



ARCANOGRAPHY

BEHIND THE LENS



ARCANOGRAPHY

Arcanography is the practice of capturing and displaying images of the world in permanent or semipermanent states. With light-gathering crystals and sensors, an accurate recreation can be embedded in an object to be later recalled through the use of spells or recreated on a surface in a nonmagical state as a static record.

These practices are a closely kept secret as they can be lucrative to the mage as a service and could potentially be abused in the wrong hands. In places where knowledge is kept, such as an ancient library, the practice of recalling the images from an object might be more widely shared but the act of capturing it would only be known to the one or two highest ranked keepers, if any at all.

Record-taking services are not widely advertised as they often attract attention of a criminal nature; ne'er-do-wells seeking to capture incriminating images of prominent figures for blackmail or other forms of exploitation.

LEARNING ARCANOGRAPHY SPELLS

Such spells are not available upon leveling up, and those who understand arcanography are unlikely to scribe such spells into scrolls. The most reliable way to uncover the secret of arcanography is to obtain an arcanographer's spellbook—although they are unlikely to part with it willingly.

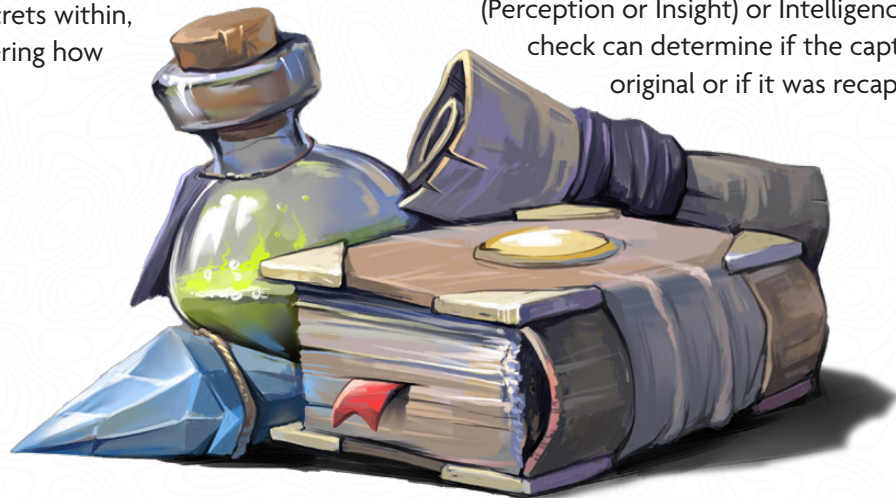
Alternatively, one can learn arcanography through experimentation. Only the most dedicated mage might successfully unlock arcanography with no prior knowledge. In most cases, the mage has reverse engineered the art from an embedded relic—learning first to display the secrets within, and only then discovering how to embed their own.

MANIPULATORS

Despite the relative scarcity of arcanographers, the generally held belief is that the records they are able to create are true and accurate records of what is captured. As such, they are sometimes entered into evidence in high profile trials or referred to by historians as the truth of the past. The images contained within however are not always immutable. If the magic of how to capture such images is rare, the skill required to truly alter them is almost mythical. Yet, there are those who have accomplished such a feat. These individuals are known as manipulators, and their existence is a more closely guarded secret than arcanography itself.

Some people are known to create fake scenes and commission arcanographers to capture it. Dressing up as well-known individuals and falsifying their deeds. This isn't manipulation, but arcanographers are content to allow people to believe as such. Each arcanographer's way of capturing images is unique enough—and their community is small enough—that who captured an image can be discerned with a successful Intelligence (Investigation) check performed by another arcanographer, with a DC equal to the creator's spellcasting DC. Thus, falsifying records is not a common practice as it would discredit the arcanographer.

The most basic form of manipulation to achieve is by capturing a scene in a focusing gemstone from the Shadowfell. Scenes displayed through a gemstone of this type show the scene as the opposite of what truly happened. This display is projected at the same size as it occurred, and then captured again through a normal gemstone to hide its nature. A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception or Insight) or Intelligence (Investigation) check can determine if the captured scene is an original or if it was recaptured.





ARCANOGRAPHY SPELLS

CAPTURE/DISPLAY

2nd-level Illusion (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: M (A clear gemstone worth at least 150 gp)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute.

Classes: Wizard

You cause the gem used to cast this spell to either begin harmlessly capturing light and sound from a 20-foot-cube within range or—if it has previously been used to capture a scene—you can choose to instead display the contained light and sound into the selected area.

When cast as a ritual, the gemstone must already contain a scene and you can only display the scene, otherwise the spell fails.

Capture. For as long as you maintain concentration, images and sounds of what is occurring within the area of the spell fill the gem with perfect accuracy. If the gem already contains a scene, it is erased in its entirety once you begin concentrating on this effect again.

Display. Once you begin concentration on this effect, the images and sounds are projected from the gem and begin replaying in the selected area. You can choose to have them appear smaller (as small as a 1-foot cube) or larger (up to a 40-foot cube). The projected images appear slightly translucent, and the sounds are ever so slightly distorted, ensuring the scene can't be mistaken as currently transpiring. While concentrating you can have it replay up to twice as fast as it occurred or half as fast. You can concentrate on this effect until the end of the scene, even if that duration is longer than the duration of this spell.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the duration is Concentration, up to 10 minutes. If you use a spell slot of 5th level, the duration is Concentration, up to 1 hour.





