

Milo's Mystical Magic

Introduction

Hi! This is a system made for Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition, with the purpose of allowing player characters to create their own spells, potions, and magic items in-game. Within it, I will be providing some mechanics, some items, and some suggestions for determining how spells will work. I'll also be providing various options for rules, depending on how resource intensive, how difficult, and how open-ended you would like spell creation to be.

The Process

The general process of spell creation goes as follows:

1. Acquire spellmaking ingredients.
2. Use ingredients to create a potion.
 - a. If you want, you can stop here and use the potion you've created.
 - b. Alternatively, you can move on to turn that potion into a spell.
3. Choose and combine runes to draw a single rune to represent your spell.
4. Write your rune, using your potion as ink, to create a scroll.
 - a. Draw this in real life, too! Then you have an actual scroll!
5. Give your spell a name!
6. [optional] Prepare your scroll or otherwise add it to your spell list.

The system as a whole is concept-based. Ingredients and runes represent specific concepts (e.g. fire, water, the mind, power, etc.) and combining these concepts creates potions and spells that relate to all included concepts.

When using this system, it's best to ask players to start with a specific potion or spell they'd like to create. Then, either tell them the ingredients you think would best form that potion or spell or allow them to propose a recipe and work with them to make a viable one. In either case, it's best that players start this process with a specific goal, bearing in mind the limited ingredients they have access to at any given time.

Spellmaking Ingredients

These ingredients can be found throughout the world and make good additions to loot. Items in **bold** are particularly hard to come by and have powerful effects, and so should be given to players more sparingly.

Item Name	Concept	Item Description
Takkatuli	Fire	A bright orange stone found in caves, especially in areas with higher volcanic activity. Many use it as a firestarter.
Bitterroot	Earth	A plant found deep underground in areas with fertile soil. It does not photosynthesize, but it is instead able to pull nutrients directly from the soil around it.

Magical Pine Sap	Plants	Coming from the rare shu pine, this sap rivals maple syrup with its sweet taste.
Eternal Ice	Water	Atop the highest mountains are large glaciers imbued with magic. The ice from those glaciers never melts.
Aero Feather	Air	The fossilized feather of a long extinct bird, these feathers, despite being encased in stone, are still extremely light.
Pure Quartz	Purity, Cleanliness	Particularly clear specimens of quartz are hard to come by, but you can often find them near clean waters.
Kaaos	Chaos	These synthetic creations are made of a large variety of different magical and non-magical ingredients. It is said demons use these both to torture souls and to entertain themselves.
Munch Shroom	The Mind	Often used as a sleep aid, these mushrooms can have a variety of hallucinogenic and other mind-altering effects.
Tarantula Leg	Inversion	Spiders are everywhere, but only the legs of the tarantula will do for these ingredients. Many have used tarantula legs to detoxify toxic ingredients, but many have also used them to create poisons out of healing items.
Perfect Pomegranate	Healing	Named for its almost universal appeal, the Perfect Pomegranate tree takes many years to grow and bear fruit, making it a luxury afforded mostly to the rich.
Red Diamond	Power	A rare type of diamond that glows a dim red. They fetch a high price.

Potions

Once you have gathered ingredients, you'll want to place them into a boiling magical cauldron. A more finely crafted cauldron may give you various advantages in your potion making, like a lower DC when creating spells using potions made by the cauldron, a higher DC for saving throws for the potions created using the cauldron, or a smaller amount of time needed to create a potion.

Any number of ingredients can be put into a cauldron to create a potion. Creating a potion takes about 10 minutes in a standard cauldron, and only one potion is made from each 10-minute use of the cauldron, no matter the number of ingredients used.

Determining Potion Effects

The effect of a created potion is determined only by its ingredients (unlike spells, which require an arcana check). Potions are often used instead to create spell scrolls, but they do have an effect of their

own, although sometimes that effect isn't particularly useful. Some of these effects are listed below, but due to the nature of potion creation, most combinations are not listed. Use these as examples to determine what other combinations of ingredients would create. When you do, write it down in order to be consistent for the future!

