

Septennial

A Wizard School RPG

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Part I

Playing the Game

Chapter 2: Tests & Tribulations

The life of a student wizard is filled with tests. Midterm tests, weekly class assignments, and the dreaded end of semester exams. But those aren't the sort of tests this chapter is about.

For in truth, a wizard's skills, both magical and mundane, are being tested for more often than they realise. Whenever they struggle to control a turbulent spell, whenever they hurl a ball down the field after school, whenever they try to convince a teacher that a hippogriff really *did* eat their homework. They may not be receiving a grade for their work, but they are still calling upon the depths of their knowledge and practice. It is these everyday tests that are the subject of this chapter.

Tests

When a character attempts an important task at which they may succeed or fail, the GM calls for a test. The GM should declare which skill the test will use, and the target number (TN) of the test. The target number is the difficulty of the test—the higher it is, the harder the test.

To make a test, roll two dice, as shown in the Test Dice by Year table, and add them together with your relevant skill. If your total is greater than or equal to the TN, you succeed. You manage what you were trying to do, and get what you want. Otherwise, you fail. Your attempt was unsuccessful, and you suffer the consequences.

Students are young and still coming into their prime, so, regardless of their skills, their abilities are constantly improving. As such, the dice you roll for a test are dependent upon your year level, and improve over time, according to the Test Dice by Year table.

Test Dice by Year

Year	Dice	Average
1	2d6	7
2	1d6+1d8	8
3	2d8	9
4	1d8+1d10	10
5	2d10	11
6	1d10+1d12	12
7	2d12	13

Target Numbers

A target number (TN) represents the difficulty of a test. It is assigned by the GM based on the nature of the situation and the feasibility of the task the character is attempting.

Much as a student becomes generally more competent as they progress through their schooling, the magnitude of the problems they face will also increase. As such, the TNs of the tasks a student is attempting should also increase. In truth, they may also still face many of the same challenges as they did in previous years, but those tasks have now become routine for them and thus unworthy of narrative attention.

The Test Dice by Year table provides the average result of the dice rolled for a test at each year level, which may be of use to the GM in determining an appropriate TN. An unskilled student of the appropriate year level will succeed on a test with this TN just slightly more than half the time. A skilled student has a greater chance of success, and the rank of a student's skills will also improve over time. As such, a skilled student has a good chance of success at more difficult tasks, particularly in higher year

levels. Remember, however, that there will always be many skills that each student does not learn. As such, students can still be challenged by TNs similar to those presented in the table, and these will simply give skilled students an opportunity to shine.

Using Tests

Only the player characters are ever called to make tests. When a character run by the GM acts against a player character, the player character can be called to make a test to resist or avoid the action. The skill used depends on how they try to resist. For example, if a hippogriff swings its talons at them, they might test Fight to block it with their staff, test Athletics to leap out of the way, or test an appropriate magic skill to cast a defensive spell in reaction.

Be careful not to call for a test when it's not necessary. If an action is a simple one that the character should be able to routinely perform, such as walking through a door or ransacking a room for something that isn't hidden, it doesn't require a test. If a character attempts something impossible, such as jumping over the moon or fast-talking the headmaster into giving up his position to a first year student, they fail without a test being rolled. Lastly, if there is no penalty for failure, there is no need for a test. If the character will keep on trying until they succeed, there's no need to make the player keep rolling tests.

Injury & Healing

Though safer than many places, school is never a totally safe environment. Magical mishaps, accidents on the sports field, brawls between students, an invasion by a dark wizard—many things can lead to students being injured.

Damage

When something happens that would injure someone, it does some amount of damage, determined by rolling some dice. Unless tests, even non-player characters may roll for damage. Spells, weapons, and attacks by mundane or magical each specify how much damage they deal. In other cases, the

GM simply chooses an appropriate number of dice to roll for damage.

