

College of Greater Summonings (alternate)

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The College of Greater Summonings is concerned exclusively with the summoning and controlling of entities from other dimensions...

This is the sentence which opens up the description of the college. Yet, the College is almost always been an evil college banned in many campaigns. As it stands, I must agree to the general viewpoint described. Currently, there is only one General Knowledge Ritual that could be considered as good, Ritual of Summoning Heroes. However, I have played a Greater Summoner and have been a “GOOD” aligned character. I opposed other Summoners and started the process of transforming this into a neutral college (at least potentially) by expanding the talents, spells, and rituals available. I have justified some of the new abilities from stealing from the College of Lesser Summonings, modified some of the existing rituals and so on. I was working on this subject and when the opportunity for a new campaign to start with me as GM, I decided to try to bring it into your living rulebook. I humbly submit this to be a viable option to the greater knowledge of the Magical Options available.

Looking at Summonables, we find these should include Djinni, Efreeti, Elementals, Lesser Powers, Demons, and Archangels. Perhaps other beings should also be included, but I will leave that to those in a better position to evaluate and make “Canon” decisions. I can see this in two ways: Go with just the original college and add these new abilities to it or create an alternative College. Looking over the risks and the actual demons themselves, I find very little reason to summon certain ones. For example, Astaroth has a base chance of 66%, cannot be bound, and will depart when the summoner is no longer involved in much death and cruelty. His only good points are his chance of granting Minions and willingness to serve. So, if one is truly evil, one can say this is a good choice. Assuming there are 10 Greater Summoners spread across the world, and all are indeed truly evil, and all can only summon Dukes, Astaroth may be a prime choice. To represent the fact there would not be 10 Astaroths running amok, I have added an extra modifier to summoning Demons: **Available** percentage. This percentage is calculated as 100%-Summoning Base Chance. This is modified by giving appropriate gifts which are included in the summoning ritual. The percentage increase is never known for sure as the Demon may value one thing over another and can be capricious in choosing, but can be approximated +1%/100 SP. To prevent GM abuse to Summoners by always saying this Demon is not available, this roll must be in the open. What this does is prevent a summoner always summoning just one or two beings assuming he/she will always get their choice. SEIR is a good choice for those who can summon Princes. He was always my one and only choice when dealing with Princes. Having that +10% wealth, the ability to almost a world-wide teleport, a 20th level Air mage made him almost too good to pass up. True, I did not have a companion as often, but I would use a different prince/duke to get one from them. However, most GMs did not want to include this college in their campaigns. I can understand, albeit reluctantly, their viewpoint. This led me to create the “Good” side of Greater Summoners.

If you decide to simply add these new abilities to the existing College, then there is little to work out. Otherwise, you can use my Alternative College with the current Q-4 being replaced by the new ritual, “Summoning Villains” and making a completely different College of the good guys. The basis is the same, so the counterspells of the existing college works on the new one, so no new counterspells are needed.

[24.3] Talents

Communicate with Summoned Beings (T-1)

The Adept can always communicate with beings from another dimension. The being must be within 25 feet (+20/Rank) of the Adept. Communication can take the form of regular speech but can also be telepathically communicating thoughts (including orders) to the subject and of reading the subject's mind. Base Chance is 40% (+3%/Rank). The Experience Multiple for this is talent is 150 and it may not be resisted.

[24.5] General Knowledge Rituals

Cleansing (Q-1)

No change

Summoning Elemental (replaces Q-2, otherwise added as R-7)

Experience Multiple: 300

Base Chance: MA + 3 / Rank

Effects: This ritual may be used to summon one or more elementals. Unlike the elemental colleges, the Adept does not need to learn a ritual for each type of elemental, but instead uses one Ritual to summon the elemental of the Adept's choice. The base chance is the Adept's Magical Aptitude (+3/Rank). As part of the ritual, the adept will need to have the required substance inside the triangle in its own container made of materials that cost no less than 300 sp. If the ritual is successful, the Elemental is summoned and controlled. If the ritual backfires, then the Elemental is summoned but not controlled and will attack the summoner and their friends.

A Water Elemental always appears within the vicinity of the Circle of Protection. It has a combined Endurance and Fatigue equal to 15 (+15 / Rank). The Elemental will remain until it is sent back to its own dimension by the Adept (with a Special Knowledge Counterspell of the College of Greater Summoning Magics) or banished. If it is controlled by the summoner it will remain controlled until the summoner's concentration is broken.

Summoning Summonables (replaces Q-3, otherwise added as R-8)

Experience Multiple: 300

Base Chance: MA + 3 / Rank

Effects: This ritual may be used to summon one Summonable, who will arrive on this plane favorably disposed towards the summoner for having summoned them, and thus will not immediately need to be bound. The adept can choose a Djinni or an Efreeti when casting the Ritual. The Djinni or Efreeti can immediately try to break free of its summoning triangle if the Summoner tries to imprison or attack the creature and can actively resist this even if a Ritual of Binding was attempted.

