

Crimson Incantation

~ Magicks and Mages ~

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Version 1.2



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Crimson Incantation: Magicks and Mages is a tabletop roleplaying game set in the modern-day real world—except that, hidden amongst mundane society, a tiny set of rare individuals possess the ability to wield fantastical magical powers. These mages must live double lives, trying to somehow balance their responsibilities in the human world with their connection to the chaotic and often dangerous magical one.

Unlike the mundane world, magical society is unordered, lawless, and amoral. Archaic traditions and rules are passed on generation after generation, with power and prestige valued far above order and justice. Self-interested organizations, ancient lineages, and rogue magical individuals engage in endless conflict to meet their selfish ends, and even mages wishing to stay out of these clashes will often find themselves inevitably dragged into them. Morality is a very personal matter, with each mage guided by their own personal code of conduct.

Genre and Style

Crimson Incantation aims to capture the style of dark urban fantasy anime. This genre focuses on complex, often trauma-ridden characters living in a morally ambiguous world, cinematic and flashy battles, and the fragile balance between the fantastical and ordinary halves of a character's life. Some major works with a similar setting and tone that serve as inspirations for *Crimson Incantation* include *Tsukihime*, *Fate/stay night*, *Noragami*, and *Jujutsu Kaisen*.

Mages in *Crimson Incantation* do not always align with the traditional magic-user archetype often seen in fantasy. Instead, they cover the entire spectrum, from brutish, blade-wielding berserkers to fragile, back-line spell snipers and eloquent, stealthy tricksters. All mages naturally make use of magic, but how they use it can vary massively.

Likewise, many common tropes of this genre are present in *Crimson Incantation*. Despite taking place in the modern-day, magic makes the impossible possible and the fantastical mundane. Bringing a sword to a gunfight, shrugging off bullet wounds, and perhaps even parrying bullets out of the air with magically enhanced reflexes fit right at home here.

Mages and Spirits

An uncrossable divide exists between the magical and non-magical: humans lacking a **Magic Factor**—the base ability to produce mana and wield magic—are fundamentally incapable of understanding magic in

any capacity. Even if they witness it, their minds cannot properly form coherent memories of the experience, allowing them to only recall it as muddled fragments in the aftermath of the event. As such, the secrecy of magic is not the product of a conscious effort by magical society; rather, it is an unbreakable rule of the universe. By somewhat arbitrary tradition, most mages consider it taboo to use magic in the presence of non-mages unless absolutely necessary.

Mages are extraordinarily rare, with an average density of only 1 per 5000 humans. The genetics involved in inheriting Magic Factors are not fully understood, but most mages are capable of producing a single offspring possessing a Magic Factor, with the chances dropping off drastically for any subsequent children. Likewise, the children of two non-magical parents almost never have Magic Factors. This means that the magical population rarely grows in size.

The core motivation of most mages is to aggressively grow their magical capabilities and influence within the magical world, usually with the intent to eventually pass it on to a successor. Lineage is very important to mages; most are forced to inherit the magical knowledge and responsibilities of their families, and they are expected to pass it down to the next generation. Since their training typically begins from a very young age, many mages never even question their station, as it's all they know.



Art Credit: BTG

Spirits

Alongside human mages, magical society is made up of beings constructed out of magic itself. These creatures are known as spirits.

Spirits come in all varieties. Some are born from the natural processes of the Earth, others are artificially created by mages, and some are even former humans whose forms have been irreversibly altered by unstable magic (creatures such as ghosts, vampires, et cetera).

Spirits often play culturally significant roles even to non-mages. For example, some powerful spirits are the objects of religious worship, and malevolent spirits are frequently viewed as demons or monsters in mythologies and traditions all across the world. Due to their inherently magical presence, however, their interactions with non-mages are still very limited. Non-mages usually will not even notice the presence of a spirit unless attention is drawn to them, and they will quickly forget any direct encounters they may have. Still, humans often adopt aspects of their encounters with spirits into stories, myths, and religious doctrine; however, memory complications often result in these depictions differing greatly from reality.

The World

[Chapter 5](#) delves into the world of *Crimson Incantation* with more detail, including an overview of some major factions, people, and locations. If you would prefer to learn more about the setting before digging into the rules, feel free to jump ahead to that chapter before proceeding to [Chapter 2](#).

Magic, Mana, and Magicks

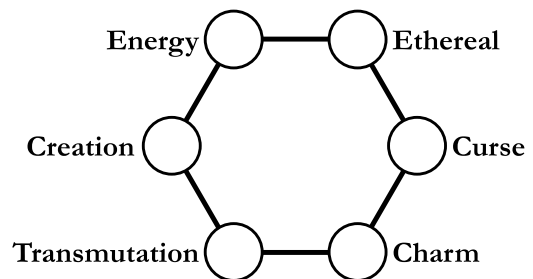
When speaking of magic, three similar yet distinct terms are used. The word ‘magic’ is used as a noun or adjective to refer to any and all things of a magical nature; the term ‘**magick**,’ on the other hand, is a

noun that refers to a specific, unique realization of magic, such as an individual spell, ritual, or other magical technique. Most often, magicks are spoken of in the plural, differentiating the otherwise identical-sounding terms. Finally, the term ‘**mana**’ refers to the magical energy mages tap into to cast their magicks.

Mages classify all magicks into one of six **magic classes**: Energy, Creation, Transmutation, Charm, Curse, and Ethereal. The former three are considered ‘physical’ and the latter three ‘metaphysical’.

Although each class is distinct, some are more similar to each other than others. To indicate the relationships between classes, they are typically organized in a hexagonal pattern, with adjacent classes being more similar to each other than distant ones. This pattern is referred to as the **magic class hexagon**.

Each magic class is described in detail in [Chapter 2](#).



CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES

All mages in *Crimson Incantation*—whether controlled by a player or GM—comprise of a core set of statistics called **Attributes**. Attributes themselves are split into two categories: **Basic Attributes**, which govern the mundane (nonmagical) aspects of a mage, and **Magic Attributes**, which govern their affinity with each magic class. Attributes affect how well a mage can perform tasks relating to that Attribute, and they are used in calculating other statistics as well.

Mages also have other statistics in addition to Attributes which are broken down in future chapters.

Attributes

There are five Basic Attributes: Fitness, Dexterity, Intuition, Reasoning, and Charisma.

Fitness (FIT) is a measure of strength, stamina, physical endurance, and general athletic prowess. Mages with high Fitness are good at taking intense beatings, performing athletic stunts, overwhelming opponents in martial combat, et cetera.

Dexterity (DEX) is a measure of finesse, coordination, reflexes, and agility. Mages with high Dexterity are good at performing precise or complex movements, sneaking, avoiding attacks, et cetera.

Intuition (INT) is a measure of instinct, acuity, and unconscious thought. Mages with high Intuition are good at detecting lies, noticing subtle details, predicting the actions of an opponent, et cetera.

Reasoning (REA) is a measure of knowledge, intelligence, and conscious thinking. Mages with high Reasoning are good at solving complex problems, investigating, researching and memorizing information, et cetera.

Charisma (CHA) is a measure of eloquence, expression, and social acumen. Mages with high Charisma are good at persuading (and deceiving) others, striking favorable deals, reading and reacting to subtle social cues, et cetera.

Magic Attributes

There are six Magic Attributes, one for each magic class. A Magic Attribute represents a mage's mastery of magicks in that class.

Energy magicks involve shaping mana into primitive energy-based forms. This can range from blasts of pure kinetic energy or heat to conjuring slightly more advanced forms, such as flames or bolts of lightning. The simplicity of Energy magicks give them a good ratio of power to mana.

Creation magicks involve converting mana into matter to conjure permanent or semi-permanent

objects and spirits. Creation magicks tend to be slow and costly, but their potential is virtually limitless.

Transmutation magicks involve manipulating the properties of inanimate objects. Unlike Creation magicks, they can only manipulate what already exists, but they are faster and cheaper in return.

Charm magicks involve granting magical boons and enhancements to living things—making Charm largely the animate equivalent of Transmutation. Charms can only affect willing targets; thus, they typically only grant positive effects.

Curse magicks involve forcefully subjecting living creatures to (almost universally negative) magic effects. Being the offensive alternative to Charms, the target of a Curse will almost always try to resist its effects.

Ethereal magicks encompass all metaphysical magicks that are neither Charms nor Curses (in other words, they do not typically directly target individual creatures). Ethereal magicks cover divination, illusions, extrasensory perception, et cetera.

Ranks

Attributes, as well as some other statistics, are defined by a **rank**—one of eight letter grades that represent a mage's ability in that statistic. They reflect the culmination of their innate talent, training, and experience.

A D-Rank is considered average for ordinary humans, but every aspect of a mage is enhanced by their magic. For them, a C-Rank is considered average.

Each rank has an associated die, as shown in this table:

Rank	Die	Description
X	—	Incapable
F	d2	Awful
E	d3	Subpar
D	d4	Human Average
C	d6	Mage Average
B	d8	Good
A	d10	Great
S	d12	Exceptional

X-Ranks are never assigned to Basic Attributes, but they may be assigned to Magic Attributes (meaning a character is incapable of using magicks of that class).

Core Rule: Keep 3 System

Most actions are easier said than done. Whenever a player or NPC attempts a non-trivial action where failure is a possibility, they must perform a **check**, a type of **roll** that determines the outcome of the action.

All checks are associated with one Attribute depending on the nature of the action. For example, attempting to solve a complex math problem would be considered a Reasoning check.

Checks are compared against a **Target Number** (TN) chosen by the GM based on how difficult they consider the action to be.

Checks (as well as another type of roll called a contest) are governed by a system called **Keep 3**. No matter what type of check is being conducted, the Keep 3 system follows the same core principles:

1. Compile your situational bonuses and penalties and determine if your roll is either 'favorable' or 'unfavorable'.
2. Roll a handful of dice (as determined by the previous step).
3. Sum exactly 3 dice (either the highest or lowest 3 depending on the favorability of the roll).
4. Compare your sum to the TN to determine the outcome of the action.

Determining Favorability

Checks are often affected by situational factors. Mechanically, these manifest as numerical bonuses or penalties. Many special effects will grant these directly, and the GM can also apply extra bonuses or penalties depending on the situation.

When determining your roll's favorability, sum together all situational bonuses then subtract all situational penalties. This final value is known as the roll's **favorability score**. For example, if you have an effect granting a +2 bonus, another granting a +1 bonus, and another imposing a -2 penalty, the roll's favorability score would be +1 ($2 + 1 - 2 = 1$).

If the favorability score is positive or zero, the check is considered **favorable**. If it is negative, the check is considered **unfavorable**.

Determining your Dice Pool

The dice used in a roll are called a **dice pool**. In *Crimson Incantation*, all dice pools consist of only one type of die at a time, but which type and how many dice are rolled varies depending on your statistics.

For checks, the type used is determined by your rank in the applicable Attribute according to the table above. The number of dice in the pool equals 3 plus the absolute value of the favorability score (this means you will never roll less than 3 dice). For example, if you had B-Rank Fitness (d8), and the check has a favorability score of -2, you would roll 5 d8s on a Fitness check ($3 + 2 = 5$). The favorability score only ever affects the *size* of your dice pool; it is never a value you add or subtract from your total.

What if I Don't Have Enough Dice?

Dice pools in *Crimson Incantation* can sometimes get quite large. While you will normally be rolling 3–5 dice in a pool, in rare situations, they can consist of 6 or even more. When this occurs, you may not have enough dice to roll them all at once. Here are a few suggested solutions when this happens:

- **Reuse Dice:** the easiest solution is to roll as many dice as you do have, remember or record the results, then reuse those dice in another roll until you've completed the entire dice pool's worth of rolls.
- **Online Dice:** there are countless services you can find online that will roll any number of dice for you. Some players may prefer to stay away from devices during gameplay, but this is a quick and effective solution if your table is okay with using virtual dice.
- **Substitution:** you can substitute any die using a different die of twice as many faces and dividing the result by two (for example, you can halve a d12 roll to represent a d6, a d20 instead a d10, et cetera). If using this method, always round up! Otherwise, the probabilities won't line up right.

Determining Your Total

Once you've rolled your dice pool, you can now determine the final total of your check.

If your roll was favorable, you keep the highest 3 dice from the pool and sum them. If it was unfavorable, you keep the lowest 3. Either way, you always keep exactly 3.

Why Do I Roll More Dice from Penalties?

While you might intuitively assume rolling more dice will always give you a higher total, that is not always true in this system. Since an unfavorable roll always takes the values of the 3 lowest dice and ignores the rest, the bigger the pool, the worse your odds actually are—after all, any high rolls from these additional dice are likely to be skipped over, and any low rolls will take their place. Conversely, when you keep the 3 highest (as is the case for favorable rolls), the more rolled at once, the better!

Determining Target Numbers

A GM can use any value they wish for a TN, but the following table is a good rule of thumb to follow for various difficulties:

TN	Task Difficulty
5	Trivial
10	Easy
15	Moderate
20	Hard
25	Very Hard
30	Nearly Impossible
35+	Divine Intervention

Determining the Outcome

Generally, a result equaling or exceeding the TN means successfully pulling off the intended action, and a result of less than the TN means failure. However, some actions might have variable degrees of success or failure—perhaps you missed the opponent’s vitals, but still grazed them with your attack, or maybe you narrowly evaded an incoming fireball, but not by enough to avoid getting minor burns. These varied levels of success or failure can be determined by how much the roll exceeded or fell short of the TN.

A check’s **margin** is the difference between the final result and the TN. If an action has variable outcomes, the margin should be compared to preset thresholds for each outcome. Increments of 5 make for good on-the-fly thresholds.

For example, the GM may decide an action has the potential for catastrophic failure (a margin of failure of 5 or more) in addition to regular failure. If they defined the TN as 15, a roll of 10 (giving a margin of failure of exactly 5) would result in a catastrophic failure. A roll between 11 and 14, on the other hand, would just result in a regular failure, and 15 or higher a success.

Exploding Dice

When performing a check, something special happens when a die rolls its maximum value. When this occurs, you can roll the die again and treat its face value as the sum of the previous and new roll. This is known as **exploding**. Each die can only explode *once*

per check, regardless of if you roll maximum on the reroll.

For example, say you make a check using 4 d8s and get 4, 8, 3, and 8. You reroll both 8s and get a 5 and 8, respectively. The values in your pool are now 4, 13, 3, and 16. If the check was favorable, taking the three highest values (16, 13, and 4) results in an impressive final total of 33. Even if the check was unfavorable, taking the three lowest values (3, 4, and 13) results in a still decent result of 20.

Contests

A **contest** is a type of roll very similar to a check, except that two characters are rolling against each other at the same time. Instead of using a TN, the two results are compared directly against each other to determine the outcome. All rules that apply to checks also apply to contests (such as exploding dice).

Contests use Attributes like checks, but the two participants may not necessarily be using the same Attribute. Additionally, contests may sometimes require using a Defense statistic (Block, Dodge, or Ego) instead of an Attribute for the roll.

For many contests, a tie simply means neither side succeeds, but this is not always true. For example, a tie is counted as a successful hit (and thus failed defense) when attacking. These exceptions are outlined when they occur.

Magnitude Rolls

A **magnitude roll** is a simpler type of roll than checks or contests. They do not use a TN or any other form of comparison—instead, the numerical results of these rolls are applied directly. Likewise, you are not limited to ‘keeping’ 3 dice; rather, you get to sum every dice rolled in a magnitude roll.

Some magnitude rolls use Attributes, but others use a predefined dice pool unaffected by the roller’s statistics. Unless an effect specifies otherwise, dice do *not* explode in magnitude rolls.

The most common type of magnitude roll is a damage roll, which is used to determine how much an attack harms a target.

CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER CREATION

Before you can begin playing, each player aside from the GM needs to create a mage of their own called a **player character**. This chapter outlines the steps required to create one from scratch.

While players could theoretically run spirits as characters, this book only provides rules for creating human mages as player characters.

Alongside Attributes, there is one other fundamental statistic of a character: **Level**. A character's Level is an overall summation of their power and experience as a mage.

Normally, new characters start out as novice mages with a Level of 1. In some cases, however, your GM may decide to have you start at a higher Level. If this applies to your character, go to "[Character Progression](#)" in [Chapter 4](#) after completing basic character creation to see what additional steps should be taken.

Rounding Fractional Values

When calculating your statistics, division will sometimes produce fractional values. When this occurs, **always round down** even if the fractional part is above one-half.

Getting Started

There are six major steps involved in character creation. As some steps are dependent on other steps, it is recommended you follow the order outlined here.

This ordering has you select your character's mechanical statistics first, and then flesh out their personality and background with those in mind. If you already have an idea for your character, however, feel free to do Step 5 first, then return to Steps 1-4 afterward.

This chapter is ordered as follows:

1. [Choose an Origin + Assign Magic Attributes](#)
2. [Assign Basic Attributes](#)
3. [Derive Other Statistics](#)
4. [Select Your Starting Traits and Magicks](#)
5. [Describe Your Character's Personality and Background](#)

1. Choose an Origin

Although all mages are necessarily born with a Magic Factor—in other words, a baseline level of compatibility with magic—they do not all derive their abilities from the same source. This 'source' is called an **Origin**.

Most mages can be categorized into one of three Origins: inheritor, scholar, or signatory. The Origin you choose significantly affects your distribution of

Magic Attributes, which are also assigned during this step. It should also factor into your character's backstory.

In regard to magic classes, the term 'adjacent' refers to classes next to each other on the magic class hexagon (see "[Magic, Mana, and Magicks](#)" in [Chapter 1](#)). For example, Transmutation is considered adjacent to Creation and Charm.

Also note that an X-Rank in a Magic Attribute means your character *cannot* use magicks belonging to that class whatsoever.

Inheritor

Inheritors draw their magical capabilities straight from their blood, inheriting power from lineage. Usually, inheritors simply receive magical abilities from their parents genetically; alternatively, some mages can manually transfer their Magic Factors to their children by making use of powerful rituals.

Regardless of how the transfer occurs, the magical power of inheritors is innate. They have immense natural talent in the type of magic they inherit, but they have weak (and often zero) magical capabilities elsewhere.

The magicks you choose as an inheritor should have rich stories behind them—they belong to your ancestors as much as they do to you. When creating an inheritor, think about your character's lineage, who their ancestors might have been, what they did, and why they cultivated these particular magicks.

While mages of all Origins inherit magic to some degree, most bloodlines are too weak to rely on latent power alone; inheritors are the exception, wielding it as their primary tool.

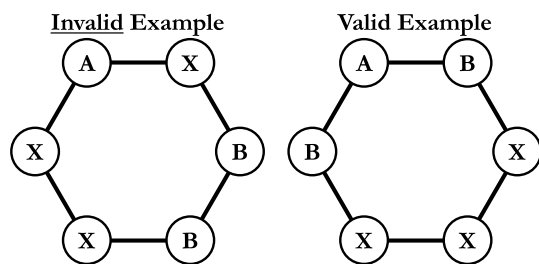


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Assigning Magic Attributes

Inheritors only have a single primary magic class, but their skill carries over to closely related classes.

1. **Assign one A-Rank** to any Magic Attribute of your choice.
2. **Assign two B-Ranks** to the Attributes directly adjacent to the one you gave an A-Rank.
3. **Assign three X-Ranks** to the other three Attributes.



Scholar

Scholars acquire their magical expertise through study and rigorous training. While their magic is generally weaker than the potent powers of an inheritor, scholars are not locked to a narrow slice of options like inheritors are. Rather, a scholar's magical portfolio is highly diversified, and they are capable of casting magicks of all classes to varying degrees.



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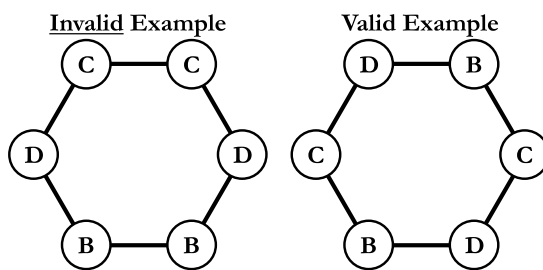
How a scholar learned to use magic is an important aspect of their character. When creating a scholar, think about who—if anyone—mentored them in magic, why they chose to specialize in the magic classes they're best at versus the ones they're weakest at, and what led them to practice magic in the first place.

Scholars are the most common and least flashy of the Origins, but their versatility is not to be underestimated.

Assigning Magic Attributes

Scholars have at least some degree of proficiency in every magic class.

1. **Assign two B-Ranks** to any two Magic Attributes.
2. **Assign two C-Ranks** to Attributes adjacent to the ones you gave B-Ranks (if there are multiple options, you choose which two).
3. **Assign two D-Ranks** to the other two Attributes.



Signatory

Signatories derive their abilities from making pacts with powerful spirits.

Rather than utilize their own magicks, they draw upon the power of their benefactor when using magic. Some signatories make pacts with lesser spirits with tangible forms (usually nature spirits or demons), while others sign



Art Credit: Terry Wei

their contracts with transcendent spirits far beyond mortal understanding. Religious mages in particular are likely to be signatories, making pacts with their cult's deity directly or, in the cases of major faiths, forging contracts with lesser divine spirits like angels or the ghosts of saints.

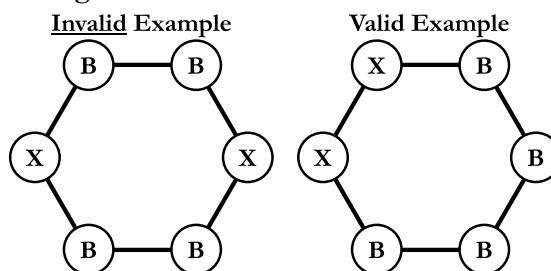
The magicks of spirits tend to be more stable but less malleable than those of mortals. As a result, signatories can use multiple types of magic fairly well, but they cannot quite achieve the full range like scholars can.

When creating a signatory, think about the spirit your character made a pact with, what their end of the deal was, how they first came into contact, and why they sought a contract in the first place.

Assigning Magic Attributes

Signatories are good at using magicks of multiple related classes, but they are limited somewhat by the nature of their benefactor.

1. **Assign four B-Ranks** to any four Magic Attributes as long as they form a continuous line on the magic class hexagon.
2. **Assign two X-Ranks** to the other two Attributes.



2. Assign Basic Attributes

Ranks are assigned to Basic Attributes through a point-buy system. Characters have a D-Rank in every Basic Attribute by default, and you have 8 total points to spend on buying higher ranks. Use the following table to calculate the costs of each rank:

Rank	Point Cost	Die
D	0	d4
C	1	d6
B	2	d8
A	4	d10
S	8	d12

A solid, recommended distribution is to purchase one A, one B, two Cs, and one D (A, B, C, C, D).

3. Derive Other Statistics

A handful of other statistics remain that are derived based on the ranks assigned to your Attributes. These are Vitality, Mana, Bursts, Defenses, and Movement.

When the die assigned to an Attribute is referenced in a statistic's formula, its max value is always used in the calculation. For example, 'FIT Die Max' would equal 8 for B-Rank Fitness (d8), 10 for A-Rank Fitness (d10), and so on.

Vitality

Vitality (VIT) represents a character's physical state and current healthiness. It is reduced when they take damage.

A mage's bodily health is closely linked to their magical nature. The mana coursing through their veins passively heals damage to their body, allowing them to recover from even seemingly lethal wounds in a day or two of rest.

Your character's Max Vitality is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Max Vitality} = 20 + (\text{FIT Die Max} * \text{Level})$$

Additionally, characters have a Vitality threshold called **Wounded**. Having your Current Vitality drop to this value or lower does nothing on its own, but certain abilities trigger or unlock after crossing this threshold.

Your character's Wounded threshold is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Wounded} = \text{Max Vitality} / 2$$

Mana

Mana is a numerical representation of your character's total pool of mana that they can draw from

to cast magicks. It is spent when magicks are used and regenerates over time.

When calculating Max Mana, use the highest die assigned to *any* of your Magic Attributes in the formula (at Level 1, that would be a d10 for inheritors and a d8 for scholars/signatories).

Your character's Max Mana is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Max Mana} = 20 + (\text{Best Magic Die Max} * \text{Level})$$

Bursts

In addition to their regular pool of mana, mages store a small number of separate mana reserves called **Bursts**—named so as they manifest as an instant 'burst' of magical energy when used.

The total number of Bursts you have is determined by your Level:

Level	Bursts
1	3
2	4
3	5
4	7
5	8

Level	Bursts
6	9
7	11
8	12
9	13
10	15

Certain abilities—known as **Surges**—require spending Bursts to activate. Some mages have specialized Surges, but all mages have at least two basic ones: **Vitality Surge** and **Mana Surge**. The values associated with these abilities are calculated here, but a detailed overview of how they actually work is explained in the [Chapter 4](#) section "[Combat](#)".

Vitality Surges channel magical energy straight into healing the body, restoring lost Vitality instantly. Mana Surges tap into your reserves to replenish your mana pool, restoring spent Mana.

Your character's Vitality and Mana Surge values are calculated using the following formulas:

$$\text{Vitality Surge} = \text{Max Vitality} / 4$$

$$\text{Mana Surge} = \text{Max Mana} / 4$$

Defenses

There are three **Defense** statistics: Block, Dodge, and Ego. Like Attributes, these statistics are represented with ranks, with the corresponding die used when making contest rolls with it.

Block is a measure of your ability to block incoming attacks using a weapon or other object. Your Block rank is equal to your Fitness rank.

Dodge is a measure of your ability to predict and avoid incoming attacks. Your Dodge rank is equal to your Dexterity or Intuition rank, whichever is higher.

Ego is a measure of your force of will and sense of self, and it can be used to resist certain attacks. Ego

typically cannot defend against physical attacks, but it is useful (and sometimes mandatory) against magical ones. Your Ego rank is equal to your Reasoning or Charisma rank, whichever is higher.

Movement

Movement is the amount of distance your character can move per turn while in time-sensitive situations such as combat.

All distances in *Crimson Incantation*, including Movement, are measured in meters.

Your character's Movement is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Movement} = 5 + (\text{DEX Die Max} / 4)$$

4. Select Traits and Magicks

Traits are the talents, skills, and special abilities that make each mage unique beyond their magicks. Traits range from having an expertise in certain tasks—such as sneaking, persuading, wielding weapons, et cetera—to knowing how to pull off special maneuvers and techniques. A full list of Traits, as well as their effects, can be found in [Chapter 6](#).

Magicks, on the other hand, are the most important tool in any mage's arsenal—after all, they're what make your character a mage in the first place. A full list of magicks and their effects can be found in [Chapter 7](#).

Both Traits and magicks can be acquired or upgraded by spending **Specialization Points** (SP). You start out with some SP, and you earn more when your character's Level increases (see "[Character Progression](#)" in [Chapter 4](#)).

You have 20 SP to spend on Traits and magicks when first creating a character. While SP can normally be stockpiled and used on either Traits or magicks at your discretion, the rules are slightly tighter during character creation: you must spend *at least* 15 SP out of this initial allotment of 20 (you can save the rest if you wish), and you can spend no more than 12 SP on just Traits or just magicks. As a result, you must take at least something from both.

Remember, if you have an X-Rank in a Magic Attribute, you *cannot* acquire any magicks belonging to that class.

Additionally, each class has one magick that costs 0 SP. Thus, as long as you are able to use magicks of that class, you can acquire it for free.

If you select a Trait that involves the use of equipment of some kind (such as a weapon), assume you own that kind of equipment.

5. Describe Your Character

Characters are not merely a table of stats—they're *characters*. Who they are is just as important as what they can do.

Basic Characteristics

First, give your character a name. Remember that *Crimson Incantation* takes place in the real world, so it's important that you decide on your character's cultural background. This can be as broad as a nationality or as specific as you see fit, but you should decide this early on; a person's culture will likely have a major influence on other aspects of who they are.

Your character can have one native language, or two if they were raised bilingually. Additionally, they can know one second language which they learned later in life. Unless you decide otherwise, they can speak, read, and write all of these languages fluently. If you want your character to know more languages than this, you must first get permission from the GM. It's a good idea to double check with your GM that every player character can speak at least one mutual language; it won't be very much fun if no one can understand each other!

Fill out other demographic data as well: age, gender, physical characteristics (such as height, weight, skin color, eye color, hair color, hairstyle, et cetera), and whatever else you feel helps meaningfully describe your character.



Art Credit: Stu Harrington

Moral Scales

The magical world is, as a whole, largely amoral, and while many uphold the rules of the factions and organizations they belong to, every mage has a personal moral code they follow above all else.

To get a general sense of your character's moral leanings and general personality, rate your character on eight metrics called **moral scales**. Each moral scale is a spectrum with a cardinal sin on one end and an opposing cardinal virtue on the other. For each scale, your character can lean towards the sinful side, the virtuous side, or be neutral between the two. Notably, these are not scales of 'bad' versus 'good'; virtuous leanings come with their own set of complications and flaws, especially when it comes to the cutthroat world of mages.

There are no restrictions on the ratio of sinful versus virtuous leanings your character can have, but interesting characters tend to have their scales lean in many different directions.

The Eight Scales

The scale of **Lust and Chastity** defines one's desire for pleasure (in whatever form that may take for them). Lustful characters tend to do what they want when they want, with little consideration given beyond their raw desire; chaste characters tend to actively deprive themselves of pleasures, even harmless ones, out of caution, restraint, or self-punishment.

The scale of **Gluttony and Temperance** defines one's self-discipline. Gluttonous characters tend to lack self-control and will mindlessly take anything handed to them without a second thought; temperate characters tend to be ascetic and austere, with a tendency to judge others for lacking their restraint.

The scale of **Greed and Charity** defines one's view of selfishness. Greedy characters tend to act in

their own self-interest at all times; charitable characters tend to be altruistic and self-sacrificial, completely neglecting their own needs in favor of others'.

The scale of **Sloth and Diligence** defines one's work ethic. Slothful characters tend to put minimal effort into their actions, opting to cut corners or cheat to get out of work; diligent characters tend to never idle, working themselves to exhaustion in everything they attempt.

The scale of **Envy and Kindness** defines one's empathy and how they view others. Envious characters tend to always compare themselves to others, coveting those with more than them and ignoring those beneath them; kind characters tend to treat all equally, often foolishly placing trust in the reliable and treacherous alike.

The scale of **Wrath and Patience** defines one's penchant for conflict or violence. Wrathful characters tend to use force to get what they want; patient characters tend to avoid any sort of conflict at all costs.

The scale of **Pride and Humility** defines one's self-image. Prideful characters tend to view themselves as the unshakeable protagonists of the world; humble characters tend to view themselves as wretched and worthless.

The scale of **Despair and Hope** defines one's cosmic view of the nature of the world. Despairful characters tend to be nihilistic and melancholic realists; hopeful characters tend to be idealistic to a fault.

CHAPTER 4: PLAYING THE GAME

While the basic rules are covered in [Chapter 2](#), this chapter digs deeper into the other systems you'll need to know to play *Crimson Incantation*.

Checks and Contests

For a variety of reasons, certain bonuses or penalties may be applied to your rolls, affecting the size and favorability of your dice pool. Some types have special rules or conditions which are described in detail here.

Using Skill Bonuses

Many Traits grant a passive **Skill Bonus** to checks or contests relating to specific tasks or actions. When making a check or contest that you think your Skill Bonus applies to, ask the GM; if they agree the Trait is applicable, you can add the stated Skill Bonus to your roll (that is, you add that many dice to the roll's dice pool).

You can apply at most *one* Skill Bonus to any given roll (but other types of bonuses may still apply). If multiple Skill Bonuses could apply, you choose which one to use.

Note that not all bonuses granted by Traits are Skill Bonuses, only those that are explicitly marked as such. Additionally, Skill Bonuses are always granted from passive (not active) Traits.

Unless otherwise specified, Skill Bonuses *cannot* be applied to magnitude rolls.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Situational conditions may affect how easy or hard it is to complete certain tasks. For checks, this is reflected in the TN, which can be adjusted accordingly by the GM depending on how advantageous or disadvantageous the circumstances are.

As contests do not use TN, this solution does not work for them. Instead, the GM can grant bonuses directly to a roller's dice pool if the situation benefits one side over the other. In general, a good rule of thumb is a +1 bonus for moderate advantages, and a +2 for huge ones. For example, if one mage is attempting to shoot another, but the target has some furniture they can duck behind as cover, the GM could decide to grant them a +1 to their Dodge roll in the contest.

In general, granting bonuses to the advantaged side is preferable to applying penalties to the disadvantaged side, as penalties are disproportionately punishing. However, all of this is up to context and the discretion of the GM.

Using Magic

Magicks are the primary tool in most mages' arsenals. Casting magicks requires spending Mana equal to that magick's **Mana Cost**. If you do not have enough Mana to pay the cost, you cannot use the magick.

In addition to their base cost and effect(s), most magicks have a number of **Modifications** that can be applied to an individual casting. Each Modification alters the magick's effect in some way, but they also have an additional Mana Cost you must pay to activate them. Unless otherwise noted, you can activate as many (or as few) Modifications as you want.

You can choose which Modifications you wish to activate each time you cast a magick. These *must* be chosen before the magick takes effect, including any rolls involved.



Art Credit: Alexandre Chaudret

Non-Player Characters

A Non-Player Character (NPC for short) is any character controlled by the GM rather than a player. This includes enemies, allies, and everyone in between.

NPCs operate with the same rules as player characters, but with looser restrictions. For example, when creating an NPC as a GM, you can reference the character creation rules as a guideline for their Attributes and other statistics, but you can deviate wherever you feel is necessary (such as by arbitrarily weakening or strengthening them). Feel free to come up with any unique abilities or magicks for them to utilize as well.

[Appendix C](#) has some examples of NPCs of varying levels of power to use as building blocks for combat encounters.

Social Interaction

Whenever possible, social interaction should be conducted via roleplaying. However, when it comes to situations with clear success and failure conditions, such as when telling a lie, contests should occur to determine the outcome.

Usually, the character initiating a social roll uses Charisma, but the GM should always consider if another Attribute fits better; for example, a character trying to win a logical argument should probably roll

with Reasoning rather than Charisma. If the conflict is symmetric (for example, two characters trying to persuade the other of something), both should use the same Attribute. When it is asymmetric (for example, one character is trying to lie to the other), they should use different Attributes (Intuition is good choice for when one side is trying to discern the intentions of the other). All of these decisions are up to the GM to make.

Using Spirits

All non-human (and non-animal) characters are spirits in some shape or form; this includes even former humans like vampires or ghosts. As they are magical in nature, almost everything that applies to mages applies to spirits as well.



Art Credit: Sandra Duchiewicz

As described in [Chapter 1](#), spirits typically have very limited interactions with non-magic humans. As such, most spirits will have little to do with the mundane world compared to human mages. This may be something to keep in mind while roleplaying them.

Using Non-Mages

Although all player characters are mages, not all characters they interact with may be.

Non-mages naturally have no magicks, Bursts, Mana, and likely no Traits either. If giving them Basic Attributes is necessary, a good rule-of-thumb for is to use the standard point-buy system with 4 points to spend instead of 8.

If combat breaks out near a non-mage, they can still act as any other NPC, but (in most cases) they would simply hide or flee instead of participating in a battle beyond their understanding.

Equipment

In general, the rules for equipment in *Crimson Incantation* are light, and characters should have access to whatever they reasonably would. For example, it would be reasonable to expect most characters to have cellphones, household goods and tools, and some might own a vehicle or even a house. If a player is ever unsure whether or not a certain item is fair or realistic for them to possess, it's up to the GM to make a judgement.

When it comes to non-mundane equipment of mechanical significance, there are two major types: weapons and artifacts.

Weapons

While magic tends to be a mage's primary tool in battle, many make use of **weapons** as well. In fact, some use magic as the supplement to their martial capabilities rather than do things the other way around.

The magic flowing through a mage's body makes them inherently resistant to non-magical attacks. To compensate, mages channel magic into their weapons to strengthen them and bypass these defenses. This results in the deadlier weapons of the mundane world being largely equalized in the magical one; boosted by magic, a steel blade is just as effective when it comes to fighting other mages as a pistol is, and it's mostly up to the user's personal preference what they choose to wield.



Art Credit: Z.W. Gu

All weapons are abstracted into four different categories: three for melee (light, medium, and heavy) and one catch-all for ranged. The stylistic shape and form of an individual weapon is completely up to whoever wields it; a player can decide that their character's medium weapon is a sword, a

staff, an axe, or maybe even a shield—mechanically, these all function the same as medium weapons.

Unless you have specialized Traits, you can only handle one weapon at any given time. For example, you cannot wield a dagger in one hand and a pistol in the other without a Trait allowing it.

Light weapons are small and often simple weapons. They include daggers, sickles, shortswords, handaxes, et cetera. Light weapons are quick and good against fast targets, but their lightweight nature means they inflict less damage than other weapon types. An advantage afforded to all melee weapons is that they can be used to Block (described later in [“Blocking”](#)).

Medium weapons are larger one-handed arms that usually require a higher level of training and expertise to use effectively. They include arming swords, rapiers, staves, battleaxes, et cetera. They are a versatile middle ground between light and heavy weapons.

Heavy weapons are large weapons requiring two hands to wield. They include greatswords, katanas, lances, halberds, et cetera. These weapons inflict the most damage and are good at overpowering

opponents, but their size and weight puts them at a disadvantage against fast enemies.

Ranged weapons are weapons that fire projectiles from a distance. They include handguns, longbows, crossbows, et cetera. Unlike melee weapons, ranged weapons *cannot* be used to Block *or* be Blocked.

The statistics of each weapon category are shown in the tables below. Details regarding how these values are used (including the difference between normal and critical damage) are described later in this chapter in “[Combat](#)”.

Type	Attribute	Damage	Critical
Light	DEX	2d4	3d6
Medium	FIT or DEX	2d6	3d8
Heavy	FIT	2d8	3d10
Ranged	INT	2d6	3d8

Type	Against Defenses
Light	+1 vs. Dodge
Medium	—
Heavy	+1 vs. Block -1 vs. Dodge
Ranged	Cannot be Blocked

Concealing Weaponry
Weapons, especially anachronistic ones, easily stand out in the modern world. Unless you <i>want</i> your character to draw attention (and likely have the police called on them), weapons need to be concealed in some way while out in public. Often, it makes the most sense to not bring them with you at all except when you plan on using them—but be sure to remember when you do or do not have them on you!

Artifacts

Artifacts are objects—usually very old ones—infused with powerful magic. These artifacts grant special effects or abilities to characters who possess them and are highly valued amongst mages. They begin their life as little more than an ordinary object infused with a magick; over time, however, they grow into something far more valuable.

Artifacts slowly absorb mana from the environment, causing their magical effects to grow more powerful the older they are. As a result, artifacts that have accumulated mana for hundreds or even thousands of years are capable of producing magic far eclipsing what a mage could do using their own mortal magicks.

Since artifacts can range in power from trivial to having literal earth-shattering might, they will likely play a role at all stages of gameplay, regardless of whether the players are Level 1 or Level 10.

By default, a new character does not possess any artifacts, but the GM can decide to grant them some if they feel it is appropriate. Otherwise, artifacts serve as an excellent reward for players to discover or win by overcoming challenges, and they can often work as adventure hooks in and of themselves.

Artifacts can be or do whatever the GM decides when they create them. A few sample artifacts are provided in [Appendix A](#), but GMs should feel free to create and use new ones at their discretion.

Combat

In the lawless world of mages, conflict is the only constant. When words fail, few mages hesitate to use violence to settle disputes. Battles to the death over personal or professional spats are a common, accepted occurrence, often even between friends and family.

This section covers what to do when battle inevitably breaks out during gameplay.

Rounds and Turn Order

Combat in *Crimson Incantation* is divided into **rounds**, where each character involved gets a single **turn**. The length of an individual round can vary wildly depending on what happens during it, but most rounds take place over the course of 5–10 seconds. Since the length of a round is loosely defined, persistent effects in battle are measured in rounds or turns rather than in seconds or minutes.

Each round is split into three sections: first comes the **Immediate Phase**, then the **Normal Phase**, and finally the **Delayed Phase**. At the start of a round, every player must decide and declare which phase they will act in. Once a choice is made for a particular round, it cannot be changed later. The GM also makes a choice for each NPC, but they do not need to reveal these choices to the players; however, these choices should be made independently from what the players declare (as best as possible).

The number of actions a character can take on their turn is determined by which phase they chose to act in. Acting sooner gives less actions, but those actions can be used earlier.

Within each phase, the turn order is simply player characters first, then NPCs. If multiple players are acting in the same phase, they decide their ordering; likewise, the GM can decide what order to have NPCs in the same phase act in.

Turns and Actions

There are two types of actions: **Major Actions** and **Minor Actions**.

Characters always get one Major Action per turn, and the number of Minor Actions they get depends on which phase they act in.

Phase	# of Minor Actions
Immediate	0
Normal	1
Delayed	2

You can spend your actions in any order during your turn, or you can forgo some of them entirely. A Major Action can also be spent to do a Minor Action instead (but not the reverse).

Each magick and Trait ability outlines which type of action (if any) is spent to use them. In addition to these, there are some standard Major and Minor Actions every character can do.

Attacks

Attacking is, naturally, the core of combat. Attacks are resolved via a contest roll between the attacker and their target. These rolls are referred to as Attack and Defense rolls, respectively.

If the **Attack roll** is *equal to or greater* than the **Defense roll**, the attack successfully lands, dealing damage.

The Attribute used for the Attack roll is determined by the weapon type or magick used. Note that magicks will use their respective Magic Attribute for rolls, not Basic Attributes.

The defender of the attack can select any valid Defense statistic (Block, Dodge, or Ego) for their Defense roll. The Defenses that are considered valid against any given attack are determined (and outlined) by that attack; for example, most physical attacks cannot be defended against using Ego, meanwhile most magical attacks cannot be defended against using Block.

Some attacks grant a bonus or penalty to the Attack roll when against certain Defenses. These bonuses should not be hidden information; the defender should be able to take them into account when selecting which Defense to use.

Once both the attacker and defender have determined which Attribute or Defense to use and have constructed their dice pools, it's time to roll to determine the outcome of the attack!

Dealing Damage

If the attacker hits, it's time to roll for damage. This is a magnitude roll, and each attack has its own defined dice pool to use for the roll.

Then, the defender's Vitality is reduced by the total of the damage roll (remember, you sum *all* of the dice in magnitude rolls). For more details regarding the

consequences of damage, see the section "[Vitality and Dying](#)" ahead.

Inability to Defend

If a target is attacked and, for some reason, they have no means of defending (for example, they are attacked with a weapon while Unconscious), the Attack roll becomes a check rather than a contest. The TN of this check is always 10.

If the roll fails to pass the TN, the failure is a result of the attacker fumbling rather than the target successfully defending.

Note that an Unconscious or similarly inhibited character can still defend using Ego if the attack allows it; they would only be helpless against attacks requiring Block or Dodge.

Blocking

To defend with Block, you need to be holding something you can use to block with. Most often, this will be a melee weapon of some kind. As described earlier in the chapter, ranged weapons *cannot* be used to Block.

Sometimes, you may be able to use an improvisational object to Block with. These will typically (but not always) be less effective than using a weapon, so the GM should grant bonuses to the attacker's roll accordingly.

Unarmed Attacks

If you have no weapons on hand, using your limbs to strike is always an option. Unarmed attacks make Attack rolls using FIT, and on a hit, you roll 1 of your FIT dice to determine damage. Unarmed attacks cannot deal Critical Hits no matter the margin of success.

For the purposes of other rules, unarmed attacks are considered weapon attacks.

Universal Actions

All characters can do the following actions:

Major Action: Weapon Attack

If you have a weapon, you can attack with it (alternatively, you can perform a unarmed attack). Melee weapons have an attack range of 1 meter, and ranged weapons have a range of 15 meters.

A defender can only use Block or Dodge against weapons (unless it is a ranged weapon, in which case they can only use Dodge).

With weapon attacks, there are two types of successful hits dealing different amounts of damage: Normal Hits and Critical Hits. Most successful hits are Normal Hits, but if an attack hits with a margin of 10

or greater, it is a Critical Hit instead. Critical Hits use different dice pools from Normal Hits.

Major Action: Prepare Defenses

When you use this action, you receive a +1 bonus to all Defense rolls you make until the start of your next turn.

Alternatively, you can declare *one* Defense statistic and receive a +2 to all rolls using it until the start of your next turn.

Minor Action: Move

Running across the battlefield is, naturally, an extremely common action. When you use this action, your character can immediately move up to their Movement value. This movement *cannot* be broken up by other actions; once you stop moving, your Move action ends.

You can use the Move action *at most* two times on any given turn. Note that other actions that result in movement (but are not the Move action itself) do not count towards this total.

Minor Action: Vitality Surge

When you use this action, expend one Burst to immediately restore Vitality up to your Vitality Surge value ($\frac{1}{4}$ of your Max Vitality).

You cannot use this action if you do not have a Burst to spend.

Minor Action: Mana Surge

When you use this action, expend one Burst to immediately restore Mana up to your Mana Surge value ($\frac{1}{4}$ of your Max Mana).

Like Vitality Surges, you cannot use this action if you do not have a Burst to spend.

Major or Minor Action: Something Else!

Describe an action not covered here that you wish to attempt to the GM. If the action is particularly simple, the GM may allow you to do it as a Minor Action, but most improvised actions like this should require a Major Action. The GM can also rule the desired action impossible.

Most customized actions will have a chance for failure; in these cases, the GM should ask for checks or contests as necessary.

Other Actions

There are some things you can do during your turn that do not cost constitute spending Major or Minor Actions. The most common is speaking, but this includes near instantaneous actions like drawing a weapon as well.

Speech is very common in magical battles, both between allies and enemies. In general, this should be encouraged rather than avoided.

Additionally, there are some magicks and Trait abilities that are used outside of the owner's turn. These have explicit trigger conditions that determine when they can be used. There is no limit to the number of out-of-turn actions like these you can do per round, but many status conditions prevent the use of them entirely.



Art Credit: Z.W. Gu

Vitality and Dying

As long as your Vitality is above 0, you can remain in the fight no matter how injured you are. The moment it drops to 0 or below, however, complications arise.

When a character's Vitality is at 0 or lower, they are in a state called **Dying** and are afflicted with the status condition of the same name. Current Vitality can be negative, so continue to keep track of it even after this point.

Mages are extremely resilient, and as long as they have a single thread of life remaining, the mana in their veins will keep them alive. To kill a mage, one must actively strike down a dying foe.

A Dying mage is permanently killed when their Vitality is reduced to a negative value equal to or lower than their Wounded threshold. For example, a mage with 26 Max VIT (and thus a Wounded value of 13) dies when their Current VIT is reduced to -13 or lower.

Spirits and non-mages do not possess this resistance to death. They die instantly when reduced to 0 or lower Vitality.

If a Dying character's Vitality is raised above 0, they are no longer Dying. Likewise, if a Dying character is no longer in combat, they can rest (see

“[Resting and Downtime](#)”) to gradually heal themselves back above 0 Vitality.

Difficult Terrain

Traversal isn't always trivial; sometimes, clutter, uneven ground, or other obstacles hinder movement through a space. These areas are considered to be **difficult terrain**. You can move through difficult terrain, but the movement cost (in terms of distance) is doubled. For example, moving through 1 meter of difficult terrain requires 2 meters of movement, 2 meters requires 4, and so on.

Surprise

Not all combat begins on equal footing. If one side sneaks up on or ambushes the other, every unsuspecting character is afflicted with the [Surprised](#) status condition until the end of the first round.

Falling

Falling long distances can be harmful, in or out of combat. When a character falls down a drop of more than 5 meters, there is a potential for injury.

A falling character makes a Dexterity check where the TN is equal to the distance they fell in meters. On a success, they manage to brace themselves or roll as they hit the ground, taking no damage. On a failure, they fall [Prone](#) and take damage equal to the margin of failure. For example, if you fell 12 meters and your check result was 8, you take 4 damage.

Resting and Downtime

Outside of combat, a mage can use Vitality or Mana Surges (described in the “[Combat](#)” section) at any time to regain lost Vitality or Mana.

To recover these Bursts, however, a mage must rest. Resting involves either sleeping or conducting only very light activities (like eating or reading something that does not require intensive thought).

For every one hour of uninterrupted rest, you regain one spent Burst. If you already have your maximum number of Bursts (or if you otherwise choose to), you can instantly expend the newly generated Burst to use a Vitality or Mana Surge.

Since Vitality and Mana Surges restore $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total of their respective values, you will always generate enough Bursts to fully restore both Vitality and Mana after eight hours of rest.

Downtime

A mage's life is rarely full of non-stop action. Between major events and conflicts, there are often

days, weeks, or months of downtime where they resume their ordinary day-to-day life.

A mage can heal even the most severe of wounds over an extended period of downtime like this. Severed limbs, damaged organs, and the like will regenerate back to pristine condition over a few days or weeks of rest, depending on how severe the damage was.

Status Conditions

There are a handful of status conditions you may be placed under for various reasons. Their effects are outlined in this section.

There is no limit to the number of conditions a character can have on them at any given time. If a character is afflicted by the same condition multiple times, every instance of the condition must end before the character is no longer afflicted; however, having multiple instances of one type of condition does not worsen the effects (in other words, no matter how many times a character is Slowed, their Movement is only cut in half once).



Art Credit: Z.W. Gu

Dying

While in combat, a Dying character suffers the same effects that Unconscious inflicts: they cannot take turns, use out-of-turn abilities or magicks, or defend with Block or Dodge. The only action they are still capable of is speaking.

Outside of combat, a Dying character can only rest, use Vitality Surges, or speak; they are incapable of even moving while in this state. Once their Vitality is greater than 0 again, they are no longer Dying.

A Dying character can simultaneously be Unconscious, but the Dying condition does *not* directly cause that condition.

Paralyzed

A Paralyzed character can only act during the Delayed Phase of a round, but they get no Minor Actions to use. Additionally, their Movement is half its regular value (rounded down).

If they were Paralyzed before they acted in a round, their turn is still moved down into the Delayed Phase regardless of their original choice.

Prone

When a character is lying flat on the ground or are on their hands and knees, they are Prone.

Attacking a Prone character with a melee weapon grants a +1 bonus to the Attack roll. Likewise, attacking with a weapon while Prone imposes a -1 penalty to the Attack roll.

Unless something is forcing them to remain Prone, they can stand up (ending the condition) by using a Minor Action on their turn.

Restrained

A Restrained character's Movement becomes 0 meters, and they have a -1 penalty to Block rolls and a -2 to Dodge rolls. Their weapon Attack rolls are also made with a -1 penalty.

Slowed

A Slowed character's Movement is half its regular value (rounded down), and they have a -1 penalty to Dodge rolls.

Surprised

A Surprised character cannot take a turn during the first round of combat. This condition always ends at the end of the first round.

While Surprised, all Defense rolls a character makes during the Immediate Phase have a -2 penalty, and they have a -1 penalty during the Normal Phase. There is no penalty during the Delayed Phase.

They also cannot use any out-of-turn abilities or magicks during the Immediate Phase.

Unconscious

When a character is asleep or is otherwise knocked out of consciousness by any means, they are Unconscious.

An Unconscious character cannot take turns or use out-of-turn abilities. Additionally, they are incapable of making Defense rolls using Block or Dodge (see "[Inability to Defend](#)").

Outside of combat, an Unconscious character is considered to be resting. Unless otherwise specified, an Unconscious character can wake up to end the condition after one hour, or at any time if they fell Unconscious willingly (in other words, if they went to sleep).

Character Progression

By overcoming hurdles and surviving harrowing battles, a mage grows in skill and power.

Level advancements are awarded at the GM's discretion. Most often, Level increases are granted for

the completion of a major story objective, such as when players finally defeat a long-term foe or overcome a similarly large-scale problem. Ultimately, however, it is up to the GM.

In addition to the statistical increase of Max VIT, Max Mana, and Bursts (which are all influenced by Level), characters also earn more Specialization Points and, at some Levels, the ability to improve their Attributes.

Note that unlike the SP given during character creation, these SP can be stockpiled for however long a player desires (even across multiple Levels), and they can be spent on either Traits or magicks freely.

Level	SP	Attribute Increases
1	—	—
2	+5	Magic Attribute Increase
3	+5	Basic Attribute Increase
4	+10	—
5	+5	Any Attribute Increase
6	+10	—
7	+5	Magic Attribute Increase
8	+5	Basic Attribute Increase
9	+10	—
10	+10	Any Attribute Increase

Attribute Increases

When a Level increase grants an Attribute increase, you can choose one of two options:

- Select one Attribute of B or A-Rank; raise its rank by one tier.
- Select two Attributes of C-Rank or lower; raise both of their ranks by one tier each.

You cannot increase the rank of an Attribute of X or S-Rank.



Art Credit: Z.W. Gu

CHAPTER 5: PEOPLE AND PLACES

This chapter explores the world of *Crimson Incantation* in more detail. The information provided here can be used directly in your own adventures, or you can simply take inspiration from what is provided to develop your own original ideas.

Major Factions

Factions are extremely useful tools to utilize when composing adventures. Faction allegiances can be messy, and players might work with (or against) a faction for any number of reasons. Perhaps they believe in the faction's ideals, or perhaps they believe in the ideals of particular members rather than the faction itself. Beyond ideals, payment or other rewards could be the sole motivation behind collaborating, or dire circumstances could make cooperation a necessity. Likewise, not every member of the party must feel the same way about every faction. As a GM, utilizing this web of personal motivations to compose an adventure can be quite powerful.

Countless magical factions of various sizes exist across the world, but this section highlights some major ones.

Council of Mages

The Council of Mages is the closest thing human mages have to a governing body in the magical world. Even then, it is far from being a genuine authority, and it mostly just serves as a loose hub for mages across the world to communicate through. The organization

is huge, with approximately a third of all mages in the world having a registered membership (though far fewer are actively involved).

Due to its size, national branches hold nearly all of the organization's power in their local regions. While different branches tend to be amicable to each other, inner conflict inevitably breaks out when disagreements arise.

Primarily, individual mages use the Council as a means of contacting other mages, exchanging magical knowledge, and conducting large-scale research. The cumulative knowledge of the Council is supposed to be freely available to all members, but it is well known that corruption runs rampant in the upper ranks, and that a large amount of magical lore is kept secret in the hands of the elite.

Objectives

Overall, the Council simply seeks to advance the human art of magic. While this makes it a great hub for academics and learners, the high levels of corruption end up neutralizing much of the forward progress it could otherwise have.

Additionally, the Council seeks to strictly uphold a single absolute law: magic should never bleed into the affairs of the mundane world. Minor infractions, such as merely using magic in the presence of non-mages, are frowned upon, but they are typically ignored by the Council. Any attempt to use magic to affect mundane society on a large-scale, however, will invite the wrath

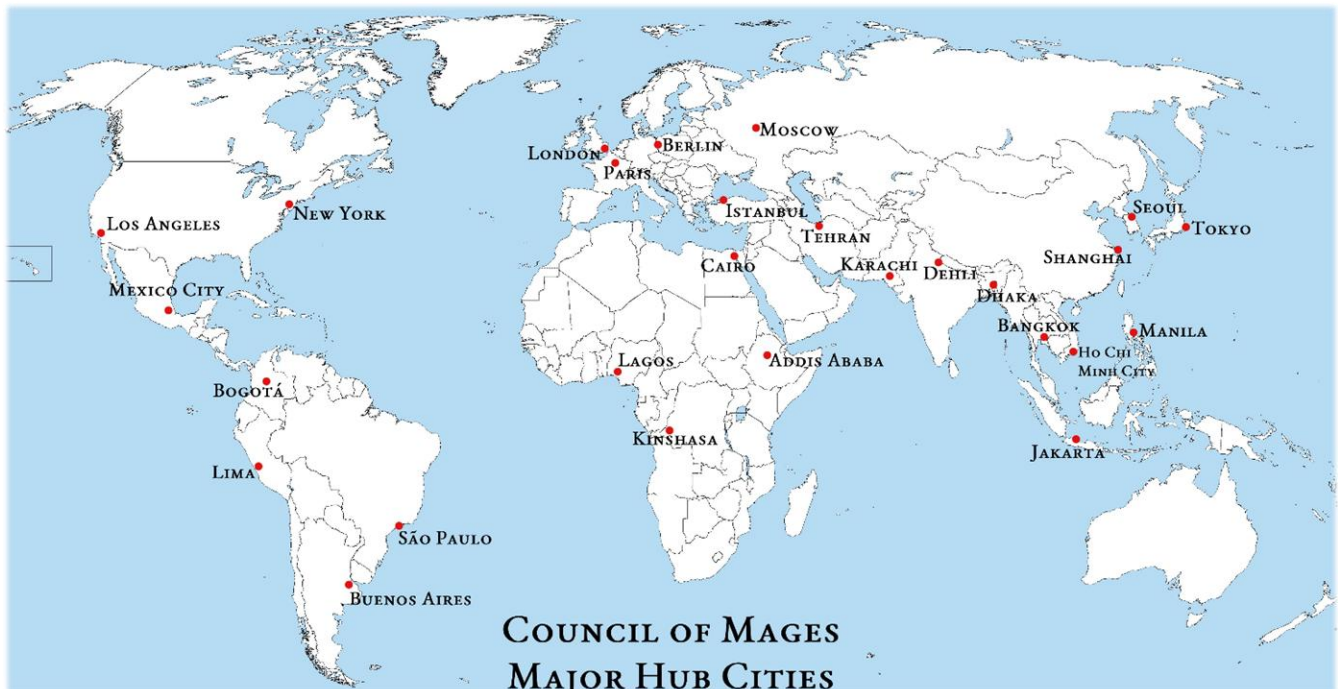


Image sourced from Wikimedia Commons; Edited

of the otherwise neutral Council. The careless use of magic has historically thrown various societies into chaos and, at times, driven them to complete collapse—an outcome that the Council seeks to avoid at all costs. This is the sole ‘crime’ it condemns and actively dispatches its members to prevent or punish.

Otherwise, the Council doesn’t care about policing individual mages. As long as they keep their exploits among other mages and spirits, their affairs are their own.

Nebula Society

The Nebula Society is a powerful, ancient assassin’s guild operating across the world. Usually, their targets are influential or powerful mages that would normally be untouchable.

The average mage is unaffected by the Nebula Society’s exploits, as it is only once they reach a certain level of influence and power that their enemies are likely to contact the guild to order an assassination. As such, while many dislike this guild in concept, most are never actively antagonized by them.

The Nebula Society operates in a very secretive manner. Arranged in a strict hierarchy of ranks, each member only knows the identities and contacts of their direct superior and immediate subordinates. Pulling off successful assassinations is the only way to rise in the ranks, but since killing mages is far more difficult than assassinating regular people, most assassins are killed by one of their targets before they rise very far in the hierarchy.

Objectives

While lower ranked assassins usually carry out jobs for pay, the primary payment the organization seeks (especially for high value targets) is information and secrets. Magical methods and lore are often passed on as secretive traditions, making this form of payment quite valuable—though the higher ranks still usually keep these rewards to themselves.

As the guild cares far more about function than ideals, the goals of its members are usually personal rather than held by the guild itself. Secrecy, however, is highly valued by the guild as a whole; it is not uncommon for the guild to order the assassinations of



Art Credit: Vladimir Matyukhin

its own members for leaking information (or for just being at risk of doing so).

New Knights Templar

The New Knights Templar is an organization of religious zealots that seek to ‘protect’ the non-magical humans of the world by destroying spirits. Moderate members of the group are only interested in killing malevolent and actively dangerous spirits that do direct harm to people, but a growing group of radicals within the organization seeks to destroy all spirits that do not adhere to their faith.

Originally a sub-faction within the Church, it has been operating almost entirely independently for several centuries. Many mages who summon or work closely with spirits view this faction as an enemy.

Objectives

The forward-facing goal of the organization is to protect non-mages from dangerous magical forces, but many individual members are more motivated by revenge or prejudice than this ideal.

Their general course of operation is to send out small patrol parties to investigate reports of spirits and potentially take them out, but they also organize structured raids against particularly powerful targets.

Important Individuals

Like factions, innumerable important individuals exist throughout the magical world. A very small selection of them is highlighted here.

The statistics for these characters are provided the “[Important Characters](#)” section of [Appendix C](#), although characters of such influence are not likely to be run-of-the-mill encounters for most adventures.

Yustina Antonov

Contrary to the self-interested nature of most mages (especially those with large influence), Yustina is a rare example of a largely altruistic mage. She, alongside a group of hand-picked followers, travels across the world to deliver justice upon those she considers evildoers—whether they be malevolent spirits, fellow mages, and in extreme cases, even non-mages. This final point goes against the core tenet of the Council of Mages, and the higher ups of the



Art Credit: らむ屋

Council generally despise her. Normally, they would simply dispatch agents to kill an offending mage like her, but such action is not easy in this case; Yustina is one of the most individually powerful mages in the modern age, allowing her to act as she pleases despite opposing the immensely powerful Council.

Personality and Goals

Yustina is charismatic and highly idealistic, usually coming off as easygoing and, at times, irresponsible. When a situation grows serious, however, she has no problem getting serious herself; in fact, when she does, her demeanor is closer to that of a stone-cold assassin than anything else. Having done this her whole life, she can snap back into her regular carefree persona just as quickly.

Yustina derives no joy from violence, but she will not hesitate to use it if necessary. Likewise, while her empathy is strong for the innocent, she spares little sympathy for those who have committed evil acts. If she believes an enemy deserves death, she will not hesitate to kill them.

Born with immense power and a strong sense of justice, she sees putting an end to the many injustices of the world as her life's purpose. Along the way, she seeks to spread her ideology, taking many apprentices she hopes will one day succeed her.