Toughness

All characters and creatures have a toughness, which determines how well they can withstand damage. Creatures with a higher toughness suffer less severe wounds from the same amount of damage, and can withstand greater amounts of damage without dying. By default, all humans, including all player characters, have a toughness of 4, though this may be modified by virtues or flaws. Non-humans can have a much wider range of values for toughness.

Wounds

Injury, to player or non-player characters, is represented in the form of wounds. Each instance of one or more damage inflicts a wound upon the target. Wounds have a severity—light, moderate, severe, incapacitating, or lethal—and a description. The severity is determined by comparing the damage dealt to the target's toughness, while the description is provided by the GM based on what seems narratively appropriate. The description should reflect the severity, and should specify at least where on the target's body the wound has been dealt.

A character may only have a limited number of wounds of each severity: two each of light, moderate, and severe wounds, and one incapacitating wound. If they would take a wound in excess of this at any severity, they suffer a more severe wound instead. A character with any fatal wounds is dead.

Inflicting Wounds

To determine the severity of a wound, compare the damage dealt to target's toughness. Damage up to the target's toughness deals a light wound. Damage exceeding this, but not exceeding twice the target's toughness, deals a moderate wound. Up to three times the target's toughness deals a severe wound, and up to four times the target's toughness deals an incapacitating wound. Damage exceeding four times the target's toughness is fatal. The Wound Ranges by Toughness table provides a handy reference for some common values of toughness.

Wound Ranges by Toughness

Toughness	Light	Moderate	Severe	Incapacitating	Fatal
0	—	—	—	—	1+
1	1	2	3	4	5+
2	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9+
3	1–3	4–6	7–9	10–12	13+
4	1–4	5–8	9–12	13–16	17+
5	1–5	6–10	11–15	16–20	21+

If damage would inflict a wound of a certain severity, but the character already has their full allotment of wounds at that severity, they take a wound of their next available greater severity instead. This may cause a fatal wound if a character already has an incapacitating wound.

The description of a wound, including where on the body it is inflicted, is ultimately left at the discretion of the GM, as influenced by the severity and any narrative factors. However, if a player wishes to wound a particular part of an opponent's body, they may declare their intention to the GM to do so. The GM may simply allow them to do so, call for a test to do so, or make an existing test to hit the target more difficult, due to the complication in aiming for a particular location. Again, the narrative should inform this choice: it's easier to hit a particular arm with a sword than it is with a fireball hurled from the opposite end of a field.

Wound Penalties

Any character who suffers a fatal wound immediately dies. Characters who suffer an incapacitating wound are rendered unconscious. They cannot be roused for at least a few minutes, unless the wound is healed, and even when roused, cannot achieve anything without assistance as long as they still have an incapacitating wound. Lesser wounds—light, moderate, and severe—carry two penalties for player characters.

Firstly, wounds apply a penalty to a character's focus, as the pain makes casting spells more diffi-

Wound Penalties

Severity	Focus Penalty	Test Penalty
Light	–1	–3
Moderate	–2	–6
Severe	–3	–9

cult. This may require a character to lose concentration on some spells when they are wounded. It is, however, possible to push through this pain with increased mental effort: a character's overchannel is increased by the same amount as any focus lost due to wounds. Ignoring or reducing the focus penalty for any reason also reduces the amount of overchannel gained.

Secondly, wounds apply a penalty to all tests that their description would indicate they should penalise (as adjudicated by the GM). For example, a wounded leg would penalise tests made to run, and a wounded arm would penalise tests made to use a sword. This will usually only penalise physical tests, not mental ones. It should not penalise tests to use magic, as that is covered by the focus penalty.

The penalties caused by wounds of each severity are shown in the Wound Penalties table. Wound penalties never stack: only the greatest relevant wound penalty ever applies. For the focus penalty, this will always be based on the character's most severe wound. For the test penalty, this may be based on a less severe wound, if the more severe wound would not impede the relevant action.

