

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



## Pages from the Mages

By Ed Greenwood and Tim Beach

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Sample file





## Introduction

*Any rogue can craft a spell—but it takes a really reckless fool to write one down.*

Who said that? Why, *me*, of course. It seems no other mage on several worlds has wits enough to speak out against the flood of scriven magic unleashed on us all. What one mage writes down, most others can read (so long, as they say, the pictures are plentiful enough) . . . so, inevitably, spells of dangerous power spread throughout the known worlds. This perilous process has all too often been aided and abetted by folk so bereft of morals (or “too fascinated to help themselves,” as one once vainly tried to justify himself to me) that they publish such secrets of Art openly, for any irresponsible hedge wizard with eyeballs to toy with.

And now, look ye, that rascal, rogue, and jackanapes Ed of the Greenwood’s been at it again—passing on precious lore (words I spoke in *confidence*, mind ye) to folk at TSR, who’ve promptly published it for all to view. Has he no shame? Thinks he for a moment of the dragons—and worse—that could be called down upon him? The flying castles crashing into what he’s pleased to call his “backyard?” The menacing dooms that may leer up at him from his freezer? The creeping horrors that might snarl from the depths of his closet? The mind-rending horrors that’ll doubtless soon inhabit his laundry hamper?

All this could have been avoided, of course . . . He’d listened to me. He never does.

They never do. None of them. If the handful of heedful folk in the worlds’d listen to me but a few moments more, much trouble could be averted—and, I suppose, much high adventure. Hmm . . . perhaps ‘tis the doom of humans to always rush in, heedless of the costs—and to open and read every old, crumbling book they find.

Certainly this book is full of the doings of too many wizards who did. (How many wizards is too many? As the old mages’ joke goes: two, because there’s only *one* of me . . . but I digress). And all who read this will be amply equipped to repeat their mistakes. Hmph. Just don’t come ye wailing at my door when whatever world ye’ve destroyed falls apart around ye! (I’ll be in bed with some good zzar and my scrying-crystal, watching ye and having a good laugh.)

Determined to read on? I can’t blame ye, I suppose . . . I know I did, every chance I got. From the slim black *Tome of Azuth*, whose single page holds a different spell each time ‘tis opened—to the *belt of spells* created by Szass Tam when he was young: strings of coins hanging from a waistband, each string a single spell, written on the faces of the coins—to the book Ansharla of Raurin tattooed on the back of her largest manservant . . . I’ve read my share of Faerûn’s books of magic. And now ye can too, albeit a selection of tomes



daring adventurers are more likely to find than honest folk.

Honest folk? What am I saying? ‘Tis *wizards* who’ll be devouring every page of this work, seeking new spells to rule or remake their world with, of course! And all too soon, they’ll turn from transforming mountains and say, “More! More! These spells are *old*—trade ye new spells for old!”

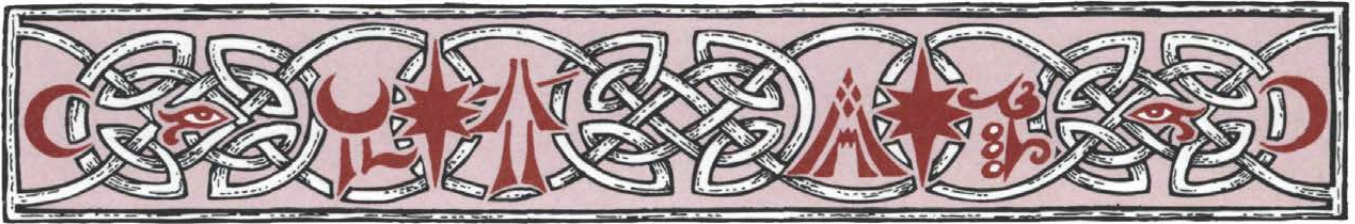
I’ve heard that very cry in the bazaars of Calimshan, uttered by men who should have known better. Yet they did not, and fared forth in great peril of their lives to seek out more magics, in the tombs and vaults of wizards who were never human, and mages and monsters alike who skulk in remote fastnesses of the Realms. At least having such spells as these gave them some defenses on such farings—defenses ye now have, too.

See ye at the Magefair. . . where we can hurl a few fireballs together. A little *spellfire*, scarecrow? Oh. Sorry. It’s all too easy to get carried away with magics such as these. Look ye: Be careful. Have fun, but be careful. Ye hold here the power to change worlds.



—Elminster of Shadowdale





## Spells of the Realms

This book describes spells that are specific to the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting. This is not a complete list; while many rare spells have been brought to light from old, musty tomes, a number still remain hidden.

Some of the spells presented here are in general use, or at least the magical population at large is aware of them. This awareness is in part due to a pamphlet entitled *Volo's Guide to All Things Magical*, in which the author revealed a large number of long-forgotten spells to the general populace. Soon after its release, Volo was confronted by some powerful mages who would have preferred the spells remained forgotten, and thereafter the sage shifted his efforts to writing travel guides, instead.

