

# The Wizard's Grimoire: Volunteer's Guide

THANKS FOR volunteering to play The Wizard's Grimoire with me!  
Here are the rules.

## 1. Your Goal in the Game:

You're doing me a favor just by playing, so you don't have to worry about winning or losing the game. Your goal is just to say things that you, personally, find honestly entertaining.

## 2. Your Main Job:

Almost your only job is to get with the other volunteer and make up answers to my questions.

I'll ask things like "I'm set upon by raiders. What are they like?" You and your fellow volunteer can imagine any raiders you want, exactly the raiders you find most fun, and tell me about them together.

If you want to ask me any questions before you answer mine, to make sure you've got all the details right or whatever, please do! I'll be more than happy to answer them.

Sometimes the answer to one of my questions will be obvious, or you'll already know it from what somebody's said before. In that case, just give the obvious answer, no need to second guess.

Sometimes one of my questions will be way out, weird, maybe contextless. You can always ask me clarifying questions, but you can also just say whatever pops into your head and let me be the one who has to make sense of it.

Sometimes I'll show you one of my sheets and have you choose something from a list, too. Always choose whichever option seems best to you at the moment.

I also have a sheet here called "A Bestiary," which includes a bunch of ideas that you can use and build on. If I didn't already hand it over, remind me.

## 3. You and the Other Volunteer:

In order for anything to really count, you and the other volunteer have to agree on it. If you don't agree about something, it's not true until you do. Talk it over until you're both satisfied. I'll wait!

The reason there are two of you, by the way, is that this way you can trade off and build on each others' ideas. Neither of you has to do all the work.

If you have any trouble coming to agreement and you want to use some kind of system to decide, like R-P-S or flipping a coin or dibs or something, that's none of my business. Whatever works for you. Just let me know what you've decided.

I have a 6-sided die you can borrow if you want to roll it.

## 4. Ending the game:

Any of us can end the game whenever we want, for any reason or none at all. It doesn't matter how abrupt it might be.

If, at any point, it seems impossible to entertain yourself, or not worth it, or anything like that, don't hesitate, just call an end.

## 5. Thank you!

You're the best! I'm lucky to have you.

# The Wizard's Grimoire: A Bestiary

## 1. The World:

It's the Ancient World, before the Age of Empires.

It's not Earth, probably, although it has a single yellow sun and a single white moon and three stars in a row in the winter sky that everyone recognizes. It has summers and winters, forests and deserts, great various continents and unmeasured salt seas. It has horses, dogs, cats, birds, cattle, fish, lions, hyenas, camels, llamas, marsupials, cetaceans, mustelidae, primates, pachyderms, each in the land or sea proper to them.

If you went there, you could breathe the air, but the language would be unknown to you and the food and fashions unfamiliar.

## 2. Human Nature:

Human beings love to have full bellies, warm rugs, sweet sad music, and their loved ones nearby.

They hate violence, hunger, fear, cold, injustice, and their friends who have wronged them.

They work stone, clay, wood, metal, cloth, fur, glass, horn, sinew, bark, leaves, leather, and reeds. They cook their food, brew their drink, bury their pickles, eat fruit in season, eat fish when it runs, and eat salt when they have it. They hold their nose when the healer makes them swallow balms and pungencies.

They create polities no bigger than city-states, usually, and usually no longer-lived than dynasties. The greatest and the least usually eat grain from the same fields and hunt ducks on the same rivers.

## 3. Wizardry:

A wizard is a person who, by diligent study and a brash willingness to cheat fate and nature, learns to perceive and manipulate the plasmic energy that suffuses the world.

Some say that plasm bathes us from its source behind the sun, and wizards represent the priesthood behind the priesthood of the Sun.

Some say that this is preposterous, and that plasm infiltrates the world from the secret invisible moon, which explains why plasms are as intractable as the tide.

The greatest wizards of human history tell that magic is a living thing, never to be treated like an instrument, always like a peculiar, obstinate, wholly self-possessed collaborator, and they would know better than I.

## 4. Plasmids &c:

A plasmid is a creature made of magical energy, an expression of magical processes the way that a living thing is an expression of biological processes. Plasmids no more understand our systems or concerns than we can understand theirs, and so appear to us to be fixated, flighty, fractious, negligent, stubborn, over-literal, malicious, and exacting.

"Rogue plasmids" or "free plasmids" are no more than plasmids for whom the speaker has no use.

A remnite is a plasmic creature left over, surviving somehow, the dissolution of its original purpose. Metaphorically, the ghost of a spell or the ghost of a magical event. They're drawn to wizards and acts of wizardry like ghosts are drawn to living dreams or the marrow of living bone.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

& Your Pronouns: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Qualities \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>Tally</i>	<i>Final Tally</i>
Ambitious	[ ]	[ ]
Bold	[ ]	[ ]
Cunning	[ ]	[ ]
Virtuous	[ ]	[ ]

Unlocked Acts of Magic & Achievements \_\_\_\_\_

Rules of Play \_\_\_\_\_

**To start a session:** Find 2 volunteers. Choose a spawning circumstance and explain it to them to begin play.

**Your goal:** Your goal in the game is to follow your ambitions into danger, and maybe to get back out again.

**The fundamentals of the game:**

1. Ask your volunteers questions.
2. Make the leap to action.
3. Look for opportunities to exert yourself.

**To roll:** Roll a number of 6-sided dice equal to your rating. Count each 4, 5 or 6 as a **hit**. If you roll no hits, **it's a miss**.

Exerting Yourself...

Empathetically:

[ ] **To study and understand a person.**  
= Your Virtuous + 1

Magically:

[ ] **To perform acts of wizardry.**  
Starts at 1

Acts of Magic:

- Pronounce liveliness upon your shoes or another's.
- Recite an ominous dissuasion.
- Study a grimoire or other artifact of wizardry.
- Unveil your wizardous senses.
- Any others you've unlocked, noted opposite or elsewhere.

Mentally:

[ ] **To study and grasp a situation's nuances.**  
= Your Highest Tally +1

Physically:

[ ] **Against the mass and momentum of an uncooperative or unsensible thing.**  
= Your Bold + Your Cunning, min 2

Subtly:

[ ] **To pass through your environment unnoticed or to take action unremarked.**  
= Your Ambitious + Your Cunning, min 2

Violently:

[ ] **Against an Enemy.**  
= Your Bold + Your Cunning, max 4

Submit to Circumstance:

[ ] **Instead of exerting yourself, just trying to come out on your feet.**  
= Your Cunning + Your Virtuous

Notes, Modifiers & Exceptions: