

Special Notes –

Tsai Wu Tsi – Magical Abilities

You use a variety of magic classified in *GURPS Thaumatology* as “Energy-Accumulating Path/Book magic”. Translating into ordinary English, this means that you can produce all sorts of flexible effects drawn from the *Paths* listed on your character sheet, and you perform lengthy ritual procedures to accumulate the mystical “energy” to get these to work. You can’t generally throw fireballs in combat, but you can do a *lot* out of different things if you’ve got enough time.

To work a magical ritual, you have to go through a series of steps:

1. Decide what you want to do, and see if there’s something appropriate in any of your magical paths. If there is, it’ll have a base energy cost. *GURPS Thaumatology* has details, but in summary:
The Path of Knowledge includes Aura Reading (2), History (6/9), Know Fault (5), Locate (7), Locate Spares (7), Read Memories (12), Read the Manual (5), Read Thoughts (9), Scry (8), See the True Face (3), Veil (7), Vision of Luck (6).
The Path of Luck includes Chaperone (8), Doom (13), Gambler’s Token (3), Gremlins (6), Hunter’s Blessing (9+), Journeyman’s Blessing (8), Journeyman’s Curse (8), Love Charm (8), Loyal Item (9), Stroke of Luck (3+), Vision of Luck (6), Weapon Blessing (11+), Windfall (7).
The Path of Protection includes Chaperone (8), Charm Against Dark Beasts (11), Cleansing (7), Curse Mirror (6/8), Curse Sanctum (5), Dispel Ritual (11), Dream Sanctum (6), Endure Elements (2 + 1/10 levels of Temperature Tolerance), Exorcise (8), Ghost Shirt (12), Veil (7), Vitality (8), Ward (9+).
The Path of Spirit includes Astral Projection (8), Banish (7+), Bind (5), Embody (12), Empower (6+), Exorcise (8), Fetish (13+), Ghost Sword (8+), Lay to Rest (3), Spirit Slave (10), Spirit Trap (8), Summon (4).
The Path of the Elements includes Calm the Winds (2 + 1/level of reduction), Command the Waves (6 + 1/level of effectiveness), Conjure Flame (6), Endure Elements (2 + 1/10 levels of Temperature Tolerance), Firecalm (3 + 1/level of effectiveness), Inexorable Breeze (11 + 1/level of effectiveness), Mist (5), Rockfall (8), Shake the Earth (10./15/20), Thunderbolt (12), Weatherworking (10).
2. The base energy cost is then increased for area of effect (and some rituals *have* to be cast over an area), amount of damage to be done, duration, complex or multiple targets, etc.; the GM will go through this with you, but there’ll very often be *significant* additions to the total. Also, the GM determines the type of energy required; there are five possibilities, each of which relates to a range of magical effects:
 - *Fire*: Fire, raw destruction, causing something or someone to grow or strengthen, speech, intellectual creativity.
 - *Wood*: Vegetation, creating anything new, anything strongly visual, emotional sensitivity.
 - *Earth*: Unrefined minerals, physical stabilizing or immobilizing effects, the sense of taste, clarity of thought.
 - *Metal*: Refined minerals, contraction or reduction, strength of will, odours.
 - *Water*: Water, weather, long-term preservation, mental stability, hearing.
3. You can now start to work the ritual. Ideally, this requires a *ritual space* – a physical location prepared for your style of magic. Unfortunately, you probably only get that in your own home. Working in a completely unprepared space gives you -5 to your skill; if you take 1d minutes and

make a roll against Ritual Magic skill, you can get this down to -1 for one specific ritual working only.

4. Also, although you don't have to concentrate to maintain magical effects placed on objects or people, each such effect currently active "stretches" your magic, giving you -2 to skill for new workings. Furthermore, you can't turn an amulet, curse, or blessing off once you've worked it – you've got to wait for it to be triggered or to expire. This is why you don't scatter minor amulets around the place at all casually!
5. Almost any working with this style of magic absolutely requires some kind of symbolic representation of the target, although this can be as minimal as a common name, a simple sketch, or a moderately detailed verbal description. If you can physically touch the target, saying "this person" or "this thing" is enough. A better representations *may* give a bonus to effective skill, at the GM's option.
In addition, you need to carry a number of standard magical symbols, tools, etc.; these cost around \$20-\$50, weigh 1-2 lbs., and can be acquired in any large town with a community with the right cultural background. Using improvised replacements (made in 1d+2 hours, using some kind of craft skill – GM's option) gives a -2 penalty to workings; attempting magic without any such general symbols means a -5. **Lastly, your level of Magery (+2) is added to your effective skill.**
6. The ritual itself involves a lot of repetitive gesturing, chanting, etc.; for game purposes, it's performed in *stages*, each taking **five minutes**. At the end of each stage, you roll roll against effective skill with the appropriate Path. At every third stage, apply a cumulative -1 to skill. Each roll gets you a certain amount of energy (unless it goes horribly wrong, i.e. a critical failure), which might be of the right aspect or a different one; the GM has rules for this. If you get the wrong type, you can keep it or throw it away. Using the wrong type of energy in a working has weird side-effects, at the GM's whim. When you (think that you) have enough energy, you concentrate for one second and – you hope – the magic takes effect...