

Cypher Fantasy

Character Generation and Advancement

All characters will start at Tier 0. Tier 0 characters are pretty much all the same at the beginning. They will earn XP and gain traits as the campaign progresses. By the time they reach Tier 1, each character will be differentiated by the choices the players have made. The idea is not to overwhelm new players with choices right away and also to keep the spirit of “zero-to-hero” fantasy games.

Starting Traits

Tier 0 characters start with:

Stat Pools: Start with 7 in each of the three stat pools (Might, Speed, Intellect). The player gets 9 points to distribute. Assign these points to Might, Speed, and Intellect. To make a completely average character put 3 into each.

Effort: 0. The characters cannot expend Effort.

Edge: 0. The characters do not have an Edge.

Cypher Use: 1. The characters have Initiate Cypher Use.

Starting Equipment: The characters start with appropriate clothing and basic household items.

Special Abilities: None. Abilities that come from Type and Flavor will be earned after reaching Tier 1.

Descriptor: None. The character will earn one during play.

Focus: None. The character will earn a Focus after reaching Tier 1.

Advancing to Tier 1 (30 XP to 46 XP)

To become a Tier 1 character, you must purchase (in any order):

Stat Pool: You gain four points with which to raise your Stat Pools. Cost: 4 XP.

Effort: You gain Effort 1. Cost: 4 XP.

Edge: You gain an Edge of 1 in either Might, Speed, or Intellect. Cost: 4 XP.

Weapons and Cyphers: Purchase one or more of the following. Cost: 8 XP to 24 XP.

- A. Cypher Use (4 XP) or Expert Cypher Use (8 XP)
- B. Practiced in up to Light Weapons (4 XP), Medium Weapons (8 XP), or Heavy Weapons (12 XP)
- C. One skill of the player's choice (4 XP)

Starting Equipment: Gain the following items in play or buy them into the story for 2 XP.

1. Appropriate clothing
2. (a) Two expensive items or (b) two weapons and one expensive item
3. Two moderately priced items
4. Up to four inexpensive items

Descriptor: You must purchase one Descriptor, preferably one that fits how you've been playing the character. Cost: 8 XP.

Gaining Traits at Tier 1 (20+ XP)

Once you are a Tier 1 character, you can purchase abilities available to Tier 1 characters.

Special Abilities: You must wait until you reach Tier 1 to purchase Type and Flavor special abilities. Each will cost 4 XP. A standard character has four Type and/or Flavor abilities.

Focus: You must wait until you reach Tier 1 to purchase your first Focus ability. Focus abilities cost 4 XP. A standard character has one Focus ability. Each named Focus ability must be purchased separately (you don't get every Focus ability for that Tier).

Elevatory Advancement (16 XP)

To gain the next Tier, a character must take these advances:

Stat Pool: Raise your stat pools by four (4 XP)

Effort: Raise your Effort by one (4 XP)

Edge: Raise one Edge by one (4 XP)

Skill: Gain one trained skill or raise a trained skill to specialized (4 XP)

Alternate: Purchase a special option in lieu of one of the above (4 XP)

Lateral Advancement (1+ XP)

Instead of spending XP to meet Tier advancement requirements, you can broaden your character. Some methods are given in the CSR (familiarity, home-base, artifacts, etc.). Here are a few more:

New Type or Flavor Ability: Pick a Type or Flavor ability at your Tier or lower. Cost: 4 XP for each Type or Flavor ability.

New Focus Ability: Pick a Focus ability at your Tier or lower. You should gain these abilities “in order.” For example, if you decide to take the Focus abilities from Bears a Halo Fire, you should start with the Tier 1 ability, then progress to Tier 2, and so on. All abilities from lower Tiers should be taken before higher Tiers. Cost: 4 XP for each Focus Ability.

Change Descriptor: If the GM and story permit the character can change Descriptors at no cost.

Power Shifts: If you have brought Power Shifts into the game, they can be raised up to three levels maximum in each area. The GM will determine how many total Power Shifts a character can have, based on the character’s Tier. The default can be one Power Shift for each Tier above 1. Cost: 10 XP for each Power Shift.

Additional Skill: Become trained in one skill of your choice, other than attacks and defense. If you’re already trained in the skill, you become specialized. You can only put 4 XP into any one skill while at the same Tier (i.e., you can’t go to trained and then specialized all in the same Tier). Cost: 4 XP.

