

MANA POINT MAGIC SYSTEM
version 3.0

by
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The following magic system has been created for use with the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons rule system. It does not constitute an affront to the creators of the original magic system provided in the Player's Handbook. It merely tries to fix some of the problems that are encountered with this original system. The major problem that can easily be seen with it and that I believe I fixed with this alternate system is the lack of flexibility. This flexibility was affected by the fact that the wizard had to choose beforehand every single spell he was going to cast during a particular day. He was also restricted by the number of spell he was able to cast for a particular level. This alternate magic system fixes both of these problems. Considering those two big advantages, something else had to be changed to keep the game balanced. Thus, the number of spells a wizard can cast in a single day, that is before resting for an extended period of time, has been reduced.

All this considered, the wizard tends to get a bit more powerful at low levels, giving him the most desired chance to stay alive during those few hard to live through levels. Please note that this system is to be used only with wizard spells cast exclusively by wizards and bards. It is not made to be used with clerical spells.

VERSIONS HISTORY

Version 3.0:

- COST changed for cantrips.
- Views on Memorization have changed and been expanded.
- The subject on How to Learn New Spells is now covered.
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) have been added.
- While a Wizard was casting when not having enough Mana Points, if the Intelligence check was missed, I did not mention what was happening. This has been rectified.
- Rate of Recovery of SCP (RRSCP) revised.
- Minor errors have been corrected throughout the text.

Version 2.02:

- E-Mail address has changed.

Version 2.01:

- Views on material components have changed.

Version 2.0:

- Wizard levels have been upgraded up to the 20th level.

- Bards have also been added to the system, also up to level 20th.

THE SYSTEM

All along the description of this magic system, you will encounter abbreviations. These abbreviations are used to make sure that the text is easier to read. Here are their meanings and how they are calculated:

MP: Mana Points

Mana Points represents the ability of a spellcaster to cast spells; the amount of mind strength that this spellcaster has to retain the energy present in his surroundings. This energy is needed to release the desired magical effects. The number of Mana Points a spellcaster can retain is directly related to his experience level and Intelligence score.

WIZARD

Level	MP	Level	MP
1	10	11	170
2	18	12	195
3	25	13	225
4	33	14	255
5	47	15	285
6	61	16	315
7	85	17	350
8	105	18	385
9	125	19	420
10	145	20	455

BARD

Level	MP	Level	MP
1	0	11	90
2	6	12	102
3	13	13	115
4	20	14	128
5	25	15	141
6	33	16	154
7	42	17	167
8	51	18	180
9	62	19	193
10	78	20	206

The spellcaster also gets bonus Mana Points due to high Intelligence score. These bonuses are cumulative for every experience level attained up to the 10th level inclusively.

Intelligence Score	Bonus
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9-15	--
16-17	+1
18	+2
19	+3

COST and SCOST (Specialized COST):

When the spellcaster casts magical spells, he expends energy that he retained in his mind: Mana Points. The amount of Mana Points used to cast a certain spell is related to the power of the spell (its level). Specialist wizards dedicated to a particular school of magic are more attuned to the spells from this school and thus require less Mana Points to invoke the power of those spells. The SCOST is then used by specialist wizard casting spells from their speciality school instead of the COST. Please note that the bard never uses the SCOST.

Spell Level	COST	SCOST
-----	----	-----
Cantrip	1	1
1	5	3
2	9	7
3	14	10
4	18	13
5	25	19
6	28	21
7	34	25
8	38	28
9	45	34

Every time a spell is cast, the COST (or possibly the SCOST in the case of a specialist wizard with speciality spells) is reduced from the total remaining MP the spellcaster possesses. The wizard can (and note, ONLY the wizard since the bard lacks the spellcasting ability to do so) if he wants, reach a negative MP total. For him to be able to do so, he must successfully make an Intelligence check. If successful, the COST of the spell is first subtracted from the remaining MP total of the spellcaster. Then, every MP reached below zero will result in one hit point lost by the Wizard. If the Intelligence check is failed, the spellcaster loses an amount of MP equal to the spell level + 1, the spell is lost and has no effect. Likewise, every MP reached below zero will result in one hit point lost by the Wizard.

After the spell has been cast, the Wizard needs to make a System Shock roll adjusted negatively by the number of hit points lost in this manner. This roll is made at the very end of the round in which the spell has been cast (whether the spell has a duration or not is irrelevant). A wizard failing to successfully make this roll, falls unconscious for 1d6 turns (unless of course the loss of hit points killed him). This loss of hit points can only be healed by rest or by the use of a heal spell or a limited wish (any cure spell won't work).

