



# RUNE METAL & MAGIC CRYSTALS



## GAMEMASTER SOURCEBOOK PREVIEW

These guidelines are provided for the gamemaster's use for determining treasure or items derived from Rune metals, crystals, or other such valuable and magically-significant substances. The RUNEQUEST GAMEMASTER SOURCEBOOK provides a more expansive treatment.

## RUNE METAL

All metal is from the bones of gods, some dead and some (like the Earth Mother) still living. Bronze is the most common metal, mined right from the Earth in many places, which is why most of Glorantha lives in a Bronze Age.

Glorantha is not Earth, and the metals named in print as “bronze,” “iron,” “gold,” and so forth are analogues, not duplicates, of Earthly metals.

### GAME RULES FOR ENCHANTED METALS

All metals in Glorantha can be enchanted, giving them special magic properties. All exceptional metals are often titled Rune metals, to distinguish them from ordinary bronze. Many cults know the common divine spell of Enchant (Metal). The exact metal(s) enchanted vary from cult to cult.

Some enchanted Rune metal weapons work against magical creatures, and thus would harm physical things that are immune to normal metals (were-creatures, for example). Silver, bronze, and iron do this.

### AVERAGE VALUES FOR RAW (UNENCHANTED) METALS

METAL	PRICE PER POINT OF ENC
Aluminum	40 L
Bronze	7 L
Copper	5 L
Gold	600 L
Iron	700 L
Lead	1 L
Quicksilver	40L
Silver	50 L
Tin	15 L

The prices given for the various metals are only a rough approximation for Glorantha and differ greatly from place to place. Seshnela, for example, historically has had the world's greatest concentration of iron, and this wonderful metal is less expensive there. On the other hand, the barbaric inhabitants of the Wastes do not even smelt bronze; iron to them is unbelievably rare and costly, so everything is costlier.

### Magic Properties of Gloranthan Metals

- **Aluminum** (see **Quicksilver**)
- **Bronze** is the most important metal of Glorantha. It can be mined on its own but is more commonly made by alloying copper and tin. No Enchant rituals for it are common, but normal non-magical forging makes perfectly serviceable weapons, tools, and armor.
- **Copper** has the same ENC as normal bronze. When mixed with a bit of tin, Gloranthan bronze is created. Unenchanted copper armor and weapons are made sometimes. Raw copper armor has

equal armor points to bronze, but loses an armor point each time it is penetrated. Raw copper weapons have equal armor points to bronze but cannot damage bronze weapons. Enchanted copper armor and weapons are especially solid, and such weapons only lose armor points damage in combat when penetrated for over twice their armor point value. *For example, over 24 points of damage would be needed before an enchanted copper broadsword would lose any hit points. However, all damage over 12 points would go through to the wielder.*

Enchanted copper armor can be hammered very thin and still retain some solidity. This reduces the armor's defensive value by 1 point, but halves its ENC. Thus, a full suit of plate armor would have 5 armor points and weigh 6 ENC.

- **Gold** has twice the ENC of bronze. When enchanted, it glows softly in the dark and doubles the effectiveness of light-producing spells cast on it. Thus, a Light spell cast on golden armor would fill an area 20 meters in diameter. Since gold is so heavy and costly, most people wishing to make use of gold's special properties find it preferable to gold bronze armor.
- **Iron** has supernatural properties even when left unenchanted. When enchanted, iron weapons are tempered into steel. They have half again the armor points of bronze. *For example, a bronze broadsword has 12 hit points, but a tempered iron broadsword 18 hit points.* Enchanted iron armor also has half again the protection of bronze armor, rounding fractions down, so that a 6-point full helm is worth 9 points of protection at no increase in ENC. Unenchanted iron has the same physical qualities as bronze. However, it also affects magic. Untempered iron reduces the chance of both casting and being affected by a spell by 5% per point of ENC. Thus, a person wearing a complete suit of unenchanted iron (12 ENC) would have a 60% chance of being unaffected by a spell cast at them as well as a -60% penalty to any spells they cast. Certain of the elder races are additionally vulnerable to iron. Any damage from an iron weapon to an elf or troll (and some of their kindred races) that penetrates armor is doubled. Unenchanted iron does normal damage against creatures such as werewolves that are immune to normal weapons, but subject to magical weapons.

