

HERBS AND HERBALISTS

Herbs and Herblore

Broadly defined, ‘herb’ is a synonym for ‘plant’. Thus, any plant— be it fungus, flower, fern, or tree— can be described an herb. The Hârnmaster skill *Herblore* represents a character’s familiarity with the identification, use, and mythology of all kinds of plants.

Usually, however, the term ‘herb’ refers more specifically to any aromatic plant or plant part that is used for cooking, medicine, or both. In common parlance, the term ‘herblore’ particularly connotes knowledge of the pharmacological properties of herbs—as medicines for weal, or poisons for woe.

Although it briefly touches on other subjects, this article is concerned with herbs of healing virtue. It provides Hârnmaster rules for the discovery, preparation, and use of herbal medicines. As such, it is primarily intended for use by PC apothecaries, but it may of interest to any character with knowledge of herblore.

Herbalists

Members of the Apothecaries’ Guild are Hârn’s most respected herbalists and the only ones who have the right to prepare and sell medicinal herbs for profit. Guilded apothecaries, however, do not have a monopoly on herbal knowledge. Physicians and midwives are usually wise in the ways of herblore. The shamans and wise women of Hârn’s tribal nations are capable herbalists. The priests of the Taelda, in fact, are among the most skilled herbalists in all of Hârn.

The main activities of an herbalist are finding herbs, harvesting them, and turning them into medicines. By law, apothecaries are permitted to make medicines and sell herbs, but are forbidden from prescribing medicines or administering them to patients. In practice, however, small breaches are regularly overlooked by the Physicians’ Guild.

Typically, the most useful Hârnmaster skills for an herbalist are *Herblore*, *Alchemy*, *Foraging*, and *Physician*.

Herbal Descriptions and Properties

Some herbs are naturally more plentiful than others. Each herb is classified as either *Very Common*, *Common*, *Uncommon*, *Rare*, or *Very Rare* to reflect its general scarcity.

Seasonal and topographical factors also affect the availability of herbs. The practical effects of this on herb-hunting can be found in the next section.

Target and Potency

Medicinal herbs vary widely in use. Some help only with specific ailments, while others have multiple uses. Some have mind-altering qualities (aphrodisiac, hallucinogenic) rather than healing ones. Even the most beneficial of healing herbs can be harmful— even deadly— if prepared or administered improperly.

For each herb introduced into the campaign, the GM must determine two basic attributes: the herb’s *Target* and its *Potency*.

Target indicates which ailments the herb is effective for treating, medicinally speaking. “Eye ailments”, “aching joints”, and “bloodloss” are typical examples of targets. Some herbs with unusual properties (e.g. aphrodisiacs) may have a target of “Special”.

Potency refers to the strength of the herb. Potency is represented by a number between 0 and 5. A potency of 0 indicates that an herb is an ineffective placebo; a potency of 5 represents an herb of singular strength. No herbs have a natural Potency higher than five, but it is possible to create herbal medicines with potencies of six or higher or above through medicinal Preparation and Enhancement (q.v.).

A patient treated with an appropriate herbal medicine typically gains MLs bonus on all medical rolls (healing rolls, infection rolls, etc.) pertaining to the target ailment of the herb.¹ The amount of this bonus is equal to 1d6 x Potency, as illustrated on the Herb Potency Table below:

¹ For non-healing drugs, this might instead function as a bonus or penalty on some other roll. An aphrodisiac with a potency of 2, for instance, might give a character a 2d6 bonus on Lovecraft.

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Herb Potency Table

Potency of Herb	Description of Effect	ML Bonus
0	useless	0
1	weak	1d6
2	moderate	2d6
3	strong	3d6
4	excellent	4d6
5	truly remarkable	5d6

This bonus is given in addition to any bonuses that may derive from being under a physician's care (see Physician-4 in the *Hårnmaster Gold Player's Edition*).

Regardless of a medicine's potency, its effects are only temporarily. As a general rule, 1 'dose' of a healing medicine provides 1 day of ML bonuses. A new dose will need to be administered if the bonus is to be extended to the following day. Some non-healing medicines (e.g. hallucinogens, aphrodisiacs, soporifics) as well as many poison antidotes, are of shorter duration.