CAPTURE SCRYING

3rd-level Illusion

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: M (A clear gemstone worth at least 1,500 gp)

Duration: Until dispelled

Classes: Wizard

This spell lays a powerful matrix of mystical energy around you. Until the spell ends, it awaits for you to cast *scrying*. If you do, you cause the gem used to cast this spell to begin harmlessly capturing light and sound from the area within 10 feet of the target of the *scrying* spell. For as long as you maintain concentration, images and sounds of what is occurring within the area of the spell fill the gem with perfect accuracy. If the gem already contains a scene, it is erased in its entirety once you cast this spell using it as a material component again.

When the *scrying* spell ends, this spell automatically ends. If you don't cast *scrying* within 1 minute of casting this spell, this spell ends.

The scene captured in this gem can be replayed with the *capture/display* spell.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th-level or higher, you can touch a creature currently concentrating on the *scrying* spell, instead of casting it yourself. The spell automatically ends when the creature stops concentrating on *scrying*, or if you stop touching the creature.



MINOR CAPTURE

Illusion Cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (15-foot-cone)

Components: S, M (A clear gemstone or piece of glass worth 1 sp)

Duration: 1 minute

Classes: Wizard

When you cast this spell, you place the gemstone or glass in front of your eye, and a burst of light erupts through it, filling the prism with a two-dimensional image of what could be seen in the area. Creatures and objects are stacked on top of one another, using the shadows created by the flash of light to indicate depth. If the area intersected with a flat surface, such as a wall, it is captured as the background. Otherwise, a blurry area frames the image with enough contrast that what was captured is clear. Looking through the glass shows you the image inside, but the image fades when the spell's duration ends.

If you cast this spell again using the same prism before the image fades you can instead point the prism at a flat surface—such as paper or wood—within range, burning the image contained inside on the surface. The closer the prism is held to the surface, the smaller and more detailed the image. Surfaces that can't be burned are unaffected. Once you use a prism in this way, the image inside fades immediately.





ARCANOGRAPHY ITEMS

FOCUSING GEMSTONE (ASTRAL PLANE)

Wondrous Item, Legendary

This focusing crystal is a glittering gemstone. When you look deeply into the gem, you see an endless ocean of stars and wisps of silver thread. When used as a spellcasting focus for an arcanography spell, such as *capture/display*, the Material component is imperceptible except by a creature with special senses such as truesight or the effects of the *detect magic* spell.

The images captured within this gemstone are immutable. Whatever is captured is an exact truth and those who see the scene recreated have any suspicions of the images magically assuaged. When the contents are displayed while traversing the Astral Plane, the recreation can be paused and questions can be asked of any sentient creatures in the scene; who answers in absolute truth (as if under the effects of the *zone of truth* spell) with all the knowledge and experiences that creature had up to the point of capturing.

FOCUSING GEMSTONE (FEYWILD)

Wondrous Item, Rare

This focusing crystal is a dull yet clear gemstone, ranging in color from green to red depending on how the light catches it. When used as a spellcasting focus for an arcanography spell, such as *capture/display*, the Material component is imperceptible except by a creature with special senses such as truesight or the effects of the *detect magic* spell.

When images captured within this gemstone are projected, the feelings of the person holding the stone affect the way the scene is recreated. For example, if the stone contains evidence towards the death of a loved one at the hands of another, the bearer's sadness or hatred might portray the killer as acting in a sadistic way or brutal way, even if that betrays the truth of the situation. If the bearer has no strong feelings towards the scene, it's recreated exactly as it happened.

FOCUSING GEMSTONE (SHADOWFELL)

Wondrous Item, Rare

This focusing crystal is a bright yet somehow cloudy gemstone, with wisps of black running through its facets. When used as a spellcasting focus for an arcanography spell, such as *capture/display*, the Material component is imperceptible except by a creature with special senses such as truesight or the effects of the *detect magic* spell.

When images captured within this gemstone are projected, the scene is recreated in the most opposite way possible to the truth. For example, if the scene contained within is a depiction of a joyous occasion, it instead is recreated as a sad one; or if it depicts adventurer's dealing the finishing blow to a dragon, it instead shows them falling to the beast. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Insight) check—automatically succeeded by anyone who was present at the event—can discern that the recreation isn't reliable.

NEEDLE OF RECORDING

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

A long steel needle, approximately six inches in length, bears a nearly perfectly smooth surface. As an action, you can hold the needle against your skin and speak the command phrase aloud. When you do this, any words spoken by you—and any words spoken by another willing creature whom you touch with the needle and remains within 10 feet of you—are recorded by the needle for the next minute. If a recording is stored and a new recording begins, the old one is erased entirely.

To play back the recorded audio, tap the needle against something hard and it reverberates for 1 minute, creating a ghostly replication of the recorded words. The recreation sounds hollow and mechanical.

ROD OF SELF-CAPTURING

Wondrous Item, Common

This pocket-sized rod can extend up to 5 feet and bears a clear glass prism on its end. As an action, you can speak a command word to have the rod extend and cast *minor capture* targeting a cone originating from the prism.