Ingredients	Potion Name	Potion Effect
Takkatuli	Potion of Fire Burp	The drinker immediately breathes out a flame. Any creature in front of the drinker must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 fire damage.
Bitterroot	Potion of Sturdiness	The drinker's AC is increased by 2 for 10 minutes.
Magical Pine Sap	Potion of Chlorophyll	The drinker's skin turns green for 1 minute.
Eternal Ice	Potion of Water Breathing	DMG
Aero Feather	Potion of Feather Fall	The drinker casts feather fall with themselves as the only target.
Pure Quartz	Potion of Cleanliness	The drinker is cleaned of any sweat or other grime coating them, as if they had just taken a shower. It does not cure diseases.
Kaaos	Potion of Wild Magic	The drinker suffers a random effect from the wild magic table.
Munch Shroom	Potion of Sleep	The drinker must make a DC 12 constitution saving throw or fall asleep for 1 minute as if the spell Sleep had been cast on them.
Red Diamond	Potion of Giant Strength	DMG
Tarantula Leg	Potion of Opposites	The drinker must make a DC 12 constitution saving throw. On a failure, any sentence they say will come out as the opposite of their intent for 10 minutes. The drinker is not aware of this fact until after the 10 minutes have passed.
Perfect Pomegranate	Potion of Lesser Healing	The drinker heals 1d4+1 HP.
Takkatuli + Bitterroot	Potion of Volcanic Burp	The drinker immediately pukes a pile of burning lava onto the ground 5 feet in front of them. Any creature in front of the drinker must make a DC 12 dexterity saving throw, taking 1d8 fire damage on a failure.
Takkatuli + Magical Pine Sap	Potion of Chili Peppers	Ow! Spicy.
Takkatuli + Eternal Ice	Potion of Steam Burp	The drinker exhales hot steam in front of them. A 20-foot cone becomes full of fog, making it heavily obscured. It lasts up to 1 minute, or until a 10mph wind or higher disperses it.
Takkatuli + Aero Feather	Potion of Fireflies	A halo of small, harmless flames is created around the drinker's head, which illuminates a 20-foot radius centered around the drinker for 10 minutes.

Takkatuli + Pure Quartz	Potion of Cleansing Flame	The drinker erupts in a bright flame, taking 2d8 fire damage. Afterward, they are completely cleaned of any grime or other attached items (other than clothing) to their body.
Takkatuli + Kaaos	Potion of Sudden Flame	The GM determines a random point in time during the next 1d6 hours. At that time, a large flame will erupt 1d20 feet in front of the drinker. Any creature within 10 feet of the flame takes 4d6 fire damage.
Takkatuli + Munch Shroom	Potion of Flame Obsession	The drinker must make a DC 12 wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they become obsessed with flame, and must spend their turn either moving toward a flame that they can see or attempting to create a flame if they cannot see one. They may repeat this saving throw at the start of their turn. The effect lasts until a successful save or up to one minute.
Takkatuli + Red Diamond	Potion of Control Flames	The drinker casts control flames on themselves. The effect also works on magical flames, and works in a 10 foot cube rather than a five foot.
Takkatuli + Tarantula Leg	Potion of Water Burp	The user immediately lets out a splash of water 5 feet ahead. A target in that direction can make a Dexterity saving throw DC 12 to avoid it, but the water has no particular effect.
Takkatuli + Perfect Pomegranate	Potion of Fire Resistance	The drinker gains resistance to fire damage for 1d4 hours. If the drinker already has resistance, they instead gain immunity.
Bitterroot + Magical Pine Sap	Potion of Fertile Soil	Has no effect on a drinker, but pouring it into soil makes it nutrient-rich, allowing a faster and more bountiful harvest in a 5-foot radius.
Bitterroot + Eternal Ice	Potion of Mud Burp	The user immediately lets out a splash of mud 5 feet ahead. A target in that direction can make a Dexterity saving throw DC 12 to avoid it, but the mud has no magical effect.
Bitterroot + Aero Feather	Potion of Light Earth	A 5-foot diameter disk below the drinker rises and hovers 3 feet in the air until the user steps off of it.
Bitterroot + Pure Quartz	Potion of Dirt Purification	Any dirt, stone, or sand eaten by the drinker in the last 24 hours is removed from their stomach, and they are cleared of any negative effects the ingestion may have caused.
Bitterroot + Kaaos	Potion of Difficult Terrain	The drinker must make a DC 12 strength saving throw. On a failure, the earth moves below their feet, making all area they walk over difficult terrain for 1 minute.
Bitterroot + Munch Shroom	Potion of Earth Obsession	The drinker must make a DC 12 wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they become obsessed with