PLANTFINDING

Many herbalists cultivate gardens, providing a ready supply of the most commonly used plants. Some herbs, however, resist cultivation and must be sought in the wild.

In the Apothecaries' Guild, it is typical for a master to have his journeymen find plants for him. Occasionally, apothecaries will be willing to purchase herbs from trusted 'outsiders', for 1/3 to 1/4 of their normal selling price.

When harvesting cultivated herbs from a garden, no skill tests are required. When seeking wild plants, however, herbalists use a derived skill called *Plantfinding*.

Plantfinding EML is the average of the character's Foraging and Herblore MLs. *Plantfinding* SI is equal to Plantfinding EML divided by 10 and rounded down. (Ex.: *Devar the Journeyman has an Herblore ML of 71 and a Foraging of 58. Thus, his Plantfinding EML is 65 and his Plantfinding SI is 6*). Plantfinding

EML does not develop independently; it improves as the two base skills improve.

Effective plantfinding requires one full watch (i.e. four hours) of *active* searching, testing, and harvesting. It also requires appropriate tools for harvesting (knife and trowel) and several pouches, baskets, or other containers for holding harvested plants and plant parts.

Searching For Herbs

For each full watch spent searching, an herbalist may make up to Plantfinding SI separate Plantfinding Search Rolls (PSRs). Each PSR is conducted separately, and before each, the herbalist must specify which specific herb s/he is looking for. Up to SI different plants may be sought—or the same plant may be sought up to SI times—in a given watch.

An herbalist's success in finding herbs on a PSR depends on three factors besides his *Plantfinding* ML: the *Scarcity* of the herb ("How rare is it?"), the seasonal availability of the herb ("Does it grow this time of year?"), and the appropriateness of the environment in which the herbalist is searching ("Are you looking for an aquatic plant in a desert?").

The modifiers for each of those factors are shown on the following table:

Plantfinding Multipliers Table

Season	Multiple
Ideal	x 1.25
Appropriate	x 1.00
Marginal	x 0.50
Inappropriate	x 0.00
Habitat	Multiple
Ideal	x 1.25
Appropriate	x 1.00
Marginal	x 0.50
Inappropriate	x 0.00
Scarcity	Multiple
Very Common	x 1.25
Common	x 1.00
Uncommon	x 0.75
Rare	x 0.50
Very Rare	x 0.25

All multipliers are cumulative. Multiplying all three by Plantfinding ML will give Plantfinding EML for this particular plant, in this particular location, at this particular time. At GM discretion, additional penalties/bonuses may be applied.

The success level of each Plantfinding roll will determine whether the desired herb is found and in what quantity.

Found Herbs: Quantity

The number of usable plants found with each SRT is determined by taking the *effective* Plantfinding SI from that roll and cross-referencing it with the success level of the roll itself on the Hårnmaster Value Enhancement Table.

A CS or MS result indicates the number of ‘doses’ worth of the sought plant that are found with that particular roll. At GM discretion, a CS may also indicate that the herb is of unusually high potency (+1). MF results are variable, but usually indicate that the desired herb was not found. Alternatively, it may be that a dose or two of an ‘inferior’ substitute was found instead.

CF on the searching roll indicates that neither the desired plant, nor an inferior substitute was found. In addition, the herbalist will lose 1d6 of any remaining Plantfinding rolls for this watch. Alternatively, and at GM discretion, it could mean that the herbalist has identified the wrong plant or gathered plants that are in some way diseased or otherwise contaminated.

Value Enhancement Table

SI	CS	MS	MF
0	1.1	1.0	1.0
1	1.3	1.0	1.0
2	1.6	1.1	1.0
3	2.0	1.2	1.0
4	2.5	1.3	1.0
5	3.0	1.5	1.0
6	4.0	2.0	1.0
7	5.0	2.5	1.1
8	6.0	3.0	1.2
9	7.0	3.5	1.3
10	8.0	4.0	1.4
11	9.0	5.0	1.5
12	10.0	6.0	1.6

Found Herbs: Quality

As a general rule, herbs tend to have the same medicinal potency regardless of when/where they are gathered. At GM discretion, however, any of the following exceptions may apply:

Resists Cultivation. Some herbs have not successfully been cultivated. They may, with difficulty, be grown in gardens, but such specimens are always less potent than their wild counterparts (-1d3 to Potency).