- **Lead** has half-again the ENC of bronze. Even in its unenchanted form, this soft, dull metal neither clanks or reflects, so lead armor never detracts from the user's Stealth skills. Lead formed into crushing weapons (only) does +2 damage. Thus, a heavy mace made of enchanted lead would do 1D10+4 damage. A war maul would do 2D8+2.
- **Quicksilver** and **Aluminum** are the same metal in two forms. A successful Craft (Quicksilver) skill roll can transform either form into the other. When enchanted, this metal gains the property that it does not sink in water. The Swim skill of an individual wearing quicksilver armor is not decreased at all. The metal's ENC is equal to bronze; its affinity for water is supernatural.
- **Silver**, enchanted or unenchanted, has the special property that it can damage creatures normally affected only by magic, such as werewolves and wraiths. Unenchanted silver is quite soft, and as a weapon it is only suitable for bludgeons or sling pellets.
- **Tin** is rarely enchanted. When a small quantity of tin is alloyed with copper, Gloranthan bronze is produced. Most tin is used for this purpose.

## MAGIC CRYSTALS

Just as the bones of dead gods provided Glorantha with bronze, the blood of dead and wounded gods provided crystals. These are marvelous items and are being found all the time. Magic crystals, being of the blood of the gods, are not subject to the effects of Divine Intervention spells. They are also indestructible.

They come in two varieties: **POW storing** and **powered**.

### DETERMINING THE NATURE OF A CRYSTAL

The only way to tell if a crystal is powered is by attempting to attune it, as described below. If the crystal is only a POW storing crystal, the adventurer will find they have just stored a magic point. If it is a powered crystal, the adventurer must overcome its POW, also described below.

To attempt this attunement, an adventurer must give up the attunement of any crystals they may have already attuned, because the attunement attempt will not work otherwise. If the adventurer then finds that the new crystal is a POW storing crystal, they can re-attune their old crystal, with no chance of failure but no chance of a POW gain roll. The

adventurer may also abandon attunement of a new crystal and re-attune the old one.

There is no limit to the number of POW storing crystals an adventurer may have, although they may have only one attuned powered crystal at any time.

The **Crystal Type** table determines the nature of a crystal.

**CRYSTAL TYPE**

D100	TYPE
01	Combination: roll twice and combine*
02	Extra POW, roll again and add 1D6 POW**
02–05	Healing focusing, 1D8 POW
06–08	Sensitivity, 1D8 POW
09–11	Twice POW yielding, 1D8 POW
12–14	Power enhancing, 1D8 POW
15–16	Spell reinforcing, 1D4 POW
17–18	Spell strengthening, 1D4 POW
19–20	Spell resisting, 1D4 POW
21–22	Spirit supporting, 1D4 POW
23–24	Spell storing, 1D4 POW
25–30	Flawed
31–00	POW storing/spirit trapping, 2D6+3

\* Roll D100 and divide by 4, rounding up. A powered crystal cannot be combined with a POW storing crystal.

\*\* This additional 1D6 can be added to the POW storable in a POW storing crystal.

**SPIRIT TRAPPING/  
POW STORING CRYSTALS**

About 70% of the magic crystals are “empty.” They have no intrinsic power of their own. However, they can be used to either contain a spirit or to store magic points for an adventurer, in effect giving them an additional source of magic points which they can “charge” out of their own POW.

Each of these “storage” crystals has a limit to the magic points it can store. This found by rolling 2D6+3. This limit does not apply, however, to the POW of a spirit contained within a crystal. These crystals have two primary uses:

- **Binding a Spirit:** If one does not wish to put a bound spirit into an animal as a familiar, one must find or buy a spirit trapping crystal. Once a spirit has been bound within such a crystal, the POW of the spirit is available for the use of the binder. The spirit may not throw spells itself or take other independent action unless the binder is attempting to control more spirits than their CHA

will allow. If the bound spirit’s POW is reduced to 0, the spirit is destroyed. Note that gods and demigods may not be bound.

- **POW Storage:** The owner of a POW storing crystal may store magic points within it, up to the limit it will accommodate, for use as desired. These magic points can only be used once. Each point is gone until the owner replaces it. The magic points in a storage crystal can be used to cast spells, but they do not count in magic resistance. The crystal also cannot be used to replace any magic points that an adventurer has used from their own reserve to cast spells.

A magic crystal can be used to do only one of the two things listed above. It cannot be used to store a spirit and magic points as well under any circumstances. Binding a spirit into a crystal with POW in it will force the magic points out. It cannot be tucked into “corners” the spirit doesn’t fill.

If an adventurer owning a crystal with a spirit bound in it is killed, the spirit returns to the spirit plane immediately.

**POWERED CRYSTALS**

Some of the crystals formed from the blood of the gods retain a certain potency. They possess various abilities and each also has a POW. An adventurer wishing to use a powered crystal must first attune the crystal.

