

A CLUTCH OF CANTRIPS

Mischief and Magic for Fledgling Spellcasters

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Cantrips and orisons are often overlooked by PCs and DMs alike, not realizing that these supposedly minor spells can be a great source of background color for a character or campaign. These simple spells represent the first steps the spellcaster

took along his chosen profession, and what they lack in power, they make up for in versatility.

In a world where magic works, cantrips and orisons should be a common sight, used by spellcasters to make their everyday lives easier. The following spells are minor incantations intended to increase the range of cantrips available to the low-level arcane spellcaster. The

cantrips here are the work of apprentices, possibly a sort of "final exam" before being allowed to progress to more powerful spells.





ZAP TRAP

Conjuration (Creation) [Electricity]

Level: Brd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Effect: One rune about 3 inches in diameter

Duration: Permanent or until discharged

Saving Throw: Reflex negates

Spell Resistance: No

Zap trap creates a rune 3 inches in diameter that can be traced on any surface. The next person to touch the rune gets an electrical shock for 1 point of damage. The symbol is faint and silver in color. Detecting the faint rune requires a DC 20 Search check.

Material Component: 1 gp worth of powdered silver.



DEFITNESS

Divination

Level: Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 minute or until discharged

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Deftness adds a +2 insight bonus to the next skill check the target makes.

FORAGING CHARM

Divination

Level: Brd 0, Drd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Area: 25-ft.-radius emanation from the caster

Duration: Concentration

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

An apprentice to the wizard Chardrix created this spell following a very lean trek across the desert. Chardrix liked the spell so much that he created similar divinations to search for small game and water. Chardrix is a good salesman and has sold this spell to dozens of traveling magicians over the last few years. The apprentice who created the spell has fallen into obscurity and is not even credited for his most popular work.

The caster of this spell knows the location of the nearest vegetable food source within the range of the spell. As long as concentration is maintained, the spell stays in existence allowing the caster to forage for food all day in sparsely vegetated areas.

PERFECT PITCH

Divination

Level: Brd 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: No

This cantrip gives the caster perfect pitch. The caster can figure out the notes to any song just by hearing it and gains a +2 insight bonus to his next musical Perform check.

Arcane Focus: A tuning fork.



THUNDERHEAD

Evocation [Electricity]

Level: Brd 0, Drd 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 3 rounds

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (see below)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Thunderhead was created by the ill-fated evoker Scira Oakenfire during

her apprenticeship. The spell was intended to scare peasants and annoy spellcasters but has little real power. Scira was killed after casting the spell on an "ill-mannered peasant" who turned out to be the head of the assassins' guild.

Thunderhead creates a small thundercloud over the target's head. Every round of the spell's duration, a miniature bolt of lightning leaps from the thundercloud to strike the target's head. Each bolt inflicts 1 point of electricity damage that is negated by a successful Reflex save.

Material Component: Small piece of copper wire.



COIN OF THE REALM Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 pebble

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: Yes (see text)

Spell Resistance: No

When Twiral the Charming stumbled upon this cantrip in the library of the academy where he was studying, he thought it was the answer to his prayers. Soon Twiral was living the high life. At first, the apprentice was careful not to draw attention to himself and only spent the coin in busy taverns where it would go unnoticed. Later, Twiral became sloppy and ran up debts that he couldn't pay off with a single coin. The debt collectors went to the young apprentice's masters, and the whole truth came out. Twiral spent the next 6 months finding out what the life of a stable boy was like.

This spell cloaks a pebble in an illusion, making it seem to be a gold coin of whatever design the caster chooses.

Note: Creatures touching the coin or studying it are allowed Will saves to recognize the glamer as an illusion.



FOR YOUR CHARACTER

These 0-level spells also offer an easy way to represent differences in training that apprentice spellcasters undergo. Instead of beginning play with all of the cantrips in the Player's Handbook in their spellbooks, wizards can select sixteen cantrips to put in their spellbook for "free." Clerics start play by choosing a list of twelve orisons, and druids start with thirteen. Of course, always check with your DM before using a new spell in her game.

FLAG

Illusion (Figment)

Level: Brd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Flag causes an illusory flag 2 feet by 3 feet to appear over the target's head. The flag can be 1-20 feet up in the air and has a design of the caster's choice. The spell is useful as a signal, to rally troops, or, as it was originally used, to mark which team you're on in a pick-up game of Thalf.

MIRROR

Illusion (Figment)

Level: Brd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: One illusory surface up to 1 sq. ft. in area

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will Negates

Spell Resistance: No

Mirror creates a one-square-foot mirrored surface that can be shaped and positioned as the caster desires. The mirror is insubstantial, and objects pass through it without problem. The mirrored area is also transparent from the other side, so the spell can be used for a one-way mirror effect if placed over a window or similar opening. As a move-equivalent action, the caster can concentrate and

cause the mirror to move anywhere within range.

STENCH

Illusion (Figment)

Level: Brd 0, Drd 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: 10-ft.-radius emanation

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: No

Stench creates a terrible smell in a 10-foot radius. It can be any smell the caster wishes. Any creature within the area of effect with the scent ability must succeed at a Will save or lose use of the ability while within the area.