Shava Forest. Herbs growing within the Shava Forest tend to be stronger than those found elsewhere (+1 to Potency).

Winter Dormancy. Although some kinds of herbs (e.g. barks, roots, etc.) are harvestable year round, most will be less potent if gathered in winter, when the plant is dormant (-1d2 to Potency).

Astrological Influences. In Hårn, astrology exerts a very real influence on the growth and potency of herbs. Each herb has an association with one of the six ‘planets’ of the Hårnic sky. If an herb is gathered during favorable astrological conditions (e.g. while its associated planet is ascendant), it will have increased potency (+1d2 to Potency).

Additional exceptions may be added at GM discretion.

Herb Selling Prices

Herb Scarcity	Normal Selling Price
Very Common	.25 d x Potency/ dose
Common	2d x Potency/dose
Uncommon	4d x Potency/dose
Rare	20d x Potency/dose
Very Rare	40d x Potency/dose

Prepared medicines may sell for prices between 3-10 times as much as raw herbs.

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MEDICINES

Raw Herbs and Prepared Medicines

Some herbs may be used 'raw', without any real preparation on the part of the herbalist. Fruits, seeds and roots may be eaten; leaves may be bruised and placed on wounds; etc. Raw herbs tend to be less effective than prepared medicines (-1d2 to Potency), as well as to have unpleasant side effects.

Typically, raw herbs are brought back to an herbalist's shop, where they are then prepared into medicines. The techniques of preparation vary widely depending on the herb and the form of medicine it is to be made into (see below). Typical procedures include drying, grinding, juicing, boiling, straining, and combination with other ingredients. Some complex techniques (e.g. distilling) are available only to those with advanced alchemical equipment and knowledge.

Forms of Medicine

Herbs may be made into several different kinds of medicines: teas, decoctions, syrups, preserves, pills, poultices, plasters, etc. Depending on the herb, the ailment to be treated, the part of the body affected, and the length of time the medicine is expected to be stored, some forms are superior to others. What follows is a list of the most typical medicinal forms, their means of preparation, and their relative advantages and disadvantages.¹

Teas

Teas are the simplest of medicines. A tea consists of a small quantity of dried or fresh herbs, flaked or crushed, to which hot water is added. The mixture is left to steep for several minutes and then strained. It is then ready to administer to the patient.

Tears are of below average strength (-1 to Potency) and are effective for only 1-2 days, once mixed with water. They also tend to be unpalatably bitter.

Teas, however, can be made quickly and easily with little equipment or skill. They also tend to be quick acting: reduce the onset time of effects by 50%, if applicable.

Syrups

A syrup is prepared by mixing bruised herbs with honeyed water, wine, barley water, or fruit must. The mixture is then boiled for several hours. More honey, herbs, and water/wine may be added later. When the herbalist sees fit, the mixture is removed from heat, strained, and cooled.

When used, syrups are drunk by the patient. Syrups are of average strength (± 0 to Potency) and are especially effective (+1 Potency) for mouth, throat, and lung ailments.

If prepared properly and stored well, syrups will keep for 8-12 weeks.

Decoctions

A decoction is a thin syrup intended for short-term use, rather than long-term storage. It is made in the same way as a syrup save that, after cooling, it is mixed with full-strength wine, ale, or cider.

Like syrups, decoctions are always intended for internal use. They are especially effective (+1 Potency) at treating ailments of the bowels, liver, and spleen, and urinary tracts. They are of average strength (± 0 Potency), but rarely last more than 1-2 weeks.

Waters

A medicinal water is a prepared tea intended for long-term storage. Crushed or bruised herbs are placed in water and allowed to soak unheated for several days. The mixture is then distilled, and the ascetate collected and stored.

Medicinal waters are typically ingested, although some can be used topically. They are weaker than other forms of medicine (-1 to Potency), but they are long-lasting. If prepared properly and sealed well, they can keep their full potency for several months. Like teas, waters are fast acting: Reduce effect onset time by 50% if appropriate.

¹ See also Appendix A.

Tinctures

A tincture is an infusion of herbs in alcohol. Bruised/crushed herbs are placed in a sealed vessel with *aqua ardens* (distilled alcohol, of either the wood or grain varieties) and allowed to soak unheated for several weeks. The resulting tincture is then strained and stored.

