

# Season of the Witch

## Player's Handbook

*Version 1.0*

**MAGIC IS REAL.** Throughout recorded history, claims of magic have been met with three responses that evolved from one another. At first there was fear, then persecution, and finally skepticism. Now the witches have come out of the broom closet, and doubt has been swept aside as the skeptics are forced to face a new reality. But for the witches whose secrets are now public, what response will they next receive? Will the response evolve to a new level as the public embraces the idea of magic? Or will society return to its old history, returning to fear and persecution?

**SEASON OF THE WITCH.** Welcome to Season of the Witch, a roleplay-intensive B/C shop found on Gaia Online. Let this document serve as an introduction and your guide through the shop's lore, rules, ways to get involved, and more. If you have any questions about the shop that are not answered in this guide, please ask in the Player Questions thread in the main guild. This guide will receive updates, so please be sure that you are looking at the most current version as found in the guild.

**THE HISTORY OF MAGIC.** The origin of magic can be traced back to the classical period of history, existing in various cultures including Greek, Egyptian, and Norse mythology. The source of magic has been a great mystery. Although some witches claim to know the truth, popular answers have been the same theories perpetuated by society and mythology including gods and goddesses, demons, ancient artifacts, spiritual energies, and inherited talents from birth. In the modern day, the witches are confident that their magic was a talent received at birth, believed to be an unfound recessive gene that can be traced through one's genealogy.

But it is the concept that magic came from some other source – some source to be feared – that led to years of religious persecution. Witch trials plagued centuries of history among witches throughout the mid second millennia, particularly for women – both true witches and mere civilians. But with the persecution of witches at an all time high, many witches found it all the more vital to congregate and unite – seeing a unity and population growth among witches that would change their history for the better.

For the centuries that followed, witches maintained a low profile by hiding in plain sight. Special schools to study magic at a young age were created posing as educational systems for academically excelling youth and a council among witches was formed. As the political climate changed and Western cultures seemed more embracing of those who faced discrimination, the Council made the decision in 2012 to come out to the public, revealing the truth about magic and changing their history more than ever before.

**WE ARE WITCHES.** The term 'witch' is the most common umbrella term for those who have the gift of magic. While the term is often associated with women, witches can be female or male and is adapted by both sexes, although some witches may prefer other names including wizards or warlocks. Magical abilities first appear during adolescence and young adulthood, typically between the ages of fourteen and twenty-two. The Council keeps close tabs on the descendants of those who hold magical abilities, and when their magic is first discovered, they reach out to protect and educate the young witches by enrolling them in special schools and covens that can be found all over the Western world.

**MUSGROVE, GEORGIA.** In the quiet town of Musgrove, Georgia, deep tension brews between its clash of old and new history. Holding one of the most historic schools for young witches in the South, recent outing of the witches has turned the liberal town in the conservative region into a hotbed of conflict. The churches and various political leaders have demanded the closing of the schools and special laws to be placed upon witches.

The historic school, **Foxglove Manor Academy for Gifted Girls and Boys** has received national attention as the headmistress Madame Amélie Bellerose has maintained its traditional poised and diplomatic approach to the hostility and used the school to exemplify a peaceful ways for witches to assimilate and benefit the public. The witches at Foxglove Manor pride themselves in being the most talented and classically trained witches, and are actively disciplined to maintain a positive reputation and reach out for acceptance.

As the spotlight was brought towards the small city, a young witch and heiress to a large fortune Joanna Park created a new school, **Covenstead**. While Miss Park seeks the same ends of peaceful acceptance, she encourages her students to embrace their individuality and not hide behind disciplined behaviors to find this acceptance.

**FOXGLOVE MANOR.** Foxglove Manor Academy for Gifted Girls and Boys has a long history dating back to before the Civil War. The school is located in an old manor home that spans approximately a city block on the edge of a swamp in the eastern city. As a result of its age and location, it tends to be a very traditional school. All students here are boarders and are required to wear uniforms with an environment in which all students must work together, live together, and contribute to the community.

All students at Foxglove are expected to do daily chores, assigned out by the house manager. These chores range from kitchen duty (cooking, dishwashing, food prep) to food service (helping pass out food during the communal lunch meal) to cleaning up around the house (bathrooms, bedrooms, laundry), or, if one is particularly lucky, helping newcomers settle in to life in the Manor.

Communal meals are served daily at noon and seven in the evenings, with a small breakfast buffet each morning beginning at eight. Lunches and dinners are sit-down affairs with the meals served by the students, and various tables for students and faculty. Students are expected to come and participate, although they are not required to attend unless it is a requirement of their chores for that day. For students who arrive late or skip the meals entirely, the leftover plates are served as a buffet until ten o'clock.

Community life at Foxglove is somewhat strict and extremely competitive. Students here are rewarded based on their progress, and are often pitted against each other by teachers and staff, even as the party line states that witches are best when working in a team.

Magic, after all, should be an elite art, wielded by a select few, carefully controlled. That's Foxglove's party line.

**COVENSTEAD.** A contrast to its competition, Covenstead as a school is still a child – only a year old and still working out the kinks. It blossomed as an idea only after the announcement was made outing witches, and it was a scramble of a year to get it open as quickly as they did.