For example:

Valniss, a 12th level Wild Mage with an Intelligence score of 18 possesses a maximum total of 215 MP (195 + (10 x 2)). During the course of the day, he used a lot of his spellcasting ability and has now 25 remaining MP. He has just engaged into a fight and is in dire need to cast an Anti-Magic Shell (6th level, COST 28). He needs to successfully make an Intelligence check and makes it with a roll of 13. He is thus able to cast the spell, spending his remaining 25 MP and then reaching into his life force to get the remaining 3 MP, losing 3 hit points in the process. If he would have missed his Intelligence check, he would have lost 7 MP and been unable to cast the spell. Valniss then needs to check if he stays conscious or not. Having a

Constitution score of 12, he must roll 77% or under (80% - 3%) to stay conscious. He rolls 47% and thus stays conscious.

Needless to say that trying this little feat for a wizard with a low Constitution score can be very hazardous.

OVERUSE OF HIGH LEVEL SPELLS

This system could very well be unbalanced and players could easily take advantage of it if another rule was not set into motion. Take for example our same wizard used previously, Valniss. We know that his total number of MP is 215. Being 12th level, he recently acquired the use of 6th level spells. The COST of a 6th level spell being 28, Valniss would be able to cast 7 spells of that level! Needless to say that it is quite impossible for a wizard to cast 7 spells of this level when the day before he wasn't able to cast even one. This problem lead me to add one more point system called Strainful Casting Points.

SCP: Strainful Casting Points:

Each time a high level spell (compared to the level of the spellcaster) is used, it takes physical energy from the spellcaster. The amount of SCP energy a spellcaster has is based on his Constitution score and level of experience. The higher both of these are, the more he can cast high level spells.

Initial SCP: (CON / 2) rounded up

For each level of experience the wizard achieves after the 1st level, he gains 1 SCP. Here is the formula to calculate the SCPs a WIZARD has after level 1:

SCP: ((CON / 2) rounded up) + (level - 1)

For example:

Valniss is 12th level and he has a Constitution score of 12. He possesses 17 SCP ((12 / 2) rounded up + 11).

For each other level of experience the bard achieves after the 2nd level, he gains 1 SCP. Here is the formula to calculate the SCPs a BARD has after level 1:

SCP: ((CON / 2) rounded up) + (((level - 2) / 2) rounded down)

For Example:

Thalis his a bard of level 8 and his Constitution score is 14. He thus possesses 10 SCP ((14 / 2) rounded up + (8-2 / 2) rounded down).

The amount of SCP spent in the casting of the spell is related to the level of the spell that is being cast crossed-checked with the experience level of the spellcaster. The following table also shows what spell level can be used at a certain experience level. A "-" sign means the spellcaster has not yet reached the power to cast a spell of that level.

WIZARD

Experience Level	Spell Level								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5	0	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	0	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	0	0	2	4	-	-	-	-	-
8	0	0	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
9	0	0	2	3	5	-	-	-	-
10	0	0	1	2	4	-	-	-	-
11	0	0	1	1	3	-	-	-	-
12	0	0	0	1	2	6	-	-	-
13	0	0	0	1	1	5	-	-	-
14	0	0	0	0	1	4	7	-	-
15	0	0	0	0	1	3	6	-	-
16	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	8	-
17	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	6	-
18	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	9
19	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	8
20	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	7

BARD

Experience Level	Spell Level					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	2	-	-	-	-	-
4	1	3	-	-	-	-
5	1	3	-	-	-	-
6	1	2	-	-	-	-
7	0	2	4	-	-	-
8	0	1	4	-	-	-
9	0	1	3	-	-	-
10	0	0	3	5	-	-
11	0	0	2	4	-	-
12	0	0	1	4	-	-
13	0	0	1	3	5	-
14	0	0	0	2	5	-
15	0	0	0	2	4	-
16	0	0	0	1	4	6
17	0	0	0	0	3	5
18	0	0	0	0	2	4
19	0	0	0	0	2	4
20	0	0	0	0	1	3

The Wizard (and there again, ONLY the Wizard), if he chooses so, can cast a spell needing the use of SCP even if he doesn't have any remaining SCP. To do so, he needs at least 1 remaining MP. If he reached zero MP and zero SCP, there is no way he will be able to cast another spell this day without the aid of some kind of magical item designed for this purpose, he's just too drained. If he does have at least 1 remaining MP, casting the spell when the remaining SCP is below what is needed to cast the desired spell is possible. To do this, the Wizard must successfully roll a Constitution check adjusted negatively by the number of SCP reached below. If successful, the COST (or SCOST) of the spell is augmented by 2. See the rule about the MP getting into the negative. If the check is unsuccessful, the COST (or SCOST) is doubled. See this same rule if the MP reaches a negative number.