Tinctures are for topical use only— and indeed, consuming one made with wood alcohol can be deadly! Tinctures are of above average strength (+1 Potency with fresh herbs) and are highly effective (+1 to Potency) at treating sores, burns, and open or infected wounds.

(NOTE: Tinctures may also be made using *aqua vita*, an alchemically enhanced form of alcohol. If this is done, increase Potency +1 more).

If properly prepared and stored, a tincture will keep its strength for 4-5 years. They are, however, very expensive to buy.

Oils

Oils are made by soaking bruised herbs in a neutral plant oil (e.g. linseed, olive, almond, etc.) for several days, ideally in warm weather or in a bed of compost or manure. The mixture is then heated slowly over flame until the herbs begin to darken and burn. The resulting oil is then strained and stored.

Oils are prepared both for internal and topical use. In the latter case, they are often mixed with wine, vinegar, or turpentine before application.

Oils tend to be of average strength (± 0 to Potency). If stored properly, they will last up to a year. Some herbs do not make effective oils.

Electuaries

An electuary is a small mass of honey, mixed with pulped or powdered herbs, that has been allowed to crystallize so as to form a kind of herbal lozenge. This lozenge is sucked upon or licked by the patient. Salt is sometimes added.

Electuaries are not very popular forms of medicine since the taste is usually quite unpleasant in spite of the honey. They are of average strength (± 0 to Potency), but are especially effective (+1 Potency) for ailments of the mouth, throat, stomach, and head. In drier

climates, electuaries can keep for up to a year, but in rainy Hårn, they begin to lose their potency after 3-4 months.

Conserves & Preserves

Conserves and preserves are what result when herbs, fruits, roots, etc. are stewed with honey and/or pectin-rich fruit (e.g apples) until a thick jam results. Vinegar and salt are sometimes added to improve flavor or longevity.

Conserves/preserves are usually much better tasting than electuaries or syrups, though they tend to be weaker (-1 to Potency). They are, of course, intended for consumption, rather than topical use. Conserves and Preserves, if properly prepared and stored, can last up to six months.

Troches

A troche is a dry medicinal 'cake' to be eaten by the patient. They are typically made by combining a medicinal *water* (q.v.) of the herb with some type of gum or resin and allowing the mixture to sit until it becomes mucilage. This mucilage is then augmented with dried, powdered herb or juice and then shaped made into several small lozenges. These are then dried near a low fire until they become solid, acquiring a consistency somewhere between that of an electuary and hard tack.

Troches are not very potent (-1 to Potency), but are long-lasting (approximately 1 year). They are popular among travelers since they do not need to be stored in pots, jars, etc., but may simply be wrapped in leaves or cloth.

Pills

A pill is a small ball of medicine with a waxen coating intended to be consumed whole. They are typically prepared by mixing pulverized herbs with a tiny bit of syrup, jelly, gum, resin, and/or honey and heating it till it forms a thick paste. This paste is then divided up into small balls that are then coated with a thin layer of wax.

Pills are of average strength (± 0 to potency with fresh herbs). They are especially effective (+1 Potency) for treating blood loss, infections, diseases, and whole-body disorders.

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Pills also have unusually strong side effects, regardless of the ailment. They also are slow-acting (increase onset time by 50%). If prepared and stored properly, pills will last 6-8 months.

Ointments

An ointment is a mixture of herbs with solid animal fats intended for topical use. Ointments are typically produced by combining the crushed herb and/or its juice with lard or goose grease in a mortar. The mixture is then let to rest for several days in a sealed pot in a warm place for several days. The mixture is then strained, more herbs added, and the process repeated until the herbalist feels that the ointment is strong enough. After the final straining, the mixture is brought to a boil and small amounts of wax and/or pine resin are added.

Ointments are of average strength (± 0 to Potency) but are especially effective (+1 Potency) for strains, sprains, and degenerative joint ailments like gout, rheumatism, dropsy, et al.. They last for 3-4 months if made and stored properly.

Plasters

Plasters are essentially ointments that are thickened by the addition of other substances. Unlike ointments, they are prepared quickly and over direct heat, rather than slowly over many days. When the mixture of fat and herb is hot, the 'thickeners' are added. These thickeners may include any or all of the following: quicksilver, lead, brimstone, chalk, salt, wax, ashes, resins, clay, sand, sulfur, vitriol, blood, ground bones, and even animal feces. Plasters are for external use only.

