30 Alchemist (Ver 1.0)

Almost all natural chemicals can be combined into a variety of useful mixtures by expert hands. The potions which will be in most demand by characters will be those that affect the bodily functions of humanoids. The effects of these potions range from stimulation and depression of emotions to deadly poisons. In a sense, alchemy is a "poor man's magic"; it is more cost-efficient in affecting the actions of beings than the use of mana, albeit not as easily applied to the victim.

There are five main areas of study of alchemy. The first is that of chemical analysis, the ability to determine the effects of ingestion or application of a given liquid substance. The others are: standard chemicals, medicines and antidotes, poisons (including venoms) and potions. The creation of a potion requires the aid of an Adept.

As a character gains experience in the field of alchemy, they will increase the efficacy of the mixtures they produce. The character will also decrease the cost of goods (to manufacture).

30.1 Restrictions

An alchemist must know how to read and write in one language if they wish to advance beyond Rank 0.

30.2 Benefits

An alchemist gains the ability to analyse chemicals at Rank 0.

An alchemist may identify a liquid by its type (e.g. medicine, poison). If the liquid is not a common one, the alchemist must spend (110 - 10 × Rank) minutes using the proper equipment to analyse the liquid's type.

If a liquid to be analysed is particularly well-known to the alchemist (such as water or wine), they will recognise it almost immediately. If an alchemist wishes to determine the exact nature of a not readily identifiable substance, the GM rolls D100. If the roll is equal to or less than (Perception + 8 × Rank), the alchemist is told the common name of the substance in question (e.g. hemlock, quicksilver). If the roll is greater than the success percentage, the GM either informs the alchemist that they are not sure or gives an incorrect answer. The greater the roll, the more likely the GM is to give false information.

An alchemist can injure themselves while working with dangerous chemicals.

Whenever an alchemist uses or analyses a liquid with potential injurious effects, there is a chance that some of the substance will come in contact with their person. The GM incorporates the accident chance into any other alchemy-related percentile roll; should there not be one, they roll D100. The chance of no accident is (70 + 2 × Rank + Manual Dexterity)%. If the roll is within the span of numbers for accident, the alchemist suffers from the chemical. A roll of 100 always causes an accident.

Example An alchemist character with a Manual Dexterity of 17 and of Rank 3 would have a 7% chance of failure. Any roll from 94 to 100 will cause the alchemist to have an accident.

The GM will determine the exact effects upon the unfortunate character. The minimum damage will be from formaldehyde type chemicals, which will cause about 1 Damage Point and causes blisters. The maximum damage from a non-magical liquid will be from something on the order of non-dilute hydrochloric acid, which will cause about 12 Damage Points per pulse, and possibly permanent bone and tissue damage. The effects of certain chemicals are described in the following cases. Unless either the GM or the player have a fair knowledge of chemistry, the alchemist should restrict themselves to common liquids.

If the alchemist is dabbling with dangerous chemicals without using the proper equipment (see §30.3), double the chance of accident. If an alchemist is working in their lab they may prevent damage due to chemicals after the first pulse (unless they are incapacitated during the first pulse) by pouring the appropriate counter-agent upon the affected area.

If a combination of chemicals forms a gas or a solid, the character's Agility value is substituted for their Manual Dexterity when rolling for accident.

An alchemist can mix standard chemicals beginning at Rank 3, and may add one additional ability to their repertoire at Ranks 5, 7 and 9.

An alchemist chooses their additional ability from the following: medicines and antidotes, poisons (including venoms) and potions.

The ability to mix standard chemicals allows the alchemist to produce mixtures which can prove useful on expeditions.

An alchemist may produce well-known chemical combinations (e.g. oil and vinegar, water and anything) at any Rank. The standard chemicals ability allows the alchemist to perform most distillations and extractions, and mix the simplest of compounds.

For example, an alchemist can produce Greek Fire and methane with the standard chemicals ability. The components for 12 ounces of Greek Fire (enough to fill a grenado) cost 600 Silver Pennies. Enough methane to fill a grenado can be manufactured at a cost of 300 Silver Pennies. If a creature is directly hit by a grenado filled with Greek Fire, that creature will suffer [D + 7] Damage Points per Pulse until the flames are extinguished (the virtue of Greek Fire as a weapon is that it sticks to the target). A partial hit will cause [D - 3] Damage Points per Pulse; if a shield is interposed between target and grenado, the shield catches fire, though the intended target suffers no more than 2 Damage Points. A methane grenado creates a ball of fire in the hex in which it detonates and the adjacent six hexes. Any creature in one of those hexes will suffer [D - 3] Damage Points, but will be able to avoid further damage by exiting the fire hexes (methane is not a persistent inflammable).

Whenever an alchemist wishes to manufacture standard chemicals, they must spend [D + 7] hours in a laboratory and pay for the components. The quantity mixed does not affect the time required, but an alchemist is limited to the manufacture of one end product during a given laboratory session.

An alchemist can produce standard chemicals for the use of local businessmen (e.g. embalming fluid for the undertaker), and earn between 50 and 75 Silver Pennies per full week of labour. Alternately, they may produce chemicals which are likely to be put to illegal uses (e.g. a corrosive for iron) or manufacture addictives (e.g. cocaine, heroin). The alchemist must discover an outlet to sell such chemicals, and the return on the goods is up to the GM's discretion.

Medicines and antidotes are used to cure a being suffering from either disease, fever or poison.

