

STAVES & WANDS

“I cannot read the fiery letters,” said Frodo in a quavering voice. ‘No,’ said Gandalf, ‘but I can. The letters are Elvish, of an ancient mode, but the language is that of Mordor, which I will not utter here.’” — The Fellowship of the Ring

This skill enables a character to use magic items. The skill is also known as Attunement. In order to cast spells or use abilities from an item, the wielder of the item must have made a successful Staves & Wands static maneuver.

“Teaching” someone else an item is not permitted because using an item is a personal experience between the individual and the item. Although you may tell someone what the item does and thus remove the penalty for not knowing the spell(s) and/or abilities in the item, you cannot aid them.

Certain spells on items do not normally require a roll for Staves & Wands, subject to GM stipulation. They include spells that operate constantly, bonuses built into items, and spells in intelligent items. All of these cases include spells that do not require the conscious casting of any spell by the wielder of the item. Some items with low intelligence have a bonus to the attunement roll for that item.

The activity of using a magic item depends on the spell it contains. An item holding an instantaneous spell equals a 10% attunement activity while a normal spell requires 75% activity. A character must roll for Staves & Wands in order to be able to use the spell in an item and then make a spell roll to see the effectiveness of the spell (i.e. for a directed spell, see how much damage it does, for a utility spell see if it fumble). The spell is usually cast “by the caster” for the purpose of duration and attack level.

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Static Maneuver Table SM-10.1.2

-26 down Spectacular Failure

You trigger whatever spell(s) in the item at the worst possible way. In addition, you are drained of all power points, the item is exhausted (if possible) and you have to roll on the appropriate spell fumble table.

-25 – -04 Absolute Failure

You drain the item of its powers (charged items will be permanently drained, others will regain their power over the course of 3 days) without receiving any benefits. The amount of power discharged require a roll on the spell fumble table (other non-attack spell column).

05 – 75 Failure

You are unable to use the item. You may do another attempt only after gaining additional information about the item or having received additional skill ranks in the attunement skill.

UM 66 Unusual Event

During your attunement attempt a mystical bond is created between you and the item. You are now able to use the item at will (without rolling again), but will also be emotionally attached to it. If you lose it you will feel severe grief, being at -10 to all actions for the first week and -5 for the second before getting normal again.

76 – 100 Partial Success

Your attempt fails for now, but you are not completely clueless. Spend 1-100 hours (GM decision or die roll) pondering and roll again with a +10 bonus.

UM 100 Unusual Event

You understand the item, learn the spells and may use them at will without having to roll again. Your higher level of understanding even let you instruct others how to use the item, letting them roll without any of the penalties below.

101 – 175 Success

Your maneuver succeeds normally. All further attempts to use this item have a +10 bonus (not cumulative with a Partial Success bonus above).

176 up Absolute Success

You attune to the item and may use it at will without having to roll for this skill again. The Realm and spell(s) of the item is known.

Static maneuver modifications:

Open-ended d100 roll

- 10 if spell is unknown.
- 20 if Realm of spell is unknown.
- 30 if the Realm differs from that of the character.
- + 10 if Success or Partial Success have been achieved earlier.
- + 10 if Realm of the spell is known.
- + 20 if the spell is known.
- + 30 if the character can cast spell intrinsically.