

## RUNIC ITEMS

Any item that bears a magical rune is considered a runic item. In addition to any other effects, a runic item is considered a magic item. Note that due to the Rule of Pride (detailed below) a runic item is also always a superior quality item, and as such it adds  $\square$  to the dice pool when its use is relevant.

## THE RULES OF RUNECRAFT

Like all things dwarfen, runic magic is surrounded by a wealth of history and tradition. The traditions and practices of the runesmiths are passed down as zealously as the runes they learn, and indeed it is impossible to distinguish tradition from the necessary practices integral to runic magic.

What is known is that all runic items and all runesmiths follow three essential laws of runecraft. Most runesmiths will say that these laws are primal, essential to the nature of runes and their magic.

### THE RULE OF THREE

No runic item may bear more than three magic runes. Even the mightiest of rune axes and talismans crafted by the most gifted runesmiths throughout history cannot break this limit. For relatively unskilled runesmiths, even the rule of three is outside their abilities. Apprentice runesmiths can generally only manage a single rune on a single item - they need more practice before they can manage to balance two powerful runes on a single item and have them both function. Most experienced runesmiths can reliably strike two mystic runes on the same weapon, talisman, or suit of armour, but three runes is the mark of a master.

#### ANVIL OF DOOM

The Anvils of Doom are amongst the most treasured relics of the dwarf race, forged in the distant mists of time by ancestors whose skill and craft humble the runesmiths of today. They are inscribed with runes modern runesmiths cannot fathom and possess powers greater than perhaps any other dwarfen runic item. In times of dire need, some dwarfholds transport their Anvil of Doom (for few holds have more than one) to the battlefield, where the throng's runelord strikes it with his runic hammer in precise accordance with secret traditions. Doing so unleashes devastating magics against the enemies of the dwarfs, or bestows mighty blessings upon the throng.

It is rare indeed that anyone other than a runelord is given the opportunity to use an Anvil of Doom for his own runecraft, and any runesmith given such an opportunity would do almost anything for the honour. It is whispered that only upon an Anvil of Doom can the mightiest master runes be struck.

## RUNE MAGIC

There are a small number of **Rune Magic** action cards included in the Black Fire Pass box set. These represent specific applications of a Runesmith's knowledge and skill and are only available to characters with an Apprentice Runesmith or Runesmith career ability card. Technically, they are **Spell** actions, but they do not draw upon the Winds of Magic or require a personal store of power as other spells do.

Except for the considerations noted above, these actions are treated just like any other **Spell** action card.

### THE RULE OF THREE IN-GAME

In game terms, an Apprentice Runesmith may only imbue each item with a single rune. A Runesmith of at least character Rank 2 can strike 2 runes onto a single item. Crafting an item with 3 runes is the sort of feat that requires heroic efforts and materials, and may only occur with the consent of the Game Master.

### THE RULE OF FORM

"Form follows function," it is often said, but as far as runic magic is concerned the opposite is also true. Certain runes are only functional when placed on an item of the appropriate form. A Rune of Cleaving, for example, only works when engraved and empowered on an axe or hammer. It would not benefit a dwarf if inscribed on his armbands or breastplate. No amount of runic magic will turn an axe into a shield, and not even the most foolish runesmith would attempt to inscribe a rune meant for one onto the other.

### THE RULE OF FORM IN-GAME

In game terms, each rune has a trait: *Weapon*, *Armour*, or *Talisman*. *Weapon* runes must be attached to melee weapons; *Armour* runes must be attached to armour or shields. *Talisman* runes may be added to a variety of small items meant to be worn or carried about the person, such as jewellery, a lucky tankard, or a banner. However, no matter how many different talismans a dwarf takes to carrying, they collectively count as a single runic item. The Rule of Three still applies: he can only bear up to a maximum of 3 talismanic runes before they all stop working. (A dwarf can stow a few of his talismans in his pack or otherwise out of sight, if he so chooses - talismans stored this way don't count as worn.)

### THE RULE OF PRIDE

This is perhaps the most important and hardest to define rule of rune magic. All dwarfs are proud of their work, of course, and constantly strive to produce items of the best possible craftsmanship. To do so is to honour one's ancestors and ensure a place of glory amongst them when the time comes.

However, runesmiths believe that their runes are also proud, and so must be treated with at least as much respect and honour as a dwarf. There are many facets of the Rule of Pride, including, but not necessarily limited to: