

Witchcraft

Beyond the Basics



With
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Partial Witchcraft Glossary

Note: some of these terms are for purely historical purposes and are rarely used in modern Witchcraft. Please note that the listing of a practice in this glossary does not necessarily mean that practice is condoned by the author.

Adept A master of the magic arts

Akasha - The fifth element; the power of the Universe. Sometimes known as "aether" or Spirit.

Altar - A surface, usually flat, that is set aside exclusively for magickal workings and is used as a focus of power. Can be indoors or outdoors. Can be made of any material, preferably natural.

Amulet - An object magically charged for use as protection

Anointing Oil - A skin-safe, sometimes scented, oil that is dabbed on the body (at chosen pulse points or on the forehead) in order to purify an individual mentally and spiritually.

Asperge — v. To purify ritually by sprinkling with salt water; often this is done by dipping a fragrant branch, such as rosemary, into the water and sprinkling it over the participant in a ritual.

Astral plane – A nonphysical plane closest to the physical.

Astral projection - The act of separating the consciousness from the physical body and moving it at will. This is often done by traveling on the astral plane.

Athame – (Ah-THAM-ee) A knife (traditionally double-bladed and black-handled) used to direct energy.

Baculum Witches' rod, staff, wand, or "broomstick" used in divination and certain fertility spells.

Balefire - A bonfire, lit for magickal purposes.

Ban - To banish. To curse.

Bane - That which destroys or banishes.

Banish - To send off or remove.

Barrow An elven or Celtic burial mound often used by coven for Sabbat covenstead.

Beltane - The Sabat celebrated May 1 celebrating the marriage of the Goddess and God.

Besom - A Witch's broom usually made from birch and willow used to purify spaces.

Bind - To control magically.

Blue Moon - When there are two Full Moons in one calendar month, the second is called a Blue Moon.

Bolline - A white-handled utility knife often curved like a sickle. Used to harvest herbs, inscribe candles and trim wicks, etc.

Book of Shadows - A Witch's workbook. The term was coined by Gerald Gardner and is not a term used from antiquity as is often thought. In a tradition, this is also where the tradition's legends, laws and history is kept.

Burning times - A term used by some Witches for the period of persecution in the Middle Ages and later.

Cabala, qabalah

I (1) Body of lore stemming from early Chaldean and Mesopotamian traditions, later incorporated within certain rabbinical texts,

I (2) practical magical processes deriving therefrom

Calling the Quarters - Verbal or symbolic acknowledgment of the Four Elements (Earth, Air, Fire Water) in a ritual environment. Often the portals of these elements are opened to empower, balance and protect the energies raised within the circle.

Casting a Circle - The creation of a psychic magical sphere that encircles one's ritual/working space. The circle is a guardian and protection which enables the witch to raise , focus and contain power.

Cauldron - Any pot or cooking vessel, often cast iron which symbolizes the womb of creation, transformation and rebirth.

Censer – an incense holder/burner. See thurible.

Chakras – Seven major points of energy in the body. Each is usually associated with a color. These vortexes are: crown - violet; forehead (third eye position) - indigo; throat - blue; chest - green; navel - yellow; abdomen - orange; groin - red. Smaller vortexes are located in the hands and feet, as well.

Chalice - A blessed cup used in ritual to hold the drink or saltwater. It represents the Goddess. It is a symbol of the feminine principle.

Charge, to - To infuse an object with power.

Cleansing - The act of removing any negative energy, vibrations or images from an object or place by utilizing positive, psychic energy. Often done via salt & water and smoke.

Charm - Spoken or chanted words of magical intent

Cingulum - Witches' cord or girdle

Cone of power - "Cone" of collective witch power raised by assembled coven within circle to forward a certain aim previously decided upon

Conjuration - An act of creating from the psychic or astral realm.

Consecration- The ritual of purifying and blessing of an item. Consecration means "to set apart."

Correspondence - An item that has a magical association. Correspondences include: days, planets, moon phases, herbs, oils, colors, gemstones, Zodiac signs, hours, etc. Based on the hermetic principle of the law of Correspondence.

Coven - A small group of people, usually no more than 13, of the same Tradition or mind-set who work together within the Craft.

Covenstead - The regular home or meeting place of a coven.

Cowan - Uninitiated intruder

Cromlech - Welsh word for dolmen

Craft, the - Witchcraft

Curse - Purposely directing negative energy at someone. Also known as a hex.

Dagyde - Witches' image-needle or pin

Demon - Nonhuman spirit. Has come to mean evil spirit.

Demonology - The practice of the evocation of demons.

Deosil - (pronounced Jess-el) Moving in a sun-wise direction.

Divination - To foretell events of the future or recount the distant past or clarify the present by using so-called random events such as the shuffling of Tarot cards, tossing of runes, the swinging of pendulums, etc.

Dolmen - Elven structure of stone. Megalithic monument. Often used as covenstead by witches

Eidolon - Wraith or fetch. Witch power formulated into semi-tangible human shape

Elemental - Spirit being made up purely of a single element. Also, a Witch's magically created familiar

Elements - Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Witches believe also in a fifth element - Self, Spirit or Aksha.

Elf fire - Need fire or Wildfire. Flame to light coven balefire produced without the use of metals

Elvenfolk - Descendants of the witch gods, or Mighty Ones; Prytani or Faeryfolk

Esbat - The celebration of the moon phases, mainly the Full or New Moon.

Evoke - To call forth within a particular space, i.e., elementals or spirits, often to visible appearance.

Exorcism Magical operation of purifying something from all alien influences

Familiar -

- (1) Coven totem animal,
- (2) witch's pet animal,
- (3) elemental servant

Fascination - Process of casting a spell upon someone using only the projection of witch power in close personal proximity

Fell - Baneful

Fetch - Wraith

Glamour - Fascination

Goetia, goetic -Pertaining to medieval sorcery

Grimoire - A spell book.

Grounding and centering - A meditation exercise that allows one to draw or send energy into the Earth. and balance the energy within one's own body. A relaxing exercise which is used to prepare for magical working.

Hallows - Halloween, Samhain, or Shamain, November 1 Eve witch festival

Hexagram - Six-pointed talismanic star made of two interlaced triangles

Honorian script - Witch runes

Handfasting - Wiccan, Pagan or Gypsy wedding.

Hex - Curse.

Imbolc - The Sabat marking The Festival of Lights celebrated Feb. 1. It celebrates the first stirrings of spring and the recovery of the Goddess from giving birth.

Incantation - Spoken or chanted charm, spell or prayer.

Incubus - Male wraith form projected for purposes of sexual intercourse

Initiation - The process by which a Witch is admitted into a coven or tradition.

Infusion - A liquid produced by soaking herbs in hot water, i.e. a tea.

Invocation - To call a deity into one's self.

Ligature - Magical binding of person in order to prevent him accomplishing a specified thing or course of action

Linking - Commemoration. Process of mental identification with past adepts or appropriate symbols within a magical operation

Living Fire - See elf fire

Lughnasadh: A Sabat held Aug. 1 to celebrate the first harvest, also called Lammas.

Lycanthropy

- (1) Chain-dance "assumption" of animal form,
- (2) projection of wraith in animal form

Mabon - The Sabat held on the Autumn Equinox (around Sept. 21) to celebrate the end of harvest.

Magistellus -Elemental servant (see Familiar)

Magnetism - Term deriving from Anton Mesmer's eighteenth-century theory of witch power

Magus - Practitioner of magic, wizard

Mandragore - Mandrake Plant Magistellus

Mighty Ones - The ancient witch gods, Watchers, or Sons of Heaven

Mommet - Alternative to poppet or voodoo doll

Magic - The science of the magi. The art and science of causing change in accordance with one's will.

Midsummer - A Sabat held on the Summer Solstice (around June 21) that celebrates the longest day of the year.

Moon Void of Course - An astrological term for when the Moon yet entered the next sign and is currently not aspecting another planet. This stage lasts a few hours . Some witches claim It is best to avoid any magick workings during this period, as well as avoiding making major decisions or planning important events.

Mundane Plane – A term sometimes used for the mortal or physical world.

Necromancy - Evocation of the dead

Need fire - Elf fire (q.v.)

Northways - Anticlockwise, widdershins, against the sun

Object link - Material sample impregnated with magnetism of proposed victim or subject of magic, i.e. hair, nail clippings, a photo (as opposed to power object)

Old Ones, the - Mighty Ones, archetypal witch gods derived from legends of the Watchers

Ostra - A Sabat of marking the Spring Equinox (around March 21) and the return of the Sun and the fertility of the Earth.

Pagan - Originally meaning country dweller. Later, it meant non-christian. Neo-pagan means a modern participant in earth-based spirituality.

Pendulum: A divination device consisting of a string attached to a heavy object whose movement determines the answer.

Pentagram - The prime magickal symbol of The Craft. A five-point star often symbolizing the 5 elements in harmony. It is usually depicted with a single point on top. Some traditions and practitioners use the symbol with the single point on the bottom and this has been falsely claimed to be representative of evil. Satanists do use this symbol, but so do some witch traditions who are not satanists.

