

and other material that allows him to record her progress, gives him room to expand her knowledge, and assists him in her magical endeavors. Such a collection of items and information is known as a magical lodge. Magicians of the same tradition can share a magical lodge.

A magical lodge is required to improve Magic-linked skills, learn new spells, and perform Ritual Spellcasting. A lodge has a Force rating that is used to measure its power. The Force of a lodge must be at least equal to the skill rating being learned or the force of a spell being cast (in the case of Ritual Spellcasting) or learned.

A lodge costs 500¥ per Force point, and the lodge's rating can be improved later. The money is spent to buy the supplies used to build the lodge. Once the supplies are gathered, the magician must complete an activation ritual that will "awaken" the lodge and construct its astral presence. The actual process requires 1 day per point of Force desired. An activated lodge acts as an astral barrier (see p. 185). Any magicians involved in the activation of the lodge are unaffected by this barrier, and can allow other astral forms to pass through it at will. A lodge contains the astral signature of the magicians who activated it (see *Astral Signatures*, p. 182). A lodge is magically linked to the magicians who activated it. This link can be tracked using astral projection (see *Astral Tracking*, p. 184).

If the magician wishes to increase the rating of an existing lodge, additional materials must be acquired to bring the Force up to the desired level. An activation ritual must also be performed, taking a number of days equal to the difference between the current Force and the desired Force. Gamemasters can generalize the cost of searching and gathering at a flat cost of 500¥ per Force point. Improving a Force 4 lodge to Force 6, for example, would cost 1,000¥ and take two days of ritual.

The contents of a lodge vary according to a magician's personality and tradition. Hermetics often collect ritual tools such as daggers, scrollwork, runes, and—above all—books, though these days a virtual library often replaces the traditional hard-copy. Shamans are known to have crystals, stones, hides, colored sand or paint, herbs, and so forth.

Lodges can be established almost anywhere. While the contents of a lodge can be moved, lodges are not portable: a lodge cannot be carried around on one's person while activated. It is an Awakened place, more than the sum of the objects it contains. When a lodge is moved, it must be set up again in order to be used, requiring a new activation ritual.

NOTICING MAGIC

Just how obvious are magical skills? Not very, since most spells and spirits have little, if any, visible effect in the physical world (unless the magician prefers to have flashy effects, or her tradition calls for it). An observer has to notice the magician's intense look of concentration, whispered incantations, and small gestures. Magicians of some traditions display a more visible change when practicing magic known as the *shamanic mask*. The shamanic mask typically changes the magician's features temporarily to display characteristics appropriate to her mentor spirit or tradition—an eagle shaman, for example, might seem to have feathers or beaklike features while spellcasting or summoning.

Noticing if someone is using a magical skill requires a Perception Test (p. 117) with a threshold equal to 6 minus the magic's Force—more powerful magic is easier to spot. The gamemaster should apply additional modifiers as appropriate, or if the perceiver is Awakened themselves (+2 dice), astrally perceiving (+2 dice), or if a shamanic mask is evident (+2 dice).

A sneaky shaman is working up a spell to control Zack's actions, so the gamemaster rolls a secret Perception Test for Zack to see if he notices it coming. Zack's not Awakened, but the Raven shaman's bird-like shamanic mask adds 2 dice to Zack's dice pool of 6. Zack rolls 8 dice and gets 3 hits. The shaman's spell is Force 4, so Zack only needed 2 hits (6 - 4) to see him working up the spell.

MAGIC ACTIONS

The following list describes the magical-oriented Free, Simple, and Complex Actions a character may take, as noted under *The Action Phase*, p. 135.

Free Actions

Centering: An initiate may take a Centering action to focus himself and block out distractions in order to better resist Drain. See *Centering*, p. 189.

Deactivate Focus: An Awakened character may deactivate a focus that is bound to him as a Free Action, turning the focus off. See *Foci*, p. 190.

Declare Counterspelling Protection: A magician who wishes to protect others with Counterspelling (see p. 175) must spend a Free Action and declare it in advance (a magician never needs to declare that he is using Counterspelling on himself).

Drop Sustained Spell: A magician may drop a sustained spell as a Free Action (see p. 174).

Simple Actions

Activate Focus: An Awakened character may take a Simple Action to activate a focus that is bonded to him. Note that activating a sustaining focus requires the magician to cast a spell and thus is a Complex Action. See *Activation*, p. 191.

Call Spirit: A magician can use a Simple Action to call forth a spirit that was previously conjured and placed on "standby" (see *Conjuring*, p. 176).

More than one bound spirit may be called at once with the same Simple Action if they are all of the same type (fire spirits, for example). See *Binding*, p. 180.

Command a Spirit: Using a Simple Action, a magician may issue a command to a spirit under his control. More than one spirit may be commanded in this manner if they are all given the same command (see *Conjuring*, p. 176).

Dismiss Spirit: A magician can use a Simple Action to send a conjured spirit away on "standby" (see *Conjuring*, p. 176).

Shift Perception: A Simple Action allows a magician to shift perception to or from astral space. Actual astral projection requires a Complex Action (see *Astral Perception*, p. 182).