

Religion

Religions are many and varied, and though most people believe in many gods, the majority choose one or two as their patrons. A few will go as far as joining a religious cult. A cult provides a person with allies and resources, but also requires obedience and aid in return.

The title of *priest* is generally reserved for those whose main calling is to lead their followers in religious rituals, and who teach the rituals of their faith to others. The majority of cult members protect and serve the priests, though sometimes the line between priest and follower can be blurred.

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Rituals

Each cult teaches its own view of religion. A cult member will be taught a religion skill specialised in the teaches of the cult's god. This skill gives knowledge of the mythology, ceremonies and moral beliefs of the cult. Related to each religion skill, are a number of techniques which may be taught by the priests to cult members.

Like any knowledge, improving a skill in religion requires access to a source of knowledge - books, teachers or divine inspiration are all possible sources. In game terms, as long as a character has reasonable access to a knowledge source, then the religion skill can be improved with gained experience (it is assumed some down time was spent talking to people, watching rituals and the like). Only if the character has been cut off from such sources for a time are they likely to have difficulty improving their skill.

Learning new techniques should be treated similarly. If the character has access to someone willing to teach them for the first couple of points, then the rest can be learnt through practise and meditation.

In both cases, if someone is willing to provide full time tuition, then both skill and techniques can be improved using the study rules.

Using Techniques

Religious techniques (also known as rituals) are seen as the divine force of the priest's god. In reality, there is rarely any obvious magic going on. Techniques tend to be a mixture of skill and knowledge rather than magical power. Those that do have a mystical effect tend to do so in a subtle way, which can be explained by the beliefs of those it is used on, or put down to simple luck.

Some rituals however are distinctly unnatural in nature, and are difficult to explain without resorting to belief in gods (or at least, magic). The ability to turn aside a blade from naked flesh, or to act with inhuman speed or ability is not to be ignored lightly.

Cost and Preperation

Most rituals are free to use, and can be used as often as desired.

Falling from the Path

Should a priest leave their religion, either to follow another or for any other reason, then further progression in the religion skill or any techniques is not possible. Currently known techniques can still be used however unless the GM decides it is inappropriate. Techniques which rely on the cooperation of others will no longer work unless the targets believe that the character is still a priest of that faith, or at least still capable of representing that faith.

Acceptance into other religions, or even acceptance back into the original religion, is a matter of roleplaying and circumstances.