCY

REGULATE SPELL VOLATILITY (10 BP)

This procedural training provides an arcane spellcaster with a slower but surer means of executing a magical effect. By employing an alternate thaumaturgic preamble, the mage can better modulate the initial flow and thus tamp down the chance of a particular spell going wildly awry. It is of particular use to an otherwise unremarkable practitioner of arcane lore not blessed with a gifted intellect as it can permit him to better harness complex enchantments at the bleeding edge of his capabilities.

In practice, this proficiency permits the mage to add +1 to his Spell Failure Check roll when casting a spell (see Table 4-3 on p. 85 of the GameMaster's Guide) in exchange for adding one second to his casting time. Said bonus greatly increases the complexity of spells he can manage — a notable boon when “overramping” higher level spells. Possessor's of this proficiency are far less likely to suffer spell mishaps and can dare to attempt otherwise dangerous magical exploits.

This proficiency may be built upon by re-taking the proficiency at an additional cost of 5 BP per increment (i.e. Regulate Spell Volatility II can be purchased for 15 BP after Regulate Spell Volatility is acquired thus providing a +2 bonus to Spell Failure Check rolls but requiring an addition two seconds casting time).

It is not mandatory to employ this technique when casting spells. The mage can certainly opt to cast relatively safe dweomers without the additional casting time demanded by this proficiency reserving its safeguards for truly volatile magicks.