Adventure Hooks

Most adventures utilizing Yustina would likely focus on fighting against corrupt and evil individuals, although it could be possible the players themselves are the evil individuals on the receiving end.

Assuming the players are on her side, they could be motivated to join her group, or it could be a simple case of uniting against a common foe. For low Level, smaller-scope adventures, an apprentice of hers could be used instead of Yustina herself.

Shui Ren

Shui Ren is a high-up and influential member of the Council of Mages. Although the Council as a whole believes in the separation of mages and non-mages when it comes to magical matters, Ren believes very strongly in complete separation. Something of a magic-supremacist, he does not believe there is any use in mages living alongside mundane humans, nor in mundane humans living alongside mages.

His ultimate goal is to establish an entirely magical civilization that is imperceptible to the mundane world. He wholeheartedly believes this is the best path forward for magical society.

Shui Ren is extremely old. Although his bloodline does not possess any remarkable magical aptitude, his

family has a wealth of knowledge it has passed down from generation to generation. The culmination of centuries of research (which they refuse to share) is a miraculous anti-aging magick which has prolonged Ren's life by at least two centuries. Rumors say a magick like this must have some kind of terrible cost, but what that cost is—or whether it's even true—is not known.

Age has still taken a toll on him, however, and Ren is no longer anywhere near as powerful as he once was. Rather, he makes use of the large following of supporters he cultivated over his long life to advance his agenda.

Personality and Goals

Due to his extremely weak body and declining magical power, Ren has grown very paranoid, and he rarely goes out to speak with others directly. Instead, he uses a group of trusted subordinates to serve as his 'mouths'. Thus, being able to speak to him face-to-face is an immense honor to most.

After being alive for so many years, Ren has grown largely uninterested in 'living'; rather, he continues to exist for the sole purpose of guiding the research and development of his 'utopia'—which, as of yet, he has not discovered the means of realizing. If nothing else, it is practically impossible to sway his disposition in any way.

Adventure Hooks

Shui Ren is a figure with a large amount of political influence, with countless allies and enemies to contend with. If you want to run an adventure centering on the unstable politics of the magical world, consider making use of Ren and his faction, especially if their hard-liner ideals conflict with the ideals of the player characters. Having the player's opposition be a force of immense social power as opposed to physical power can create many interesting scenarios.

Ruarcc Donne

Ruarcc Donne is an ancient vampire of considerable infamy. Becoming a vampire fundamentally warps a person's personality, making them cruel and evil regardless of their original disposition—even by a mage's standards. Ruarcc, however, is a sadist even amongst vampires.



Art Credit: N Z

Vampire tradition dictates that one should be very selective with whom they grant their vampirism to—a means of keeping their kind as ‘elites’ amongst spirits. Ruarcc, however, gleefully converts most mages that dare to face him. Most consider becoming a vampire a fate worse than death—which is *exactly* why Ruarcc relishes in doing it.

In the millennium and a half since becoming a vampire, countless attempts to kill him have been made by mages the world across—all of which have failed. Ruarcc is clever, and he avoids any fight with a chance of failure. He also has an eye for potential, and is known to kill weak, young mages on the hunch that they could be a threat to him decades down the line.

Personality and Goals

Ruarcc is a jovial sort of man who seeks to enjoy everything he does. From just speaking with him, one would not expect him to be cruel or evil; he puts on a fun but gentlemanly act most of time—before turning into a machine of murder at the drop of a hat. Before becoming a vampire, he lacked meaningful autonomy over his own life; the freedom granted to him after becoming a monster, however, was everything he ever desired.

Mindless slaughter is always on the table, but he enjoys toying with people as well—and he is willing to fully commit to doing so. Utilizing his infinite lifespan (as long as he consumes human blood with enough frequency), he loves assuming fake identities to infiltrate organizations or other groups, earning the trust of its members just so that he can see how they’ll react when he finally turns on them.

Ruarcc is not particularly motivated by ideals or long-term goals; rather, he acts based on whims, and often enjoys the chaos doing so causes.

Adventure Hooks

Ruarcc is more likely to manipulate and play tricks on players than he is to be a direct antagonist—unless they are powerful enough to be a real threat to him.

Since Ruarcc creates new vampires with some frequency, a surge of stray vampires appearing out of nowhere is likely his doing, as is the unprompted slaughter of a magical organization from the inside. Many things that could appear as ordinary crimes could actually be orchestrated by Ruarcc, making him a good character to use for adventures involving investigating or solving mysteries.

Locations

Since *Crimson Incantation* takes place in the real world, the adventures you play will usually take place in real world locations (or fictional ones based on real

places). This section provides ideas, hooks, and a general outline for adventures taking place in urban and rural settings, as well as a few specific locations that could serve as the setting for adventures.

Urban Locations

Urban locations are the most common setting for adventures in *Crimson Incantation*. Since these areas have high population densities, there tends to be more mages in urban areas at any given time compared to less urbanized ones.



Art Credit: Julian Seifert-Olszewski

Prestigious mage families are more likely to live in urban areas, and by extension so do the many mages they hire (such as bodyguards, researchers, et cetera). This also means feuds between major families are most likely to brew and boil over in these kinds of locations, and these large-scale conflicts often end up involving mages who did not start out directly associated with either family.

Not all mages come from wealthy or prominent families. Independent mages trying to make a living in the mundane world may choose to find work by leveraging their magical abilities. A private eye specializing in solving magical mysteries or a spirit hunter killing demons for pay are a couple of examples that one might find in an urban area.

Rural Locations

While rural locations usually will have far fewer mages than urban ones, that does not mean they are uninteresting.

A rural town might be located on a natural source of magical power like a ley line, or it could be the secluded hiding place of a legendary artifact that was stowed there hundreds of years in the past. Things like these can attract mages from the world over to remote locations. Rural areas are ideal for storylines centering on unassuming or ancient secrets.

Likewise, local legends and stories might be borne from the sighting of secluded mages or spirits making their home in the countryside, and investigating these

stories can make for interesting small-scale adventures (or the beginning of larger scale ones).



Art Credit: Sylvain Sarrailh

International Headquarters of the Council of Mages

Located in Manhattan, New York, the International Headquarters of the Council of Mages serves as the hub for communication between the countless national branches of the Council. As such, some of the most significant decisions affecting the magical world are decided here.

For most of history, there was no single international version of the Council; most countries had their own, independently run Council or equivalent organization. However, for as much as mages like to consider themselves unaffected by the politics and forces of the mundane world, once it globalized, mages followed suit. By the early 20th century, a worldwide Council of Mages was officially established to oversee all local branches. Although these independent branches hold the real power, each branch must at least appear to abide by the decisions of the international Council to maintain their reputation. The International Headquarters in New York was constructed in the 1950s and has remained the global hub ever since.

When major meetings are held and high-ranking members of the Council from across the world arrive, Manhattan typically boasts the highest density of mages of anywhere in the world until the meeting concludes—from political juggernauts to their security forces to fringe radicals seeking to assassinate their opposition. Thus, it's a perfect hotspot for conflicts and adventures to unfold.

Whether following a grand political conspiracy or simple infighting between opposed factions, adventures centered around the Council Headquarters could have worldwide ramifications.

London College of Mages

As most mages seek to consolidate and hoard their knowledge (and given how rare mages are in general),

magical education is almost exclusively done by traditional apprenticeship. Naturally, then, institutions offering formal education in magic are exceedingly rare, and although many attempts have been made throughout history, most fail very quickly. One of the few large scale attempts that remains in the modern era is the College of Mages, located on the outskirts of London.

Like the rest of magical society, the College is not safe or free of conflict. Although students are restricted in some ways, most mage customs are still honored—the most notable being duels. Many new students are killed by their peers following over escalations of minor conflicts, a horrific norm that the school puts up with because it conveniently culls weaker students.

Since apprenticeships are considered standard, many mages discriminate against students of the College based on the belief that those unable to find masters must be inferior. Given the rarity of mages and the stigma against institutional education, the College typically only has one to two hundred students at a time. These numbers are usually higher at the start of a year, but high death rates in the first couple of months brings them back down again.

An entire campaign could easily center around the players being students (or professors) of the College and the problems they face—from the hostility within to the scorn held towards them from the outside. Even if the players are not students themselves, the sheer density of mages on this small campus makes it ripe for conflict that could spill out into the nearby city of London.

Argent Forest

The Argent Forest is a magical demi-plane created from an immensely powerful artifact known as the Argent Heart—an artifact generally considered to be among the most powerful in existence. The Argent Heart will, at seemingly random points in time, temporarily tear a hole in physical space to form a gate between the real world and the Argent Forest. These gateways would be dangerous enough if they just affected mages, but ordinary people can easily stumble into them as well. As a result, finding and quarantining all gateways to the Argent Forest is a priority of the Council of Mages. Gateways to the Argent Forest have been opening periodically for at least 500 years.

The Argent Forest is a dense, jungle-like environment with a dreamlike atmosphere, populated heavily by nature spirits of all kinds. It is unknown whether spirits are drawn to the Forest from the outside or whether it is capable of creating them, but

regardless, most spirits are immediately hostile to outsiders. Likewise, the environment itself is dangerous, featuring rivers of poison and innocuous-looking plants and animals capable of violently killing unaware passersby.

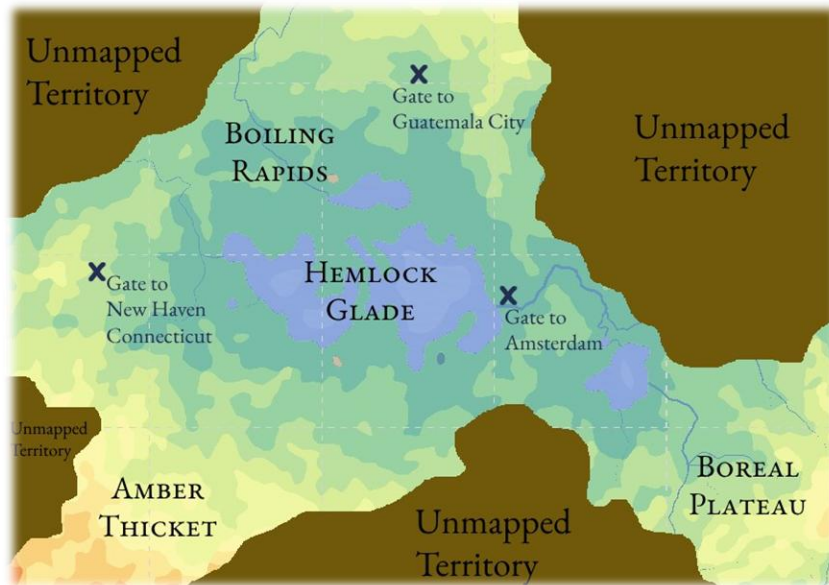
The Argent Heart is believed to be hidden somewhere within the Forest itself, and countless failed expeditions to find and destroy it (or claim it) have been attempted over the centuries.

The Argent Forest can be used as an interesting plot hook from both the inside and outside. A new gate opening could mean dangerous spirits spilling out into a helpless town; likewise, the Forest could serve as a perfect hiding place for an enemy of the players to

stay under the radar. Expeditions to map out the Forest and search for the Argent Heart are possibilities as well.



Art Credit: Anastasia Shiyankova



A partially mapped section of the Argent Forest, featuring three gates

Base Map Generated from Azgaar's Fantasy Map Generator; Edited

CHAPTER 6: TRAITS

This chapter includes a detailed list of all Traits in *Crimson Incantation*.

Many Traits have upgraded versions that can be bought using additional SP. Note that these costs are *in addition* to the base cost; however, you can purchase the upgrade at a later time than the base version.

The descriptions provided here mostly give mechanical information; you can generally flavor your Traits however you like when you use them.

Weapon Traits

Light Weapon Proficiency

Passive – Cost: 3 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests making use of a light weapon, including Attack and Block rolls.

Light Weapon Proficiency+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Medium Weapon Proficiency

Passive – Cost: 3 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests making use of a medium weapon, including Attack and Block rolls.

Medium Weapon Proficiency+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Heavy Weapon Proficiency

Passive – Cost: 3 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests making use of a heavy weapon, including Attack and Block rolls.

Heavy Weapon Proficiency+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Ranged Weapon Proficiency

Passive – Cost: 3 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests making use of a ranged weapon, including Attack rolls.

Ranged Weapon Proficiency+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Skill Traits

Athlete

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving endurance-heavy physical tasks such as running, swimming, or climbing.

Athlete+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

City Dweller

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving the use of first-hand knowledge and experience with cities or other urban locations, such as blending in to an area or accurately navigating through a complex series of alleyways.

City Dweller+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Cunning

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving lying to or tricking someone.

Cunning+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Deft

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving precise, skillful physical actions. These can range from large and obvious acts, like performing a backflip, to subtle and quiet ones, like pickpocketing.

Deft+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Educated

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving book knowledge, such as recalling information about history or science.

Educated+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Eloquent

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving persuading, inspiring, or otherwise positively communicating with someone. This does *not* include actions based on deception.

Eloquent+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Insightful

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving deciphering the deeper or true meaning behind messages, whether they be spoken or written.

Insightful+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Investigator

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving searching for or analyzing something.

Investigator+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Naturalistic

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving the use of first-hand knowledge and experience with nature, such as tending to an animal or following tracks through a forest.

Naturalistic+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Stealthy

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You get a +1 Skill Bonus to checks and contests involving sneaking or being quiet.

Stealthy+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This Skill Bonus increases to +2.

Passive Traits

Deflect Projectiles

Passive – Cost: 3 SP

Any time you can defend against an attack using Dodge, you can choose to use Block instead. This includes defending against ranged weapons and many magicks.

Dual Wielding

Passive – Cost: 4 SP

You can wield two light weapons at once. You can attack or make Block rolls with either weapon.

Immediately after performing a Major Action weapon attack with one weapon, you can choose to spend a Minor Action to attack with the other weapon at a -1 penalty to the Attack roll. You can only use this ability once per turn.

Improved Critical

Passive – Cost: 4 SP

Your weapon attacks only need to succeed by a margin of 8 or greater to land a Critical Hit.

Improved Critical+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This margin is further reduced to 6.

Sidearm

Passive – Cost: 2 SP

You can wield a light weapon and a ranged weapon at the same time. You can perform weapon attacks with either weapon, and you can make Block rolls using the melee weapon.

Sidearm+

Upgrade Cost: 2 SP

You can wield a medium weapon (instead of a light weapon) at the same time as a ranged weapon.

Ability Traits

Charge Attack

Major Action – Cost: 3 SP

When acting during the Immediate Phase, you can spend a Major Action to move up to your Movement value and immediately execute a melee weapon attack.

Cleave

Minor Action [1/turn] – Cost: 3 SP

Immediately after performing a melee weapon attack with a medium or heavy weapon, you can choose to spend a Minor Action to attack a different target within melee range at a -1 penalty.

You can only use this ability once per turn.

Feint

Minor Action [1/turn] – Cost: 3 SP

If you are wielding a melee weapon, you can spend a Minor Action on your turn to feint against a character within 1 meter of you, granting you a +1 bonus to the next melee Attack roll against them until the end of your turn.

You can only use this ability once per turn.

Last Stand

Trigger [1/combat] – Cost: 3 SP

When you are reduced to 0 or less Vitality, you can immediately use a Vitality Surge (if you have a Burst to spend). If your Vitality is brought back above 0, you do not enter the Dying state.

You can only use this ability once per combat.

Parry

Trigger [1/round] – Cost: 2 SP

When you defend against a melee weapon attack using Block and succeed with a margin of 5 or greater, you can immediately attempt a weapon attack against the character who attacked you.