New Alternative Ability: You can purchase another alternative ability with the GM’s approval. You may only purchase any given alternative ability once per Tier. Cost: 4 XP.

Advancing Beyond Tier 6

Once Tier 6 is reached, advancement can continue. You can continue to number the Tiers (such as Tier 7, Tier 8, etc.). The four 4 XP advances become:

Stat Pool: Add four points to your Stat Pools.

Effort: Effort is capped at 6. You cannot raise Effort. Instead of raising Effort, gain one new skill (or make a trained skill specialized), one new Type or Flavor ability (of any Tier), or one new alternative ability (such as adding 2 to recovery, reducing the cost of wearing armor, etc.).

Edge: Raise an Edge (Might, Speed, or Intellect) by one. You cannot raise any Edge higher than 6.

Skill: Gain a new skill (or make a trained skill specialized).

Alternate: Purchase a special option in lieu of one of the above.

These four options each cost 4 XP and count as an “advance.” Continue to use the rules for Lateral Advancement. There are no automatic gains in the free-form advancement system.

A General Word About Advancement

There are three elements to character advancement: elevatory, lateral, and diegetic. Elevatory advancement is the progression in overall power level of the character. Lateral advancement is concerned with the broadening of character abilities. Diegetic advancement is the character’s increasing importance and development within the game-world itself. All three are necessary.

Normal Cypher System Advancement

Tier	Trait	Warrior	Adept	Explorer	Speaker
0	Stat Pools	+30 (30 XP)	+30 (30 XP)	+30 (30 XP)	+30 (30 XP)
0	Cypher Use	1 (4 XP)	1 (4 XP)	1 (4 XP)	1 (4 XP)
1	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
1	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
1	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
1	Cypher Use	2 (4 XP)	3 (8 XP)	2 (4 XP)	2 (4 XP)
1	Weapons	H (12 XP)	L (4 XP)	M (8 XP)	L (4 XP)
1	Equipment	(2 XP)	(2 XP)	(2 XP)	(2 XP)
1	Special Abilities	+4 (16 XP)	+4 (16 XP)	+4 (16 XP)	+4 (16 XP)
1	Descriptor	1 (8 XP)	1 (8 XP)	1 (8 XP)	1 (8 XP)
1	Focus	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
1-2	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
1-2	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
1-2	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
1-2	Skill	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
2	Special Abilities	+2 (8 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+4 (16 XP)	+2 (8 XP)
2	Focus	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
2-3	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
2-3	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
2-3	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
2-3	Skill	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
3	Special Abilities	+3 (12 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+3 (12 XP)	+3 (12 XP)
3	Focus	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)
3-4	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
3-4	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
3-4	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
3-4	Skill	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
4	Special Abilities	+2 (8 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)
4	Focus	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
4-5	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
4-5	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
4-5	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
4-5	Skill	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
5	Special Abilities	+3 (12 XP)	+2 (8XP)	+3 (12 XP)	+3 (12 XP)
5	Focus	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
5-6	Stat Pools	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)	+4 (4 XP)
5-6	Effort	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
5-6	Edge	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
5-6	Skill	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+1 (4 XP)
6	Special Abilities	+2 (8 XP)	+1 (4 XP)	+3 (12 XP)	+2 (8 XP)
6	Focus	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)	+2 (8 XP)
Total		248 XP	224 XP	256 XP	240 XP

Converting Monsters from Dungeons & Dragons

D&D has a lot of monsters. You can use them for a fantasy game. It's fairly easy to convert them to the Cypher System. There are ways to convert 3rd and 4th edition monsters as well but you probably won't need that right away. Once you pick an edition, it's probably best to stick with that edition.

Level

A Dungeon & Dragons monster has a level based on its hit dice. The tables below show the equivalencies to Cypher System creature level.