It's housed in an old, five-story brick building downtown, amongst the noise and bustle of shopping and taxis and city life. Due to its size and location, there are relatively few boarders at Covenstead -- although those who come from afar will be settled into dorms owned by the institution. After all, the school wants to allow opportunities for everyone, not just those who are local or those who can afford it.

The atmosphere at Covenstead is one that encourages creative thinking and innovation. The school was opened specifically because it wanted to present a different kind of witch to the world. Instead of the highly regimented life that is presented at Foxglove, Covenstead teaches students all of what magic can offer, like rooms that clean themselves and a kitchen that is run without staff and simply puts out food when its needed. There are no chores here, allowing students instead to explore the possibilities of what they can do.

Aside from classes, Covenstead tries to provide opportunities for students to open up and learn about each other, and to come up with new innovative ways of thinking. This is done periodically via group bonding sessions that may come either in the form of simple sitting and chatting, icebreaker sessions, movie nights, game nights, and more.

At Covenstead, embracing one's magic and individuality is paramount.

**CHARACTER STAGES & REQUIREMENTS.** In Season of the Witch, most characters evolve through three stages. Growths between stages are obtained through roleplay and other forms of activity, and no stages are guaranteed without completing the requirements.

**Novices** are the first stage of any witch character. These are witches who are first discovering their magical abilities. At this stage they may only learn or cast the most basic level of their spells and all Novices inherently have the capability to learn the Basic Telekinesis spell. Novices at Foxglove are required to adhere to the guidelines of the school's uniform but may accessorize to demonstrate their personality.

**Adepts** are the second stage of any witch character. They are witches who have learned several spells at their disposal. At this stage, they may learn or cast up to the second level of their spells and all Adepts now have the capability to learn the Basic Flight or Summon Familiar spell. Adepts at Foxglove are given more liberty with their uniform and may choose one element to leave out or alter instead of the standard requirements.

*Requirements for Adept: 15 RPs + 3 or more Spells + 2 Months Since First Obtained*

**Masters** are the third stage for any witch character. These are witches who have truly gained a grasp of their magical potential. At this stage, they may learn or cast up to the third level of their spells and can unlock one of the Mastery Pools. All Masters have the capability to learn the Advanced Flight or Advanced Telekinesis spell. Masters at Foxglove no longer are required to wear a uniform but must maintain the color scheme of black, white, and grey.

*Requirements for Master: 20 RPs + 8 or more Spells (Total) + 3 Months Since Growth*

In addition to these stages, **civilian characters** can be obtained as well. These characters do not come with guaranteed artwork or require any slots to obtain them, but do require a simple vetting system of approval and a new civilian character may only be created once every four months. Players who are active with their civilian characters may be rewarded with character artwork in the future.

**SPELLBOOK & MAGIC SYSTEM.** Magical spells separate witches from the masses and have a wide variety of uses. The various schools of magic teach from the same text, **The Warlock's Grimoire**, originally written by a former president of the Witch's Council who collected the spells and organized their hierarchy.

The Grimoire is composed of five main **Books**, which categorize the major forms of magic and are then broken down into various **Pools** of magic that consist of different **Spells**. For example, the Book of Elemental Magic contains seven primary Pools for different elements, including the Pool of Ice Magic, which contains the spells Shiver and Freeze. Each Book also contains a Mastery Pool, only unlocked by Masters who

have learned all other Spells within the various Pools of a given Book. A Master may only unlock one Mastery Pool.

In order to learn a new spell, the Pool and Book that contain it must be unlocked by spending Book Points, Pool Points, and finally Spell Points to unlock a Spell. These unlocks are required because it is easier for a witch to learn Spells from Pools and Books they already understand.

Points are achieved with every two role-plays completed. For every two role-plays, you may claim either 1 Book Point (BP), 1 Pool Point (PP), or 1 Spell Point (SP). All Books, Pools and Spells only cost one respective Point to unlock. The exception is for Mastery Pools and Spells, which require 2 Points for the Pool and for each Spell.

As an example, to learn a new Spell from a new Pool and Book, one must complete six role-plays for 1 BP, 1 PP, and 1 SP. All new characters or Novices begin with 1 BP, 1 PP and 1 SP.

The role-plays used still count towards the basic growth requirements. Once a Book or Pool is unlocked once, they do not need to be unlocked again. Furthermore, you do not need to re-purchase Spells with each rank as they power-up automatically with you. Additionally, the “sixth book” of Innate Spells can be claimed as soon as a rank is obtained and do not cost any points.

For the complete Spellbook, please see the Spellbook thread in the guild for the most detailed information.

**OBTAINING A CHARACTER.** Characters at Season of the Witch can be obtained through a variety of means that will be detailed below. To create a quest for a character and receive an application form, see the Quester Information Thread in the guild which will further guide you in this process.

The most common way of obtaining a character is through competing in **concept contests** that will be held multiple times a year. These would involve a complete application form, often with a role-play prompt. Characters may also be obtained in **flatsales, raffles, and custom bribes** with the aritsts.

Occasionally, a quest may be **quest fairied** as a reward to active newbies with a strong quest application completed. Remember that civilian characters can be claimed without a slot every four months and must simply have their character application form approved.

Lastly, **meta events** are a great way to get involved in the shop and new characters may be distributed through these events. Keep an eye out for all of these opportunities!

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.** To be updated as general player questions are received and answered.