The effectiveness of plasters is highly variable. Many urban physicians recommend them only as a 'last resort' when other treatments have failed, though they remain popular among rural healers. They do not last long, 1-2 weeks at most.

Poultices

A poultice is essentially a medicinal 'gel' or 'mash' that is applied to a cloth and then applied

externally. To prepare a poultice, the herbalist first takes the appropriate herbs and crushes them into as fine a powder or paste as possible. This is mixed with water and gum and boiled into a light jelly. At this point, a bit of barley-flour, suet, or stale bread may be added. While the preparation is still hot, pieces of cloth are then soaked within it and then applied topically. Poultices are of average strength (± 0 Potency with fresh herbs, -1 with dried). They are especially effective (+1 to Potency) for bruises, fractures, and minor cuts and pierces. For reasons few understand, their effectiveness is increased further (yet another +1 to Potency) if they are applied after the patient has first been purged of excess bodily fluids, through the ingestion of emetics, diuretics, and/or laxatives. Poultices, however, do not last long. They lose these bonuses if they are allowed to cool before application, and begin to lose their normal potency after only 2-3 days.

PREPARING MEDICINES

The preparation of medicines is one of the most crucial tasks of an herbalist. Most herbalists try to faithfully follow recipes that they learned in their training, but substitutions and variations sometimes inevitable due to ingredient or equipment availability.

The two most important Hårnmaster skills for the preparation of medicines are Herblore and Alchemy. The former represents the herbalist's basic plant-handling skills and his knowledge of plants' natural properties. The latter represents his/her ability to use alchemical equipment, techniques, and substances to enhance those properties.

In terms of preparation method, medicines may be divided into *simple medicines* and *compound medicines*. Simple medicines contain only one active herb. Compound medicines contain two or more active herbal ingredients. The methods of preparing each are similar, but they are handled separately in this document.

Simple Medicines

When preparing a simple medicine, an herbalist is assigned a number of *Medicinal*

Preparation Points (MPPs) equal to his Herblore SI + Alchemy SI. These points are then “spent” by the herbalist in preparing the medicine.

A basic simple medicine is made by testing Herblore ML + Alchemy SI, modified by the form of medicine, as shown on the Medicine Preparation Table below. The base MPP cost of preparing the medicine is also shown on this table.

Type of Medicine	MPP	EML
Tea	1	+25
Syrup	2	—
Decoction	2	+10
Water	3	-25
Tincture	2	-10
Oil	2	—
Electuary	2	-05
Conserves/Preserves	2	—
Troche	2	-10
Pills	2	-15
Ointment	2	—
Plaster	3	-20
Poultice	2	-10

Medicine Preparation

Additional penalties may be assessed for poor quality materials, rushed preparation, etc. A bonus of +10 may be added to EML for *each extra MPP* spent by the herbalist on basic preparation. A medicine may not be made if the herbalist lacks either sufficient MPPs or the necessary equipment and ingredients.

MS on this roll means that preparation was successful, resulting in a normal Potency medicine. CS means that it was successful and that the herbalist regains the base MPP cost of the preparation (but not any MPPs used to improve final EML). MF means that the initial preparation attempt has been unsuccessful; although the herbalist may make another attempt with the same ingredients if sufficient MPPs remain. CF means that the preparation was completely botched and the ingredients ruined.¹

¹ On a CF, however, the herbalist may make a *Salvage* attempt (see Enhancement) if any MPPs remain.

Compound Medicines

Compound medicines are medicines with two or more active herbal ingredients. The number and kinds of herbs in a compound are subject to several restrictions. First, and foremost, all the herbs in a compound must be effective for the same ailment. There is little point in making a compound with one herb that is useful only for earaches and another useful only for contraception.

Secondly, all of the herbs in a compound must be alchemically compatible. In rules terms, this is reflected by the astrological associations of each herb. All of the herbs used to make a compound medicine must therefore be ruled by the same planet.²

Provided those two restrictions are met, compound medicines are prepared in essentially the same way as simple medicines, with the following differences:

In addition to the modifier for medicine type (e.g. tea, syrup), there is an additional penalty of -10 to EML for each herb in the compound (2 herbs = -20 to EML, 3 herbs = -30 to EML, etc.) when preparing a compound medicine.

