

Astrology

Magic on Mars taps into the celestial relationship between Mars itself and all the living pieces on its chessboard.

True Names

Each living thing on Mars has a True Name. This name is not pronounceable, rather it is a sequence of relationships between the planet, the sun, the moons, and the Martian Zodiac. Each of these relationships is called a 'Key'. There are 4 Keys in the True Name. Two other Keys are governed by an individual's ancestors and location.

The Vanished Seas

Long ago, Mars was covered in oceans in much the same way that Earth is today. The ancient race had an immense maritime empire and great knowledge of the secrets of the seas. It was known then that certain currents and winds within the oceans held power, and Seers of the day could tap that power for nearly any use.

The cataclysm at the end of the Blue Age destroyed the seas, and made way for the rise of the six nations of the Vendekost, Ximm, Temoi, Karn, Mekhans and Erinyes. The power of the currents and winds remained, despite the destruction of the seas, and the young races carved canals into the face of Mars, allowing the power to be tapped once again.

The Martian Zodiac

One of the few remnants of the ancient race is its Zodiac. It survives, though almost all the other elements of their culture has been destroyed, because it was not mere ceremony and ritual. There is indeed a connection between Mars and the heavens, and that connection affects all those who walk the sands.

As the former slaves of the ancient race, the young nations interpreted the Zodiac as the ancients did. They saw the stars as the presence of the Oldest. For them, a constellation was one of the 6 faces of God.

Human interpretation of the Zodiac varies from culture to culture. Some of the newer human nations (Particularly those small, powerful groups composed mostly of arrivals from the 19th and 20th centuries) refuse to believe in the Zodiac at all. Nonetheless, it has power, though technology may take the place of its influence in these younger cultures.

Most humans on Mars are descended from older stock, and so place full confidence in the power of the Zodiac. Terminology varies according to the written language of each nation, but the constellations themselves do not. The Egyptians name the Zodiac according to their pantheon, while the somewhat less religious Nova Romans name the stars for the paraphernalia of war. The Ancient, Egyptian, and Roman terms appear below. (The system uses only the ancient terms)

Nova Roman	Egyptian	Ancient
Sicarius <i>The Sword</i>	Osiris <i>The King</i>	Siroko <i>Killing Wind</i>
Aegis <i>The Shield</i>	Isis <i>The Queen</i>	Itaka <i>The Oldest</i>
Currus <i>The Chariot</i>	Horus <i>The Prince</i>	Naro <i>The Fountain</i>
Cassis <i>The Helm</i>	Thoth <i>The Wizard</i>	Aptek <i>Lightning-bolt</i>
Signum <i>The Standard</i>	Geb <i>The First Man</i>	Tuok <i>Champion</i>
Verutum <i>The Javelin</i>	Set <i>The Adversary</i>	Perigo <i>The Hawk</i>

The Solar Key

This is the birth sign of the Martian Zodiac, determined by the position of the Sun at the moment of birth. For aliens, it is determined the first morning they awaken on Mars, rather than the moment of actual birth.

The Major Lunar Key

This key is determined by the placement of Phobos when the individual first sheds the blood of another being on Mars. Phobos orbits very quickly, making research into the Major Lunar Key very difficult.

The Minor Lunar Key

Deimos orbits more slowly than Phobos, and is smaller as well. Still, the Minor Moon has its influence. This influence is thought to be set when the first drop of an individual's blood touches the surface of Mars.

The Corporeal Key

The Corporeal Key is the same for all beings of a given race. For example, all humans share the same Corporeal Key, Perigo. The other major races each have one of the 5 remaining keys. Lesser races also have a key, though they duplicate the keys of the 6 major races, and typically have an affinity for the race whose Corporeal Key they share.

Humans	Aptek
Vendek	Siroko
Ximm	Perigo
Karn	Naro
Mekhan	Itaka
Temoi	Tuok

The Astral Key

The Astral Key is determined by placing Mars itself in a position among all 6 signs at the moment the individual first knows thirst. For children born on Mars, this is usually a few hours to a day from birth. For aliens it generally comes a few hours to a day after arrival.

The Nexus Key

The Nexus Key is determined by arrangement of the Signs against the compass at a given place. This is the easiest Key to determine, since all those within a few hundred miles of a given Nexus will have the same Nexus Key. This key, along with the Corporeal, form the foundation of the racial and regional cultures of Mars, since the more powerful magical effects can be duplicated simultaneously only on large groups sharing these 2 keys.

Martian Magery

Martian sorcery is practiced along 4 lines, 2 beneficial and 2 detrimental, paired into a lesser and greater set of 1 beneficial and 1 detrimental.

Focus

Lesser beneficial sorcery focuses the capabilities of an individual, increasing physical and mental capacity and bolstering acumen, reflexes, longevity, endurance, and resistance to poison and disease.

Ruin

Lesser detrimental sorcery affects the same traits, but instead decreases capacity.

Bless

Greater beneficial sorcery produces all manner of strange and wonderful powers in the enchanted individual. Everything from flight, invisibility, or a fearsome presence to supernatural strength and speed can be gained when one is blessed by the stars and currents of Mars.