**Attuning a Powered Crystal**

To attune a crystal, an adventurer must overcome the magic resistance of the crystal by application of their POW against the POW of the crystal. This takes one full week. The attack is resolved as if the adventurer had thrown a spell at the crystal. If the attack is successful, the adventurer has attuned the crystal. If they fail in the attempt, they will lose POW as described in the **POW Loss** table.

**POW Loss**

D100	POW LOST PERMANENTLY
01–60	1 point
61–90	2 points
91–00	3 points

Attuning a crystal also counts as a successful use of magic for the purpose of getting a POW gain roll. As soon as a crystal is attuned, it glows. Unfortunately, it is only possible to be attuned to one crystal at a time.

## Attributes of a Powered Crystal

The power of most of these crystals cannot be used directly by an adventurer. The power in the crystal serves to amplify and modify the power in the spells an adventurer casts through them. Each powered crystal has a specialized function which it makes available to the attuning adventurer. This special function is not known until the crystal is attuned.

## TYPES OF CRYSTALS

- **Combination:** Roll twice and combine. Add the POWs to obtain the total POW of the crystal for attunement but treat the two POWs separately in figuring capability. Thus, a POW 4 Sensitivity/POW 3 Healing focusing crystal has a POW of 7 for attunement purposes but can only double 3 points of Healing and aid four Detection spells.
- **Extra POW:** This indicates a crystal which has an extra dose of POW.
- **Healing Focusing:** These crystals double the effect of Healing spells cast by the attuned adventurer. Thus, a 3-point Healing spell does 6 points of cure but cost only 3 magic points. Note that a crystal will only double as many points of Healing as its POW. In other words, a 1-point crystal will only double 1 point of Healing.
- **Sensitivity:** These crystals make 1-point Detection spells free of any magic point cost to cast. They also allow the casting of 2-point Detection spells for the cost of 1 magic point. Of course, the adventurer must know the spells that they wish to cast. The crystal can aid in the casting of Detection spells the number of times a day equal to its POW. In other words, a Sensitivity crystal of POW 7 would allow an adventurer to cast seven 1-point detection spells per day for no cost or seven 2-point spells at a cost of 1 point each, or any combination of the above.
- **Twice POW Yielding:** The magic points of these crystals can be used by the owning adventurer to cast whatever spells they know. The crystals yield twice their POW per day for an adventurer's use. The crystal regains magic points separately from the adventurer at the same speed as do humans, i.e.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their POW per 6 hours. If the magic points of such a crystal are reduced to 0 by misuse or emergency, the crystal is effectively destroyed, becoming only a dull pebble.
- **Power Enhancing:** These double the effectiveness of variable strength spells (except for Healing) cast

by the attuned adventurer. Thus, a 2-point Bladesharp becomes a 4-point Bladesharp at the cost of 2 magic points instead of 4.

- **Spell Reinforcing:** Adds 1 point of POW per point of POW of the crystal to the characteristic POW of the user when they use an attack spell against the POW of a target. This even allows an adventurer to attack as if they had a POW over their species maximum. Thus, a Rune Priest with a POW of 18 and a 4-point spell reinforcing crystal could attack as if they had a POW of 22. This POW cannot be drawn on to cast spells and cannot be used to defend against a magical attack or spirit combat.
- **Spell Strengthening:** For every magic point used in a spell, this crystal will add 1 up to its limit in magic points. This is used for getting past Countermagic and Shield spells. Thus, an adventurer with this crystal of a POW of 4 could put 4 magic points of their own behind a Disrupt and get another 4 magic points from the crystal, which will get past most Countermagic spells. This does not drain the POW from the crystal, it will always have a POW of 4.
- **Spell Resisting:** This crystal is the opposite of the spell reinforcing crystal. It adds its POW to the magical defense of an adventurer, giving that adventurer extra POW to defend with. It cannot be used for anything else, including a defense against spirit combat.
- **Spirit Supporting Crystal:** Each point of the crystal's POW adds +10% to the user's Spirit Combat skill, for purposes of both attack and defense.
- **Spell Storing:** Each point of this crystal counts as 1 CHA point for possessing spirit magic spells or bound spirits. If the crystal is not attuned, even temporarily, the spell and spirits are lost. It takes one full day to store 1 point of spirit magic in such a crystal.
- **Flawed:** Looking for all the world like one of the above, these crystals have a taint of Chaos to them. One might be impossible to attune, whatever its ostensive power, or a POW decreasing crystal, or be impossible to de-attune once attuned. Each type should be different. That's what Chaos is. A flawed crystal may not be wholly bad. It may take a permanent POW drain of 1D4 points from a character and bestow a worthwhile power on them or possess one of the others shown above.