

Homebrewed Spellcasting: Magic Pool

Design Notes

The following D&D 5E design of the Magic Pool was created to provide an easier alternative to tracking of spell slots.

One of the things that I struggled with in 5E was tracking of Spell Slots. I don't really do it as a DM (although I really should) and I do not know if other DM's feel the same way. The idea originally began nagging at me while I had a certain magic-user. There were times when I wasn't sure if he was truly keeping track, and I did not question it (mainly because I was not tracking it either). I don't play spellcasters very often (when I DO play as a PC), but it seems like too much to easily keep track of. This system was also a way for me to quickly and easily keep track of multiple magic-wielding NPC's. I simply recorded their available Magic Pool points and then deducted their spells (level) as they casted them. There was no longer the need for me to keep looking up how many slots of spell level X were left.

This design provides details of how we track and use a custom Magic Pool. As with any type of custom 'homebrewery', feel free to tweak these parameters to fit your campaign.



Magic Pool

How it is calculated:

1. No more X spell lots of 1st, 2nd, 3rd (etc) level
2. For Bards, Clerics, Druids, Sorcerers and Wizards: Total up all of your spell slots and then add your spellcasting levels. This # equals your maximum Magic Pool (mana if you will). For Paladins or Rangers, add 1/2 of your spellcasting levels. For Eldritch Knights or Arcane Tricksters, add 1/3 your spellcasting level.
3. As you cast a spell, deduct the level of the spell from this pool. Spells of 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th level are limited to once/long rest. At level 19, you gain the ability to cast two spells of 6th level. At level 20, you gain the ability to cast 2 spells of 7th level.

4. During a short rest, you may add a number to your Magic Pool equal to the fraction of a long rest. Example: 1 hour = 1/8 of a long rest = Regain 1/8 of your max Magic Pool (rounded down). 2 hours = 2/8 of Magic Pool, etc, etc.

Everything else works the same: Spells known, prepared spells, long rest, cantrips, etc.

In this scenario, you are not limited to using multiple high level spells. On the flip side, each higher level spell will drain more from your magic pool, so you must choose wisely. Conversely, you may have much more level 1 spells at your disposal.

The Examples above are based upon a 10th level Wizard.

Current Stats: 4 first level spell slots, 3 second level spell slots, 3 third level spell slots, 3 fourth level spell slots and 2 fifth level spell slots. (15 spell slots)

Proposed Stats: 25 Magic Pool points (15 spell slots + 10 levels of Wizard)

This Magic Pool variant does not apply to Warlocks. Their system of tracking is simple enough already in 5E.

At the time of the publication of this document (Sept. 2017), we have been play-testing it for about 6 months with no major complaints. Full disclosure: Magic users can now cast spells such as Fireball more often since they are no longer limited to X number of 4th level spell slots. On the flip side, this is also the case for villains/monsters/NPC's (if you choose to calculate their magic pool ahead of time). So, take that with a grain of salt. If you feel that a certain lower level spell is too powerful and can be abused in this way, then I would recommend that you enforce a homebrew rule where it becomes a higher level spell. This, in turn, will up the Mana Pool points requirement for it and/or possibly bump it up to the once/long rest category of a level 6 spell.

CREDITS

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Revisions:

Other Resources by Bryan Williams

Homebrewed Class - Tinkerer

<http://www.dmsguild.com/product/212588/Homebrewed-Class--Tinkerer>

Homebrewed Crafting - Blacksmith

<http://www.dmsguild.com/product/216529/Homebrewed-Crafting--Blacksmith>

Homebrewed Crafting - Herbalism

<http://www.dmsguild.com/product/216525/Homebrewed-Crafting--Herbalism>