Non-player characters can be wounded in the same way as player characters. As non-player characters can never make tests, the penalty from a non-player character's wounds is instead applied as a bonus to a player character's tests, when such tests might benefit from the wound. For example, a test made to chase after a creature with a wounded leg, or to sword fight against a person with a wounded arm, would gain a bonus from the most severe relevant wound. GMs are not required to track focus for non-player spellcasters, so this penalty is not applied numerically, but GMs are nonetheless encouraged to bear the effect of wounds in mind.

Wound Recovery Time

Severity	Recovery Time
Light	1 day
Moderate	1 week
Severe	1 month
Incapacitating	1 month

Healing & Recovery

Recovering naturally from wounds is a slow process. It requires some period of time, after which the wound is reduced the next-lowest severity (and likely has its description adjusted to match). The recovery period is given in the Wound Recovery Time table. For more severe wounds, natural healing will also require first aid and some care not exacerbate the wound during the healing period: a black eye will be little problem, but a broken leg will require splinting and the use of a crutch for a while.

Thankfully, the ready availability of magic means that students are rarely required to recover from any but light wounds naturally. The school nurse can always heal even incapacitating wounds within a day. However, while the school nurse will never decline a student treatment, their ministrations often come with a number of questions about how a student's wounds were sustained. Students wishing to avoid their activities being scrutinised might, therefore, wish to avoid the nurse. Healing can instead be sought from students studying restoration, but this can come with its own problems: a sub-standard quality of healing, or a price demanded in exchange.

Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Magic

Learning magic isn't easy. Student wizards would need to spend seven years at school if it was. Casting spells is an exercise in precise gestures, carefully recited incantations, and intense mental focus. Enchanting is arguably even more complicated. This chapter, therefore, shall present the cliff notes on the matter. That is, the rules for the use of magic in game.

Currencies of Magic

There are two essential "currencies" of magic, used to determine the magnitude of a magical effect that a wizard can produce: focus and mana. Focus represents the basic spellcasting ability a wizard always has available, and also their ability to concentrate upon ongoing spell effects. Mana is a pool of excess mental energy that a wizard can utilise to push themselves and produce more powerful effects than their basic focus would allow. A third statistic, overchannel, determines how much mana a wizard can utilise on a given spell. Focus, mana, and overchannel are all so essential to a wizard that they are not taught in specific classes, but generally trained in all practical activities students perform. As such, they advance automatically with a student's current year level, as shown in the Magical Power by Year table.

Focus

Casting spells requires intense mental focus. Each spell has a focus cost, which may be modified by various factors. In order to cast a spell, a student must be able to muster the requisite focus. Focus is not consumed by casting a spell—it is simply a threshold that must be met. A student's base focus, as given in the Magical Power by Year table, thus

Magical Power by Year

Year	Focus	Overchannel	Mana
1	3	2	6
2	4	2	8
3	4	3	10
4	5	3	12
5	5	4	14
6	6	4	16
7	6	5	18

determines the maximum difficulty of spell they can cast without extra effort or other aid.

Concentration

Some spells with ongoing effects take ongoing concentration to maintain. After a student completes the casting of such a spell their focus is reduced by the concentration cost of the spell, for as long as they wish to maintain the effect. A student may cease concentrating on any spell at any time, and it immediately ends if they do so. They also cease concentrating if they go to sleep or otherwise fall unconscious.

A student may concentrate on multiple spells simultaneously, and their concentration costs stack to further reduce their focus. However, a student may never concentrate on so much as to reduce their base focus below 0. They must cease concentrating on one of their spells to recover some focus if this would occur.

Mana

Mana is a kind of magical mental energy that wizards can expend to power their magic, allowing more powerful effects than their focus allows them to readily produce. The Magical Power by Year table shows a student's maximum mana, which they may expend points from. They may recover all their expended mana with an hour of rest and relaxation. This cannot be done during classes, but the lunch break affords sufficient rest as long as students refrain from doing anything too taxing. A student cannot rest to recover while mana while concentrating on any spells.