Basic (Moldvay/Cook/Allston)			Advanced Dungeons & Dragons		
Hit Dice	ThAC0	Level	Hit Dice	AD&D ThAC0	Level
Up to 1	19	2	Up to 1-1	21	1
1+ to 2	18	2	1-1	20	2
2+ to 3	17	3	1	19	2
3+ to 4	16	3	1+	18	2
4+ to 5	15	3	2-3+	16	3
5+ to 6	14	4	4-5+	15	3
6+ to 7	13	4	6-7+	13	4
7+ to 8	12	4	8-9+	12	5
8+ to 9	11	5	10-11+	10	6
9+ to 11	10	5	12-13+	9	7
11+ to 13	9	5	14-15+	8	8
13+ to 15	8	6	16+	7	9
15+ to 17	7	6			
17+ to 19	6	6			
19+ to 21	5	7			
21+ to 23	4	7			
23+ to 25	3	7			
25+ to 27	2	8			
27+ to 29	2	8			
29+ to 31	2	8			
31+ to 33	2	8			
33+ to 35	2	8			
35+ and up	1	8			

D&D5e		
Challenge	Prof. Bonus	Level
0 to 1/8	+2	2
1/4 to 1/2	+2	3
1 to 4	+2	4
5 to 8	+3	5
9 to 12	+4	6
13 to 16	+5	7
17 to 20	+6	8
21 to 24	+7	9

When converting a monster from D&D5e, the Cypher System level becomes 3 + Challenge / 4 (RU) if the Challenge is 1 or higher. Cypher Level is also 2 + D&D Proficiency Bonus.

Health

A creature's Health is equal to its AD&D or B/X hit dice times five. To this, add the additional hit points shown in the Dungeons & Dragons description. If the monster description gives its full hit points, use those. If converting from D&D5e, the Health is equal to the Cypher Level times five plus the creature's D&D Challenge. You may have to adjust to keep the monster reasonable (for creatures with very high hit points). Compare hit points with the monsters from the Cypher System Rulebook and Godforsaken if you have doubts.

Armor

A creature's Armor is equal to ten minus the B/X D&D or AD&D AC, this number divided by two (drop the fraction). The Armor from D&D5e is $(AC-10) / 2$ (RU). This is a simple conversion and does not take into account "fast" or "dextrous" monsters that have a low AC. If the creature typically carries a shield, consider the AC to be one worse than what's shown in the monster description and give the monster +1 Level on Speed defense actions.

Damage

A creature inflicts damage equal to half of the die used to roll damage in Dungeons & Dragons. If the damage listing is for multiple dice (e.g., 2-16 or 4-40), then calculate for the first die and then add one for each additional die (e.g., 5 or 8 for the examples before).

Modifications

Don't forget to add a level on melee and ranged Speed defense if the creature has a shield. You can add more modifications as fitting.

Specials

Keep the spirit of any special attacks or defenses. For example, a troll's Armor will not count against fire and acid attacks. Trolls will also regenerate 3 Health per round starting three rounds after taking damage.

Converting Magic Items from Dungeons & Dragons

You can convert magic items from Dungeons & Dragons for use in your Cypher System fantasy campaign. Just remember a few key conversion points.

Plusses

For earlier versions of D&D, magical "plusses" ranged from +1 to +5 (and to +6 in 4th edition). These can convert directly by considering them to be the plus to the d20 roll (which it is). The plusses relate to bonuses and easing of attacks for weapons. Damage is increased by one for each plus.

AD&D Magical Weapon Bonuses in Cypher System

Magical Weapon Plus	Cypher System Ease	Cypher System Attack	Damage Bonus
+1	None	+1	+1
+2	None	+2	+2
+3	One Step	+0	+3
+4	One Step	+1	+4
+5	One Step	+2	+5
+6	Two Steps	+0	+6

Magical ranged weapons use the Ease and Attack Bonus above. The ammunition uses the Damage Bonus. The plusses from magical shields use the easing and bonuses for Speed defense rolls. The magical plusses from armor are applied differently.

AD&D Magical Armor Bonuses in Cypher System

Magical Armor Plus	Cypher Armor Bonus	Speed Effort Reduction
+1	+1	--
+2	+1	-1
+3	+2	-1
+4	+2	-2
+5	+3	-2
+6	+3	-3

For D&D Fifth Edition, consider the plus to be double the AD&D plus and use the tables above.