		the earth and will attempt to get into any holes in the ground that they see and can fit them for the next minute. If they successfully do get into a hole, the effect ends.
Bitterroot + Red Diamond	Greater Potion of Sturdiness	The drinker's AC is increased by 2 for 1d4+2 hours.
Magical Pine Sap + Munch Shroom	Potion of Speak to Plants	The drinker casts speak with plants at 3 rd level. The plants will not fight on behalf of the drinker.
Magical Pine Sap + Red Diamond	Potion of Plant Violence	All plants within 10 feet of the drinker double in size. This effect lasts 1 minute.
Eternal Ice + Munch Shroom	Potion of Water Obsession	The drinker must make a DC 12 wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they become obsessed with the water and will attempt to get into any body of water that they see and can fit them for the next minute. If they successfully do get into a body of water, the effect ends.
Aero Feather + Munch Shroom	Potion of Sky Obsession	The drinker must make a DC 12 wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they become obsessed with the sky and must spend their action trying to get as high as possible. They may repeat the saving throw at the start of each of their turns. The effect lasts up to one minute.
Pure Quartz + Munch Shroom	Potion of Inner Peace	The drinker chooses an event they have experienced in the last 24 hours that lasted no more than an hour. All memory of that event is wiped from their mind.
Kaaos + Munch Shroom	Potion of Madness	The drinker must make an intelligence saving throw DC 12. On a failure, they become paranoid of all creatures surrounding them. At the beginning of each of their turns, they must randomly choose and attack a target they can see and can hit with an attack. They can repeat the saving throw at the end of each turn. The effect lasts up to one minute or until they cannot make an attack on their turn.
Kaaos + Red Diamond	Potion of Advantage	DMG
Kaaos + Tarantula Leg	Potion of Order	For the next minute, any roll that would be made by the drinker is instead replaced with a 10, still adding any relevant modifiers.
Munch Shroom + Tarantula Leg	Potion of Alertness	For the next minute, the drinker cannot be put to sleep by any magical or non-magical means. If the drinker reaches OHP, this effect ends and they are knocked unconscious as normal.
Munch Shroom + Perfect Pomegranate	Potion of Memory Restoration	The drinker regains any memories lost in the last 24 hours. Additionally, the GM may choose to restore a single lost memory from any time in the drinker's past.

Red Diamond + Tarntula Leg	Potion of Weakness	The drinker must succeed on a DC 12 strength saving throw or have their strength reduced to 1 for 1 minute.
Red Diamond + Perfect Pomegranate	Potion of Healing	DMG
Tarantula Leg + Perfect Pomegranate	Potion of Poison	DMG




Creating Scrolls


Each potion can be used as-is, or it can be used to create exactly one spell scroll. To create a spell scroll, you must use a potion as ink and draw a single rune made from one or more of the runes below.

Runes



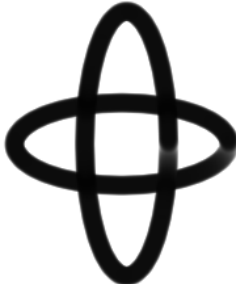


Runes can represent targeting methods and schools of magic.