Overchannelling

The primary use of mana is provide additional power to spells that a student cannot cast with their base focus alone. Whenever casting a spell, a student may spend an amount mana up to their overchannel in order to increase their focus for that spell by the mana spent. The increased focus only benefits the initial casting of the spell—it has no effect upon concentration.

Bound Mana

Mana is also essential in enchanting. Enchanting is the art of binding a portion of one's mana into a physical object. Binding mana firstly requires you to expend the requisite amount of mana as you enchant the object. While the object remains enchanted, your maximum mana is reduced by the amount you bound into the enchantment. This reduces the amount you restore when you rest, as well as the maximum amount you may hold when restoring mana by any other means.

When you rest and recover mana, you may reclaim mana from any number of objects you have enchanted, ending the enchantment on that item. The enchantment ends, but your maximum and current mana are restored. If an enchanted object has been destroyed or disenchanting, you automatically recover its mana when you next rest.

Some enchanted items allow spending bound mana to power the enchantment upon the item. Bound mana spent by an item remains bound in that item, and still reduces your maximum mana. When you rest and recover mana, all your enchanted items also recover all the mana they have

spent, unless you reclaim the mana from them during that rest.

Spells

Most magic is performed by casting spells. Each spell a wizard knows is a particular series of incantations, gestures, and mental exercises that harness magical energies to produce a particular effect. Spells are normally learned in classes, though a few minor ones may already be known by students when they arrive at school.

Most spells have a similar set of requirements for casting them, although certain spells will specify that they vary in these requirements. Firstly, a student must have sufficient focus, by overchannelling if necessary. Secondly, most spells require the caster to speak an incantation and perform the required gestures, to shape the arcane energies being harnessed. As such, the student must be able to speak and make sound, and must have one unrestrained hand which is either empty, or only holding a casting tool. Thirdly, most spells require a few seconds to cast. As such, most spells are too slow to be cast in reaction to immediate danger, such as falling from a tower or having a fireball flying at you.

In most instances, simply casting spells does not require a test. Characters are assumed to be able to cast any spell taught in a class they have completed, given sufficient focus. Tests are only called for when it is uncertain that a spell will produce the desired effect, most commonly when another character is opposing it. For example, a test may be required to hit a moving target with a fireball, to teleport away from danger in time, or to make an illusion sufficiently convincing to fool someone.

One exception to this rule is when a character attempts to use magic from a class they are taking, but have not yet finished. In this case, the GM may call for a test to perform the magic at all, with the TN influenced by how far the student is through the semester.

Part II

Character Creation

Chapter 4: Character Creation Guide

Chapter 5: Virtues & Flaws

Chapter 6: Talents

Chapter 7: Skills

The success of a wizard is not determined simply by the spells they know and the magics they can perform. Equally important is their skill at wielding that magic, and even their skill in the more mundane aspects of life. It's one thing to be able to throw fire, but without the ability to hit what you're aiming at, you're going to be burning down a lot of buildings you didn't mean to. Similarly, while magic can let you take on someone else's face and voice, doing so is pretty useless if you're a terrible actor.

As such, classes don't simply teach students new techniques; they always contain a practical component to allow students to practise their skills. Furthermore, schools encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities outside class hours, to help them develop into well-rounded individuals. All in all, there are many skills, both magical and mundane, that students can develop throughout their education. These are shown in the List of Skills table, while details of each skill are provided in the following sections.

For Craft, Lore, and Perform, many different versions of each skill exist. The skill descriptions below list a number of possible versions of each skill, but a player may select any version they can imagine with the GM's permission. A student may have a different rank for each version of the skill. For example, they may have 6 ranks in Craft (woodcarving), 4 ranks in Craft (glassblowing), and 0 ranks in all other versions of the skill. Each class or extracurricular that advances these skills will specify a version of the skill, or may allow you to advance any one version of the skill of your choice.

