

THE AETHYRIC SENSES

In addition to the usual five senses of sight, scent, touch, taste, and hearing, there are three further types of senses all trained Magisters possess and other untrained people might possess in some way. These senses are those that allow a Human to become aware of the unseen world, the immaterial world, which magic occupies. Although the senses can be sporadic and fleeting in some untrained magic users, sometimes giving a strong effect and sometimes giving none at all, no magic user can simply turn them off. The more training a magic user has in the arcane arts, the clearer these senses become, and the harder it is to ignore them.

INTUITION OR AETHYRIC ATTUNEMENT

Intuition is the simplest and most common of the Aethyric senses. It is also the most easily ignored. Although everyone feels it from time to time, most shrug it off as foolish or irrelevant. However, intuition is the most commonly observed gateway of Humans to all Aethyric sensitivity. Aethyric Attunement is a very real form of Aethyric awareness. Chances are if a person experiences a sudden flash of unexpected insight, gets goose bumps, or shivers though the day is warm, then that is probably a demonstration of an intuitive response to some kind of activity in the Winds of Magic.



Intuition is the sixth sense. It is the ability to feel the Winds of Magic. Whether it is refined and developed or not, it is an individual's inborn ability to sense the various movements, disturbances, and "flavours" of the Winds of Magic as they move around or through that individual. Very few people who feel these otherwise intangible movements of magic know or understand what they are feeling or know it is due to an immaterial force external to themselves, rather than just some passing feeling brought on by indigestion or lack of sleep. Intuition is most often mistaken for some feeling other than what it is—the perception of the Winds of Magic.

The more developed it is, the more likely one will be able to feel when a spell is being cast or some other Aethyric disturbance occurs. However, just because this person can feel the spell being cast, it does not mean he knows what is happening—he knows only something is happening.

Commonplace intuition is the Sixth Sense Talent and does not signify a noticeable ability with or awareness for magic. However, in some people this sense is more highly developed, perhaps by some freak of nature or because of the particular psychology, beliefs, or personality of the individual. When this is the case, this heightened intuition is expressed as the Aethyric Attunement talent.

Depending on the experience of the magic user, Aethyric Attunement can manifest itself as anything from a faint shiver when the PC is in proximity to a magical object or someone casting a spell, to a very specific physical and/or emotional reaction that is dependent upon the strand of magic being used. For instance, when in proximity to *Aqshy*, PCs with Aethyric Attunement might become restless, irritable, or aggressive. They might become physically warm or even hot. They might imagine they can smell brimstone or ozone.

The same applies to the other Winds. Check their entries (see page @@) for the kind of emotions and physical processes that each of the Winds of Magic are drawn to and promote.

With regard to all forms of Dark Magic, any PC with Aethyric Attunement in proximity to it feels an edge of panic and of creeping dread. This does not necessarily apply to the one using the Dark Magic, because his or her mind is invariably flashing with coloured lights and rushing with a sense of incredible power.

MAGICAL SENSE AND WITCHSIGHT

"Witch'sight," sometimes referred to as the seventh sense, is the term widely given by Collegiate Magisters to the ability to actually see the Winds of Magic. In some ways, this term is negative, as no trained Magister would ever accept being called a witch and certainly do not consider themselves as such. However, the term is older than the Colleges themselves and has entered the common vernacular of most Magisters alongside less degrading terms such as "spirit-sight."

USING WITCHSIGHT

Witchsight can be a valuable tool in heightening the tension in a game. As any character who can cast spells has this ability, which strengthens and becomes more disturbing with the more power they accumulate, GMs can use witchsight to foreshadow events. For instance, if the characters move through an area in proximity to a lode of Warpstone, a Wizard in the group might see piles of roiling maggots, blood seeping from the trees, red clouds dancing in the sky, odd patterns in the grass or worse, all of which point to some approaching danger. Furthermore, GMs can use witchsight to provide clues toward solving a particular mystery. For instance, in a particularly brutal murder scene a character with witchsight might see a glimpse of the killer's face as it really is—say, twisted by Khorne's dark will.

In short, witchsight is a GM tool. As it is fickle, and unpredictable, characters can rarely harness this ability to exploit it. At your (the GMs) option, you might allow Wizards to use witchsight to sense magic, requiring them to succeed on a Challenging (–10%) Will Power Test. If the character fails the test by 20% or more, the character sees something he shouldn't and gains 1 Insanity Point. In such instances, this can be useful for giving the party an important, but missed, clue.

Any person possessing witchsight sees the world as if through two types of vision superimposed upon each other. With his normal mundane sight, the Aethyrically sensitive person sees like any other Human does. With his witchsight, the person actually sees the Winds of Magic to some degree, either as swirling clouds and rivers of churning coloured energy, or as manifestations of their own thoughts, memories, emotions, expectations, beliefs, and fears and those of the people around them. The common expression of witchsight in untrained magic users is as strange shapes and flickering lights just at the corner of their vision. Depending upon how strong one's witchsight is, one may be able to see the movements of magic and magically charged items and beings, even in the dark or if one's eyes are shut, blinded, or missing.

Some people with the most developed witchsight are able to see the entire world even without their eyes, perceiving with perfect clarity the souls, thoughts, and intentions of all living beings around them, seeing how magic swirls around and through them and all other things in the world. Witchsight may never be turned off and even the greatest Magisters with all their discipline have trouble ignoring it. This is part of the reason why Magisters and other magic users with witchsight are so eccentric, if not plain mad. Those with it are surrounded by a world of swirling magical colours, plainly visible thoughts, dreams, and nightmares, flashes of future and past events, auras, and any number of other arcane and bizarre visions.

Sixth Sense or Aethyric Attunement, witchsight (or Magical Sense) cannot simply be explained away as just a feeling. It is either considered madness by most people of the Empire, or else people with the witchsight actually believe they are seeing physical things existing around them. Those who were born with witchsight grew up believing that seeing coloured auras around living creatures is entirely normal—they may also be convinced by family and friends who do not possess a similar talent that they are haunted or tormented by Daemons. In a sense, these friends and families are correct, for these things do

exist almost everywhere, although these things are almost never visible and can only very rarely interact with the mortal world.

CHANNELLING

Channelling is sometimes called the eighth sense by Imperial Magisters. It is questionable whether Channelling is truly a sense (even an Aethyric one), or whether it is an in-born or learned ability. Essentially, this is the most dangerous of all the Aethyric senses, because it is this one that allows someone to actually manipulate the Winds of Magic. This can manifest itself in countless ways, from minor Poltergeist activity around the affected person, right up to Daemonic possession or spontaneous combustion. Whatever part of the mind or personality that allows a Human to interact with magic is more highly developed in a person who can channel. The effect is they can actually draw to themselves, focus, and direct a Wind of Magic, focussing and making the energies have a tangible effect upon the environment around them.

Naturally, people with this ability in small villages or very superstitious and pious regions often find themselves on the receiving end of a lynching or witch-hunt. For one untrained in such matters, it is almost impossible for them not to create supernatural effects around themselves unintentionally. If this was not dangerous enough, unwitting magic users can often harm themselves or be harmed by some Aethyric entity that they either have created through their own fears or have attracted by their uncontrolled use of magic. Just as someone who can channel may touch magic, so too can the embodiments of magic touch them in return. Many are the stories and folktales of people troubled by violent Poltergeists and Daemons who were invisible and intangible to all except their victim.

There is no fixed order in which a Human may have the three Aethyric senses. Some have one or two of them, very rarely someone might have all three without any training. Those individuals who can channel without having either of the other two Aethyric senses are unfortunate indeed, for it is doubtful