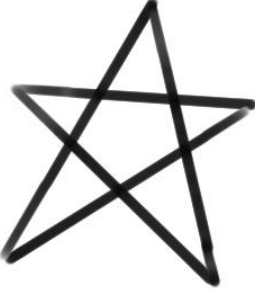


Targeting

	The Self Rune represents touch. A spell made with this rune will affect the caster or a willing creature the caster can touch.
	The Area Rune represents a wide-open space. A spell made with this rune is cast in an area with a saving throw to halve damage.
	The Attack Rune represents conflict. A spell made with this rune will be a melee or ranged spell attack.

	<p>The Target Rune represents choice. A spell created with this rune can target one or multiple creatures that the caster can see within range. An unwilling target can avoid effects with an appropriate save.</p>
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Schools of Magic

	<p>Enchantment. This is used to influence the minds of others.</p>
	<p>Divination Rune. This is used to gain information.</p>
	<p>Conjuration Rune. This is used to summon objects or creatures.</p>
	<p>Transmutation Rune. This is used to change matter from one form to another.</p>
	<p>Evocation Rune. This is used to create energy or matter. It is also used for healing.</p>

	Illusion Rune. This is used to create illusions!
	Necromancy Rune. This is used to manipulate and defy death, or to do anything involving skeletons.
	Abjuration Rune. This is used for protection from and interference with other magic.
	Wild Magic Rune. This is used to embrace chaos.

Flourishes

There are a few flourishes that one can add to a rune to alter its power.

Description	Effect
Spikes along the outside of the rune	The spell becomes more powerful and of a higher level.
Spikes along the inside of the rune	The spell becomes less powerful and of a lower level (including down to cantrip level).
Dots on the inside of the rune	The spell can be cast quietly, removing verbal components.
Dots on the outside of the rune	The spell can be cast with no hand motion, removing somatic components.

If spikes are placed both inside and outside the rune, the spell creation automatically fails. If dots are placed on both the inside and outside of the rune, the spell creation also automatically fails.

Spells that Already Exist

Often, the intended effect and ingredients of a spell a character is making matches an already-existing spell. This is fine, and in fact makes a lot less work for everyone involved! If the arcana check succeeds, it can successfully produce a scroll of the appropriate spell.

Additionally, it may be necessary to make powered-up or less powerful versions of existing spells. To do that, slap the word “Lesser” or “Greater” in front of the spell name and see the damage tables below!

Spell Effects

Determining the Spell Level

The following rules make a good baseline, but they sometimes need to be adjusted on a case-by-case basis, depending on the desired effect of the spell.

1. The default level of a spell created is one.
2. For every red diamond used, increase this level by one.
3. If there was more than one rune drawn, increase the level by one.
4. If there were 3 or more ingredients used, increase the level by one.
5. If there was a small number of external spike flourishes, increase the level by one.
6. If there was a large number of external spike flourishes, increase the level by two.
7. If there was a small number of internal spike flourishes, decrease the level by one (including down to cantrip level).
8. If there was a large number of internal spike flourishes, decrease the level by two.

When you’ve determined the spell level, decide the potency and effect of the spell based on something that would be fitting to that level.

Arcana Check

Creating a spell scroll requires a successful arcana check. The DC of this check is determined by the number of runes used as well as the spell level. On a successful check, a single spell scroll is created. On a failed check, the rune sparks and fizzles out, disappearing, and all ingredients used in the potion are lost.

The default DC is 10 plus twice the level of the created spell. Additionally, combining multiple runes causes a minimum DC of 18.

Determining Spell Damage

If you have created a damaging spell, the below tables can be used to determine how much damage it does based on its targeting method and its level. If the spell has an additional effect (e.g. a saving throw to avoid a negative effect), reduce the number of dice by half.

