BASIC D20 FAIRY TALE SPELLCASTING

Basic d20 assumes that you will use the normal D&D spellcasting system to create characters. The system detailed in this document eliminates spell slots, spell points, and other forms of Vancian spellcasting for the Basic d20 game. It is optional, but if used, spellcasters know their spells outright and can cast them at any time. The limit on spellcasting comes in the form of an increasingly debilitating effect known as Mindfog which eventually leaves them without the ability to cast spells until they have recovered. This system uses the Magic skill, as detailed in the previous document "Basic d20 the Magic Skill" but eliminates spell slots in favor of Mindfog-limited casting.

THE MAGIC SKILL

There is one Magic skill. Each rank in the Magic skill costs the same as one rank in a normal Basic d20 broad skill area (1 Power Point per skill rank). Purchasing ranks in the Magic skill confers certain spellcasting benefits to the character. The Magic skill represents the character's knowledge and mastery in all forms of magic. If this broad skill area is introduced into the campaign, then the Spellcraft specialty becomes a part of the Magic skill (and is removed from the Science broad skill area).

Check: Normally associated with caster level checks only. The key ability does not figure into caster level checks. The key ability does affect the saving throw DC for spells cast by the character.

Action: Not Applicable.

Try Again: Not Applicable.

The Magic skill does not work like other skills. The Magic skill grants the character the following advantages:

Spellcaster Level: the character's level for the purposes of spellcasting is equal to the number of skill ranks the character has in the Magic skill. Spellcaster level governs the highest level of spell the character can use and is used for all situations where a caster level is required. The character's caster level is equal to the number of skill ranks in the Magic skill. For game effects requiring a class caster level (or some other "generic" caster level), use this caster level.

Spell Lists: Each rank in the Magic skill allows the character to access spells of the appropriate spell level based on the character's caster level. These spells become part of the character's personal spell list and are taken from all spell lists (bard, cleric, druid, sorcerer/wizard, etc.). If a spell has different spell levels for different classes, use the lowest from among cleric, druid, and sorcerer/wizard (excluding domain lists). For example, *true seeing* becomes a 5th level spell under this system. If a spell is not found on any of these three lists, use the lowest level listed for any class.

It is important to note that not all of these spells become automatically known by the character immediately. They must be found and learned through normal means (as determined by the GM).

Being on the character's personal spell list simply makes them available to be learned by the character, much like all sorcerer/wizard spells are available to be learned by sorcerers and wizards.

All spells up to a level equal to the number of Magic skill ranks divided by two, become part of the character's spell list (with the exception of cantrips/orisons and 1st level spells). See the chart below.

Ranks	Spell Levels in List	Ranks	Spell Levels in List
1	0th-1st	12	0th-6th
4	0th-2nd	14	0th-7th
6	0th-3rd	16	0th-8th
8	0th-4th	18	0th-9th
10	0th-5th	20	0th-10th

For example, a character with 8 ranks in Magic would include all spells from 1st to 4th level in his personal spell list. A character with 18 ranks in Magic would have every spell from 1st to 9th level in his personal spell list.

Learning Spells: Use the Magic broad skill just like Spellcraft to learn spells from a source (whether the source is a book, scroll, another character, creature, etc.). The default DC to learn a spell is 15 + the spell's level and learning a spell takes the normal eight hours as detailed in the Spellcraft skill in the SRD. However, the GM may set the DC and learning time to whatever is suitable for the campaign.

GAINING SPELLS

As stated before, just because a character has a number of spells on his personal spell list does not mean that he knows any of them. The procedure for learning spells is set by the GM, but defaults to the same method as illustrated under the Spellcraft skill description in the SRD. Furthermore, gaining one spell (of any level) costs 1 PP under this system.

If the character does not have 1 PP to spend on learning a spell, then the Natural Advancement method can be used. It takes one month to learn a spell (with an instructor) or two months to learn a spell (without an instructor). The character takes 20 on the Spellcraft roll to learn the spell in this manner. If successful (and it should be), the spell is learned and does not cost 1 PP (but it took a lot longer).

Spells can be learned from many different sources. Since magic is "generic" under this system, spells can be learned from spellbooks, from other spellcasters who know the spell, from inscriptions on buildings, a spellcaster's familiar, an otherworldly entity, the list goes on and on and is only limited by the setting and milieu.

Once learned, a spell is known in the manner of a sorcerer and can be cast spontaneously. No preparation is needed, neither prayer nor daily study. A character can cast a spell he has learned at any time. The limitation on spellcasting under this system comes in the form of Mindfog and is detailed next.

MINDFOG

Casting spells is mentally fatiguing and this fatigue manifests itself as varying levels of Mindfog. There are three levels of Mindfog: Addled, Befuddled, and Feebleminded. The first two are new conditions that require description. The last condition, Feebleminded, mirrors the condition imposed by the spell of the same name.