The spells reflect the AD&D® 2nd Edition game. If a spell previously in use is not in this listing, it does not mean that the spell does not exist, only that it is not now generally known to the magic-using populace.

Named spells are usually named for their creators. There are spells by Bigby, Mordenkainen, and other characters who are not native to the Realms. Given that travel to other planes is common among the higher level mages of the Realms, this should be expected. While it is suspected that Elminster has visited Oerth and Bigby has visited Toril, it is known that Mordenkainen and Vangerdahast have competed magically for the hand of a young extra-planar beauty. (Both lost, by the way.)

## Availability of Spells

There are three categories of spells in the Realms: common, rare, and unique.

**Common spells** are spells that any wizard can gain access to, as long as his Intelligence permits him to assimilate them. They have been known for centuries, and almost everyone, not just wizards, knows about them and their effects. The names of their creators have long since been lost. These spells have generic names like *charm person* or *magic missile*.

**Rare spells** are not so rare as their name implies. These are the "named" spells, such as the various *Bigby's hands*, *Tenser's floating disk*, *Leomund's assorted shelter* spells, and so on. Apprentices are not commonly taught these spells, and a wizard may not have one in his repertoire because he has never been taught it or researched it. Still, these spells are well known, at least by name, to most of the magical fraternity.

**Unique spells** are found only in obscure spellbooks, such as those described herein.

All spells detailed in this work are identified by **bold italic** type where they appear in the spell lists associated with the unusual magical books detailed in the following pages.

## Spellbooks

The spellbooks described in this work are of exceptional nature. They often vary widely in content and appearance from the more typical spellbooks possessed by player character mages. The size of these rare books is usually measured in "hands." A "hand," or "handwidth," is about 3½ inches, a measurement based on the size of the delicate hand of the scholar Aleric.

Many of the new spellbooks are actually *orizons*. An *orizon* is a jumble of spells of varying levels, sometimes interspersed with spell research notes or other information, or even spells usable only by other classes.

An *arcanabula* is an illusionist's workbook or traveling spellbook, as opposed to the more complete spell tomes kept in secret by almost all spellcasters. Most *arcanabula*s are non-descript, although illusionists in the Realms have shown a talent for making theirs look like something else—such as a musical instrument, a gaming board, a belt of linked metal plates, and so on.

The general guidelines for standard spellbooks follow:

**General Note:** A mage completing his or her apprenticeship generally has one, or possibly two, spellbooks. A book of 1st-level spells will certainly be possessed, and cantrip notes may be given as well. The other depends upon the options of both the DM and the concerned player. The following guidelines apply to spell books of the usual sort.

**Type of Spellbooks:** Two types of wizard spell books exist: *Standard books* contain up to 24 spells of 1st–3rd level, up to 16 spells of 4th–6th level, or up to 8 spells of 7th–9th level. *Traveling books* contain at most one-fourth of the number of spells possible in a standard spell book—either 6 spells of 1st, 2nd, and/or 3rd level; 4 spells of 4th, 5th, and/or 6th level; or 2 spells of 7th, 8th, and/or 9th level.

**Cost of Spellbooks:** A standard spellbook costs 1,000 gp for materials, plus an additional 100 gp per spell level for each spell contained therein. (Special cantrip uses are recorded as 1st-level spells.) The cost of a new mage's or illusionist's initial book or books is assumed to be borne by the new spellcaster's former master, so the fledgling spellcaster will have them at no cost. Books prepared later in a mage's career (having higher spell-level capacity than "beginning" books) are not supplied by the master but are composed by the character as part of his or her training when rising to a higher experience level. This composition will take from 1d4+3 weeks for each new standard book; the book is composed during and after the time when other training exercises are taking place.

These same costs/prices apply when such a book is being manufactured and composed: A standard spellbook requires a





1,000-gp investment for materials, plus 100 gp per level for each spell entered in the book, payable when a mage adds a new spell to his or her repertoire. (A 1st-level spell costs 100 gp, a 2nd-level spell costs 200 gp, etc.)

A traveling spell book costs 500 gp for materials. The cost of each spell contained within such a book is the same as the cost for entering a spell in a standard book. All traveling spellbooks must be fabricated by the mage or otherwise discovered as treasure by the mage or his or her associates. A player character does not possess a traveling spell book when beginning his or her career.

**Physical Aspects of Standard Spellbooks:** A standard spellbook is approximately 16 inches in height, 12 inches wide, and 6 inches thick. (The DM has leeway to reduce or enlarge this general size, although nothing smaller than 12×12×6 inches or larger than 18×12×9 inches is recommended.) The weight of a standard book of median size is 15 pounds (adjusted upward or downward for varying sizes).