You can only use this ability once per round, even if your attack does not hit.

Surge Ability Traits

Action Surge

Minor Action [1/combat] – Cost: 3 SP

You can spend a Minor Action and a Burst to gain an additional Major Action this turn.

You can only use this ability once per combat.

Arbiter Surge

Trigger [1/check] – Cost: 3 SP

You can expend a Burst after failing any non-combat related check (but *not* a contest) by a margin of less than 5; if you do, you can reroll your entire dice pool.

You can only use this ability once per check.

Benevolent Surge

Major Action – Cost: 3 SP

You can spend a Major Action and a Burst to restore the Vitality of a character within 1 meter of you. The amount restored is equal to your Vitality Surge value.

Boost Surge

Trigger [1/turn] – Cost: 3 SP

When you make an Attack roll, you can expend a Burst to get a +1 on that roll.

You can only use this ability once per turn.

Cancel Surge

Trigger [1/combat] – Cost: 3 SP

When you fail an Attack Roll during your turn, you can expend a Burst; if you do, you regain the Major or Minor Action you spent to use that attack.

You can only use this ability once per combat.

Quick Surge

No Action [1/turn] – Cost: 2 SP

You can use one Vitality or Mana Surge per turn without spending a Minor Action. You must still spend the Burst.

You can only use this ability once per turn.

Seal Surge

Trigger [1/combat] – Cost: 3 SP

If the target you have damaged most recently expends a Burst to use a Surge ability, you can immediately expend a Burst of your own to cancel that Surge ability. Their Burst (and any action spent to use the ability) is still consumed.

You can only use this ability once per combat.

CHAPTER 7: MAGICKS

This chapter includes a detailed list of all magicks in *Crimson Incantation*.

Much like Traits, all magicks have an upgraded version that can be bought using additional SP. Note that these costs are *in addition* to the base cost; however, you can purchase the upgrade at a later time than the base version.

The descriptions provided here mostly give mechanical information; you can generally flavor your magicks however you like when you use them.

Energy Magicks

Breakthrough

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

When you succeed an Attack roll with a magick against a single target, you can cast this magick to send a violent flood of magical energy at them.

Make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Energy dice; the target takes that much damage. This damage is applied in addition to the regular effects of the magick that triggered it.

You can only cast this magick once per round.

Modifications

Overload

Mana Cost: +6 Mana

Your magnitude roll uses 2 of your Energy dice instead of 1.

Breakthrough+

Upgrade Cost: 2 SP

After making this magick's magnitude roll, you can choose to reroll the entire pool once after seeing the result. If you do, you must use the second result.

Flash Shot

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to fire a bolt of pure energy at a target within 15 meters of you.

Make an Energy Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Dodge or Ego. On a hit, you deal 2d8 damage.

Modifications

Precision Boost

Mana Cost: +3 Mana

Spend a Minor Action (in addition to your Major Action); your Attack roll receives a +2 bonus.

Power Boost

Mana Cost: +3 Mana

On a hit, you deal 3d8 damage instead.

Flash Shot+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus (stacks with *Precision Boost*), and its damage increases to 2d10 (3d10 with *Power Boost*).

Surge Blast

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 8 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to fire an explosive blast at a point within 20 meters of you. The explosion affects all characters within 5 meters of the point you chose (in all directions).

You make one Energy Attack roll; each character in the range of the blast makes a Defense roll using Dodge or Ego against that roll. Each target that loses the contest takes 2d6 damage (roll damage once and apply it to all hit targets).

Modifications

Expanded Blast

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

The explosion radius extends to 10 meters.

Surge Blast+

Upgrade Cost: 8 SP

This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus, and its damage increases to 2d8.

Force Lash

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to fling a whip of pure energy at a target within 5 meters of you.

Make an Energy Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Dodge or Ego. On a hit, you deal 2d6 damage and can pull or push them up to 5 meters towards or away from you (you can choose which direction and how far).

Modifications
Entrap
Mana Cost: +2 Mana On a hit, the target is afflicted with the Slowed condition until the end of their next turn.
Illusory Arc
Mana Cost: +3 Mana The target no longer has the option to use Dodge and must instead use Ego for their Defense roll.
Force Lash+
Upgrade Cost: 6 SP This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus, and its damage increases to 2d8.

Creation Magicks

Creation magicks conjure spirits and objects. While some creations vanish quickly after use, others persist for a period of time. A few special restrictions apply to the persistent constructions: a spirit or object manifested by a Creation magick is dispelled (destroyed) at the end of the combat it was cast (or after 10 minutes if it was used outside of combat), if its Vitality is reduced to 0 or lower (if it has Vitality), if the caster enters the Dying state, or if the caster chooses to manually dispel it as a Minor Action.

Additionally, you cannot cast the same Creation magick again until the existing manifestation has been dispelled. You can, however, have manifestations of multiple *different* Creation magicks at once.

Forged Sever

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to instantly conjure a weapon and strike at an enemy within 1 meter of you with it.

Choose whether the weapon conjured is light, medium, or heavy. Any bonuses or penalties that weapon type has against certain Defenses apply to this attack, and you can apply any Traits you have that would normally affect weapon attacks. Make a Creation Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Block or Dodge. On a hit, deal the regular damage of the weapon type you chose. This attack can deal Critical Hits.

The weapon created by this magick is dispelled at the end of the attack whether it hits or misses.

Modifications
Manifest Projectile
Mana Cost: +2 Mana This magick's attack functions as a ranged weapon instead of a melee one. You still use Creation for the Attack roll, but all other details—such as range, valid Defenses, damage—match those of a regular ranged weapon attack.
Razored
Mana Cost: +3 Mana On a hit, make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Creation dice; deal that much additional damage to the target.

Forged Sever+
Upgrade Cost: 2 SP If your attack misses, attempt a Creation check where the TN equals the result of the Defense roll your target just made. If you succeed, you regain the Major Action spent on this magick. You can only use this ability once per round.

Conjure Spirit

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 12 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to manifest a spirit familiar in an open area within 3 meters of you.

Make a magnitude roll using 3 of your Creation dice; the Vitality of your summoned spirit is the result of that roll. Its Attributes, Defenses, and Movement match your own, and it has no Traits or magicks. Its Vitality cannot be restored by any means. It does not take its own turn, but otherwise acts the same as a character.

During your turn, you can spend your actions to have your spirit act instead. For example, you can spend a Minor Action to have your spirit take the Move action, or a Major Action for it to attack.

As a Major Action, your spirit can attack a target within 1 meter of them; their Attack roll uses your Creation Attribute, and the target makes a Defense roll using Block, Dodge, or Ego. On a hit, it deals 2d6 damage.

Modifications
Distance Boost
Mana Cost: +3 Mana You can summon your spirit up to 15 meters away from you.
Life Boost
Mana Cost: Varies Spend as much Mana as you wish; your spirit's initial Vitality increases by the amount you spend.

Conjure Spirit+

Upgrade Cost: 8 SP

The magnitude roll to determine the Vitality of your spirit now uses 5 of your Creation dice, and the spirit's damage increases to 2d8.

Construct Barrier

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 8 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to manifest a physical structure centered on a point within 20 meters of you. This structure can be any shape you wish, but it can be no taller than 3 meters, no wider/thicker than 1 meter, and no longer than 10 meters. It can be oriented in any direction, but it cannot overlap any characters or sturdy structures. Small or loose objects will be pushed out of the way of its placement.

The barrier has Vitality equal to $4 \times$ the max value of your Creation die. If it is attacked, it is unable to defend.

Modifications

Repulsion

Mana Cost: +6 Mana

Any character who deals damage to the barrier immediately takes damage equal to 1 of your Creation dice.

Size Boost

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

You can double the size limitation of a single dimension (height, width, or length).

Construct Barrier+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

You can cast this magick as a Minor Action once per combat, and its Vitality increases to $6 \times$ the max value of your Creation die.

Ensnare

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 8 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to conjure a field of vines, ropes, nets, or similar objects centered on a point within 20 meters of you. The field extends on the ground in a circle with a radius of 3 meters.

Make one Creation Attack roll; each character within the field makes a Defense roll using Dodge against that roll. Each target that loses the contest is afflicted by the Restrained condition. On their turn, they can spend a Major Action to attempt to break free by making a Fitness check with a TN of 10; if

they succeed, they are no longer Restrained. If they fail the check, the TN is reduced by 5 for their next attempt (this reduction can stack multiple times).

The area covered by the field is considered difficult terrain. It does not have Vitality and thus cannot be dispelled by taking damage.

Modifications

Squeeze

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

Any character who is Restrained by this magick takes 2d4 damage at the start of their turn.

Tighten

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

Roll 1 of your Creation dice when casting; increase the starting TN to break free from this field by that value.

Ensnare+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

The base TN to break free from this magick is increased to 15, and the damage dealt by the *Squeeze* modification increases to 3d4.

Transmutation Magicks

Mold

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to manipulate the shape of a small object.

To determine how good the result is, make a Transmutation check against a TN set by the GM based on how complex what you attempted is. The toughness of the material, complexity and detail level of the manipulation, and size of object should all affect the TN. Your margin of success or failure determines how closely the end result matches your original intent. As a general baseline, a manipulation that could realistically be performed using ordinary physical effort in a couple of hours should have a TN of ~10.

This magick can be used multiple times on the same object. Even failed checks still manipulate the object, just imperfectly—as such, the GM may rule that future attempts have lower TNs as less work needs to be performed.

Modifications
Shatter
Mana Cost: +6 Mana
If your manipulation is chaotic in nature with the intent to merely destroy or damage the target object, your Transmutation check receives a +2 bonus.
Precision Cast
Mana Cost: +4 Mana
Your Transmutation check with this magick receives a +1 bonus.
Mold+
Upgrade Cost: 2 SP
Your Transmutation checks with this magick receive a +1 bonus. Additionally, its Mana Cost is always halved (including added costs from Modifications).

Enchant Weapon

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Minor Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Minor Action, you can cast this magick to enchant one weapon that you or an ally within 1 meter of you is wielding with magical energy.

The next Attack roll made with an enchanted weapon receives a +1 bonus and, if it hits, you make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Transmutation dice; the target takes that much additional damage. Regardless of if it hits, the enchantment ends afterwards.

If you cast this magick again while a weapon is still enchanted, that weapon loses its enchantment.

Modifications
Block Boost
Mana Cost: +2 Mana
If an enchanted weapon is used for a Block roll, that roll receives a +2 bonus. The enchantment ends if used this way (even if the wielder is hit). The enchantment can still apply the regular effect of strengthening attacks even if <i>Block Boost</i> is active.
Overcharge
Mana Cost: +4 Mana
Instead of a bonus, the enchanted weapon receives a -1 penalty to its next Attack roll, but you roll 2 of your Transmutation dice for additional damage instead of 1.
Enchant Weapon+
Upgrade Cost: 6 SP
An enchanted weapon no longer loses its enchantment if an Attack roll fails to hit (or, if <i>Block Boost</i> is active, a Block roll fails); the enchantment only ends once an enhanced roll is a success.

Imbue Magick

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: Varies

Outside of combat, when you or a willing ally casts a non-Trigger magick, you can cast this magick to inject the other magick into an object. By doing so, you can keep the effect dormant and release it at a later time.

The Mana Cost of this magick equals the Mana Cost of the magick you wish to place inside the object (including Modification costs). You can only imbue objects the size of a heavy weapon or smaller. When casting this magick, make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Transmutation dice; the other magick can remain imbued in the object for a number of hours equal to your roll.

You can release the magick (and thus cast it) from the object by using a Minor Action from any distance as long as you can see it. If the object is given to someone other than you, they can also release it by using a Minor Action if they are holding the object. The magick is cast using the statistics of the original caster and with whatever Modifications they activated when originally placing the magick inside the object. If it requires any active decisions (like where to target), the character who releases it chooses. Releasing an imbued magick does not cost any Mana to the character who releases it.

You can only have one object (and one magick) imbued at a time. The magick disappears completely if it isn't used before its rolled duration expires.

Modifications
None
Imbue Magick+
Upgrade Cost: 6 SP
You can have up to two objects imbued with magicks at a time, and you roll 2 of your Transmutation dice to determine how long a magick can stay imbued for. Both magicks cannot be imbued into the same object.

Shatter Earth

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 8 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to warp the ground around you into an attack that extends 3 meters in every direction (centered on you).

Make one Transmutation Attack roll; each character within the specified region around you (except yourself) makes a Defense roll using Dodge against that roll. Each target that loses the contest

takes 2d6 damage and is pushed 3 meters away from you (roll damage once and apply it to all hit targets).

The ground affected by this magick permanently becomes difficult terrain, but you are unaffected by it.

Modifications
Razored Mana Cost: +4 Mana Whenever any character except you enters or starts their turn in the affected region, make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Transmutation dice; they take that much damage.
Careful Eruption Mana Cost: +2 Mana You can designate any number of characters within the radius of the region to be unaffected by the attack, the difficult terrain, and the effects of the <i>Razored</i> Modification.
Manipulate Terrain+ Upgrade Cost: 6 SP This magick's damage improves to 2d8, and its radius expands to 6 meters. The push effect is also extended to 6 meters.

Charm Magicks

Aid

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

When you or an ally within 5 meters of you is about to perform a check, you can instantly cast this magick to grant magical assistance to the action.

Make a Charm check where the TN equals the TN of the check you are trying to assist. On a success, the character you assisted receives a +1 bonus to their check roll.

You can only cast this magick once per check, and only once per round in combat.

Modifications
Range Boost Mana Cost: +2 Mana This magick can target characters within 20 meters of you.
Boon Mana Cost: +4 Mana If you succeed this Charm check by a margin of 5 or better, the assisted character receives a +2 bonus instead.

Aid+

Upgrade Cost: 2 SP

Your Charm checks made with this magick receive a +1 bonus, but its Mana Cost increases to 6.

Aegis Ward

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

When you are targeted by an attack, you can instantly cast this magick to use Ego for your Defense roll (even if you normally couldn't).

After resolving the attack, make a Charm check with a TN of 15; if you fail, you cannot cast this magick again until the start of the next round.

Modifications
Guard Boost Mana Cost: +3 Mana This Ego Defense roll receives a +1 bonus.
Absorb Energy Mana Cost: +2 Mana If you succeed this Ego Defense roll by a margin of 5 or better, you gain an additional Minor Action on your next turn.

Aegis Ward+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

Your Defense rolls made with this magick receive a +1 bonus (stacks with *Guard Boost*). The TN of your check is also reduced to 12.

Mana Shield

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

When you take damage from an attack, you can instantly cast this magick to weaken the incoming damage.

Make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Charm dice; reduce the damage by that much (to a minimum of 0). You can choose to use this magick after you know the result of the damage roll but before you subtract it from your Vitality.

Modifications
Protection Boost Mana Cost: +6 Mana Your magnitude roll uses 2 of your Charm dice instead.

Mana Shield+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

Your magnitude roll now uses 2 of your Charm dice for damage reduction (and 3 with *Protection Boost*).

Blessing

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 6 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to enhance the abilities of yourself or of an ally within 5 meters of you.

Select one Basic Attribute and one Magic Attribute; the target has those Attributes increase by one rank for the purposes of rolls. For the Basic Attribute chosen, the corresponding Defense statistic is also affected (if the Attribute rank increase would result in it increasing). This has no effect on an Attribute if the target has an X or S-Rank in it normally.

At the end of each of the target's turns, you must make a Charm check with an initial TN of 10; on a failure, the effects of this magick end and the target's Attributes are reverted. On a success, the TN of the check increases by 3 for the next time (this can stack multiple times until you fail). Outside of combat, make this check once every minute instead of after every turn.