Targeting Method	Cantrip Damage	Level 1 Damage	Level 2 Damage	Level 3 Damage	Higher Level Damage

Ranged or Melee attack roll	1d8, increasing to 2d8 at level 5, 3d8 at level 11, and 4d8 at level 17	2d8	3d8	4d8	(level+1)d8
Area, with a save in an appropriate stat to halve damage	1d6	3d6	4d6	7d6	(level+5)d6
Target, with a saving throw to be unaffected	1d4, increasing to 2d4 at level 5, 3d4 at level 11, and 4d4 at level 17	2d6, selecting 1 target	3d6, selecting up to 2 targets	4d6, selecting up to two targets	(level+1)d6, selecting up to level/2 targets

Casting a Spell

To allow non-caster player characters to interact with this system, the following changes to scrolls in 5e are recommended:

1. Scrolls are not exclusive to classes that can cast them.
2. No ability check is required to cast higher-level scrolls.

Preparing Spells from Scrolls

Spells made with this system can be copied into a spellbook by a wizard in the same way they copy any other spell.

For any class that learns spells on level-up (including wizard), spells created by the character and that they have at least one scroll for can be learned in place of another spell of the same level, as if they were on the class's spell list. Learning the spell consumes the scroll.

Enchanting Items

When creating a scroll, you are enchanting parchment. But any non-magical item can be enchanted in the same way. If you simply carve or otherwise imbue the corresponding rune into the material using the appropriate potion, the item will be enchanted with an effect matching the runes and potion given. The same arcana check is required as for creating a spell scroll.

If the enchanted item is a stick, a wand, or a staff, it can create a Wand of the corresponding spell, working like the Wand of Magic Missiles as described in the DMG, but adjusted for the appropriate spell. Some adjustments include downgrading the spell to level 1, decreasing charges, or preventing the wand from ever regaining charges.

For other items, choose an appropriate effect for the item and the spell. Certain items could act as traps, causing the item to cast a spell on someone who interacts with the item. Other enchantments could work to protect the item, or to animate the item. Make sure to consider the intent of the players as well!

Enchanting People

A skilled tattoo artist can imbue magic onto people the same way they can onto items or parchment. Doing this adds +8 to the DC of the required arcana check, making it only plausible for a very skilled mage.

Examples

Of course, a lot of this system is very open-ended, so naturally it becomes a bit difficult to know how to use it as a GM or as a player right off the bat. So, of course, I've provided some examples below of uses of the system, start-to-finish.

Creating Potions

Potion of Fire Obsession

Brottor the Brilliant boots up the party's cauldron and places a Munch Shroom and a Takkatuli into it. The cauldron bubbles and boils, and after a few minutes, the liquid within settles, glowing a bright orange. Brottor pours the newly-made Potion of Flame Obsession into a flask, and begins preparing four cups of tea, three for the party, and one for Lord Aetilius, who has been threatening the town of Alegeli with violence should they not pay higher tax. Then, he lights the flame.

Iris the bard brilliantly deceives Lord Aetilius, inviting them in for what appears to be an unforgettable luncheon full of flattery and boot kissing, but once Aetilius sits back and takes a cup of tea, they make a wisdom saving throw. Rolling only an 11, they just barely fail. A warm feeling bubbles up in Aetilius's chest, and they want nothing more but to warm themselves up even further, plunging themselves into the fireplace. This causes them to take significant damage and gives the party the element of surprise as combat begins.

Creating Spells

Life transfer

Having recently collected several powerful magical ingredients, the party wants to experiment. Springleshortz Dingle-dab, the party's necromancer cowboy, would like to be able to heal the party *before* they die, so he would like to create a spell that's capable of transferring an enemy's life to that of an ally. He communicates this intent to the GM.

Since this will be a healing spell, Springleshortz starts by throwing a Perfect Pomegranate into the cauldron. He then adds a Red Diamond, as both healing an ally and harming an opponent at once is certainly not an easy task.

Once the potion is made, Springleshortz combines the attack and necromancy runes to make the rune below and uses the potion to draw said rune on a piece of parchment.

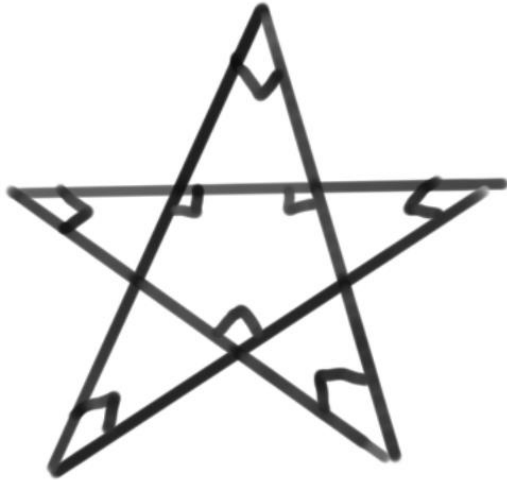


The GM agrees that a targeted healing spell seems to match the ingredients and runes drawn and so has Springleshortz make an arcana check. The level of the spell is 3 because of the red diamond and the multiple runes. This would mean that the DC is 16 by default, but since Springleshortz combined two runes, the minimum DC is instead 18.

Springleshortz, a master wizard, passes the check easily, so the GM creates a spell matching the description that Springleshortz gave. Since it is a third level, single-target spell, the GM consults the spell damage table and sees the default damage is 4d8, but since this spell has a powerful additional effect, the GM halves the number of dice to 2d8. They ask what Springleshortz would like to name the spell, and Springleshortz answers “Life Transfer”. The GM decides that the range of the spell is 30 feet and writes out the spell description: “Make a ranged spell attack against a target you can see within 30 feet. On a hit, deal 2d8 necrotic damage and choose another target (other than yourself) within range to heal half the damage dealt.”

Necrotic Bonfire

The party’s Circle of Spores druid has the Create Bonfire cantrip, but feels that a blue flame would be more fitting to her aesthetic. Though her player could have probably asked the GM for a blue flame out of character before the campaign started, she decided it would be cooler to create the blue bonfire in-character. So, she throws a Takkatuli into the cauldron. Once the potion is made, she draws the necromancy rune with internal spike flourishes, telling the GM she hopes to create a necrotic, magic flame of decay with a cantrip like create bonfire.



At first, the player wanted to combine eternal ice with the takkatuli and draw a conjuration rune, but the GM said that a spell like that would likely create steam rather than fire, so they instead recommended necromancy for the blue, decay-inducing flame. The arcana check was only a DC 10 since it was a cantrip. The GM decides that the spell will function like Create Bonfire, but the fire is blue, requires no fuel, cannot spread, and deals necrotic damage rather than fire damage. At the end of the session, the players level up, and the druid swaps out her Create Bonfire cantrip for the spell she had created, dubbing it “Necrotic Bonfire”.

Fish

The party's bard just wants to screw around with ingredients and see what will happen. He puts eternal ice and a munch shroom in a 2:1 ratio into the cauldron, then draws a transmutation rune. He gives the GM full creative freedom over what type of spell this may create. The arcana check DC would be 12 since this is a level 1 spell, which the bard passes. The GM then creates the spell “Fish” with the following description:

“One non-living, non-magical object of size small or smaller that you touch turns into a fish of the same size. The fish is a normal carp and has no magical ability whatsoever. When cast at level 3 or higher, medium objects can also be targeted. The transformation is permanent.”

