

REMASTER COMPATIBLE

PSIONICS SECOND EDITION



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PSIONICS SECOND EDITION

A Complete Guide to Psionics

For the 2nd Edition Pathfinder® Remastered Roleplaying Game

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Psionics Second Edition

Welcome to a new frontier of mental mastery, where methodical focus replaces traditional incantations and divine grace. This chapter establishes the core philosophy of manifesting, outlining the unique mechanics of psychic energy.

WHY PSIONICS?

One might ask why a game needs psionics when the occult tradition already exists within Pathfinder Second Edition. While both paths delve into the hidden depths of the mind and the unseen forces of the universe, they profoundly divide in approach, origin, and execution.

The Occult Lens

The occult is one of the four magical traditions alongside the arcane, divine, and primal paths. A magical tradition dictates how a spellcaster interacts with magic and limits what kind of magic they can employ. It provides the philosophical framework through which a character understands and shapes supernatural forces. Every spell in the game belongs to one or more of these traditions, and each tradition is tied to a specific skill used to identify and comprehend its magic. Therefore, the occult psychic essentially studies magic to cast spells. They rely on established formulae, manipulating ambient magical energy to produce repeatable effects. Magic provides inherent safety parameters, shielding the caster from the catastrophic potential of the forces they wield.

The Psionic Manifestation

Psionics is not a magical tradition. A psionist does not view reality through the lens of magic, nor do they study how to cast spells. Harnessing psionic potential demands intense mental discipline to safely project internal energy into the physical world. Abilities with the psionic trait do not utilize traditional slots or require standard verbal, somatic, or material components. Instead, they require deep mental focus and adhere strictly to the Reserve Rule. A manifestor taps into an internal reservoir of Psychic Energy Points to reshape reality through pure force of will.

They do not study dusty tomes, pray to a deity, or venerate nature. To a psionic practitioner, traditional magic entirely misses the point. They acknowledge its existence but view it as overcomplicated and unnecessarily restrictive. Why meticulously build a bridge when you can simply force a tree to fall over the river?

Will Over Science

If magic is akin to a formal science in the Pathfinder universe, psionics is the exertion of cultivated ego. Just as an astronomer and an astrologer both look to the stars, the occultist and the psionist both manipulate the hidden and subconscious forces beneath ordinary reality. The occultist achieves this through the structured application of magical traditions. The psionist achieves this through the direct application of psychic energy.

This makes psionics a fundamentally dangerous and unpredictable art. It grants the practitioner immense control over these forces, but does so without any of the guardrails that magic provides. To navigate this mental landscape without inviting total catastrophe, a manifestor must honor the Reserve Rule by never fully extinguishing their inner spark of energy, while simultaneously respecting the Golden Rule that governs the safe volume of power a single mind can channel at once. Those who find themselves cornered might risk an Overburn, a desperate maneuver that forces a blinding surge of psychic power through the brain to achieve impossible feats, though the resulting mental trauma serves as a grim reminder of the steep price such unchecked power demands.

A Question of Flavor

Beyond mechanics, the divide between the occult and psionics is basically a matter of thematic flavor. The occult thrives in the shadows of history. It is the domain of forgotten rituals, bizarre deities, and whispered superstitions. An occult spellcaster delves into esoteric mysteries, drawing magic from the spiritual and the macabre. Their art is steeped in folklore, curses, and the incomprehensible entities that lurk just beyond the veil of sanity.

Psionics approaches the unknown from an entirely different angle. It represents the frontier of uncharted biology and untethered mental evolution. It is the domain of fringe theory, untested hypotheses, and arduous internal experimentation. A manifestor does not bargain with spirits or decipher ancient prophecies. Instead, they unlock the latent potential of their own flesh and blood by consciously redirecting blood flow or forcing their cells to knit together. They treat the mind and body as an integrated laboratory. Where an occultist might diagnose a spiritual curse, a psionist sees a misalignment of metabolic frequency or a disruption in cellular regeneration.



Those who practice this discipline are often viewed as radical outliers even among the magically inclined. They are the anomalies of the world. Their talents do not typically arise from studying crumbling scrolls, but rather through sudden awakenings, intense mental conditioning, or forced biological grafts. They achieve the impossible by manipulating spatial folds and agitating ambient molecules rather than reciting incantations. To the uninitiated, this calculated application of will feels bizarre and alien. It is a localized science of the mind that defies accepted magical laws, relying entirely on internal structure rather than mystical tradition.

The Logistical Divide

Moving beyond thematic origins, the distinction between spellcasting and manifesting becomes a matter of strict logistical resource management. Conventional magical traditions utilize a Vancian methodology, where spellcasters rely on distinct spell slots of ascending ranks. A manifestor instead relies on a fluid pool of Psychic Energy Points, abbreviated as PEP, allowing them to pour variable amounts of mental strength into their powers.

The Boundaries of Magic

The traditional spell slot system excels in offering specialized, highly potent effects with clearly defined boundaries. A traditional caster preparing a spell knows exactly how much impact that specific incantation will have. This provides a safe, highly structured daily arsenal. The primary weakness of this approach lies in its rigidity. A spell slot is a static container. Once a caster exhausts their highest rank slots, their overall potency plummets, and a lower rank slot can seldomly be used to fuel a higher rank spell. Furthermore, magical spellcasters are bound by traditional gestures and incantations, making them vulnerable to physical restraints or magical silence.

The spell slot system forces casters to fix their potential into rigid shapes. Each spell occupies a specific rank and performs a single, predetermined function. A wizard cannot pour extra power into a basic spell to widen its reach, nor can a cleric scale down a miracle to conserve strength. They cast each spell exactly as it was prepared. This creates a steady battle of attrition, where a caster manages a shrinking set of narrow tools rather than drawing from a flexible reservoir of personal power.

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The Flexibility and Peril of Psionics

Conversely, the Psychic Energy Point system champions extreme tactical flexibility. A psionic power is not a static formula, but a modular construct that expands to fill the capacity of the mind channeling it. Every power begins as a simple talent costing zero energy to manifest. A manifestor can then spend PEP to augment these base abilities with increased range, expanded areas, or devastating potency. This allows a single power to serve as both a reliable foundational tactic and a devastating finisher. Additionally, psionics eschew physical flourishes, allowing manifestors to act freely even while Grabbed or Restrained.

However, this supreme flexibility comes with perilous logistical pitfalls. A manifestor must carefully measure their output against the Golden Rule, which automatically limits the maximum energy they can safely channel into a single manifestation. Without the rigid safety containers of spell slots, a reckless psionist can easily exhaust their entire daily reserve in a handful of intense encounters. More dangerously, a manifestor must always honor the Reserve Rule. They must retain at least one Psychic Energy Point to maintain the inner spark of their abilities. If they deplete their pool entirely, they immediately lose the ability to use any action with the psionic trait. While a manifestor can consciously disable their safety inhibitors to Overburn and exceed their normal limits, this desperate maneuver gambles their physical health, inflicting severe backlash damage and fatigue.

The Taxonomy of the Mind

Having established how a manifestor channels their energy, it is crucial to outline the specific fields of study they pursue. All psionic powers belong to one of six distinct disciplines, and each power gains the specific trait associated with its field of study. A discipline is a mode of thought rather than a mere category.

Clairsentience extends the senses beyond the physical body to perceive distant locations or future timelines. Materialization draws ectoplasm from the Astral Plane to knit together physical objects and structures. Psychokinesis manipulates the physical world through force, moving objects or agitating molecules to create energy. Telepathy facilitates direct mental contact, encompassing communication and psychic combat. Translocation manipulates space and time, allowing for teleportation and temporal distortion. Finally, Vitalogy focuses on the internal mastery of biology, allowing the psionist to alter their own metabolism and health.

Talents and Advanced Powers

Within these disciplines, a manifestor categorizes their abilities into two distinct tiers. Psionic Talents act as the fundamental, reflexive expressions of a manifestor's will. These base powers cost nothing to initiate and scale automatically with the practitioner's Psionic Rank. Conversely, Advanced Powers represent complex mental constructs that tax the psyche to its limit. These higher mysteries serve effectively as daily resources, requiring a significant expenditure of energy and specific mental conditioning to perform.

The Path Forward

Introducing psionics into your game opens a new frontier of storytelling and tactical combat. It invites players to explore characters who solve problems not through ancient rituals or divine favor, but through the unrelenting force of their own minds. The rules in this tome detail the specialized skills, feats, and powers required to master this subsystem. Prepare to look inward, harness your potential, and rewrite reality.

WHAT IS PSYCHIC ENERGY?

The fundamental mystery that keeps psionics relegated to the fringe of supernatural study is the elusive nature of psychic energy itself. Even the most astute manifestors struggle to provide a clear or universal definition. A wizard might confidently dismiss it as unfiltered arcane force, while others claim it is an unrefined state of life or soul energy. It remains wholly distinct from standard vital energy because it does not directly add health to a subject without the strict, conscious application of will. However, it possesses a bizarre capacity to animate things that typically lack life. It is inherently incompatible with most forms of traditional undead. Despite this, it can be inverted into void energy and can occasionally spawn pseudo-undead. These spontaneous entities are essentially very active psychometric echoes birthed from highly emotional events rather than necromancy.

It is much easier to explain the behavior of psychic energy than to accurately define it. Free psychic energy appears to originate from the Astral Plane and eventually returns there. When drawn into the physical world, it frequently condenses into tangible states. In its liquid form, it manifests as ectoplasm. This fluid state appears as a viscous, shimmering sludge that manifestors can weave into temporary objects or barriers. Under some mental pressure, the energy solidifies completely into complex crystal lattices.