The Summonable will remain on this plane and serve for a number of days equal to [D + 4]. See the pertinent sections for more information on their abilities.

Summoning Villains (replaces Q-4, otherwise R-9)

Experience Multiple: 500

Effects: The Adept may summon a great villain from another dimension to assist them. This villain may be any character from the body of fantasy literature known to both the Adept and the GM. The GM always sets the characteristics of the villain, their weaponry and armour, the number and type of companions (if any) and the length of time and terms under which they will remain in the Adept's dimension and assist them. The GM may limit the use of this ritual to periods when various celestial bodies are in conjunction (once a game year or so). The GM need not inform the Adept of any details concerning the results of the summoning until it has been performed. Unlike a hero who will want to return and finish what he has started, a villain may wish to remain and continue in this new land.

The Base Chance that this ritual will succeed will vary according to the hero the Adept is attempting to summon, but should usually be set at less than 20%.

Summoning Hellhounds (R-8, otherwise R-10)

Experience Multiple: 300

Base Chance: 15% + 3 / Rank

Effects: This ritual may be used to summon one or more Hellhounds, who will arrive on this plane relatively favorably disposed towards the summoner for having summoned them, and thus will not immediately need to be bound. Hellhounds arrive on this plane with only one goal: to destroy by killing and maiming, burning crops, and ruining buildings. They may also be forced to guard a specific spot or treasure. If the Hellhound is to be simply released into the wilderness, they will agree to do one small task that is within their power to do. If they are summoned to perform guard duty, a task not immediately related to their goal, they will have to be Bound and forced to do the task (and they may actively resist). The Base Chance is 15% (+ 3 / Rank), and it is reduced by Rank/2 rounded down for each Hellhound above one being summoned at once. The Greater Summoner may voluntarily reduce this amount if desired. If the ritual backfires, the Hellhound will appear and attempt to maim and then devour the summoner and his or her companions.

Hellhounds remain on this plane and serve for a number of days equal to [D + 4] unless bound to guard something. The die is rolled only once as the pack will act as one. Hellhounds may also be forcibly returned to their own plane whenever their Endurance is reduced to the point that they are reduced to unconsciousness or a counterspell is cast over them by their summoner. Once returned to their own plane, they may not return to the aid of the summoner unless the summoner performs another Ritual of Summoning Hellhounds.

[24.7] Special Knowledge Rituals: Summoning Powers of Light (R 11-16)

Just like the six separate Special Knowledge Rituals to summon Demons, there are six separate Special Knowledge Rituals to summon the Powers of Light. Each of these Rituals are designed to summon a particular Rank of Power. There are six Ranks of the Powers of Light: Seraphim, Kerobim, Malakim, Angles, Archangels and Avatars. Each Rank is subject to certain limitations as to where and when it can be summoned.

All Ranks of the Powers of Light are summoned in the same manner. The summoner announces the entity they are summoning and that entity's Rank. He then performs the appropriate Ritual of Summoning. At the end of the ritual (that is after one hour), a check is made to see if the ritual has been effective. The summoner rolls D100. If the result is equal to or less than the Base Chance of summoning the particular entity and have fulfilled all other appropriate restrictions that is the object of the ritual, the entity is summoned and appears before the summoner. Otherwise, the power does not appear, and the summoner may not make a further attempt to summon that entity that day. They may attempt to summon another entity instead but must first repeat the Ritual of Cleansing. The description of each power lists the Base Chance to summon that type of Power of Light.

Special Knowledge Rituals may only be performed on days 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 28 of the cycle of the moon, Luna. They may be attempted on other days but can never have any effect. There is a possibility that an Adept could lose track of time and attempt to employ a Special Knowledge Ritual on a day when it will not work. In such cases, the GM may choose not to inform the individual that the ritual can have no effect and may allow them to perform it anyway, only telling the player why they have been unable to summon the entity at the end of the ritual.

An Adept who knows a particular Ritual of Summoning may summon any of the entities of that Rank. Each description includes: the entities Rank, the Base Chance of summoning (and binding) it; the percentage chance that the demon will agree to grant the summoner a companion from among its legions of lesser spirits; the special talents, skills and magical abilities of the entity; a quantification (given as a span of possible numbers) of the entity's characteristics; its natural armor (given under the heading NA as the number of hits absorbed for each Strike, if any); the natural weapons of the entity (and any other weapons habitually carried), and any special comments on the entity's nature or abilities. Also included is a short physical description of the entity.

