

Luckily, most commoners are bad at identifying familiars for what they are. (This, unfortunately, can be a peril for non-magic characters who are particularly attached to some favoured—but entirely mundane—animal that is mistaken for a familiar.)

## ATTENTION OF CHAOS

Familiars are magical creatures, and as such, they attract the attention of Daemons and other magical creatures. When creating adventures and adjudicating action in scenes, the GM should keep in mind that familiars attract such special attention in order to keep the familiar's master on his toes.

## OBSESSION

Because of the close relationship the master and familiar share, it is possible for the master to become utterly obsessed with his magical servant. Every time the familiar spends xp on an advancement pick or new familiar ability, its master must make an Easy (+20%) Fellowship Test. If he fails, he becomes obsessed with his familiar—its activities, its whereabouts, its thoughts and opinions. In addition to roleplaying this obsession, it gives others an easy (if figurative) chain to yank. Anyone threatening or otherwise using the familiar against its master (GM's judgment) causes such psychological disturbance within the master that he suffers a -10% penalty to his Intelligence and Will Power, and a -20% penalty to his Fellowship, until the situation is resolved.

## DEATH OR DEPARTURE

Familiars die. So do their masters. It is also rumoured that there are spells—rituals, perhaps—that can sever the relationship between a master and familiar. If either party to a familiar

bonding dies, or if the relationship is severed (which can also be done by mutual agreement between master and familiar) both suffer a -10% penalty to all tests for a week, during which time the afflicted is alternately cranky, sullen, distressed, and occasionally violent without provocation. At the end of the week, the wounded party can make a Very Hard (-30%) Fellowship Test. Upon success, the penalty is no more. If the test fails, however, it remains for another week, at which point another test can be attempted. The test gets one-step easier each week, though, becoming simply Hard in the second week, Challenging in the third week, and so on. If the afflicted individual still does not pass the test when it becomes Very Easy, the state of psychic discord has persisted so long that the penalty becomes permanent, and no further Fellowship Tests are allowed to shake it off.

## AETHYRIC LINK

Familiars have a special link to their masters, and because of this link, enemy spellcasters can exploit the bond. As such, spellcasters can use another Wizard's familiar as a special ingredient to augment spells targeting the familiar's master. The familiar adds a +1 bonus to the Casting Roll. When used in this way, the familiar experiences intense pain and must succeed on a Challenging (-10%) Will Power Test or take a Damage 1 hit. If the familiar suffers a Critical Hit with a Critical Value of +5 or greater, it automatically explodes. Naturally, sane familiars do what they can to avoid being used in this way.

A Wizard cannot use his own familiar to get a bonus when he casts spells to affect himself. A Wizard's allies could conceivably use a familiar to cast friendly spells on its master, but a Wizard who frequently allowed this would face open rebellion from his familiar in very short order.

# — POTIONS —

**P**otions are beverages imbued with both magic and the virtues of natural substances. Potions differ from draughts as magic is required to brew these concoctions, while draughts can be mixed using mundane means. When consumed, they are intended to provide some benefit to the imbiber. Because many potion ingredients are inherently unstable, though, and because the arts of preservation in the Old World are rather medieval, potions frequently go bad, sometimes with disastrous results. And because the natural state of most potions is to smell dubious, it's impossible to tell whether a given potion has gone bad before you drink it.

The following sections describe the characteristics by which potions are described, the chances a given batch will go bad, the effects when they do go bad, characteristics for a variety of potions, and rules for how characters can brew them—assuming they wish to try their hands at such a potentially dangerous task.

## POTION CHARACTERISTICS

Potions are defined by a variety of characteristics, as follows:

**Name:** What the potion is commonly called, “Potency Draught,” for example. When a specific batch of potion is being named, the common name is followed by additional information including the potion's creator, the season and year the potion was brewed, and the degrees of success that were achieved in the brewing. For example “Potency Draught — Bertold the Foetid's Winter I.C. 2522 (+2).”

**Effect:** What the potion is supposed to do when someone drinks it. Potions are always limited to affecting the one who drinks them. (Unless spoilage causes the imbiber to throw up on someone else, that is.)

**Lag Time:** Most potions do not take effect immediately. Lag Time is the amount of time that passes between the time the potion is consumed and the beginning of its Effect.

**Volatility:** A measure of how disastrous the effects are likely to be if the potion is consumed after it has spoiled. Volatility can be described — in order of increasing volatility — as Minor, Moderate, Major, or Extreme.



**Ingredient Cost:** The amount the ingredients for a batch of the potion cost, if purchased on the open market in a large city.

**Ingredient Locale:** The climate or environment where the ingredients for the potion can be found, if the brewer chooses to harvest his own ingredients rather than buying them.

**Ingredient Difficulty:** The Difficulty for tests to find enough ingredients for one batch of the potion in the appropriate locale.

**Creation Number:** The Difficulty for tests to brew a batch of the potion.

**Creation Time:** The amount of time it takes to brew one batch of the potion.

## USING POTIONS

Using a potion is easy—you drink it. Once you’ve swallowed it, the GM rolls on **Table 7–8: Potion Spoilage Chance**. This table uses the potion’s age in seasons (yes, potions go bad quickly) and the number of degrees of success in brewing (that’s why recording the batch information is important) to determine the chance for the potion to go bad. Then the GM makes a roll to determine whether the potion has actually gone bad. If it has not gone bad, the potion takes effect as intended. If the potion has gone bad, the roll also tells the GM whether the potion is utterly spoiled, or spoiled but still effective. In the first case, the GM rolls on **Table 7–9** to determine exactly what happens. In the second case, the potion has its intended effects, but also has a spoilage effect determined by rolling on **Table 7-9**. Note that the GM should not tell the player what’s happening during the spoilage-determination process, and only inform the player what happens to his character when it happens. Not knowing whether a potion’s about to take effect or rot your guts from the inside out is half the fun!



“Degree” is the number of degrees of success achieved in brewing the potion. “Age” is the batch’s age in months since brewing. The number before the slash is the chance that the potion is utterly spoiled. The number after the slash is the chance that the potion is spoiled but also effective. Both possibilities are addressed with one die roll. If the GM rolls equal to or less than the first number, the potion is utterly spoiled. If the GM rolls equal to or less than the second number (but not equal to or less than the first) the potion is spoiled but effective.

**TABLE 7–8: POTION SPOILAGE CHANCE**

Degree	—Age in Seasons—					
	1	2	3–4	5–8	9–16	17+
0	11%/22%	22%/44%	33%/66%	55%/88%	50%/95%	50%/95%
+1	10%/20%	20%/40%	30%/60%	40%/80%	50%/95%	50%/95%
+2	9%/18%	18%/36%	27%/54%	36%/72%	45%/90%	50%/95%
+3	8%/16%	16%/32%	24%/48%	32%/64%	40%/80%	50%/95%
+4	7%/14%	13%/28%	21%/42%	28%/56%	35%/70%	42%/84%
+5	6%/12%	13%/24%	18%/36%	24%/48%	30%/60%	36%/72%
+6	5%/10%	10%/20%	15%/30%	20%/40%	25%/50%	30%/60%