Because of this physical nature, psychic energy can be easily trapped within living tissue (nerve and brain tissue especially) and crystalline structures of all sorts. Quartz is the most common medium, but most gemstones and even common salt can hold a psychic charge. Though it is easiest to store the power in these specific mediums, any sort of matter can act as a vessel when inundated with high amounts of psychic energy. This stored power vibrates at a frequency of both thought and emotion, making it highly permeable to solid matter, though it sheds these specific frequencies as it decays. It can be readily converted into any other sort of elemental or kinetic energy. Although originating from the Astral Plane, it seems to exist everywhere at once and can be directed entirely by will, thought, and emotion.

THE CHAPTERS AHEAD...

This tome serves as your complete guide to integrating the power of the mind into your Pathfinder Second Edition campaigns, providing the mechanical framework and thematic lore necessary to substitute traditional magic with the sheer exertion of will. Whether you are building a manifestor who weaponizes their own biology, or preparing to unleash terrifying, crystal-infused wyrms upon your players, the rules within these pages open a vast new frontier for storytelling and tactical combat. To help you navigate these uncharted depths, the following section provides a comprehensive overview of the book, summarizing the specific character options, advanced mechanics, and esoteric threats detailed in each of the chapters ahead.

Chapter 2: Psionic Ancestries

Chapter 2 expands your options for character creation by introducing heritages and ancestries bound to innate mental potential. Choosing one of these paths alters your character at a fundamental level, granting them unique physiological traits and sensory capabilities that reflect their mental focus. You will discover six completely new ancestries, such as the silent Kyrn or the towering psiclops, specifically built around psionic themes. These characters utilize strict mental discipline to manipulate their environment rather than relying on arcane study or divine intervention. Additionally, the chapter provides the versatile satori heritage and ten unique psionic heritages for common ancestries, allowing you to integrate innate manifestation across a wide variety of character concepts.

Chapter 3: Psionic Classes

Chapter 3 details the extraordinary classes who rely on their own minds to manipulate the universe. Rather than traditional magic, these practitioners utilize manifesting, channeling their will directly into psychic energy. This section presents six core classes, each offering a distinct path to mental mastery. The Dreadnaught forms an indestructible suit of ectoplasm for frontline combat. The Psionist represents the pinnacle of intellectual discipline, acting as a mental tactician who masters a full spectrum of disciplines, unleashing devastating telepathic and psychokinetic effects alongside the manipulation of space, time, and their own biology. The Psychic Soldier synchronizes their body and mind to excel in martial combat. The Soulsword projects a weapon of pure mental force. The Stargazer anchors their mind to celestial bodies to wield starlight and gravity. The Tempest overrides internal safety protocols with intense emotion to unleash wild surges of power. Alongside these core paths, the chapter provides comprehensive rules for phrystals, which are externalized fragments of consciousness. Last, you will find multi-class archetypes for all six new classes and twelve new class archetypes that weave psionics into well-known class concepts.

Chapter 4: Psionic Skills, Feats, & Powers

Chapter 4 presents the mechanical engine of your psionic potential, providing the foundational rules for manifesting abilities through the precise management of Psychic Energy Points (PEP). Within these pages, you will find specialized applications for the new skill of Meditation to regulate internal reserves or identify phenomena, alongside universal feats that expand mental capacity or externalize the subconscious into a crystalline phrystal. Most importantly, this chapter catalogs an expansive arsenal of manifestations across all six disciplines. These range from foundational Psionic Talents (reflexive abilities that scale automatically with your proficiency) to reality-bending Advanced Powers that function as complex, high-cost daily resources. Whether carefully augmenting a base talent to impose a saving throw penalty or extend a power's reach and area, or consciously disabling safety inhibitors for a desperate Overburn, this section provides the complete framework for substituting traditional magic with the pure, indisputable power of the mind.

Chapter 5: Psionic Equipment

While harnessing psionic potential demands profound internal mental discipline, Chapter 5 explores how practitioners can anchor their willpower into permanent physical mediums. This chapter catalogs a diverse array of specialized materials (such as astral-infused quartz and tektite glass) used to forge armaments capable of storing and amplifying psychic energy. Manifesters will discover the mechanics for etching permanent mental sigils, constructing self-sustaining psionic circuitry, and wielding advanced artifacts like psychoplasm and skeptons. By bridging the gap between raw internal focus and tangible utility, this specialized equipment ensures that a practitioner remains effective on the battlefield even when their personal stamina reaches its limit.

Chapter 6: The Psionic Bestiary

Finally, in Chapter 6, the Psionic Bestiary catalogs 66 formidable entities that manipulate reality through pure willpower and psychic energy. Leaving mundane biology behind, this chapter explores creatures shaped by intent and sustained by the psychic currents of the world. Within these pages, Game Masters will find terrifying aberrations that feed on thought itself, spontaneous anomalies born from overwhelming grief, and majestic predators that fold space. At the absolute pinnacle of this strange ecology stand the great psionic wyrms. From the telepathic noetic dragons ruling deep subterranean labyrinths to the psychokinetic dynamis dragons commanding high-wind steppes, these crystalline beasts eschew traditional magic, using their unique biology as organic amplifiers to project their formidable will directly into the physical world.

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