Magical Items

An artifact's level is double the number of plusses if it's a weapon, a suit of armor, or a shield. Scrolls should have a level based on the highest level spell on the scroll with a minimum Cypher System level of 4 (since 7th level is the minimum level to create scrolls in AD&D). If the magic items casts spells and the caster level for those spells is fixed (like in AD&D), then consider the level to be half of the caster level (for AD&D). Wands perform at 6th level of experience (DMG, 135), staves at 8th (DMG, 133). It appears that these levels hold for B/X D&D as well (see wands and staves on page X49 and note the damage dice). In AD&D, spellcasters can create potions at 7th level with aid of an alchemist or 11th level by themselves. This would indicate a minimum potion level of 4 (so the level should be 1d6 + 3 if randomly determined). For all other magic items, the *enchant an item* spell is 6th level and *permanency* is 8th level. The minimum Cypher level should be 6 and possibly 8. Magical items from 13th Age are usable too.

Converting Spells from Dungeons & Dragons

If you want to use D&D spells it might be best to pick one edition and use the spells from that edition. I'll use D&D5e for this conversion because the spells have fixed levels that do not vary with the type of spellcaster casting the spell.

You can keep most of the description and flavor for each spell with regard to casting time, range, components, and duration. Saving throws must be converted to "power rolls" that a player makes if a character is casting the spell. Attack rolls will remain attack rolls. Defense rolls must be determined. Characters can become trained and specialized in spells. Each spell costs 3 XP to gain (CSR2e, 259).

D&D Rule	Cypher System Rule
Player makes a spell attack roll vs. target AC	Player makes a Speed attack roll vs. Target Number
Creature makes a spell attack roll.	Player makes a Speed defense roll vs. Target Number
Player makes a saving throw vs DC	Player makes a stat roll vs. Target Number
Creature makes a saving throw vs DC	Player makes an Intellect roll vs. Target Number

When the spell requires an attack roll, this translates to a Speed roll with the Target Number being the creature's Cypher Level times 3. If an NPC or creature attacks a character with a spell requiring an attack roll, the player makes a Speed defense roll for the character versus the enemy's Target Number. If the player would be required to make a saving throw, this becomes an appropriate stat roll (Might for Strength and Constitution, Speed for Dexterity, and Intellect for Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma). If a creature

would have to make a saving throw, D&D5e DC is normally based on a mental ability score, so the player would make an Intellect roll against the creature's Target Number.

Spell Cost

Spell's cost double their level in Intellect points. Cantrips cost 1 Intellect point.

Spell Damage

Cypher System spell damage is equal to half the first die of damage plus the number of additional D&D5e spell damage dice (regardless of die type). For example, *meteor swarm* would do 22 points of fire damage and 22 points of bludgeoning damage. The *fire bolt* cantrip does 5 fire damage and then 6 at 5th level, 7 at 11th level, and finally 8 at 17th level. *Fireball* does 10 points of damage at the base spell level. For every two additional Intellect points put into it, it does an additional point of damage. In the Cypher System, Armor protects against just about all damage unless it's ambient damage.

Healing

Healing restores hit points in the same manner that damage takes them away. *Cure wounds* heals 4 Might and/or Speed stat pool points or 4 Health. For every two additional Intellect points put into the spell, *cure wounds* heals another point. A character can regain up to 6 + Tier points in magical healing by spells per day. Any additional magical healing from spells above this number will be ineffective. Healing can only be applied to Might and Speed stat pools.

Ritual Spells

Spells with the ritual descriptor can be cast for no Intellect points as long as the caster adds ten minutes to the casting time.

Spellcasting Ability Modifier

If this is needed, it's equal to your Intellect Edge. Cypher Stat Pools correspond to D&D ability scores up to 10 at which point the D&D ability score equivalent increases by two for every point of Edge (i.e., Edge 1 is D&D 12, Edge 2 is D&D 14, etc.).

Spell Description

If the spell talks about D&D terms, such as hit dice, and you're using D&D monsters, there's no need to translate anything. All of the narrative effects of the spell occur as described.

Spellcasting Systems

The characters could gain spellcasting abilities in a variety of ways. The GM needs to pick a system and stick with it.

Everyone Can Learn Spells

With this system, everyone can learn spells. As long as someone teaches you a spell, you learn it from a book, a god implants it into your soul, etc., you can pay 3 XP to learn a spell and cast it whenever you want. The maximum spell level you can learn is equal to your Tier. Spellcasters are just people who have spent their time learning spells rather than getting better at other things.