FOOTPAD'S GRACE

Transmutation

Level: Brd 0, Drd 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Concentration

This spell was the work of Belem Shadelighter, an apprentice who, despite a great aptitude for the art, chose to pursue a more lucrative career as a thief. Belem used his magic to become one of the most infamous thieves in history. No record exists of Belem's fate. Some say he fell prey to a fiendish trap or that the god of thieves called him as his personal servant. Others claim that Belem exists to this day as a lich, surrounded in an almost impregnable fortress with layers of traps and the treasure of ten kingdoms at his feet.

The spell mutes all sound that the caster makes, bestowing a +3 bonus to his Move Silently checks.

Material Component: A tiny pillow that is used up in casting the spell.

GLITTERING RAZORS

Transmutation

Level: Brd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Touch

Target: 1 metal object/caster level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

The apprentice Ogrim Stonebinder created this spell in order to make enough money to pay for tutelage from the Archmage Ulteaha the Dragonslayer. Ogrim intended to spend a year charging to cast the spell on adventurer's weapons, but instead, the King's court wizard, upon seeing the spell's potential, offered to pay for Ogrim's tutoring in exchange for use of the spell. Ogrim lives in luxury today, specializing in the creation of new spells that others might find useful.

This spell polishes to a perfect shine any metal object touched by the caster. In addition to this effect, bladed weapons enchanted thus gain a +1 to damage for their next strike only. The spell effect is instantaneous and does not prevent further soiling of the object due to normal tarnishing and wear.

Material Component: A pinch of polish and a piece of rag.

HEAT WATER

Transmutation

Level: Brd 0, Drd 0, Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 5 ft.

Target: 2 pints of liquid

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes

An unknown halfling apprentice created this spell. Hailed as one of the most useful spells ever created, *heat water* was originally intended as a cooking tool for those times when no fire was available (such as while traveling through dangerous lands). The cantrip has been used in many tasks, from alchemy to cleaning to food preparation. *Heat water* is even said to have saved its creator's life when she threw boiling water into the face of a goblin attacker.

This spell causes up to 2 pints of liquid in a container to heat up. The spell takes 1 minute to bring water from cold to boiling point. The water can be kept at any temperature the caster wishes (above or at room temperature) as long

as she concentrates. If further water is added to the container, the spell ends.

RESIZE

Transmutation

Level: Clr o, Drd o, Sor/Wiz o

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One article of clothing or armor

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Resize alters one piece of non-magical clothing or armor to fit a differently sized creature. The object to be resized can be expanded or shrunk to fit a target up to one size larger or smaller than it originally fit. If *resize* is dispelled, the clothing or armor falls off its wearer and returns to normal size.

YELL

Transmutation

Level: Brd o, Drd o, Clr o, Sor/Wiz o

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal


Target: You

Duration: 1 minute or until discharged

This cantrip amplifies the caster's voice for one message up to 10 words in length. The amplification gives those within earshot a +10 to Listen rolls made to hear the message.

MYSTIC SYMBOLS

The symbols spaced throughout the article and shown again here to the right each represent a different school of magic. Although they'll be limited to labeling new spells in the magazine, there's no reason you can't use them for other things in your campaign. If you photocopy the symbols to the right, you can use them as your character's arcane mark, as the symbol for a guild or group of adventurers, as a personal emblem for a magic-inclined noble house, as a banner for a group of monsters or mercenaries, or even as dungeon dressing if you use miniatures and a battlemat.

In general, regular, recognizable symbols can be a great way to add detail to a campaign. They give both players and DMs a visual way to connect individuals who belong to a group, and they can quickly convey a lot of information about a group's alignment and goals. 



ABJURATION

Abjurations are protective spells and barriers.

In your campaign, the symbol could represent an individual PC, a group of dwarven bodyguards, a signature mark that appears whenever abjuration magic is detected, and so on.

EVOCATION

Evocations manipulate energy, often releasing great destructive forces.

The symbol could also represent a group of spellswords, an evil group of mercenaries, or the servants of a powerful and destructive wizard.

TRANSMUTATION

Transmutation spells change the properties of some creature, thing, or condition.

In your campaign, this symbol could also represent a group of chaos cultists or a spellcaster who favors elemental magic.

ENCHANTMENT

Enchantment spells affect the minds of others, influencing or controlling their behavior.

Other uses for this symbol include using it as the emblem for a group of seers or a group of knights dedicated to vigilance against evil.

CONJURATION

Conjuractions bring manifestations of objects, creatures, or some form of energy to you.

This symbol could represent a group of demon worshipers or a group of knights dedicated to caging evil creatures.

ILLUSION

Illusion spells deceive the senses and the minds of others.

This symbol could also be used as the emblem for a group of thieves or a group of priests and wizards specializing in mirror magic.

DIVINATION

Divination spells enable you to learn secrets long forgotten and to find hidden things.

This symbol could also represent a guild of fortune tellers or a group of fanatics obsessed with some future doom.

NECROMANCY

Necromancy spells harness the power of death.

This symbol could also represent any number of death cults, demon or devil worshipers, a group of powerful intelligent undead, or any similar evil group.

UNIVERSAL

Universal spells affect other spells or change the very nature of magic or reality itself.

This symbol could represent a group of beings devoted to peace and unity or a group of fanatics dedicated to the destruction of everything.