Pentacle - A plate or disc often with a pentagram drawn on it used for charging magical items on an altar. Also can refer to a pentagram (often within a circle) worn as jewelry.

Phases of the Moon - The stages of the Moon (new, waxing, full, waning) as it journeys around Earth. One complete orbit of the Moon around the Earth is called a lunar cycle and takes 28 days There are 13 lunar cycles per year.

Planetary Hour - Also called a magical hour. Divisions of night and day that are guided by astrological influences and the energies of the various planets.

Power object - Material object charged with witch power and transferred into a particular vicinity to effect a certain result; psychic battery

Poppet - see Mommet

Projective Hand - Your dominant hand. This is the hand you use to send out and direct energy.

Quarters of the Moon -- Astronomical measurement of the Moon's cycle as it journeys around the Earth. The first and second quarters encompass the stages from New to Full Moon, while the third and fourth quarters represent the journey back from Full to New.

Rath - Celtic word for elven dwelling

Receptive hand - Your less dominate hand This is the hand that energy will flow in through. This is the hand that will sense and receive energy.

Reincarnation - A belief in a series of rebirths which allow for the evolution of the soul.

Retrograde - When a planet, from the viewpoint of Earth, appears to be moving backward through space.

Ritual - A ceremony.

Runes

- (1) Ancient magical script or hieroglyphic alphabet,
- (2) spells

Sabbat -- A Witchcraft ceremony of honor acknowledging seasonal changes of the year. There are eight Sabbats: Yule, Imbolic, Ostra, Beltane, Litha, Lughnasad, Mabon and Samhain. Not all witches celebrate all 8 sabbats. Some witches do not celebrate sabbats at all.

Samhain - The Sabbat marking the Witches' New Year on Oct. 31, which observes the symbolic death of the God as he passes into the Land of the Young.

Scrying - To gaze into or at an object for divination purposes.

Scrying Mirror - A mirror used for divination purposes that is painted black

Seeing stone - Show stone or crystal ball

Servitor - Familiar

Shade - Spirit of a dead person

Siderite - Witch amulet of lodestone

Sigil -- A type of symbol. A magically oriented seal, sign, glyph used in a magical working.

Simple - Philter derived from a single herb

Sorcery - Magic, often of an adverse nature

Southways - Deosil

Solstice – Marks the longest day (Summer Solstice) and the longest night (Winter Solstice)

"So Mote It Be" – A popular Witch expression meaning "So be it."

Speculum - Magical mirror or crystal for scrying in

Spell – An act of magic. A spell can be executed with or without the aid of physical props such as candles, incense, herbs, waters, oils, etc.

St. John's (Eve) - The midsummer witch festival

Succubus - Female wraith form projected for purposes of sexual intercourse

Talisman - An object that has been magically charged for bringing about a specific result, i.e. love, money, etc. See Amulet.

Tradition - An organized, structured, specific methodology and belief system of witchcraft.

Theban - Honorian script

Thurible Incense burner

Transvection

(1) Levitation,

(2) projection of the wraith form

Vampire - Predatory wraith form

Verendum - See Baculum

Vibrations - Magical atmosphere around person, place, or thing

Vortex - See Cone of power

Visualization - The forming of mental images.

Walpurgis Night - Beltane

Wand – A branch or piece of wood used to channel energy. See Baculum.

Waning Moon – The phase of the moon between Full Moon and New Moon.

Warlock - Originally term of abuse meaning "traitor," used rarely to signify male witch.

Watcher

(1) Elemental guardian,

(2) Old One

Waxing Moon – The phase of the moon from New Moon to Full Moon. This is the time for magick that involves growth and increase.

Werewolf - Predatory wraith form

Wicca -- 1) A contemporary pagan religion with spiritual roots in the earliest expressions of reverence for nature and celebration of the Goddess and God. 2) It is thought that this term was originally coined by Selena Fox of the Circle Sanctuary in an effort to describe the modern religion of Witchcraft (as begun by Gerald Gardner in England in the 1950's).

Widdershins - Anti-sun-wise

Witch -- A person who practices Witchcraft.

Witchcraft – The craft of a witch, sometimes, but not always of the wiccan faith, including spell work.

Wheel of the Year -- One full cycle of the seasonal year, divided into eight seasons celebrated with the Sabbats. Used by many, but not all witches.

Wraith, wraith form - Projected astral body. Mobile form of witch power ensouled by witch's exteriorized consciousness

Yule - A Sabbat marking the Winter Solstice (Dec. 21) celebrating the rebirth of the God.