

Alchemy

There are three forms which alchemy can take, each a different skill. Regardless of form, all alchemy revolves around the transmutation of a *prima materia* into its pure form. The promise of mineral alchemy to transmute a base metal, such as lead, into gold is the example that captures the imagination and allows charlatans to relieve the naive of their money. Some alchemical products have commercial and military use, such as black powder. True alchemy is the pursuit of spiritual transmutation and is above such petty notions.

The methods of alchemy vary by form, but all follow the basic premise outlined by the *Emerald Tablet*. In mineral alchemy the operations are calcination, dissolution, separation, conjunction, fermentation, distillation and coagulation. Each operation is designed to be a physical process as described by the *Emerald Tablet* and is intended to be accompanied by meditation and inner working as the alchemist pursues enlightenment.

One of the principles of alchemy, "that which is above is like that which is below," is a statement that the macrocosm (the universe) affects and is affected by the microcosm (the self). The relationships that have been discovered come in groups with seven members, hence another name for alchemy is the Seven-Fold Way and fourteen pointed star is a symbol for it. An example of correspondences is Sunday, which corresponds to the Sun, which corresponds to gold.

Each group also has an ordering—for example, Monday follows Sunday—but the ordering depends on the group. The week starts with Sunday, the

sequence of planets starts with the moon (it being the closest sphere to the earth) and the metals begin with iron. All end with Saturday (or its equivalent), but the intermediate steps differ.

The overt goal of animal alchemy is the creation of a homunculus, that of mineral alchemy the alkahest and that of plant alchemy the Elixir. Each of these is a physical manifestation of the goal of spiritual and metaphysical perfection which is the true goal. Upon successful completion of a Great Work the character may, at the referee's discretion, gain mastery of runes. The completion of any Great Work only counts once towards rune mastery. The first will master the first seven runes mastered by the first god, the second will master the second seven runes mastered by the first god and the third will master the remainder of the lesser runes and the Quest run as well. Rune levels are gained the normal way so the alchemist is likely to master runes for which he has no rune levels and thus no power.

There are two modes of alchemical work: research and production. A pure alchemist conducts various researches to uncover the path to the final work and along the way produces the various substances necessary for it. However most alchemists produce substances for sale—whether to pay for the costs of research or purely for commercial gain.

Research

Research can be general where the alchemist simply conducts new experiments. Such research can only uncover a base formula or a next step in a known formula. For each week of research a roll against the appropriate alchemy skill is made. A fumble

The Seven-Fold Way

Weekday	Planet	Metal
Sunday	Sun	Gold
Monday	Moon	Silver
Tuesday	Mars	Iron
Wednesday	Mercury	Quick Silver
Thursday	Jupiter	Tin
Friday	Venus	Copper
Saturday	Saturn	Lead