Lets have another example to make sure that everything is well understood:

Valniss, (Int 18, Con 12) is 12th level. We know he has 215 MP and 17 SCP. During the day he has made much spellcasting and has climbed down to 39 MP. He used powerful spells and has only 2 remaining SCP.

One of his party member has just been turned to stone by a Basilisk and he needs to revive him. To do so, he needs to cast a Stone to Flesh spell (6th level). Doing so requires 6 SCP which he doesn't have. He will take a chance to cast the spell however but doing so requires him to roll a Constitution check with a +4 penalty to the roll (6 SCP needed when he has only 2 left). He rolls and gets a 10 on his dice, which results in a 14. He fails! The COST of the spell is then doubled, resulting in a COST of 56. He only has 39 MP left so he must reach into his life force (Hit Points) to get the 17 missing MP.

He needs to roll a system chock to see if he loses consciousness. He has to roll equal to or lower than 63% (80 - 17). He rolls a 34% and stays conscious. He will have to rest to gain back this loss of 17 Hit Points since he has no way to get a heal spell, even less a limited wish.

RECOVERY

There is only one way to recover from spellcasting: sleep. MP and SCP are recovered at different rates though. Here is how it works:

RRMP: Rate of Recovery of Mana Points

The spellcaster recovers no MP the first 3 hours of sleep. He gets 20% of spent MP for each hour of sleep thereafter.

For example: Valniss is down to 15 MP from a total of 215. He tries to sleep 8 hours to get all of his missing MP but is disturbed and is unable to finish the night off for some reason. He gets no MP back for the first 3 hours of sleep but gets 20% back for each of the following 3 hours, thus regaining 60% of his missing MP. When he wakes up he has 135 MP $((215 - 15) \times 60\% + 15)$.

$$\text{RRMP: (Maximum MP - Remaining MP) } \times \%$$

RRSCP: Rate of Recovery of Strainful Casting Points

For what is considered being a good night of sleep (usually 8 hours, depending of physical activities of the day) the Wizard gets back SCP in the following way:

$$\text{RRSCP: (Level / 2) rounded up + 2 + (CON bonus (max +2))}$$

For example, Valniss would get 8 SCP $(12 / 2 + 2)$ back for a full night of sleep. Since he has only a Constitution score of 12, he would not get any bonus for high Constitution.

Bards though, get back their SCP according to this:

$$\text{RRSCP: (Level / 2) rounded down + (CON bonus (max +2))}$$

For example, Thalís would get 4 SCP $(8 / 2)$ back for a full night of sleep. Since his Constitution score is 14, he would not get any bonus for high Constitution either.

MEMORIZATION

The spellcaster in this alternate system, unlike the original spellcasting method of TSR, does not need to memorize spells to be able to cast them. When he finds a spell book, he can learn spells directly from it as the original method, then he can copy it to his own spell book. This has not been changed. However, the spellcaster does have to spend time going over his spells from time to time. The time spent in this manner permits him to refresh his memory on spells that are less often used. The amount of time needed for the spellcaster to do so is around one hour per day, regardless of the amount of spells he has. This amount of time is approximate and the DM doesn't have to enforce this to the letter. A simple "I spend some time studying my spell book" announcement by your player is sufficient to consider it done. It can also be divided into many separate session of time during the day like in the morning, at lunch, before going to bed, etc.

However, if 5 days in a row goes by without the player being able to study his spell book, there is a chance that some spells may be forgotten temporarily. This chance is based on the spellcaster's Intelligence score in the following manner:

Cross-check the Intelligence of the spellcaster with the "Chance to Learn Spell" column in the AD&D Player's Handbook. The percentage shown is deducted from 100%. The result is the percentage of chance that the spellcaster forgets one spell in his repertoire.