Special Training Grants Spell Use

Under this system, a character must learn to become a spellcaster before learning spells. In game terms, there must be one or more gatekeeper traits. It could be as simple as taking a skill like Spellcasting or more involved, like having a different skill for each school of magic. If more than one skill is required, then these skills should be Ranks that cost 1 XP. You may learn and cast spells having a D&D spell level of your Rank in the appropriate category. Each spell, regardless of spell level, costs 3 XP. The maximum Rank you can get is equal to your Tier. For a spellcasting system based on *Ars Magica*, each of the fifteen Arts can have a separate Rank. For D&D, each separate school of magic should have its own School Rank. Thus, characters must advance their eight Schools of magic to become versatile casters.

As a personal preference, healing spells should be moved to the School of Necromancy. These spells from the Player's Handbook are *cure wounds*, *healing word*, *prayer of healing*, *aura of vitality*, *mass healing word*, *mass cure wounds*, *heal*, *mass heal*, and *power word heal*.

Spells Replace Type and Flavor Abilities

Spells replace the abilities you get from your Type. Instead of choosing one or more abilities from your Type or Flavor when you reach a new Tier, you choose spells. A spell's level cannot be higher than the new Tier.

Spells Replace Cyphers

If a character has gained access to a spell, they can fill one of their "cypher slots" with a spell instead of a cypher. The table below shows the rule progression on the number of cyphers a character can carry. If they try to memorize or prepare more spells, they may hold the spell for a while but then spells will be randomly forgotten to bring the character back down to their normal maximum. An easy rule could be that a character could fit more spells but for every spell they go over, they will randomly lose one if a d20 roll is equal to or less than the extra number of spells (kind of like a GM intrusion but can happen on higher rolls).

Cypher Use Level	Cyphers	Type and Tier
Initiate Cypher Use	1	Tier 0
(Proficient) Cypher Use	2	Warrior 1, Explorer 1, Speaker 1
Expert Cypher Use	3	Warrior 3, Adept 1, Explorer 3, Speaker 3
Adroit Cypher Use	4	Warrior 5, Adept 3, Explorer 5, Speaker 5
Master Cypher Use	5	Adept 5

While the spells are held in memory, they can be used indefinitely if the cost is paid for each casting.

Spontaneous Spells

If this option is used, a character can cast a spontaneous spell as long as they would be able to cast a spell of double that level in that school (or by their Tier, if the school system isn't being used). The Intellect point cost is doubled for a spontaneous spell (i.e., D&D spell level times four). For example, A Tier 1 character could spontaneously cast a cantrip they do not know for 2 Intellect points, one of Tier 2 could cast a 1st level spell for 4 Intellect points, a Tier 4 character could cast an unknown 2nd level spell for 8 Intellect points, and a Tier 6 character could spontaneously cast 3rd level spells for 12 Intellect points.

Converting Game Rules from Ars Magica

Art Ranks and Spells

Although it's probably more complicated than the Cypher System wants, you need to have some way to differentiate spellcasters through their Arts in a game that uses Ars Magica material. Art Ranks are the way to do this. Each Art Rank costs only 1 XP but Art Ranks provide the "gatekeeper" traits for determining what spells a character can learn, how they will fare in certamen, lab totals, etc.

Each Art also has an associated skill with it, in the normal Cypher System sense. Characters can be trained or specialized in Arts.

Maximum Art Rank by Character Tier

Tier	Maximum Art Rank	Art Score	+ Trained	+ Specialized	Max Spell Level
0	1	5	10	15	30
1	2	10	15	20	40
2	3	15	20	25	50
3	4	20	25	30	60
4	5	25	30	35	70
5	6	30	35	40	80
6	7	35	40	45	90
7+	8	40	45	50	100

Each Art Rank contributes five levels to the maximum spell level a character can learn. Being trained in the Art adds an additional five. Being specialized adds ten total. The table above shows the maximum Art Rank with corresponding maximum Art Score for each Tier. The maximum Spell Level column assumes that the character is specialized in both the Technique and the Form. The "base" maximum Spell Level (without any additional skill in the Arts) is double the maximum Art Score (or twenty less than what's shown in the last column).

Spells cost 3 XP to gain (see Cypher System Rulebook Second Edition, page 259). When buying a spell, the character can get any spell that they qualify for (in other words, the cost of the spell is not based on the spell's level). Spells cost a number of Intellect points equal to the magnitude of the spell to cast (yes, it should be Cypher Might, but magic in Cypher costs Intellect).