An alchemist may manufacture three types of medicine:

- bactericide (remedy for disease)
- antipyretic (remedy for fever)
- salve (remedy for skin inflammation)

A bactericide or antipyretic must be ingested, while one dose of salve can cover up to two square feet of skin.

Whenever a being uses a medicine to counteract an affliction from which they are suffering, the GM rolls percentile dice. If the roll is equal to or less than (8 × Alchemist's Rank + User's Endurance), the user is completely cured. If the roll is above the success percentage, the user subtracts 10 from their next dice-roll to see if they naturally recovers from their infection (see §5.7). The failure of one medicine to work has no effect upon any subsequent medicines used by a being.

When an alchemist manufactures an antidote, they must specify the type of poison they are negating. Natural poisons are classified by the source from which they stem. Thus, a snake antidote will cure all poison from snakes, and so on. Synthetic poisons (those manufactured by alchemists) are cured by an antidote from an alchemist of equal or higher Rank than the alchemist who created the poison. When a being ingests the proper antidote, the poison in their system will no longer affect them.

Poisons cause damage when introduced into the blood stream of a being.

Poisons come from two sources: those which occur in nature (venoms from animals and plants) and those which are created in a laboratory (synthetic poisons). An alchemist may distill venoms and synthesise poisons. A venom is distilled from either the poison sacs of a poisonous animal (the most common being a snake), or from certain plants. An alchemist may distill [D - 1] doses of poison from poison sacs. The amount they may distill from plants depends on the type of plant (GM's discretion). An alchemist requires (11 - Rank) hours to distill one dose of venom from either source. The cost of a poison plant or sac is (750 + 150 × Average Damage per Pulse) Silver Pennies, and there is no cost for the distillation process.

Venoms come in two forms: Nerve Agents and Blood Agents. Nerve Agents work quickly (doing damage every Pulse) while Blood Agents (such as arsenic) work over a long period of time. The effects of slow acting (blood agent) poisons function in the same manner as infections except there is no roll for cure. The damage a being will suffer from a dose of Nerve Agent venom is equal to the damage it would suffer from the venom of the source animal or plant.

An Alchemist may also manufacture synthetic poisons (both venoms and paralysants) in their laboratory. A synthetic venom will do [D + Alchemist's Rank - 5] damage points per Pulse and costs (1000 - 75 × Rank) Silver Pennies to manufacture. If a synthetic paralysant is used to affect a being, the formula used for the Willpower Check of the victim is [4 × Willpower + 20 - 5 × Alchemist's Rank). A synthetic paralysant costs 1750 - (60 × Rank) Silver Pennies to manufacture. An alchemist can produce up to three doses of synthetic poison per day.

Potions are created by an alchemist with the aid of either an Adept or a Healer.

Potions are designed to create a specific effect when imbibed by a being. They are manufactured in one-use doses and the entire dose must be swallowed for the effect.

Magical potions are created by the concerted efforts of an Adept and the alchemist (who may be the same person). Any spell or talent which the Adept knows and which is designed to affect only the Adept or some facet of their own person may be imbued into a potion. It takes two whole days of continuous combined effort to create the potion. It is successfully created if at the end of the time the player rolls less than (10 × Alchemist's Rank) + Adept's Rank with the spell or talent). A roll above this indicates the potion is useless and the process must be repeated with new ingredients, etc. The effect of a successful potion for the imbiber is as if the Adept had already made a successful Cast Check and the spell had taken effect. The workings of magical potions are immediate. The cost to manufacture a magical potion is equal to [(Experience Multiple of spell or talent × 20) - (Alchemist's Rank × 10)].

An alchemist and a healer working together may create a healing potion (again, they may be the same person). The potions possible and their Base Value are listed in §37.4. The time required to produce the potion is the same as a magical one, and the equation to see if the process was successful is (10 × Alchemist's Rank + 3 × Healer's Rank). If successfully created, the potion will act on the imbiber as if a healer of the creator's Rank was attempting to heal them (any success rolls must still be attempted). The cost to manufacture a healing potion is (Base Value - 50 × Alchemist's Rank) Silver Pennies.

The duration of a potioned talent, that is the duration of the talent the imbiber will gain, is 1 hour $\times$ Rank of Talent (minimum 1).

30.3 Costs

An alchemist will be able to better perform their skill when using the proper equipment or when working in a laboratory.

It costs 2500 Silver Pennies to construct a lab, and 1000 Silver Pennies per year to maintain it. An alchemist can only manufacture medicines, antidotes, poisons or potions or distill venoms in a lab. A laboratory may be rented at a cost of 15 Silver Pennies per day.

The chance of an alchemist correctly analysing a chemical (see §30.2) is increased by 10 when they perform the analysis in a laboratory.

The GM and an alchemist player should scale costs and effects of improved alchemical support material to the above rules.

An alchemist must purchase the components necessary to manufacture each product.

A medicine costs (150 - 10 $\times$ Rank) Silver Pennies. An antidote costs (250 - 15 $\times$ Rank) Silver Pennies. The costs for poisons and potions are given with their rules. All costs given are for one creation attempt; if that attempt fails, new ingredients must be purchased.

The cost for a standard chemical will range from 1 Silver Penny for a quart of flammable oil to 2000 Silver Pennies for a fluid ounce of non-dilute hydrochloric acid. The GM should scale the costs of other chemicals appropriately.