For example: Valniss (Int 18) is trapped prisoner in a cave by Orcs for 5 days. All of his possessions have been taken from him by his captors and wasn't able to have access to his spell book. The player who plays Valniss needs to check if his character temporarily forgets a spell. Valniss' "Chance to Learn Spell" is 85%. So his chance to forget a spell is 15% (100% - 85%). The player rolls 6%. Valniss will unfortunately forget one spell.

The spell forgotten in this manner is chosen by the DM within the spells that have been less frequently used recently. It could be a spell of any level. It is at the DM discretion. Spells used frequently will usually not be forgotten though. In a similar fashion, spells that have been cast within the last 2 days are considered having been practiced and cannot be forgotten.

The spellcaster needs to check if he forgets a spell everyday thereafter, until he can study his spell book for an amount of time equal to half an hour per day that he didn't study it. Each day after the 5th, the spellcaster adds 5% to his chance of forgetting a spell. One spell can be lost each and every day in this manner.

For example: Valniss (Int 18) is still held captive the Orcs. He has spent 8 days so far in his cage. He had 15% (100% - 85%) chance to forget a spell on the 5th day and missed his roll, thus forgetting one spell. On the 6th day, he adds 5% to this chance, resulting in 20%. He rolls 47% and so doesn't forget a spell this day. On the 7th day, his chance increases to 25%. He rolls 22% and forgets another spell. On the following day (the 8th day), he now has a 30% chance to forget another spell. He is lucky and rolls 86%. So far in his 8 days captivity, he has forgotten 2 spells.

This can keep going on and on until the spellcaster forgets all of his learned spells.

Spells forgotten in this manner needs to be relearned, but this in a different way than when the spellcaster first learns them. The spellcaster will be able to relearn it with a chance of 100%. What will differ from time to time is the amount of time spent to relearn a spell.

A total of 5 hours per spell level must be spent by the spellcaster to relearn a forgotten spell. These hours need not be spent consecutively but a session of less than 2 hours will not count toward diminishing this time. No more than 10 hours per

day can be devoted to relearning spells. After this period of time is spent by the spellcaster, he needs to roll to see if he has successfully refreshed his memory. To do that, he needs to successfully roll a "Chance to Learn Spell" check. If the check is unsuccessful, one more hour per spell level must be spent. The spellcaster must then reroll, adding 5% to the percentage of his success. The spellcaster must proceed in this manner every time a check is missed, again adding one hour per spell level and 5% to his chance of success.

LEARNING NEW SPELLS

When a spellcaster finds new spells, like in the original rule of the Player's Handbook, he must learn it before being able to write it down in his spell book or cast it. The way by which this is done is unchanged from the original method. The spellcaster must make a check against the "Chance to Learn Spell" percentage corresponding to his Intelligence score. Failure to succeed means that the spellcaster is unable to learn the spell and that the next attempt to do so will have to wait until he either raises his Intelligence score in some way or that he raises his level of experience.

What I want to cover further here is the time spent to learn a new spell. Learning a new spell takes relatively more time than to relearn a forgotten spell. This time is equal to 15 hours per spell level. This time is modified depending on the Intelligence score of the spellcaster according to the following table:

Intelligence Score	Bonus
-----	-----
9-15	--
16-17	2
18	3
19	4

This bonus is subtracted from the amount of hours per spell level needed to learn a spell. No more than 10 hours per day can be devoted to learn a spell. The "Chance to Learn Spell" check like explained earlier is made after half of this time is spent. It is then and only then, that the spellcaster will know if the dweomer of the spell is too complicated for him to learn at this moment or not.

Here is an example to make sure everything is well understood:

Let's use the bard Thalís (Int 16) for this example. Thalís finds a new spell that he wants to learn and then later copy into his spell book. He proceeds to learn the spell which is Fire Shield, a 4th level spell.

It would normally take him 60 hours to learn this spell but because he has a high Intelligence score (16), it takes him 13 hours per spell level instead of 15, thus a total of 52 hours. After 26 hours, Thalís makes a "Chance to Learn Spell" check based on his Intelligence score. His chance to succeed is 70%. He succeeds with a roll of 48%. He knows that after spending the 26 remaining hours of study on this spell, he will be able to cast it and write it in his spell book.

COMPONENTS

I suggest that you do not take into account material components unless the spell uses components that are very expensive and that the spell is powerful itself. I use them only when I want to restrict the use of a particular spell.