Spontaneous spells can be cast. The maximum spell level is equal to half the Lab Total (but you spend full Intellect points, e.g. a Level 10 spontaneous spell costs 4 Intellect as if it were a Level 20 spell). For non-fatiguing spontaneous spells, level is limited to the Art Ranks of Te+Fo. Of course, consider Intellect Edge as well (which would reduce cost).

Ritual spells are cast just like in Ars Magica. They cost one Intellect point, one pawn of raw vis, and fifteen minutes per magnitude.

Words & Gestures. Changing these results in additional Intellect point costs. One additional Intellect point per five modifier points. Casting with no words or gestures (-15) costs Intellect 3.

Other spellcasting rules can be converted as needed.

Converting Hermetic Spells to Cypher Spells

Ars Magica Spell Trait	Cypher System Rule
+X to Recovery	+X/3 to Recovery (+1 = +1 to third Recovery roll)
+X to Characteristic	+2X to appropriate stat pool
Increase Characteristic	Increase stat pool to no higher than 10+2X
A roll of X+	A roll of X+ (Ease Factor = Target Number)
+X to Attack	+X to Attack (or ease roll by X/3 levels)
+X to Defense	+X to Defense
+X to Soak	+X/3 to Armor
+X to rolls	+X to rolls (or ease roll by X/3 levels)
Light Wound	2 damage (compares to 10 damage in Ars Magica)
Medium Wound	3 damage
Heavy Wound	4 damage
Incapacitating Wound	5 damage
Fatal Wound	6 damage
Fatigue Level	3 damage (but recovered after an hour) or special
+X Damage for Spell	2+X/5 Damage
+X Damage added to a Weapon	+X/5 Damage
Arcane Connection	Use Ars Magica rules
+X Size	+X to Damage, +3X to Health, -X to Attack/Defense
Ars Magica Might	Level = Might/5, Might = Cypher Level X 5
“Armor is no defense”	Ignore Armor when dealing damage (ambient)
Concentration	Use concentration table from Ars Magica
“Heals as wound”	Use Ars Magica guidelines (lasting damage in Cypher)
Reduce Might	Reduce Might, target takes reduction/5 as damage.
Gain X Warping Points	Take X damage (no Armor) or use Warping
Parma Magica	Character Tier X 5 + Parma Magica skill
Magic Resistance	If a creature has it, its level times five (or Might)

Magic Resistance and Penetration

Magic resistance is based on a creature’s Ars Magica Might, which remains the same (no need for conversion). If a D&D monster is used and you have to determine its Might, use its hit dice times 2.5. Characters that have familiarity with Parma Magica have a magic resistance of five, trained grants 15, and specialized grants 30.

A character’s spell penetrates if the following result of a 1d6 roll is true:

Character’s Spell Penetrates if $1d6 + \text{Max Spell Level (TeFo)} - \text{Spell’s Level} + \text{Penetration} > \text{Target’s Might}$

The player rolls 1d6 and adds the difference between the maximum spell level that’s learnable for the specific Technique + Form combination minus the spell’s actual level. Also add +1 if the character has familiarity with the Penetration skill, +3 if trained, or +6 if specialized. If this result is greater than the target’s Might, the spell penetrates. The player should note the overall penetration modifier for each of his character’s spells for ease of calculation during play.

For example, a magus casts Pilum of Fire at a Level 5 water elemental. He has specialized in both Creo and Ignem. He has two Art Ranks in both Creo and Ignem. His maximum Crlg spell level is 40. Pilum of Fire is Crlg 20. The difference is 20. The elemental's Might is 25. The player would have to roll a 6 on the die to penetrate. If he had familiarity with Penetration, the roll would have to be 5+. With trained Penetration, the roll would have to be 3+. If specialized, Penetration would be automatic. Let's say he's trained in Penetration. In this case, the player should write "Pilum of Fire (Crlg 20) + 23" on the character's sheet.

A character's Parma Magica blocks a hostile magical effect if the following 1d6 roll is true:

Character's Parma Magica blocks if $1d6 + \text{Tier} \times 5 + \text{Parma Magica} > \text{Attacker's Might}$

A character's overall magic resistance (assuming they have Parma Magica) is equal to five times the character's Tier plus a modifier for the Parma Magica skill (+1 with familiarity, +3 if trained, +6 if specialized). A character "practiced" with Parma Magica just gets their Tier times five as magic resistance.