MPP cost for basic preparation is multiplied by the total number of herbs in the compound. With two herbs, it is doubled; with three herbs, tripled; etc.

If successfully prepared, the base Potency of a compound is a function of all the herbs in it, determined as follows: Take the most potent herb that will be used in the compound and note its Potency. Now, take the sum of all the other herbs in the compound, divide that by 2 and round up, adding the resulting number to the Potency of the strongest herb. The final sum is the Potency of the compound as a whole, prior to any modifications for medicine type or enhancements. The base Potency of a compound may never be higher than twice that of the most Potent herb within it.

² This rule is intended as a general guide for medicinal herbalists. The GM, should s/he wish, may certainly allow the creation of medicines, potions, or other alchemical compounds out of astrologically incompatible herbs. It is, however, recommended that such concoctions be considered extremely rare alchemical recipes, rather than ordinary medicinal preparation.

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In determining potency modifiers for medicine type, the less advantageous number is used if a mixture of dried and fresh herbs were used in preparation.

ENHANCING MEDICINES

Once it has been established that a medicine was properly prepared, the herbalist may choose to spend any remaining MPPs on enhancing it.¹ Many different kinds of enhancements may be attempted. The MPP costs and EMLs of the most typical are shown on the following table:

Herblore/Alchemy

Medicine Enhancements

Enhancement	MPP
Alter Onset Time	2
Alter Duration	2
Increase Storage Time	3
Increase Yield	4
Reduce Side Effect	4
Alter Aroma/Taste	5
Increase Potency	5
<i>Salvage</i>	<i>1</i>

As with basic preparation, the herbalist may gain a bonus of +10 for each additional MPP spent on an Enhancement attempt. Descriptions of the listed enhancements may be found on the following pages.

Typical Medicinal Enhancements

Alter Onset Time In many cases, the delay between the time a medicine is given and the time it takes effect is inconsequential. For some drugs, (e.g. antidotes, aphrodisiacs, etc.) however, onset

time is crucial. The herbalist must specify in advance whether s/he is attempting to increase or decrease onset time. With CS, MS, or MF, consult the Value Enhancement Table and multiple/divide the original onset time by the resulting number to determine the amount of the increase/decrease. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Alter Duration The effect of many medicines is cumulative and gradual. Some medicines (e.g. stimulants, hallucinogens, soporifics), however, produce effects that last for specific period of time. The herbalist may, through various means, attempt to alter the duration of the medicine's effects. S/he must specify in advance whether s/he is attempting to increase or decrease duration. With CS, MS, or MF, consult the Value Enhancement Table and multiply/divide the original effect duration by the resulting number to determine the amount of the increase/decrease it. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Increase Yield The herbalist may attempt to increase the number of 'doses' resulting from his/her preparation. With CS, MS, or MF, consult the Value Enhancement Table and multiply the resulting number by the original number of doses. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Increase Storage Time Medicines lose their potency over time. Some medicines will last for days; others for years. The herbalist may attempt to increase the storage period of the medicine. With CS, MS, or MF, consult the Value Enhancement Table and multiply the resulting number by the original storage time of the medicine. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Reduce Side Effects Many herbal medicines have incidental "side effects". Such side effects may be minor, nuisancesome, or downright harmful, depending on the herb in question. A skilled herbalist, with appropriate equipment and ingredients, may attempt to reduce the side effect.

¹ In fact, most of these enhancements would be performed while the medicine is being prepared, rather than afterwards. However, as a rules mechanic, they are to be handled afterwards.

With MS, the herbalist appreciably reduces a specified side effect. With CS, he can eliminate it entirely. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Alter Odor/Taste Most herbal preparations have a strong and distinctive odor and taste. The herbalist may attempt to decrease or alter aromas or flavors in the medicine. This is quite difficult to do, even with proper alchemical materials. It is rarely attempted except in cases where the goal is to produce a medicine that is designed to be undetectable (such as a poison). With MS, the herbalist succeeds in reducing the medicine's distinctive smell/taste. With CS, he can make it completely undetectable, or even give it another scent/taste. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Increase Potency The herbalist may attempt to use alchemical equipment, ingredients, and processes to increase a medicine's potency. With CS, Potency is increased by 2. With MS, it is increased by 1. With MF it remains unaltered. With CF, the medicine is ruined, although the herbalist may still attempt to *Salvage* it (see below) if any MPPs remain.