Casting this magick again while a character is still under its effects ends those effects early.

Modifications

Spread Boost

Mana Cost: +8 Mana

Choose one additional Basic Attribute and one additional Magic Attribute to improve (these cannot be the same Attributes as the first set).

Blessing+

Upgrade Cost: 8 SP

The TN for your Charm checks starts at 8, and it only increases by 2 for each success.

Curse Magicks

Confound

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Minor Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Minor Action, you can cast this magick to distract a target within 10 meters of you.

Make a Curse Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Ego. On a hit, the target receives a -1 penalty to all Attack rolls they make before the start of your next turn.

Modifications

Shieldbreaker

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

You must spend a Major Action to cast this magick instead of a Minor Action. On a hit, you can additionally select one Defense statistic (either Block, Dodge, or Ego); the target receives a -1 penalty to all Defense rolls they make using that Defense until the start of your next turn.

Confound+

Upgrade Cost: 2 SP

This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus, but its Mana Cost increases to 6.

Mindrend

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to strike directly at the mind of a target within 15 meters of you.

Make a Curse Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Ego. On a hit, you deal 2d6 damage. If you succeed by a margin of 5 or better, the target's Attack rolls receive a -1 penalty until the end of their next turn.

Modifications

Piercing Strike

Mana Cost: +3 Mana

Your Attack roll receives a +2 bonus, but its damage is reduced to 2d4.

Defense Bane

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

On a success with a margin of 5 or more, the target also receives a -1 penalty to all Defense rolls they make until the end of their next turn.

Mindrend+

Upgrade Cost: 6 SP

This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus (stacks with *Piercing Strike*), and its damage increases to 2d8 (2d6 with *Piercing Strike*).

Sickness

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 6 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick to send a draining wave of lethargy towards a target within 5 meters of you.

Make a Curse Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Ego. On a hit, the target is afflicted by a condition determined by the margin of success.

The condition ends at the end of the *next* round. With a margin of 10 or better, they are afflicted with Unconscious; with a margin of 5–9, they are afflicted with Paralyzed; with a margin of 0–4, they are afflicted with Slowed.

Modifications
Strength Drain
Mana Cost: +3 Mana If you <i>fail</i> the contest by a margin of less than 3, the target is afflicted with the Prone condition.
Mental Drain
Mana Cost: +3 Mana On a hit, the target's Ego Defense rolls receive a -1 penalty until the condition applied by this magick ends.
Sickness+
Upgrade Cost: 6 SP The margins for each condition are lowered by 2: Unconscious is now at 8+, Paralyzed at 3–7, and Slowed at 0–2.

Seal Magick

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Trigger – Mana Cost: Varies

After a target within 10 meters of you casts a magick and finishes resolving its effects, you can cast this magick to try to seal that magick and prevent its further use.

The Mana Cost of this magick equals the base Mana Cost of the magick you want to seal (not including any of its Modification costs). When casting this magick, make a Curse Attack roll; the target makes a Defense roll using Ego. On a hit, the magick is successfully sealed. The target cannot cast that magick while it is sealed. This does not cancel the casting they just performed or any persisting effects of that casting; it only prevents them from casting it again as long as it remains sealed.

At the end of each of the target's turns while their magick is sealed, you must attempt another Curse Attack roll versus their Ego Defense roll. If you succeed, the magick remains sealed. If you fail, the magick is no longer sealed. Outside of combat, you repeat this contest once every minute instead of after every turn.

You can only have one magick sealed at a time. Casting this magick again while a magick is still sealed will end the first seal early.

Modifications
Partial Seal
Mana Cost: +5 Mana If you <i>fail</i> the initial contest by a margin of less than 5, the target's magick is still sealed, but only until the end of their next turn (you do not attempt another contest to see if the seal remains; it will always end).
Seal Magick+
Upgrade Cost: 6 SP This magick's Attack rolls receive a +1 bonus (including for the repeated contests).

Ethereal Magicks

Magic Trick

Acquisition Cost: 0 SP

Minor Action – Mana Cost: 2 Mana

As a Minor Action, you can cast this magick to produce a minor sensory illusion akin to a mundane magic trick. Your illusion can be visual (sight-based), auditory (sound-based), or olfactory (smell-based), but it can only affect a single one of these senses. Within these boundaries, however, it can manifest however you'd like.

The more complex the illusion, the harder it is to pull off. To determine how good the result is, make an Ethereal check against a TN set by the GM based on how complex what you attempted is. Your margin of success or failure determines how closely the end result matches your original intent. As a general baseline, a small visual illusion, quiet or short sound, or faint smell over a small distance should have a TN of ~10. Any increases in size, detail, duration, or similar metrics should increase this baseline.

Additionally, if a character makes a roll against an illusion produced by this magick (such as trying to discern if it is real), use the value of your original check as the TN for theirs, or treat it as your overall result if it is a contest.

Modifications
Sensory Overload
Mana Cost: +3 Mana You can select one additional sense for your illusion to target. The complexity (and thus TN) of your check increases accordingly.
Convincing Cast
Mana Cost: +4 Mana Your Ethereal check with this magick receives a +1 bonus.

Magic Trick+

Upgrade Cost: 2 SP

Your Ethereal checks with this magick receive a +1 bonus. Additionally, its Mana Cost is always halved (including added costs from Modifications).

Pocket

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Major Action – Mana Cost: 8 Mana

As a Major Action, you can cast this magick on one stray object or willing character within 1 meter of you to temporarily stow them inside a pocket dimension. You cannot target objects that are touching unwilling characters, and valid objects must be the size of a person or smaller. You also cannot cast this magick on yourself.

Make a magnitude roll using 1 of your Ethereal dice; a character can remain inside the pocket dimension for that many rounds (this counts up at the end of each round), while an inanimate object can remain for a number of rounds equal to three times the result of the roll. If outside of combat, the roll equals the number of minutes they can stay inside instead of rounds.

A character within the pocket dimension shares perception (including sight and hearing) with you, and they can choose to release themselves from the pocket dimension at any time. You can also release them early by spending a Minor Action. When released, the character or object reappears in an open area within 1 meter of you.

Casting this magick again while something is already inside your pocket dimension will immediately release them.

Modifications

Extended Suspension

Mana Cost: +8 Mana

If casting this magick on an inanimate object while outside of combat, you can forgo the magnitude roll; instead, the object can remain in the pocket dimension for up to 24 hours.

Quick Cast

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

You can cast this magick as a Minor Action instead of a Major Action.

Pocket+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

Your magnitude roll now uses 2 of your Ethereal dice, and you no longer need to use a Minor Action to release something from your pocket dimension (instead, you can do so for free during your turn).

Veilstride

Acquisition Cost: 3 SP

Minor Action – Mana Cost: 4 Mana

As a Minor Action, you can cast this magick to instantly teleport a short distance.

Make a magnitude roll using 2 of your Ethereal dice; you can teleport up to that many meters in any direction to a point you can see. You cannot teleport inside objects or people, but you can teleport through solid objects as long as you can see the destination.

You can select the destination after making your roll.

You can only cast this magick once per round.

Modifications

Range Boost

Mana Cost: +4 Mana

Your magnitude roll is made with 4 of your Ethereal dice instead.

Subjected Teleport

Mana Cost: +6 Mana

Instead of teleporting yourself, you can choose to teleport a character within 1 meter of you. If the target is unwilling, you must make an Ethereal Attack roll against their Ego Defense roll; they are only teleported if you succeed in the contest.

Veilstride+

Upgrade Cost: 4 SP

This magick can now also be cast as a Trigger immediately after you take damage. You can also now cast this magick twice per round (whether as a Minor Action or as a Trigger).

Analyze

Acquisition Cost: 4 SP

Outside of Combat – Mana Cost: 20 Mana

Outside of combat, you can cast this magick to magically divine information about an object within 1 meter of you.

Make an Ethereal check against a TN decided by the GM. The GM should reveal one detail regarding the targeted object that you do not already know. If the check fails, this information should be vague, surface-level, or something similar. If the check succeeds, it should be more specific, secretive, or important. The GM should set the TN based on how difficult it would normally be to acquire information regarding the object. For example, a mass-produced object might have a low TN, but a one-of-a-kind artifact might have a high TN. All of these factors are up to context and the GM's discretion, and they can decide if some information cannot be revealed no

matter how high you roll. The GM should *not* reveal whether your check was successful, leaving it up to you to speculate on the value of the information.

You can never cast this magick on the same object twice.

Modifications
None

Analyze+
Upgrade Cost: 8 SP You can now cast this magick on any given object twice; this retroactively applies to objects you cast this magick on before upgrading it.

APPENDIX A: ARTIFACT EXAMPLES

This chapter includes a small handful of examples of artifacts you might come across in *Crimson Incantation*. Feel free to come up with your own artifacts and effects as a GM, especially if you can incorporate them into the story of your adventure.

Because artifacts tend to be more powerful the older they are, each example is marked with approximately how old it is to give a general indication of its power or importance.

Mindcutter

Artifact Age: Contemporary (a few years)

An enchanted blade that manifests the wielder's intelligence as magical energy when swung.

This object can be used as a medium weapon. Weapon attacks made with this weapon use Reasoning, and the target makes Defense rolls with Ego. It deals the regular damage of a medium weapon.

As a GM, You can easily modify this artifact to be of a different weapon type or to use a different Attribute for the attack. For example, it could be a heavy weapon using DEX, or a ranged weapon using FIT.

Mage's Sheath

Artifact Age: Contemporary (a few years)

A dagger-sized weapon sheath made for the sole purpose of holding weapons of all shapes and sizes.

The sheath is capable of containing one weapon of any type regardless of its size without the size of the artifact changing. The sheath is small enough that a person could easily conceal it on their body without it drawing attention.

Veil Chalk

Artifact Age: Mature (a few decades)

A small piece of magical chalk capable of drawing magical circles that the writer can instantly teleport to at a later point.

You can mark a surface with the chalk as a Minor Action. When you do this, any previous marks made with the chalk lose their magical properties and can no longer be teleported to. At any point in time—as long as you still possess the Veil Chalk—you can spend a Major Action to teleport to the position you last marked, as long as your mark remains physically intact.

Teleporting drains a large amount of mana from the chalk. After using its teleport ability, the chalk becomes inert and unusable for a number of hours equal to the number of kilometers you traveled via teleportation.

Idol of Decay

Artifact Age: Aged (a few centuries)

A small, handheld statue of a religious figure capable of slowly corroding the very existence of anything it touches.

If the idol is in constant, uninterrupted contact with something (such as an object or person) for over a day, its effects will begin to take hold. The thing it touches will slowly disintegrate physically, and memories or knowledge of that thing will vanish from people's minds as it gradually decays. If the entire thing disintegrates, it will be entirely erased from humanity's knowledge and memory, including references to it recorded in writing or other means. It takes around a year for something the size of a person to fully decay, and this duration approximately scales linearly with size (for example, something twice the size of a human would take around two years).

The only way to contain the idol's power is to ensure it never stays in contact with any one thing for longer than a day. If hidden maliciously, however, it can have truly devastating effects.

Grand Suppressor

Artifact Age: Aged (a few centuries)

A very old round crystal capable of bringing down immense destruction upon any sources of mana nearby.

If a mage holds the Grand Suppressor, they can activate it as a Major Action. When they do, every mage and spirit within 100 meters immediately takes 10d6 damage, and any artifacts in the area younger than a decade instantly disintegrate. Being the closest to the source, the holder suffers the greatest effects; they take 10d8 damage, and the limb they held the suppressor in is completely destroyed.

Whenever the Grand Suppressor is activated, the holder should roll 1d12. If they roll a 1, the Grand Suppressor suddenly shatters, collapsing under its own power and becoming forever inert.

CRIMSON INCANTATION: CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name

Origin

Gender

Age

Height

Weight

Player Name

Skin

Hair

Eyes

Languages

Level

VITALITY

BURSTS

MANA

Max VIT

Wounded
(½ VIT)

112345678910

11345678910

Max Mana

VIT Surge

1/4

Mana Surge

Current Vitality

Current Mana

BASIC ATTRIBUTES

DEFENSES

MAGIC ATTRIBUTES

FIT

DEX

INT

REA

CHA

Block
FIT

Dodge
DEX or INT

Ego
REA or CHA

Energy

Ethereal

Curse

Charm

Transmutation

Creation

d2

d3

d4

d6

d8

d10

d12

F

E

D

C

B

A

S

Movement

Specialization Points

TRAITS

MAGICKS

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Trait Name

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Mana Cost

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Trait Name

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

MORAL SCALES

Lust

Chastity

Gluttony

Temperance

Greed

Charity

Sloth

Diligence

Envy

Kindness

Wrath

Patience

Pride

Humility

Despair

Hope

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magick Name

Magic Class

Mana Cost

CRIMSON INCANTATION: CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name

Inheritor

Origin

Gender

Age

Height

Weight

1

Player Name

Skin

Hair

Eyes

Languages

Level

VITALITY

BURSTS

MANA

Max VIT

Wounded

30

13

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Max Mana

30

Current Vitality

VIT Burst

6

1/4

Mana Burst

7

Current Mana

BASIC ATTRIBUTES

DEFENSES

MAGIC ATTRIBUTES

C

Fitness (FIT)

A

Dexterity (DEX)

B

Intuition (INT)

C

Reasoning (REA)

D

Charisma (CHA)

C

Block

A

Dodge

C

Ego

d2

d3

d4

d6

d8

d10

d12

F

E

D

C

B

A

S

Energy

A

B

Ethereal

Creation

B

X

Curse

Transmutation

X

X

Charm

7

Movement

Specialization Points

0

TRAITS

MAGICKS

Educated

Action Surge

Light Weapon Proficiency

Trait Name

Trait Name

Trait Name

Breakthrough

Forged Sever

Magic Trick

Flash Shot+

Force Lash

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Energy

Creation

Ethereal

Energy

Energy

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magic Class

Mana Cost

Magic Class

Mana Cost

MORAL SCALES

Lust

Chastity

Gluttony

Temperance

Greed

Charity

Sloth

Diligence

Envy

Kindness

Wrath

Patience

Pride

Humility

Despair

Hope

CRIMSON INCANTATION: CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name

Scholar

Gender

Age

Height

Weight

1

Player Name

Skin

Hair

Eyes

Languages

Level

VITALITY

Max VIT

28

Wounded
(½ VIT)

14

Current Vitality

BURSTS

1

1

3

4

6

7

8

9

10

VIT Burst

7

1/4

Mana Burst

7

MANA

Max Mana

28

Current Mana

BASIC ATTRIBUTES

(B) Fitness (FIT)

(C) Dexterity (DEX)

(B) Intuition (INT)

(B) Reasoning (REA)

(C) Charisma (CHA)

DEFENSES

(B) Block
FIT

(B) Dodge
DEX or INT

(B) Ego
REA or CHA

MAGIC ATTRIBUTES

Energy (D)

Ethereal (D)

Creation (C)

Curse (C)

Transmutation (B)

Charm (B)

d2 F

d3 E

d4 D

d6 C

d8 B

d10 A

d12 S

6

Movement

Specialization Points

0

TRAITS

Medium Weapon Proficiency+

Deflect Projectiles

Trait Name

Trait Name

Trait Name

Trait Name

MAGICKS

Breakthrough+

Forged Sever

Mold

Aid

Confound

Magic Trick

Enchant Weapon

Mana Shield

Magick Name

Magick Name

Energy

Creation

Transmu.

Charm

Curse

Ethereal

Transmu.