Advancing Skills

To advance a skill a student has to practice it, either in class or during their extracurricular activi-

List of Skills

Mundane	Magic
Aim	Conjuration
Athletics	Divination
Beast Handling	Enchanting
Charm	Illusion
Craft (various)	Kinetics
Fight	Metamagic
Investigation	Necromancy
Leadership	Restoration
Lore (various)	Sorcery
Observe	Transmutation
Perform (various)	
Rhetoric	
Subterfuge	

ties. As such, experience (XP) is tracked independently for each skill, and a student must earn XP in a particular skill in order to advance that skill. All skills begin at rank 0, and their rank increases by 1 for every 4 XP earned in that skill. The skill's rank is used when making tests with that skill, being added to the result of the dice roll.

Characters can earn XP for skills by receiving advances in those skills. Each class or extracurricular will advance one or more skills. However, even the most dedicated study can only improve a skill so far. As such, there are diminishing returns for advancing a single skill multiple times in the same year. The first advance earned in a skill each year grants 4 XP. The second advance earned in the same skill in the same year grants 2 XP. The third advance in the same year grants only 1 XP.

Fourth and further advances in the same year grant no benefit.

When roleplaying part way through a semester, skill advances from classes and extracurriculars should be considered to be earned halfway through the semester, at the beginning of the mid-semester break. That is, if playing before the mid-semester break, characters have not yet earned XP from that semester's advances. If playing during the break, or during the second half of the semester, they have earned that XP, and any corresponding increases in their skill ranks.

Optional Rule: Using Spare XP

If your campaign progresses through the years very slowly, it may take a long time to see the benefit of advancing skills multiple times per year. It takes until second year to see any benefit for advancing a skill twice per year, and until third year to see any benefit from advancing it three times per year. If you wish to provide some earlier benefit for this, you may allow players to benefit from their spare XP in skills.

Each point of spare XP in a skill (XP earned since last increasing the skill's rank, up to 3) allows a player to take +1 with on a test roll using that skill, once per session. This may not be used more than once on the same test, and must be declared before the dice are rolled. Doing this does not consume the XP.

Mundane Skills

Mundane skills are those used in mundane actions—actions that would be possible even for those without magical talent or training. They are rarely taught in classes at magical schools, and most students will develop them primarily through their extracurricular activities.

Aim

Used to hit distant targets with something, be it thrown by hand, hit by a bat, or loosed from a bow. Spells are usually targeted using the appropriate

magic skill, but some classes may teach students to aim them using their mundane ability.

Athletics

Used to run, jump, climb, swim, hike, ski, and generally to get about the place. While many sports will require skill in Aim or Fight, most sports depend heavily, even primarily, on Athletics.

Beast Handling

Used to understand beasts and interact with them: to calm them, tame them, ride them, train them, and command them. While normally applied to animals, magical or mundane, some magical plants and fungi have sufficient will and motility that this skill can be useful in dealing with them.

Charm

Used to make people like you: to befriend them, to build rapport with them, or to disarm them with a smile. While Rhetoric is used to make a persuasive argument, people who like you enough will often take your suggestions without any argument required.

Craft

Used to make things with your hands. Each Craft skill is learned separately, and represents the ability to practise a particular craft. Available crafts include the following:

- Blacksmithing
- Carpentry
- Cooking
- Glassblowing
- Jewellery
- Masonry
- Pottery
- Seamstressing
- Woodcarving

Fight

Used to engage in hand-to-hand combat, either with weapons or without. This involves both harming your opponent and preventing them from harming you.

Investigation

Used to uncover things by extended investigative effort. This includes rifling a desk drawer for a document, ransacking a room for equipment, searching a library for pertinent information, or even unearthing a piece of juicy gossip.

Leadership

Used to command obedience from a position of authority or superiority. This includes leading subordinates, whether they follow you willingly or due to your institutionally invested authority. It also includes intimidating those who are physically or socially inferior to you.