Salvage This is not truly an 'enhancement' so much as an effort to prevent all from being lost if a preparation or enhancement attempt resulted in a CF. It may only be attempted once per critically failed roll. With CS, the medicine is restored to the state it was before the CF, although no MPPs are regained. With MS, the medicine is salvaged but is inferior in some way; note the state it was before the CF and then roll 1d6 on the Salvage MS table below. With MF, the medicine is still unusable; no further salvage attempts may be made. With CF, something goes terribly wrong, according to the discretion and malice of the GM.

Salvage MS Table

Die Roll	Salvage MS Results
1	decrease Potency by 1d2
2	decrease yield by 2d4 x 10%
3	decrease storage time by 2d4 x 10%
4	increase/add unpleasant side effect
5	decrease yield by 2d4 x 10%
6	decrease Potency by 1d2

Other enhancements may be handled at the discretion of the GM.

An Example of Medicine Preparation and Enhancement

Naiklos of Kulbeber is an apothecary with an Herblore ML of 73 and an Alchemy ML of 54. He also has a nicely prepared shop with adequate but unexceptional alchemical equipment and ingredients.

He has recently harvested 10 doses of crosswort leaves, which are (in Hårn at least), a Potency-2 herb for treating cuts and abrasions. He decides to make a simple medicine out of them, rather than trying to make them into a compound. Naiklos decides to make the crosswort into a tincture, since tinctures are especially effective for treating skin wounds and are extremely long-lasting. The fact that he has an ample supply of usable *aqua ardens* (alcohol) already on hand makes the decision easier; should he have to distill the alcohol from scratch, he might instead decide to make an ointment or a medicinal water.

The first thing that is to be done is to determine Naiklos' MPPs. With an Herblore SI of 7 and an Alchemy SI of 5, he has 12 MPP to use in preparing this tincture of crosswort, which is more than enough to pay the 2 MPP cost of preparing a tincture.

Since the base EML for preparing any medicine is equal to Herblore ML + Alchemy SI, Naiklos starts off with a base EML of 78 (73+5). However, as indicated on the Medicine Preparation table (p. 9), there is a -10 penalty for preparing tinctures, so his EML for making the tincture is lowered to 68. That's pretty good, but Naiklos is cautious. He decides to be extra careful in performing the preparation and spends 3 of his MPPs to get a +30 bonus, thereby bringing his final EML up to 98!

So, a roll is now made to determine how successful Naiklos was in preparing the tincture. His player rolls the dice: 84, a Marginal Success. (Good thing he spent those extra MPPs, or else it would have been a Marginal Failure). He now has 10 doses worth of Tincture of Crosswort, with a Potency of 4 (base potency of herb = 2, +1 to Potency for a tincture made with fresh herbs,

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+1 more to Potency for a medicine that will be used on open wounds).

Naiklos now has the option of trying to enhance the tincture by spending his remaining MPPs. (He started with 12, used 2 for the basic preparation of the tincture, and used 3 more to increase the EML of his basic preparation roll. This means he still has 7 remaining). Naikos briefly toys with the idea of increasing the medicine's Potency, but instead decides to try and its yield, so as to wind up with more doses.

Increasing the yield of a medicine costs 4 MPP, which will leave Naiklos with 3 after the attempt is made. His base EML for increasing the yield of a medicine is 64 (the average of 73 and 54, rounded off). Naiklos, still cautious, decides to spend 2 of his remaining 3 MPPs to give +20 to EML, making for a final EML of 84. (He's keeping the final MPP in reserve in case the attempt to increase the yield Critically Fails).

Again, Naiklos' player rolls: 96, a Marginal Failure. Still, maybe some good was done. The effective SI to be checked on the Value Enhancement Table is 8, since 84 was the final EML that was rolled against. When cross-referenced with the MF column of the table, the number that results is 1.2. This means that Naiklos only succeed in increasing the total yield to 12 doses (10 x 1.2).