Spellcasters in this system can cast whatever spells they've learned whenever they want to cast them. However, each time they cast a spell, they must make a Will save against Mindfog at a DC equal to 9 + twice the spell's level (with cantrips and orisons counting as half-level spells). If the save is successful, there are no ill effects. If the save is failed, the character gains one level of Mindfog. Regardless of whether the save is successful or not, the character receives a -1 to all further saves against Mindfog. Each penalty gained in this manner is cumulative (e.g., casting three spells in a row imposes a -3 penalty to the next save versus Mindfog).

An Addled character has an additional -1 penalty to saves against Mindfog. A Befuddled character has an additional -2 penalty against saves versus Mindfog and this penalty is cumulative with that gained from the Addled condition (for a total of -3). A Feebleminded character's Intelligence and Charisma drop to 1. The Feebleminded character is unable to use Intelligence- or Charisma-based skills, cast spells, understand language, or communicate coherently. Still, he knows who his friends are and can follow them and even protect them. The character remains in this state until a *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell is used to cancel the effect of this Feebleminded condition. Note that the Addled and Befuddled conditions are not healed in this manner (and there is no way to remove these conditions save the method described next).

The Addled, Befuddled, and Feebleminded states gained from spellcasting fade with time. Every hour (regardless of the character's activity) a Wisdom check against DC 10 can be attempted to remove the worst Mindfog condition. Only one condition can be removed per hour in this manner. Thus, a Feebleminded character will become Befuddled after an hour and a successful Wisdom check. A Befuddled character will become Addled (after another hour and successful check) and an Addled character will go back to normal if another hour passes and another DC 10 Wisdom check is successful. Eight hours of sleep will remove all conditions regardless of the results of any checks (although checks can still be made each hour if desired).

The cumulative penalty to Will saves versus Mindfog is removed in the following manner. Each hour that the character does not cast a spell, this penalty is halved (round towards zero). For example, if a character ends a battle with a -10 penalty, this penalty becomes -5 after one hour (as long as no spells were cast during that hour). After another hour of refraining from spellcasting, the penalty is -2. Two hours after that, the penalty is removed entirely (for a total of four hours from the end of the battle). While sleeping, a character is presumably not casting spells, and the penalty fades away as described above.

KEY ABILITY FOR THE MAGIC SKILL

The GM determines the key ability for the Magic skill in his campaign. He can vary the key ability by character, allowing the player to determine the nature and "feel" of his particular spellcaster. He could rule that the highest of the character's mental abilities (i.e., Int, Wis, and Cha) is always that character's key ability.

Regardless of the key ability chosen for each Magic skill, certain uses are standard. The key ability is added to the Difficulty Class of the saving throws for spells cast by the character. The key ability also determines the highest spell level the character can learn.

HIGHEST SPELL LEVEL ABLE TO BE LEARNED = KEY ABILITY × 2 + 1

This yields: 1st level spells for +0, 3rd level spells for +1, 5th level spells for +2, 7th level spells for +3, and 9th level spells for +4.

ARCANE AND DIVINE SPELLCASTER DISTINCTION

Under this system, disregard the arcane/divine distinction in spellcasting. For any game effects that require the source of the character's spellcasting ability be known (whether arcane or divine), the GM should exercise good judgment. Spellcasters are not affected by the arcane spell failure chance when wearing armor in which they are proficient. Spellcasters wearing armor in which they are not proficient suffer the normal arcane spell failure chances.

"FAIRY TALE" SPELLCASTING

This version of the Magic skill is meant to emulate the kind of spellcasting in popular fantasy and possibly fairy tales. There is one Magic skill and it is just like other skills. It allows a character to learn spells (which cost power points) and cast them whenever desired. There are no spell slots, spell points, or other measure of the number of spells a character can cast in one day. Spellcasters learn their spells and do not have to prepare them or pray for them. Thus, Vancian spellcasting is eliminated. Fantasy literature abounds with examples of spellcasters that do not have to "memorize" their spells or have a set number of spells that they can use per day.

However, there must be a limitation on spellcasting for game balance reasons, so two new conditions have been introduced that provide a check on unlimited casting. It is important that these conditions cannot be "healed" by magic, otherwise a character can enjoy an unlimited casting loop and the system is circumvented.

A character's Will save bonus becomes very important in this system, as the character must make a Will save versus Mindfog after every spell is cast. Extensive numerical analysis shows that even with the highest bonuses normally gained (when considering the highest level of spell a caster can cast) there is still a reasonable risk of failure every time a spell is cast. Also remember that a naturally rolled '1' is always a failure.