Lore

Used to know and recall information. Each Lore skill is learned separately, and represents knowledge of a different field. Available fields of knowledge include the following (knowledge of magic is covered by magic skills):

- Botany
- Geography
- History
- Medicine
- Mycology
- Philosophy
- Politics
- Religion
- Zoology

Observe

Used to notice things, by vision, hearing, or even smell. This includes spotting something out of place, such as spotting a piece of lab equipment out of place, or hearing someone sneaking up on you. It also includes watching people carefully, such that you might pick up on signs they're hiding something or lying.

Perform

Used to entertain people by putting on a show. Each Lore skill is learned separately, and represents a different form of entertainment. Available methods of performance include the following:

- Acting
- Dancing
- Drums
- Flute
- Singing
- Trumpet
- Violin

Rhetoric

Used to persuade people with reason, logic, debate, and eloquence. While Charm can make someone like you, Rhetoric can make them agree with you, even despite how they might feel about you personally. Rhetoric is also used for most writing, a useful skill for a student.

Subterfuge

Used to conceal your covert activities. This includes sneaking, hiding, stealing, smuggling, and even lying.

Magic Skills

Magical skills represent a student's mastery of the various magical disciplines—they are primarily developed by attending classes. They are primarily used in the actual practice of magic, though each doubles as a Lore skill concerning magic of the relevant discipline.

Conjuration

Used to create something from nothing. Objects and creatures created by novice conjurers are usually temporary, but skilled conjurers will learn how to make their creations permanent.

Divination

Used to obtain information by magic. Divination allows a wizard to scry on remote locations, sense things beyond normal perception, pierce illusions, and otherwise to discover whatever they cannot learn mundanely.

Enchanting

Used to bind magical power into objects. Enchanting can invest objects with the ability to generate magical effects independently of a wizard, among other things. It is also used to create casting tools and potions.

Illusion

Used to alter the perceptions or even the minds of people and animals. Illusion can cause people to see things that don't exist, to perceive one thing as another, or not to notice something at all. In its more insidious uses, it can affect minds directly, changing emotions, memories, or beliefs.

Kinetics

Used to manipulate motion and forces. The most obvious application of kinetics is simply telekinesis. However, it can also be applied to allow flight, warding, teleportation, and more.

Metamagic

Used to manipulate magic itself. Metamagic spells often affect other spells, empowering them, cancelling them, or otherwise altering them. They may also affect mana itself, generating it, or funnelling more of it into a single effect.

Necromancy

Used to manipulate the dead, or to bring about death in the living. In the former application, necromancy allows the animation of undead or

communion with spirits. In the latter application, it directly weakens, wounds, or kills, without any need for the fire of sorcery or the bludgeon of kinetics. Necromancy is perhaps the most feared form of magic, and its use is often highly regulated.

Restoration

Used to restore things to a previous state, or to enhance them to a better state. Restoration is most well known for its use in healing people, but it can also heal animals and plants, or even repair damaged or destroyed objects. Used for enhancement, it can make a person faster or stronger, make a plant grow faster, or make a sword sharper.

Sorcery

Used to create or manipulate heat, light, sound, lightning, and similar energies. Detractors of sorcery say it's nothing but throwing fireballs, and it's true that the discipline often favours power over finesse. But modern sorcery also encompasses the control, containment, and destruction of energy, and thus has a much wider variety of uses. Including warding against fireballs.

Transmutation

Used to transform things into other things. Transmutation may affect nonliving things, such as turning lead into gold; living things, such as turning people into animals; or turn one into the other, such as turning a person to stone.

Part III

The Curriculum

Chapter 8: Extracurricular Activities

Chapter 9: Conjunction

Chapter 10: Divination

Chapter 11: Enchanting

Chapter 12: Illusion

Chapter 13: Kinetics

Chapter 14: Metamagic

Chapter 15: Necromancy

Chapter 16: Restoration

Chapter 17: Sorcery

Chapter 18: Transmutation

Chapter 19: Spells & Enchantments

Spells

Enchantments

Spell Modifiers