Once an entity is dismissed (returned to its own dimension) it cannot return to this plane in less than a day. An entity who has been dispelled by a counterspell or rendered unconscious may return to this plane (by being resummoned in a new ritual) only after one full month in its own plane (spent reforming the scattered energy pulses that make up its being). Entities may be controlled while the summoner stands within the Pentacle which they must draw to perform the summoning ritual. They will speak to the summoner under this circumstance and will generally tell the truth, but rarely all of the truth as a mortal does not see the entire picture in their viewpoint. To ensure absolute and full honesty, a Ritual of True Speaking must be performed. To ensure that the entity will not attack and try to attack and destroy the summoner once the ritual is over, a Ritual of Binding must be performed. An entity who is not bound must be dismissed at the end of the summoning (once the summoner has finished speaking to the entity) and will then usually return to its own plane. However, an entity who feels that the summoner does not truly align with its purposes, or is abusing it, may decide to attack the summoner. The summoner must then make a check against the Willpower to determine if the summoner breaks the magical circle protecting them and fights the entity or remains safely within the Pentacle (in which case, the frustrated entity departs).

Adepts are not provided with a Shield when they are admitted to membership in the College of Greater Summoning, as a Shield is not necessary to perform the rituals of the College. However, they may wish to make or have made a special Shield (actually a disc of metal engraved with symbols of occult power) to protect them during the summoning of a member of the Powers of Light. This shield is made by Adepts of the College of Shaping Magics — see Arcane Wisdom. A summoner who does not have a Shield can suffer a backfire. A summoner who is using the proper Shield cannot suffer a backfire. A backfire from a Special Knowledge Ritual consists of the appearance of the demon being summoned, but inside the circle of protection (Pentacle) so that the entity is free to attempt to destroy the summoner. In such cases, the entity may be returned to its own dimension by a counterspell or by being rendered unconscious, but will otherwise remain on this plane and freely roam about attacking and destroying until somehow banished. It will not, however begin roaming the earth until it has destroyed its summoner. A backfire occurs whenever an Adept roll a number which is 30 or more than the modified Base Chance of summoning a particular entity while making a check to see if that it is summoned. A backfire is treated as “no effect” if the summoner has the proper Shield in their hand during the ritual.

The individual Shields that will protect a summoner from backfire are discussed under each individual Ritual of Summoning. Shields only affect the summoning of entities of the Powers of Light. There is no backfire due to an ineffective attempt at employing any other Ritual of Summoning. Rituals of True Speaking and Binding may backfire

(regardless of whether a Shield is employed) and result in the summoner being affected by their own ritual and forced either to answer all questions of the entity as truthfully as possible or to serve the entity so long as it remains on this plane. This backfire result may be passively resisted.

Note: The interaction between a player and the “Power of Light characters” they summon is the most important aspect of the workings of this College, and the GM should strive to keep players on their toes by developing the power character as fully as possible (making it cooperative about some things and uncooperative about others, for example). Note, that the descriptions deal only with one aspect of the various religions, but this treatise is meant to help cover the world's entire gambit of religions. Demons seem to be cross religion but come from the Christian background. Other religions have powers of good and bad within them. The GM is encouraged to modify this college to fit within the larger scope of the world. The notes on individual demons are meant to serve as a guide to their characters as well as their abilities. Their descriptions also give the forms in which they may appear. Often, these forms will be insubstantial, and the demon will have no power (nor will anyone have power over it) while it is in those forms. However, the information is included as clues for the GM in structuring the demonic character. Likewise, the Power of Light side of Greater Summoning should serve as a guide for the GM to expand this side of the spiritual battle to increase the potential for role-playing

Summoning Seraphim (R-11)

Experience Multiple: 350

Effects: This ritual is used to summon the following servants of the Powers of Light of the lowest rank. Although many of these may be offered as companions when summoning the higher levels, they also can be summoned individually. Each individual Seraphim as a true name, and although they do not freely give it out, it can be forced out if under the power of the Ritual of True Speaking, or if the summoner has been especially true to the Powers of Light, it may be given as a reward. This is a double-edge sword as it will increase the chance of summoning by 15%, but will decrease the willingness of the Seraphim by the same amount until the Adept has proven himself by many deeds and examples of devotion to the Power of Light to which the Seraphim serves.

The only Shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning Seraphims is a disk of purest copper 12 inches across, inscribed with the general names of Seraphims and their related Power. This shield may only be manufactured by a Shaping mage, and is the exact same as a Shield versus Dukes, except for the final casting of names. It weighs 2 pounds and the average cost of manufacture will be 3000+ Silver Pennies. It takes about three months to manufacture.

Summoning Kerubim (R-12)

Experience Multiple: 400

Effects: This ritual is used to summon the following servants of the Powers of Light of the middle rank. Although many of these may be offered as companions when summoning the higher levels, they also can be summoned individually. Each individual Kerubim as a true name, and although they do not freely give it out, it can be forced out if under the power of the Ritual of True Speaking, or if the summoner has been especially true to the Powers of Light, it may be given as a reward. This is a double-edge sword as it will increase the chance of summoning by 15%, but will decrease the willingness of the Kerubim by the same amount until the Adept has proven himself by many deeds and examples of devotion to the Power of Light to which the Kerubim serves.