Charm

Magick Class

Magick Class

4

4

4

4

4

2

4

4

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

MORAL SCALES

Lust

Chastity

Gluttony

Temperance

Greed

Charity

Sloth

Diligence

Envy

Kindness

Wrath

Patience

Pride

Humility

Despair

Hope

CRIMSON INCANTATION: CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name

Signatory

Origin

Gender

Age

Height

Weight

1

Player Name

Skin

Hair

Eyes

Languages

Level

VITALITY

BURSTS

MANA

Max VIT

Wounded

24

(½ VIT)

12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Max Mana

28

Current Vitality

VIT Burst

6

¼

Mana Burst

7

Current Mana

BASIC ATTRIBUTES

DEFENSES

MAGIC ATTRIBUTES

D Fitness (FIT)

D Block

C Dexterity (DEX)

B Dodge

B Intuition (INT)

C Reasoning (REA)

A Charisma (CHA)

A Ego

Energy

Ethereal

Creation

Curse

Transmutation

Charm

d2

d3

d4

d6

d8

d10

d12

F

E

D

C

B

A

S

6

Movement

Specialization Points

0

TRAITS

MAGICKS

Arbiter Surge

Ranged Weapon Proficiency

Cunning

Stealthy

Trait Name

Trait Name

Breakthrough

Forged Sever

Confound

Magic Trick

Ensnare

Veilstride

Seal Magick

Energy

4

Creation

4

Curse

4

Ethereal

2

Creation

8

Ethereal

4

Curse

Varies

Magick Name

Magick Class

Mana Cost

Magick Name

Magick Class

Mana Cost

Magick Name

Magick Class

Mana Cost

MORAL SCALES

Lust

Chastity

Gluttony

Temperance

Greed

Charity

Sloth

Diligence

Envy

Kindness

Wrath

Patience

Pride

Humility

Despair

Hope

CRIMSON INCANTATION: CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name

Inheritor

Gender

Age

Height

Weight

1

Player Name

Skin

Hair

Eyes

Languages

Level

VITALITY

BURSTS

MANA

Max VIT

24

Wounded
(½ VIT)

12

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Max Mana

30

Current Vitality

VIT Burst

6

¼

Mana Burst

7

Current Mana

BASIC ATTRIBUTES

DEFENSES

MAGIC ATTRIBUTES

D

Fitness (FIT)

B

Dexterity (DEX)

B

Intuition (INT)

A

Reasoning (REA)

D

Charisma (CHA)

D

Block

FIT

B

Dodge

DEX or INT

A

Ego

REA or CHA

Energy

B

X

Ethereal

Creation

A

X

Curse

Transmutation

B

X

Charm

d2

d3

d4

d6

d8

d10

d12

F

E

D

C

B

A

S

7

Movement

Specialization Points

1

TRAITS

MAGICKS

Seal Surge

Last Stand

Insightful

Trait Name

Trait Name

Trait Name

Breakthrough

Forged Sever

Mold

Conjure Spirit

Construct Barrier

Imbue Magick

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Energy

Creation

Transmu.

Creation

Creation

Transmu.

Magic Class

Magic Class

Magic Class

Magic Class

4

4

4

12

8

Varies

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

MORAL SCALES

Lust

Chastity

Gluttony

Temperance

Greed

Charity

Sloth

Diligence

Envy

Kindness

Wrath

Patience

Pride

Humility

Despair

Hope

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Magick Name

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

Mana Cost

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE NPC STAT BLOCKS

Generic Enemies

Weak Level 1 Enemy									
VIT: 20 (VIT Surge: 5)									
Mana: 12 (Mana Surge: 3)									
Bursts: 2									
Movement: 7									
FIT:	B	Block:	B		Energy:	C			
DEX:	B	Dodge:	B						
INT:	C								
REA:	C	Ego:	C						
CHA:	C								
Major Actions									
Medium Weapon Attack									
Flash Shot [Energy]									
Trigger									
Mana Shield [Charm]									

Medium Level 1 Enemy									
VIT: 24 (VIT Surge: 6)									
Mana: 20 (Mana Surge: 5)									
Bursts: 2									
Movement: 7									
FIT:	B	Block:	B		Energy: Transm.:	C B			
DEX:	B	Dodge:	B						
INT:	C								
REA:	B	Ego:	B						
CHA:	C								
Traits									
Heavy Weapon Proficiency									
Major Actions									
Heavy Weapon Attack (+1 Skill Bonus)									
Surge Blast [Energy]									
Minor Actions									
Enchant Weapon [Transmutation]									

Medium Level 1 Enemy									
VIT: 22 (VIT Surge: 5)									
Mana: 22 (Mana Surge: 5)									
Bursts: 2									
Movement: 6									
FIT:	C	Block:	C		Creation:	B			
DEX:	C	Dodge:	A						
INT:	A								
REA:	B	Ego:	B						
CHA:	C								
Traits									
Ranged Weapon Proficiency									
Major Actions									
Ranged Weapon Attack (+1 Skill Bonus)									
Conjure Spirit [Creation]									
Construct Barrier [Creation]									
Entrap [Creation]									

Strong Level 1 Enemy						
VIT: 28 (VIT Surge: 7)						
Mana: 26 (Mana Surge: 6)						
Bursts: 3						
Movement: 7						
FIT:	C	Block:	C		Energy: Curse:	C A
DEX:	A	Dodge:	A			
INT:	C					
REA:	B	Ego:	B			
CHA:	B					
Traits						
Light Weapon Proficiency+						
Dual Wielding						
Major Actions						
Light Weapon Attack (+2 Skill Bonus)						
Mindrend+ [Curse]						
Seal Magick [Curse]						
Force Lash [Energy]						
Minor Actions						
Light Weapon Attack [Dual Wield] (+2 Skill Bonus, -1 Dual Wield penalty)						

Strong Level 1 Enemy						
VIT: 24 (VIT Surge: 6)						
Mana: 25 (Mana Surge: 6)						
Bursts: 3						
Movement: 6						
FIT:	B	Block:	B		Energy:	A
DEX:	C	Dodge:	C		Transm.:	B
INT:	C				Charm:	B
REA:	A	Ego:	A		Curse:	C
CHA:	B					
Traits						
Action Surge						
Last Stand						
Major Actions						
Flash Shot+ [Energy]						
Surge Blast [Energy]						
Shatter Earth [Transmutation]						
Sickness+ [Curse]						
Trigger						
Aegis Ward [Charm]						

Important Characters

Yustina Antonov (Level 9 Inheritor)						
VIT: 128 (VIT Surge: 32)						
Mana: 128 (Mana Surge: 32)						
Bursts: 13						
Movement: 6						
FIT:	S	Block:	S		Transm.:	S
DEX:	C	Dodge:	B		Creation:	B
INT:	B				Charm:	A
REA:	C	Ego:	A			
CHA:	A					
Combat Traits						
Heavy Weapon Proficiency+						
Deflect Projectiles						
Parry						
Cleave						
Non-Combat Traits						
Action Burst						
Arbiter Burst						
Silver-Tongued+						
Athlete+						
Major Actions						
Heavy Weapon Attack (+2 Skill Bonus)						
Mold [Transmutation]						
Shatter Earth+ [Transmutation]						
Forged Sever [Creation]						
Construct Barrier [Creation]						
Minor Actions						
Enchant Weapon+ [Transmutation]						
Cleave						
Action Burst						
Trigger						
Imbue Magick [Transmutation]						
Aid+ [Charm]						
Mana Shield+ [Charm]						
Blessing [Charm]						
Arbiter Burst						
Shui Ren (Level 3 Scholar)						
VIT: 26 (VIT Surge: 6)						
Mana: 56 (Mana Surge: 14)						
Bursts: 5						
Movement: 5						
FIT:	F	Block:	F		Energy:	B
DEX:	F	Dodge:	A		Creation:	S
INT:	A				Transm.:	B
REA:	S	Ego:	S		Charm:	C
CHA:	C				Curse:	A
					Ethereal:	S
Traits						
Educated+						

Investigator+ Arbiter Burst									
Major Actions									
Flash Shot [Energy] Forged Sever [Creation] Conjure Spirit+ [Creation] Ensnare [Creation] Mold [Transmutation] Pocket [Ethereal]									
Minor Actions									
Confound+ [Curse] Magic Trick [Ethereal] Veilstride [Ethereal]									
Trigger									
Breakthrough [Energy] Aid [Charm] Imbue Magick [Transmutation] Aegis Ward [Charm] Seal Magick [Curse] Arbiter Burst									
Other									
Analyze+ [Ethereal]									

Ruarcc Donne (Level 8 Spirit — Vampire)						
VIT: 100 (VIT Surge: 25)						
Mana: 116 (Mana Surge: 29)						
Bursts: 12						
Movement: 8						
FIT:	A	Block:	A		Energy Charm: Curse:	A B S
DEX:	S	Dodge:	S			
INT:	B					
REA:	B	Ego:	B			
CHA:	D					
Traits						
Deflect Projectiles						
Major Actions						
Special Unarmed Attack						
DEX vs. Block/Dodge						
+2 Skill Bonus						
3d6 damage (4d8 Critical Damage)						
Mindrend+ [Curse]						
Sickness+ [Curse]						
Surge Blast+ [Energy]						
Force Lash [Energy]						
Minor Actions						
Confound+ [Curse]						
Trigger						
Breakthrough+ [Energy]						
Seal Magick+ [Curse]						
Aid [Charm]						
Mana Shield [Charm]						

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

This chapter provides a brief description of the major terms used in *Crimson Incantation* for quick reference. This section is not a replacement for the main rulebook; refer to the main rules instead of you need a full reminder of how a mechanic works. Entries are sorted alphabetically.

Artifact: an item with magical effects or abilities.

Attack Roll: the roll made by an attacker when resolving the outcome of an attack.

Attribute: a character's core set of statistics.

Basic Attribute: Attributes that govern the mundane (nonmagical) aspects of a mage.

Block: a Defense statistic measuring a character's ability to block incoming attacks using a weapon or other object.

Burst: individual mana reserves separate from a mage's regular pool of mana, named so as they manifest as an instant 'burst' of magical energy when used.

Charisma (CHA): a Basic Attribute that measures a character's eloquence, expression, and social acumen.

Charm: the magic class that involves granting magical boons and enhancements to living things.

Check: a type of roll made using an Attribute that determines the outcome of an action. The action succeeds if the roll meets or exceeds a Target Number set by the GM.

Contest: a type of roll where two characters are in direct competition and roll against each other. The higher roller succeeds.

Creation: the magic class that involves converting mana into matter to conjure permanent or semi-permanent objects and spirits.

Curse: the magic class that involves forcefully subjecting living creatures to (almost universally negative) magic effects.

Damage: the amount of Vitality lost when a character is hit by an attack.

Defense Roll: the roll made by a defender when resolving the outcome of an attack.

Defense: a type of statistic derived from one or two Attributes that is used when making Defense rolls.

Delayed Phase: the last phase of a round. Characters acting here get two Minor Actions.

Dexterity (DEX): a Basic Attribute that measures a character's finesse, coordination, reflexes, and agility.

Dice Pool: the dice used in a roll.

Difficult Terrain: regions of a battlefield that 'cost' twice the Movement to move through.

Dodge: a Defense statistic measuring a character's ability to predict and avoid incoming attacks.

Dying: a state a character enters when their Vitality is reduced to 0 or lower. They are killed permanently if their Vitality is reduced to below half of their negative Wounded threshold.

Ego: a Defense statistic measuring a character's force of will and sense of self. It can be used to resist certain attacks.

Energy: the magic class that involves shaping mana into primitive energy-based forms.

Ethereal: the magic class encompassing all metaphysical magicks that do not directly target individual creatures, such as divination, illusions, extrasensory perception, et cetera.

Exploding Dice: when a die rolls its maximum value on a check or contest, it 'explodes', meaning you can roll the die again and treat its face value as the sum of the previous and new roll. Each die can only explode once per roll.

Favorability Score: the net sum of all numerical bonuses and penalties applying to a check or contest.

Favorable: a check or contest is considered favorable if its favorability score is positive or zero. Favorable rolls have their highest 3 dice summed.

Fitness (FIT): a Basic Attribute that measures a character's strength, stamina, physical endurance, and general athletic prowess.

GM: short for gamemaster. This player does not play a character of their own, and instead directs and adjudicates the game. They also control all NPCs.

Immediate Phase: the first phase of a round. Characters acting here get no Minor Actions.

Intuition (INT): a Basic Attribute that measures a character's instinct, acuity, and unconscious thought.

Level: an overall summation of a character's power and experience as a mage.

Magic Attribute: Attributes that govern a character's affinity with each magic class.

Magic Class Hexagon: a six-pointed shape used to demonstrate the relationships between each magic class, where adjacent classes are more similar than distant ones.

Magic Classes: the classification system used for all magicks, which divides them into six categories.

Magic Factor: a person's base ability to produce mana and wield magic. Most humans lack them.

Magick: specific, unique realization of magic, such as an individual spell, ritual, or other magical technique.

Magnitude Roll: a type of roll where the entire pool is rolled and summed, and the numerical result of the roll is used directly (rather than being compared to a Target Number).

Major Action: the primary action of a character's turn.

Mana Surge: a Surge ability that instantly restores a quarter of a mage's Max Mana.

Mana: the magical energy mages tap into to cast their magicks. Also, a numerical representation of a character's total pool of mana that they can draw from to cast magicks.

Margin: a numerical value equal to the difference between the final result of a check and the Target Number, or for contests, the difference between the two rolls.

Minor Action: a fast or simple action a character can perform on their turn in addition to a Major Action. The number of Minor Actions a character has on their turn depends on which phase they act in.

Modification: an optional effect of a magick that alters it in some way at the cost of extra Mana.

Moral Scales: a set of eight spectrums used to describe characters. Each has a cardinal sin on one end and an opposing cardinal virtue on the other.

Movement: the amount of distance a character can move per turn while in time-sensitive situations. Measured in meters.

Normal Phase: the middle phase of a round. Characters acting here get one Minor Action.

NPC: a character controlled by the GM.

Origin: the source of a mage's magic. Affects the distribution of their Magic Attributes.

Player Character: a mage controlled by a player other than the GM.

Rank: one of eight letter grades that represent a character's ability in a given Attribute or Defense. Each letter grade corresponds to a different die.

Reasoning (REA): a Basic Attribute that measures a character's knowledge, intelligence, and conscious thinking.

Roll: an instance of rolling a dice pool. Split into three types: checks, contests, and magnitude rolls.

Round: a slice of combat where each character involved gets one turn. After one round ends, a new one begins.

Skill Bonus: a passive bonus granted by some Traits to specific checks or contests.

Specialization Points (SP): points that can be spent to acquire or upgrade Traits and magicks on a character.

Status Condition: afflictions a character can suffer from caused by various effects.

Surge: an ability that requires spending Bursts to activate.

Target Number (TN): the value a check roll must meet or exceed to succeed.

Trait: talents, skills, and special abilities that make each mage unique beyond their magicks.

Transmutation: the magic class that involves manipulating the properties of inanimate objects.

Turn: a designated time where a specific character is able to take actions during combat.

Unfavorable: a check or contest is considered unfavorable if its favorability score is negative. Unfavorable rolls have their lowest 3 dice summed.

Vitality (VIT): a character's physical state and current healthiness. It is reduced when they take damage.

Vitality Surge: a Surge ability that instantly restores a quarter of a mage's Max Vitality.

Weapon: an offensive instrument some mages use in combat. There are four types: light, medium, heavy, and ranged.

Wounded: a Vitality threshold equal to one half of a mage's Max Vitality. Does nothing on its own, but dropping beneath this value may trigger certain effects.