Curse

Greater detrimental sorcery is feared by all those who know its power, and with good reason. A martian sorcerer with full knowledge of a victim's True Name can dominate the body, suppress the will, destroy even the most steadfast constructions, unveil the memory, cause rapid aging, or obliterate the accumulated expertise of a lifetime.

Nexus Magic

Wards and warding, banishing and summoning, instantaneous travel, and clairvoyance are all possible through Nexus Key magic.

Corporeal Magic

Most corporeal magic effects are quite similar to the capabilities of modern medicine, with a few fantastic exceptions. Corporeal magic can be used to cure wounds, restore vitality, mend broken bones, regenerate lost limbs, and even bring the dead back from the afterworld.

System

There are a number of Feats necessary to master all of Martian Magery. In addition to these, a Mage must know at least his

own Keys, and the Keys of anyone he wishes his magic to affect.

The feats are: Lesser Sorcery, Greater Sorcery, Divination, Independent Sorcery, Bolt, Wrack, Ordeal, and Rending

Divining a Key

The Nexus Key

Touching the soil of an area and a standard action will suffice to determine the Nexus Key of an area, a Spellcraft check with a DC of 15 will grant knowledge of the borders of the Nexus region. Through long research, the mages of Mars have compiled Nexus charts which show the center and borders of all the Nexii of Mars. These charts will suffice for plans and preparations, but cannot substitute for actually standing within the area.

The Corporeal Key

A lock of hair, drop of blood, fingernail, or other bit of the corporeal form is all that is needed to know the Corporeal Key. So long as this piece of the body is in the possession of a mage, he is able to work corporeal magic on the provider.

The True Name

A mage who wishes to work truly dire or wondrous effects must have encyclopedic knowledge of the martian Zodiac. He must also have at least the birthdate (or arrival date) of the individual, or the name he was given at birth. From this he can derive the Solar Key. To find the Solar Key, the mage must have either a volume of astrological lore or possess the Precocious Magery Feat. Only after the Solar Key is found can the mage learn the Lunar and Astral keys. The Spellcraft DC for finding the Solar Key is 20, the Minor Lunar Key can be derived with a DC 25, the Astral Key with a 30, and the Major Lunar Key with a 35. The keys must be researched in order of ascending difficulty. Each attempt takes 1 hour, and in most cases the astrologer can take 20, requiring 2 10 hour days to learn a single key.

The True Names of a group equal or less than the Intelligence bonus of the mage can be derived simultaneously, so long as all the subjects share all known keys. Thus, an astrologer with 16 INT can seek the Solar Keys of up to 3 beings, as long as they occupy the same Nexus and are all of the same race. If they happen to have the same Solar Key, the astrologer can simultaneously seek all 3 Minor Lunar keys, and so on, until it is revealed that one or more do not share a key, from which point the mage must proceed with any who still share the known keys.

Changing a Key

It is possible, though exceptionally difficult, to alter the Keys. The process is known as 'rending' the key, and, while it rarely results in death, a failed attempt can cause madness, sterility, or permanent disfigurement. Even a successfully altered key will leave the subject marked for life by the new sign.

Using a Key

Each of a subject's keys make him capable of receiving, or vulnerable to, certain magics. A subject with a Tuok Astral Key is open to different magics than a subject with an ApteK Astrak Key.

Spells

The Corporeal and Nexus keys can be used to generate 24 different effects each, depending on the type of spell being cast, and the prevailing sign. The True Name Keys make an individual open to another 24 spells, dependent on the sign of each of the 4 True Name Keys. Focusing sorcery uses the Solar Key, Ruining the Minor Lunar, Blessing the Astral, and Cursing the Major Lunar Key.

Components

Martian Mages require a Disc for Focus and Bless, and a Gem or Stone for Ruin and Curse. These items are not consumed in casting, but must be magically prepared. This preparation requires an hour, a tool sharp enough to inscribe certain symbols on the object, and a spellcraft check with a DC of 20.

Saving Throws

Defending against negative effects varies, depending on the caster's expertise. If the caster lacks all 3 of the Bolt, Wrack, and Ordeal feats, any subject of one of his spells can spend 5 Vitality to ignore the effect outright or 1 Vitality the round follow the effect to shake it off.

Bolts

A bolt spell is resisted with a Reflex save. Bolts have a range of DIS x 5 hexes or squares.

Wrack

A wrack spell is resisted with a Fortitude save. It has a range of DIS x3 hexes or squares.

An ordeal spell is resisted with a Will save. It has a range of DIS x1 hexes or squares.

Save DC is 10+ITY+caster's appropriate save modifier. A caster with 20 INT and a +5 will save casts ordeals with a 20 DC.

Special Terms and Bonuses

The following types of bonuses are considered separate from any other effect or ability, and stack with all other effects and abilities. Only one type of modifier can be present on a subject at a time; later cast effects wipe away previous ones.