The only Shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning Kerubim is a disk of hammered tin 12 inches across, inscribed with the general names of Kerubim and their related Power. This shield may only be manufactured by a Shaping mage, and is the exact same as a Shield versus Princes, except for the final casting of names. It weighs 3 pounds and the average cost of manufacture will be 3000+ Silver Pennies. It takes about three months to manufacture.

Summoning Malakim (R-13)

Experience Multiple: 450

Effects: This ritual is used to summon the following servants of the Powers of Light of the greater rank. Although many of these may be offered as companions when summoning the higher levels, they also can be summoned individually. Each individual Malakim as a true name, and although they do not freely give it out, it can be forced out if under the power of the Ritual of True Speaking, or if the summoner has been especially true to the Powers of Light, it may be given as a reward. This is a double-edge sword as it will increase the chance of summoning by 15%, but will decrease the willingness of the Malakim by the same amount until the Adept has proven himself by many deeds and examples of devotion to the Power of Light to which the Malakim serves.

The only shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning a Malakim is a disk of base metal (other than cold iron) coated with quicksilver and is identical to the Shield used against the Presidents, except for the final casting. This shield may only be manufactured by a Shaping mage. It weighs 3 pounds and the average cost to manufacture will be 4000+ Silver Pennies. It takes about four months to manufacture.

Summoning Angels (R-14)

Base Chance: 25%

Experience Multiple: 500

Effects: This ritual is used to summon the following Angels of the Powers of Light. Angels are minor aspects of the Archangels and can only be summoned in the same location as their greater aspect. They will have the same abilities as their greater aspect they follow, but will be at $\frac{3}{4}$ Rank. This is true of all abilities, even Magic Resistance. They have 50% chance of Minions. Each individual Angel as a true name, and although they do not freely give it out, it can be forced out if under the power of the Ritual of True Speaking, or if the summoner has been especially true to the Powers of Light, it may be given as a reward. This is a double-edge sword as it will increase the chance of summoning by 15%, but will decrease the willingness of the Angel by the same amount until the Adept has proven himself by many deeds and examples of devotion to the Power of Light to which the Angel serves.

The only shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning Angels is a disk of hammered bronze inscribed with the names of the Powers of Light. This shield may be manufactured by Shaping magicians. It weighs three pounds and the average cost to manufacture will be 5000+ Silver Pennies. It will take about four months to manufacture.

Summoning Archangels (R-15)

Base Chance: 15%

Experience Multiple: 550

Effects: This ritual is used to summon the following Archangels: Michael, Sammael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel and other equivalent beings from pantheons that the Gamemaster has incorporated into his campaign.

The only Shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning Marquis is a disk of fine silver inscribed with the names of the Archangels (and equivalent beings). This shield may only be manufactured by a Shaping mage. It weighs 3 pounds and the average cost of manufacture will be 7000 Silver Pennies. It will take about five months to manufacture.

Summoning Avatars of Power (R-16)

Base Chance: $(MA+WP)/2$

Experience Multiple: 600

Effects: This ritual is used for summoning the highest level of the Powers of Light. The avatar is essentially a portion of the real deity. This ritual is fraught with peril as the Adept who uses it is no longer communicating with a servant of the power, but the power itself. Even Agents of the Power do not attempt to disturb the deity itself. A Greater Summoner is risking much, but also has the potential to receive much. Most of those Greater Summoners who attempt this are attempting to become a true Agent of the Power, answerable only to the power and not those in the mortal realms who think they speak with the knowledge of what the deity wants. A minion is always given, but it may be only a beast at first and a quest to achieve. Upon successful completion, a reward of a higher minion is given, and many times another quest. When it is time to commune again, the Adept will receive a vision. Interpreting the vision correctly will acknowledge the worthiness of the Adept.

The only shield that will protect against the possibility of backfire while summoning Avatars is a disk of hammered gold inscribed with the names of the Power. This Shield may only be manufactured by Shaping magicians and is essentially the same as the Shield for Kings. It weighs three pounds and the average cost of manufacture will be 15,000 Silver Pennies. It will take about six months to manufacture.

NOTE: There are many examples of the Deity choosing the Agent rather than the other way around. In real life, one can argue Abraham, Moses, Saul did not seek out God through religion and were called on by God himself. In fiction, Moon's Paksenarrion saga deals with a mortal who is called by 4 gods to be a paladin, not through the normal channels, but directly. The Agent procedure deals with the clerical calls, but I felt there should be a direct way as well. I tried to also answer critics who feel that Greater Summoners are inherently evil. Hopefully you will agree.