

Proposal for Vancian Magic

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Despite the definite lack of love for Vancian magicks in the game that we love to play, it remains a part of the lore and history of D&D and the SRD/D20 system that microlite20 and microlite74 are based from.

Greywulf's original vision of using an abstraction of HP to represent "life force" and using that life force to control and project the mystical forces for spells is an excellent mechanic. I did miss the concept of Vancian magic, though, and decided to incorporate Vancian magic into my own house rules for microlite74. I think this is easily extended to microlite20 as well, as it doesn't involve anything specific beyond magic being part of the setting.

Magic Users may opt to memorize spells instead of reading them out of their books and burning HP. Casting a spell does not cost them HP, but they lose the ability to recast that spell once it's cast. Such Magic Users are known as Wizards or Mages. Those Magic Users who use the spell books and HP to cast their magicks are known as Sorcerers or hedge wizards.

Mages must rest for 8 hours and spend 10 min per spell level to memorize each spell that was cast. They must have their spell books available to memorize the spells. Mages may not "duplicate" spells, once a spell is memorized, it is memorized once and used once. (That is why scrolls and wands may exist).

A Wizard may attempt to "hold onto" the magic in his mind as he is casting the spell, should he dare to exert his control over the mystical energy. Magic is a powerful and fickle thing, and those that attempt to master it often find themselves in harms way in trying to control such power. A player declares their intention to try and retain the spell when they are casting it. The DM rolls a d6 and uses the following chart:

- 1 - Spell is retained in memory.
- 2 - Spell is lost from memory but nothing bad happens.
- 3 - Spell is lost from memory and PC loses 1/2 of their HP total.
- 4 - Spell is lost from memory and PC loses 3/4 of their HP total.
- 5 - Spell is lost from memory and PC loses their HP total.
- 6 - Spell is lost from memory. PC loses their HP total plus (1d6 x lvl of caster) of damage. **

Note that results of 3 - 6 will apply the normal rules of m74 damage, that is if they were not at full HP, then they may be dropped to 0 and possibly lose some of their STR as well. A result of 6 when a mage has been in combat will more than likely kill them.

This gives the Magic User player a few options:

- If they want to be more involved in combat, they can become a Wizard/Mage which gives them more HP to rely on, but fewer magic options at lower levels. There's a real danger to trying to hang onto spells, but if a Wizard is desperate, they may be able to count on luck to help them.

- If they want to maximize their casting at the sacrifice of HP, they can opt to be a Sorcerer/Hedge Wizard, which may allow them to cast 2 spells at 1st level and still have an HP or two left to survive on. I hope that Sorcerer is paired up with some strong Fighting Men!

Characters gain the ability to memorize spells according to this chart:

1st/2nd/3rd/4th/5th/6th spell levels

1 1
2 2
3 2/1
4 2/2
5 3/2/1
6 3/2/2
7 4/3/2/1
8 4/3/2/2
9 4/4/3/2/1
10 4/4/3/2/2
11 4/4/4/3/2/1

(GMs who run games with characters above level 11 may continue to use the pattern of progression here or come up with their own.)

** NOTE - there are LOTS of possibilities of Bad Things that could happen to a mage who has an epic failure of attempting to retain the spell and rolling a 6. The DM could consider the complete loss of HP and some other randomly chosen side effect, like the PC aging 10 years, or becoming disfigured, or gaining some sort of "taint".

[Magic](#)

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