The cover of a standard book is typically heavy leather—dragon hide or something similar—inlaid with metal so as to provide both extra durability and a means to close and secure the book. Vellum pages are sewn together and secured to a fine, supple leather spine backing. Pages are secured additionally by fine leather front and back pieces. It is also usual for such a tome to have vellum stubs at intervals for insertion of additional pages, although this by no means allows for any increase or change in the number and types of spells the book can contain.

Notwithstanding any special protection placed thereon, a standard spellbook has a saving throw equal to that of “leather” with +2 to dice rolls made to save against acid, fireball, disintegration, and lightning attacks. Special books may have other saving throws.

**Physical Aspects of Traveling Spellbooks:** A traveling spell book is approximately 12 inches tall, 6 inches wide, and 1 inch thick; 9×9×1 is likewise a good working size. The weight of such a book is approximately three pounds. Five such books will fit within a backpack, twice that number in a large sack.

The cover of a traveling spellbook is strong, supple animal skin such as that from a giant cobra. The hand-sewn leaves of parchment are carefully secured to a fine leather backing and glued to the spine. The whole is further secured by front and back pieces of vellum. A small lock or leather ties are typically used to secure the whole. Pages are very thin and fragile, so great care must be taken to protect the book when it is in use.

Notwithstanding any special protection placed thereon, a traveling spell book has a saving throw equal to that of “leather” or “book,” with no bonuses (as a standard book has) against certain forms of attack.

**Value of Spellbooks:** A standard spellbook has an experience point value of 100 points per spell level contained therein, and a gold piece value of 1,000 gp per spell level (which applies to all spells, and cantrip applications are considered the same as 1st-level spells).

## Mage Sigils in the Realms

Each mage in the Realms has his own personal rune or symbol, which is used both to identify his own work and to protect his items (as with *explosive runes*). This sigil is unique for each active mage in the Realms and remains with the particular caster until death.

A wizard chooses a sigil sometime before reaching 4th level. Long-lived wizards sometimes go through a number of sigils, but most stay with the first one they choose. A change can be made at 10th level and each fifth level thereafter. The inherent nature of the sigils themselves prevents accidentally copying another living wizard’s sigil. (Accidentally copying a dead wizard’s sigil is another matter, but some liches have their own ideas about protecting their symbols.)

No two mage sigils are identical—and each is readily identifiable by its owner. Mage sigils can be reproduced by others to disseminate truthful information (such as “this is the sigil of Elminster of Shadowdale”), but a heavy curse is invoked against those who seek to use the sigils of others to their own ends, either with intent of counterfeiting, fraud, or mischief making.

This curse is said to come from the goddess Mystra herself and to be delivered by her faithful servant Azuth, whom all wizards venerate for the ability to cast spells. The curse affects any and all who attempt to use the sigil of another mage for their own ends.

If such an attempt is made, the offender must make three ability checks—one for Strength, one for Intelligence, and one for Charisma.

- ✦ Failing the Strength check means that the offender loses one point of Strength permanently and 1d4 hit points.
- ✦ Failing the Intelligence check means that the offender loses one point of Intelligence permanently and is *feebleminded* as the 6th-level wizard spell (no saving throw).
- ✦ Failing the Charisma check means that the offender loses one point of Charisma permanently. In addition, a glowing apparition appears (believed to be Azuth himself) which points at the afflicted character and declares “Falsely done!” In extreme cases, the apparition stays with the offender for days, visible to all, pointing at the offender who copied another’s sign.





### Special Note About How to Use This Book

While some of the spells presented in this book have appeared previously (including the earliest magazine versions recently republished in the *Encyclopedia Magica*™ volumes), the text as presented here should take precedence. Many of the spells originally presented in DRAGON® Magazine were later reproduced in a more developed form in the *Forgotten Realms Adventures* hardbound. In this work, the opportunity has been taken to correct some minor errors and also to match the current format for spell presentation.

In order to make the spells easier to reference, the spell level of each has been included in the spell information. After the text describing the books themselves, the spells are presented in order of spell level, with the spells of each level in alphabetical order.

Finally, DMs in particular are directed to Elminster's introduction. The materials herein are quite potent in game terms and are perhaps best suited to NPC wizards, at least at first. It is far easier to add a new spell to a campaign than to remove one if it doesn't work out. Scrolls are a good way to let player characters experiment with unusual spells. Likewise, a campaign that has a low level of magic will likely be greatly disrupted if a volume like the *Alcaister*, which contains more than four hundred spells, comes into the permanent possession of a low- or mid-level character.

Even the three-fold curse of Mystra does not stop some individuals, though it daunts all but the most clever and black-hearted rascals. The curse applies to everyone, nonmages as well as mages, and is triggered even if the offender used some other agency (spell, charmed individual, or such) to copy the sigil. Among wizards of good and neutral alignment, copying another's sigil is considered nasty business, on a level with using *fool's gold* to pay debts and forging another's name to a letter.

### Wizard Sigil Note

In this accessory, the sigil given in the description of a magical tome is that of the wizard to whom the book is attributed.