NEW MAGICAL ITEMS

A whole set of magical items can be created with this new magic system in mind. One could add to the number of MP or SCP a spellcaster has. Another could lower the COST of a certain school of magic. Yet another one could change the recovery rate of either MP or SCP. I could think of many many more that could be very interesting but I'll leave it at you. Let your imagination flow!

FAQ: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q:

Let's say the spellcaster sleeps 3 hours and his sleep is disturbed. And after a while he goes back to sleep again. Does he need to sleep another 3 hours before he starts to gain MP back?

A:

This calls for logic. If the spellcaster wakes up for only 15 minutes, then logic says that no, he doesn't need to start back to zero. If he wakes up for hours, then yes he would need to start all over again his resting process. Or the DM could allow the player to start gaining MP after 2 hours of sleep.

Q:

If the spellcaster only sleeps half of the night, does he still gain a little bit of SCP back?

A:

Unfortunately no. The DM has to decide what is "a good night of sleep" depending on what kind of activities were made by the spellcaster during the previous day. Hard labors would definitely preclude 8 hours of sleep. Spending the day riding with many rests would perhaps require 6 hours of sleep. There again, it's a call for the DM's logic.

Q:

After a spellcaster has chosen to cast a spell when he didn't have enough MP and then needed to reach into his Hit Points to get the energy needed, does he stays in a negative number of MP? Let me explain what I mean: Let's say Valniss needs 28 MP to cast a spell but only has 25. He makes his roll and succeeds. After losing 3 Hit Points, does he remain at -3 MP?

A:

No. The MP gets back to 0 after the spell is done casting. The negatives are only used to add up the damage suffered by the wizard.

Q:

When a wizard casts a spell and decides to cancel it before the release of the spell, does he lose the MP needed to cast the spell?

A:

Not entirely. The way spellcasting is handled by this system is in the following manner: The spellcaster must first tap 1 MP into his mana bank to "activate" the spellcasting, or should I say to awaken the dwoemer. He must then devote another amount of MP equal to double the level of the spell to invoke the energy necessary to focus the patterns and join the components together (V,S and/or M). Then at the end, the remaining MP necessary to cast the spell are expanded. So voluntarily canceling a 3rd level spell in the process of casting it would result in the spellcaster spending 7 MP, instead of the regular 14. Since it is a voluntary stop of the spellcasting, the SCP are not expanded.

Q:
What if the spellcaster is disturbed during the spellcasting?

A:
When a spellcaster is disturbed before his spell is done casting, the spell is lost and cannot be cast for this round. The rules are as per the "Casting spell" section in the Player's Handbook. How it is adapted to the Mana system is in the following way: When the spellcaster is disturbed, 1 MP plus double the level of the spell in MP is wasted upon disturbance of the spellcaster (this works like in the previous question). The difference is that this time, the SCP are also expanded. This is because the spell has been interrupted abruptly, causing a stress to the spellcaster.

Q:
When the Wizard wants to cast while he doesn't have enough SCP or MP, can he voluntarily stop his spellcasting when his roll is unsuccessful?

A:
Absolutely not! This is a risk the Wizard takes when he chooses to cast the spell anyway. The roll is made at the very end of the spellcasting and there is no way the player can change his mind after he knows the result.

WORD OF THE END

I would like to thank everybody that led me into wanting to do this magic system, including TSR <g>. I would like to thank Patrick Charest who helped me with the skeletal structure of this system. I would also like to thank you all, user of this system who has provided me the comments and suggestions I needed to improve this system. This system has been around on the Internet for over a year now, and the only thing that has come out of this is improvement! Thanks a bunch!

I hope that you will find my Mana Point system useful and over all, fun to use. If you use this system in your game, I ask for no money in exchange, all I want is that you let me know of any problems you might encounter with it. Playtesting is the best way to improve new rules.

As new and improved version of this system comes out, I will try to distribute it to as many people as I can. Make sure that if you gave a copy of this system to a friend and that you come upon a newer version, that you send it to your friend.

Thanks a lot for your interest and keep the comments coming in. Enjoy!

Also available from the same author, the Ability Scores Generation System, an alternate attributes creation system for Advanced Dungeons & Dragons.

Please note that an HTML version of this system as well as the Ability Scores Generation System can be found at the following URLs:
Mana Point Magic System: <http://pages.infinet.net/grafx/manasystem.html>
Ability Scores Generation System: <http://pages.infinet.net/grafx/ability.html>

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