Without a Parma Magica, a character's magic resistance is equal to their Form Art Rank applicable to the effect (so the roll would be $1d6 + \text{Form Art Rank}$ vs. Attacker's Might).

A character's "Might" for the purposes of this calculation (if needed) is their Tier times five if they have no magic resistance or penetration ability otherwise.

Note: a d6 is used for this roll to keep the range tight and to decouple it with the normal Cypher System resolution mechanic (so it can't be affected by special abilities, a 1 XP re-roll, etc.).

The Gift

The Gift imposes a one-step penalty on all social interactions. Blatant Gift imposes a two-step penalty. This is like the reverse of trained and specialized. The Gift essentially gives an inability which hinders rolls.

Confidence

This is simply spending 1 XP to re-roll a d20. Tylalus characters get two free re-rolls per gaming session.

Certamen

Certamen would be a mini-game that plays just like the rules in Ars Magica. Use the Fatigue track and apply the penalty as a universal increase in the difficulty of the character's rolls. Use the Art Scores as produced above.

Training Apprentices

Apprentices can be trained after a wizard achieves an Art Rank of 1 in all fifteen Arts (15 XP). Many have higher ranks before taking on an apprentice.

Warping and Twilight

If the 1d6 roll for spellcasting is a '1' then there is a chance for botch. Roll a number of d20's equal to the number of botch dice. If any come up '1' then there is a botch. Magi should also get one Warping Point per

'1' that comes up on a d20. A botch would allow a GM Intrusion (no XP award) which should typically result in some sort of Twilight problem.

Here's a comparison of the two systems. It's very close.

Botch Dice	Mine	ArM	Difference
1	0.83%	1.00%	-0.17%
2	1.63%	1.90%	-0.28%
3	2.38%	2.70%	-0.32%
4	3.09%	3.40%	-0.31%
5	3.77%	4.10%	-0.33%
6	4.42%	4.70%	-0.28%
7	5.03%	5.20%	-0.17%
8	5.61%	5.70%	-0.09%
9	6.16%	6.10%	+0.06%
10	6.69%	6.50%	+0.19%

Familiars

The familiar's three cords work the same way as in Ars Magica. The Golden Cord reduces botch dice. The Silver Cord protects the wizard's mind. The Bronze Cord acts as Armor. Advance each Cord like a skill.

	Golden Cord	Silver Cord	Bronze Cord
Familiarity	-1 botch die	+1 on relevant rolls	Armor 1/+1 Recovery
Trained	-3 botch dice	+3 on relevant rolls	Armor 2/+3 Recovery
Specialized	-6 botch dice	+6 on relevant rolls	Armor 3/+6 Recovery

Auras

Auras act like free Edge (can be negative in some cases). For every five points in the bonus/penalty, the spell cost is adjusted by -1/+1. For example, in a Magic Aura of 3, the caster does not have to supply one Intellect point when casting spells ($+3/5 \times -1 = -0.6$, rounded to -1). In a Divine Aura of 2, they must pay an additional Intellect point per spell ($-6/5 \times -1 = 1.2$, rounded to +1). The additional botch dice remain the same. Magic Resistance is affected by the actual Ars Magica bonus or penalty but so is Penetration.

Cyphers and Vis

Cyphers in this game take the form of spell-like vis or charged items. Spell-Like Vis should be "naturally occurring" which makes it perfectly reasonable to have as a "find" in magical games. Charged items are manufactured, so there'd have to be some rationale as to why they exist at locations.

Use the Cyphers in the rulebooks and simply assign Arts to them as appropriate. The number of pawns of vis would be equal to its level (which is normally a 1d6 roll plus modifier). This makes vis abundant but so what?

If you rule that wizards can create raw vis, of any Art, then they would be able to create a number of pawns per season equal to their Art Score divided by five (not Lab Total divided by ten). This is if you want vis from all fifteen Arts able to be manufactured. Perhaps all raw vis is spell-like vis under this system (you can use it to cast an effect or use it to power something). Raw vis created in a laboratory might have a random

Cypher effect or perhaps the wizard can create a Cypher effect through some sort of roll. If raw vis remains the same, then only spell-like vis must be handled as a cypher (with the normal limitations). Carrying excess amounts of cyphers would induce Warring this game (it would not result in the disappearance of the cyphers). Carrying more cyphers than allowed, such as multiple pawns of spell-like vis and potions, might result in gaining Warring under the “powerful mystical effects” category. The amount should be one Warring point per 24 hours carrying more than the allowed amount. Properly storing these cyphers at a location would not cause any problems (other some of the spontaneous effects listed in the section on spell-like vis in *Realms of Power: Magic*).