Polymorph

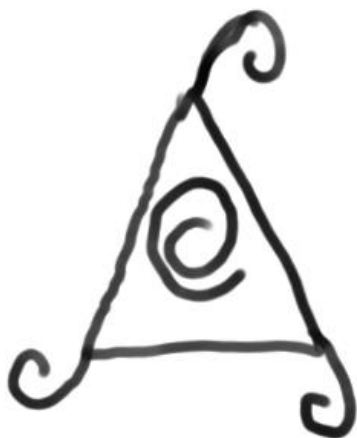
The party wants to create a polymorph scroll. They do so by creating a potion out of two red diamonds, then drawing a rune that combines transmutation and self. The spell level is four (1 + 2 red diamonds + multiple runes), so the DC is 18. The party fails the first time but tries again with two new red diamonds, and this time they succeed. The GM agrees that these seem like reasonable ingredients for a polymorph spell, and it is the correct level, so they give the party a scroll of Polymorph.



Mud Bomb

The Earth Genasi sorcerer Tarfelouis the Mighty would like to create a mud-based damaging spell. He combines eternal ice and bitterroot, as well as the party's supply of 3 red diamonds, to make a potion, then combines the area and evocation rune to create a spell. The spell's level is $1 + 3 \times \text{red diamonds} + 1$ for multiple runes, and $+ 1$ for using more than 3 ingredients, making a 6th level spell and an arcana check DC 20. With help from Springleshortz, Tarfelouis succeeds.

The GM creates the spell Mud Bomb, with a range of 150 feet, that launches a 20-foot radius sphere of acidic mud at a group of enemies, all of whom must succeed on a dexterity saving throw or take 11d6 acid damage, or half as much on a successful save.



Enchanting Items

A Prank Chair

The prankster fairy gnome Wrinkly Dingles places an aero feather in the cauldron and uses the resultant potion to draw an illusion rune on a chair. When May the druid attempts to sit on the chair, she falls through it instead, and Wrinkly laughs maniacally.

A Psychic's Orb

Tarfelouis wants to be able to spy on his enemies using his orb. He makes a potion from a munch shroom and pure quartz and imbues a divination rune onto his orb. Tarfelouis wants the orb to allow him to cast Scrying once per long rest. The GM says that if he wants that effect, he needs to add at least two red diamonds to increase the level. Tarfelouis does so, passes the check, and successfully creates his divination orb.

Enchanting People

Telepathic Communication

The party meets skilled tattoo mage Schmimbly Pibbles, who offers to give two party members the ability to communicate telepathically over any distance on the same plane of existence if the party can provide the materials. She needs two samples of pure quartz, two munch shrooms, two red diamonds, and 200 gold. The party provides the materials, and Schmimbly gets to work, first creating two identical potions with one of each of the magical ingredients, then imbuing onto May and Springleshortz an evocation rune. The successful enchantment allows the two characters to communicate with each other telepathically at will, as if via the sending spell.

Bonus - Generating Random Spells

To generate a random spell, use 2d10 to generate two ingredients, excluding the red diamonds to match the sides of the dice. Then, use a d4 to generate the targeting method and a d10 to determine the school (rerolling 0's). Then, decide an appropriate effect as if the players had made the spell!

Bonus – The God Kao

It's possible that, using this spell creation system, you accidentally allow a spell that is much more powerful than you intended or somehow throws the balance of the game into chaos. In my campaign, I had a failsafe that I never ended up actually having to use but was always present as a looming possibility. I present that failsafe here for the use of others.

Kao is the god of luck, chaos, and balance; they use their power over chance to keep individuals' power in check, preventing any one being from becoming too powerful, and helping those who are down on their luck. In your campaign, Kao will manifest with the appearance, personality, and voice of the GM. If they find something too overpowered or underpowered, they will come down to greet the party, explain what was wrong with the current spell or potion, then snap their fingers, changing the effect to a new, more balanced one.

This little bit of meta-commentary allows there to be a canonical (albeit hasty) reason why spell effects change.

That's It!

I hope you found this system cool, and if you use it in your campaigns, let me know! I'm Milo. Right now I'm a little hard to reach if you don't know me personally, but you can at least get a hold of me via [Youtube](#). (or more likely, assuming I was the one who posted this, just responding to the post!)

If you have feedback or questions or anything, let me know! I may update the document.