Since the 1 MPP remaining isn't useful on its own, Naiklos is now finished with this batch of medicine, which is now stored and awaiting sale or use. Ultimately, for all of his time and efforts, Naiklos ends up with 12 doses of Potency-4 tincture of crosswort. Anyone whose wounds are treated with this medicine will gain a 4d6 bonus on the healing and infection rolls for those wounds.

Part V: Using Medicines

Diagnosis and Prescription

For a healing medicine to work, it must be effective against an ailment that the patient is actually suffering.¹ An herb whose main value is

the easing of menstrual cramps is not likely to be of much use in healing infected wounds.

The first task in using an herbal medicine, therefore, is knowing the nature of the ailment itself. In some cases— burns, compound fractures, toothaches, serpent bites, etc.— this will be obvious. For other ailments (e.g. diseases, poisoning, internal bleeding, etc.) things are not always so clear. The Physician skill may be used to diagnose such ailments. The higher of Physician ML and Herblore ML may be used to determine which herbs and medicines should be most effective at treating that particular ailment.

If the ailment is misdiagnosed— or the wrong medicine given for a correctly diagnosed ailment— the results will rarely be beneficial.²

Administering the Medicine

Assuming that the medicine itself is ready-to-use, it is used to treat the patient in the manner most appropriate given the nature of the ailment and the form of medicine being used. Syrups are drunk, pills swallowed, ointments rubbed into the skin, etc.

In most cases, no skill roll is necessary for administering a medicine. There are, however, certain instances in which a skill roll may be called for. Getting a sick horse to open its mouth and swallow a pill may require for an Animalcraft roll. Getting a stubborn human patient to do the same might call for a Rhetoric roll. In such circumstances, the GM will determine whether a skill roll is called for and if so, which one.

The typical effects of administered medicines are discussed at the beginning of this document in the "Herbs and Their Uses" section.

¹ Non-healing drugs (e.g. contraceptives, hallucinogens, aphrodisiacs, poisons, etc.) may, of course, be used perfectly well on patients with no ailments at all.

² There are, of course, some medicines that are effective against many different ailments. There are even some herbs, like kargele, that are general cure-alls, useful for any and all ailments.

Appendix A: Table of Medicinal Forms

Medicine Type	EML ¹	Potency ²	Bonus Potency (+1)	Storage Time	Onset Time	Cost/dose ³	Notes
Teas	+25	-1/-1	—	1-2 days (once made)	-50%	3 x raw herb	—
Syrups	—	±0/-1	Mouth, throat, and lung ailments.	8-12 months	—	5 x raw herb	—
Decoctions	+10	±0/-1	Bowel, liver, spleen, and urinary ailments.	1-2 weeks	—	4 x raw herb	—
Waters	-25	-1/-2	—	1-2 years	-50%	7 x raw herb	—
Tinctures	-10	+1/±0	Sores, burns, open wounds.	4-5 years	—	10 x raw herb	Additional +1 to Potency for using <i>aqua vita</i> .
Oils	—	±0/-1	—	1 year	—	4 x raw herb	—
Electuaries	-05	±0/-1	Mouth, throat, stomach, and head ailments.	3-4 months	—	4 x raw herb	—
Conserves & Preserves	—	-1/-2	—	6 months	—	3 x raw herb	—
Troches	-10	-1/-2	—	1 year	—	5 x raw herb	Easy to transport
Pills	-15	±0/-1	Bloodloss, infections, disease.	6-8 months	+50%	6 x raw herb	—
Ointments	—	±0/-1	Strains, sprains, joint pains.	3-4 months	—	4 x raw herbs	—
Plasters	-20	variable	—	1-2 weeks	—	3-10 x raw herbs	—
Poultices	-10	±0/-1	Bruises, fractures, minor cuts, scrapes.	Immediate use	—	5 x raw herbs	Purging the body increases Potency +1

¹ EML modifier for basic preparation of the medicine.

² The first number indicates the Potency modifier when using fresh herbs. The second, when using dry herbs.

³ Raw herb costs may be found in the chart on p. 2 of the “Advanced Herblore” article. If the Potency of the medicine has been altered as a result of alchemical enhancements, recalculate the base cost using the new Potency. An improvement in other factors— like Duration, Onset Time, Side Effects, etc.— will generally have the same cost effect as an increase in Potency.