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# The Wizardology Handbook: A Course for Apprentices

Contributions by

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# AFRICAN SHAMANS

Medicine *men* or *witch doctors*.

*The shamans of Africa are often misunderstood.*

THE WIZARDS OF CENTRAL AFRICA have a great love of elaborate costumes, often donning masks, headdresses and other paraphernalia to perform their spells, and accompanying the reading of the spell itself with all manner of dancing and mumbo-jumbo. This is entirely unnecessary but, along with their unfounded reputation for commanding evil spirits, has led them to be greatly feared, especially by strangers. This often works to the wizard's advantage since he tends to be left alone to hone his powerful healing skills instead of being constantly pestered by those seeking magical cures for the most minor of ailments.

*Like their costumes, African shamans often choose a familiar designed to impress. Lions, leopards or cheetahs are popular choices, although elephants, rhinoceros and even hippopotamus have been known. The latter are not to be recommended to any but the most experienced since they have a reputation for being uncontrollable, coupled with having a very nasty bite.*

## TABLE OF SKILLS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Animation | 2 | |
| Transformation | 3 | |
| Healing | 5 | Their reputation for being able to heal all illness has led to their alternative name of "medicine men" |
| Affecting | 5 | Can affect the behaviour of others with ease |
| Divination | 1 | |
| Familiars | | Lion, leopard, cheetah, occasionally one of the larger African mammals such as the elephant, nowsen (rarely) |

# INDIAN FAKIRS

Among the *wisest* of all wizards, *fakirs* avoid all *involvement* in worldly affairs.

OF ALL THE WIZARDS OF THE WORLD, the fakirs of India are amongst the most mysterious. Little is known of their magic since they rarely speak, often choosing to remove themselves from the everyday world and instead spend months in curious pursuits such as balancing on one leg, or laying on a bed of nails. This helps them to focus their minds and concentrate their wizardly powers so that whenever they do speak it is to utter only words of the purest wisdom.

## TABLE OF SKILLS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Animation | 1 | |
| Transformation | 2 | |
| Healing | 4 | |
| Affecting | 3 | |
| Divination | 5 | Their tremendous wisdom also helps in this area—if you can get them to talk |
| Familiars | | Snake, particularly cobra |

## GREAT SNAKES

*The fakir often shuns all human possessions, owning nothing, and wearing only rags. However, as with all wizards, fakirs recognize the value of having a familiar and often choose a snake, particularly a cobra. They are also masters of the art of ophiomancy—a form of divination involving the reading of signs obtained by observing a pit of watching snakes.*

# NORTH AMERICAN SHAMANS

The greatest of *healers*, the vast open spaces of the *New World* are home to these master *herbalists* of the *wizarding* world.

THE SHAMANS OF NORTH AMERICA have a deep understanding of the natural world. They can talk to almost all species of animal and know the uses of most types of plant, preparing healing potions and poultices from ancient recipes. Instead of recording their knowledge in books, it is passed down verbally. Similarly, these powerful workers of true magic tend to shun the elaborate trappings of modern life, choosing simple stones, bones, sticks or feathers as their magical items, endowing them with enormous power through use of their ancient spellcraft. They are also masters of the art of dream-catching and can control the dreams of others. If you suddenly start dreaming of herds of buffalo you may have been unknowingly in contact with a shaman.

*Round and round the totem pole:*
Many shamans focus magical force by dancing and chanting round a pole, known as a totem.

## TABLE OF SKILLS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Animation* | 2 | |
| *Transformation* | 5 | *Adept at taking the form of many types of animal; groups of shaman sometimes form herds* |
| *Healing* | 5 | *Poultices and potions galore* |
| *Affecting* | 5 | *Rarely used for anything other than talking to animals* |
| *Divination* | 2 | |
| *Familiars* | | *Eagle, crow, owl, hawk or other bird, occasionally baby buffalo or bear cub* |

*Feathered Friends:*
Shamans often choose birds as their familiars. Eagles, crows, owls and hawks are all popular choices; the newly-introduced chicken is also gaining favour, as its eggs are useful for breakfast.

### FLYING SPELL

*Cast into a fire three pinches of dried tumbleweed, four cloudberries and the tail feather of an eagle who has flown thrice round the sun and chant:*

*Fly me to the moon,*
*Fly me to the sun*
*Fly me to the stars,*
*My flying spell's begun.*

*You will be able to fly like an eagle until darkness falls.*