Covenants

Characters can spend XP on their covenants (see Long-Term Benefits, CRS1e, 222). For every Cypher System XP spent on the covenant, give the players five *Ars Magica* Build Points. Use the Covenants supplement.

Equipment

The Inexpensive, Standard, and Expensive categories in *Ars Magica* map to the Inexpensive, Moderate, and Expensive (or more) categories in the Cypher System.

Cypher Use

For reference, the progression of Cypher Use is below:

<i>Cypher Use Level</i>	<i>Cyphers</i>
Initiate Cypher Use	1
Cypher Use	2
Expert Cypher Use	3
Adroit Cypher Use	4
Master Cypher Use	5

This could also be the limit of attuned items in a D&D5e sense, if you’re using those magic items.

Skills

All of the *Ars Magica* skills are available except for the combat skills (those are treated differently in the Cypher System). Practiced means you have the skill at +0. Familiarity is a +1, trained is +3, and specialized is +6. The equivalents in *Ars Magica* are:

Ars Magica Ability Score	Ars Magica Skill Level	Cypher System Skill Level
0 (1) to 2	Basic Skill	Practiced
3 to 5	Moderate Skill	Familiarity
6 to 8	Skilled	Trained
9 +	Very Skilled	Specialized

When applying a skill to an *Ars Magica* rule, use +3, +6, or +9 for familiarity, trained, or specialized. Each *Ars Magica* skill is a narrow skill (rather than a broad skill).

Houses of Hermes

Hermetic House	House Benefit
Bjornaer	Heartbeast (Practiced)
Bonisagus	Magic Theory (Trained) or Intrigue (Trained)
Criamon	The Enigma (Practiced)
Ex Miscellanea	Gain two 4 XP traits related to magic and gain one inability related to magic.
Flambeau	Perdo (Trained) or Ignem (Trained)
Guernicus	Hermetic Prestige
Jerbiton	Trained in one skill relating to scholarship, arts, or mundane interaction.
Mercere	Creo (Trained) or Muto (Trained)
Merinita	Faerie Magic
Tremere	Magical Focus (Certamen)
Tyталus	Self Confident
Verditius	Verditius Magic

Bjornaer

Bjornaer magi are practiced in the Heartbeast skill. This allows the magus to change into one (and only one) type of animal (their Heartbeast) for as long as they want. Other details are contained in the Ars Magica rulebook.

Bonisagus

Magi from this House are either trained in Magic Theory or in Intrigue depending on whether they are of the lineage of Bonisagus or Trianoma.

Criamon

Criamon magi are trained in The Enigma which eases rolls regarding interpreting dreams and riddle, understanding phantasms, arcane, and mysterious situations.

Ex Miscellanea

These wizards gain 8 XP worth of magical traits but must accept an inability in magic. This could be used, for example, to take Creo (Trained) and Corpus (Trained) and Perdo (Inability). It could also be used to gain two Supernatural Abilities (Practiced) and one Art inability. The source material will suggest more ways to characterize magi Ex Miscellanea.

Flambeau

Flambeau magi start out trained in either the Art of Perdo or the Art of Ignem.

Guernicus

Hermetic Prestige grants Guernicus magi ease on all social interactions with other magi in the Order of Hermes.

Jerbiton

These magi gain a free skill at the trained level relating to scholarship, arts, or mundane interaction.

Mercere

Mercere magi start out trained in either the Art of Creo or the Art of Muto.

Merinita

These magi gain Faerie Magic as a part of their House Mysteries.

Tremere

Magi of Tremere gain a Magical Focus in Certamen. This allows them to double the lower of their Arts when engaged in Certamen.

Tytalus

Tytalus magi gain the trait of Self Confident. In the Cypher System, this grants the player 2 XP per gaming session that can only be used for d20 re-rolls.

Verditius

Adding a Craft skill score to a Lab Total entails using a +3, +6, or +9 bonus from having a skill at the familiarity, trained, or specialized level. Use the same bonus scheme for the Philosophiae score and the reduction in pawns of raw vis for opening an enchantment. Verditius magi need their casting tools for all formulaic spells.