<i>Prowess</i> bonuses	Defense Bonus and Strength (Siroko)
<i>Insight</i> bonuses	Intelligence and Reflex Saves. (Itaka)
<i>Health</i> bonuses	Wounds, Fortitude Saves, and Skills modified by Constitution. (Naro)
<i>Spirit</i> bonuses	Will Saves and to Charisma. (Aptek)
<i>Agility</i> bonuses	Dexterity and Attack Bonus (Tuok)
<i>Acumen</i> bonuses	Wisdom and Initiative. (Perigo)

Intensity (ITY) and Discipline (DIS)

When a mage casts a spell with value indicated as 'Intensity' he may cast that spell with any value up to his Intelligence bonus. For example, if the spell indicates a duration of ITY Rounds, the spell will last no longer than the caster's INT bonus in rounds.

When a mage casts a spell with value listed as 'Discipline' he may cast it with any value up to the number of ranks he has in the concentration skill. Spells with duration listed as 'DIS' only function differently. Spells with DIS (without a time unit) last indefinitely, until dismissed by the caster or dispelled by an opposing effect. A caster may cast a number of concurrent spells with DIS duration. Any further spells fail to take effect.

Solar Spells [Focus]

Siroko

Focus Prowess

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: +ITY

Duration: DIS

Boon of Arms

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Effect: Summons a +3 magical weapon or shield

Duration: DIS hours

Itaka

Focus Insight

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: +ITY

Duration: DIS

Boon of Arts

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Effect: Summons tools granting a +3 bonus to crafting.

Duration: the creation of 1 item

Naro

Focus Health

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: +ITY

Duration: DIS

Boon of Thorns

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Effect: Summons a magical ring with 3 pt dmg shield

Duration: DIS hours

Aptek

Focus Spirit

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: +ITY

Duration: DIS

Boon of Courage

Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Value Summons a +3 magical weapon or shield
Duration: DIS hours

Tuok

Focus Agility
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: +ITY
Duration: DIS

Boon of Accuracy

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Effect: Increases threat range of missiles by 3
Duration: DIS missiles

Perigo

Focus Acumen
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: +ITY
Duration: DIS

Boon of Alertness

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Effect: Target cannot be surprised, gains Uncanny Dodge
Duration: DIS hours

Minor Lunar Spells [Ruin]

Siroko

Ruin Prowess
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Shearing Gust

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Value: ITY+DIS+DIS damage
Area: line (DIS hexes wide) blowing from any point visible to the caster for ITY x3 hexes.
Duration: DIS rounds

Itaka

Ruin Insight
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Maddening Sands

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Value: Multiply acutal range by ITY to determine range for victim's missile attacks and spells.
Duration: DIS rounds

Naro

Ruin Health
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Suppression

Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Value: Vctim must save each round or be unable to take a move action.
Duration: DIS rounds

Aptek

Ruin Spirit
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Cowering Gesture

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Effect: Target moves 1 step down the Fright Table.

Tuok

Ruin Agility
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Crippling Bands

Component: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Value: DIS damage and -ITY hexes to move rate.
Duration: Damage instant, move reduction DIS rounds.

Perigo

Ruin Acumen
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: -ITY
Duration: DIS

Obliviate

Components: S
Casting Time: 1 round
Value: -ITY to all spot, listen, and sense motive checks.
Area: ITY hexes
Duration: DIS minutes

Astral Spells [Bless]

Siroko

Destructive Blessing of Siroko
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Value: 10
Duration: DIS

Add 10 to all melee damage dealt by the blessed. Defense Bonus cannot be used to deflect the blessed's attacks.

Itaka

Precognitive Blessing of Itaka

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: 10

Duration: DIS

Add 10 to all initiative checks made by the blessed. Cannot be flatfooted, flanked, or surprised under any circumstances. All special attacks made against the blessed provoke an attack of opportunity, even if the attacker has the appropriate feat to avoid provocation.

Naro

Vital Blessing of Naro

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: 10

Duration: DIS

Blessed receives DR 10/+5 which reduces damage done to his wounds only. Blessed automatically saves against his next 10 Fortitude saves.

Aptek

Aptek's Blessing of the Silver Aura

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: 10

Duration: DIS

Blessed adds 10 to his Charisma. Blessed receives an additional Will Save, made before any saving against any [*Mind-Affecting*] spell or ability, made at the same DC. If this save is successful, there is no effect on the blessed, who may also choose to reflect the effect back onto the caster.

Tuok

Tuok's Blessing of Alacrity

Component: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: 10

Duration: DIS

Blessed adds 10 to defense bonus against all Ranged and Reach attacks. Blessed never provokes attacks of opportunity, even when making special attacks against a recipient of the *Precognitive Blessing of Itaka*.

Perigo

Opening of Perigo's All-Sighted Eye.

Component: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Value: 10

Duration: DIS

Blessed adds 10 to all Appraise, Hide, Spot, Search, and Sense Motive checks. Abilities or spells which grant expanded or additional hiding abilities, such as *Camouflage*, are pierced automatically by the Blessed. Blessed can see, strike, and grapple all planes and planar beings.

Major Lunar Spells [Curse]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

Nexus Spells

[Focus]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Ruin]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Bless]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Curse]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

Corporeal Spells

[Focus]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Ruin]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Bless]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo

[Curse]

Siroko

Itaka

Naro

Aptek

Tuok

Perigo