

The Renegade Mage's Technomancer Alchemy for 4th Edition

Created by Steven E. Ehrbar. Version 2.1, last revised February 27th, 2023.

The Alchemy Skill in Technomancer

Alchemy is a broad science. Valid optional specialties include a single class of formulas (Animal Control, Combat Abilities, Cosmetic, etc.), analytical alchemy (identifying alchemical and magical items), industrial alchemy (making large batches with industrial alchemy equipment), and research alchemy (inventing new formulas and alchemical applications).

Industrial Alchemy & Economics

The standard **industrial alchemy lab** is detailed in *GURPS Technomancer* (p. 48). In addition to the statistics detailed there, it (usually) counts as “the best equipment possible” (*GURPS Basic Set*, p.345) / “a cutting-edge lab” (*GURPS Magic*, p.211) for making elixirs in batches, granting a +4 (TL of 8, divided by 2) to skill. Some older and cheaper labs still in use are TL7, and so only give a +3 for batch production of an elixir. Whatever their TL, for alchemical tasks other than batch production, they only count as improvised equipment (-5); most production facilities will have a separate analysis lab using the usual equipment rules.

Operating alchemists are employed on the basis of having an effective skill of 16 when brewing a batch of 1,000 elixirs. The penalty for a batch of 1,000 is -4, the bonus for the equipment is +4, and industrial alchemical brewing is a routine job task getting a +4. Accordingly, the necessary level of Alchemy skill, after applying the elixir's penalty, is 12. This will usually be someone with Alchemy (Industrial)-12 and a level in the technique of the elixir equal to its penalty, since that's the easiest (cheapest) way to meet the requisite.

Chinese alchemical manufacturers drive the global market, with the result that their manufacturing costs drive elixir prices. The standard wage for an operating alchemist in a facility making an elixir with a -1 penalty is on the low end of Average for TL8, or \$550 a week. For each additional point of penalty, technicians able to handle the task are rarer, pushing up wages to an Average/\$650 at -2, high Average/\$800 at -3, low Comfortable/\$1,050 at -4, Comfortable/\$1,300 at -5, and high Comfortable/\$1,600 at -6. Accordingly, the labor cost for a batch of an elixir equals that weekly wage, times the number of weeks the elixir takes to manufacture, divided by 1000. Add the per-dose ingredient costs to the wages, then double to get standard retail price; this doubling subsumes overhead, bad batches, marketing costs, and profits for the manufacturer, distributor, and retailer. Pastilles require double materials and time; skin-penetrating aerosols (*GURPS Technomancer*, p.49) require double materials and quintuple time.

Charms & Economics

Charms are a relatively recent invention; the great breakthrough came from China in 2007. Development of mass production systems have not been achieved, and making a charm usually counts as a stressful task (+0). However, dedicated charm workshops giving +TL/2 to make charms exist (\$50,000). Thus, charm production needs an alchemist of the same skill level, and same weekly wage, as makers of traditional elixirs. China again leads the world in this form of alchemy, which is seen as the great challenger to North American techno-enchantment.

Alchemical Products Table

Type	Standard	LC	Pastille	Aerosol	LC	Charm	LC
<i>Animal Control</i>							
Beast-Speech	\$603.30	4	–	–	–	\$33,600 T	4
Bird Control*	\$402.20	4	–	–	–	\$22,400 T	4
Dragonslaying*	–	–	\$408.80	\$422.00	4	–	–
Horsemanship	\$102.20	4	–	–	–	\$22,100 T	4
<i>Combat Abilities</i>							
Battle	\$302.60	2	–	–	–	\$26,300 T	2
Endurance	\$606.60	4	\$1,213.20	\$1,233.00	4	\$66,600 T	4
Fetching and Carrying	\$401.10	4	\$802.20	\$805.50	4	\$11,400 T	4
Invulnerability*	\$2,012.60	2	–	–	–	\$128,000 A	3
Leadership (S)	\$807.70	1	\$1,615.40	\$1,638.50	1	\$77,800 T	1
Speed	\$403.30	2	–	–	2	\$33,400 T	2
Stealth	\$603.90	3	\$1,207.80	\$1,219.50	3	\$39,600 T	3
Strength	\$202.60	3	–	–	–	\$26,200 T	3
<i>Cosmetic</i>							
Hair Growth*	\$81.10	4	–	–	–	–	–
Hair Removal*	\$60.55	4	–	–	–	–	–
Sunblock*	\$40.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,540 A	4
Tooth Care*	\$40.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,540 A	4
Weight Loss*	\$2,019.20	3	–	–	–	–	–
<i>Hostile</i>							
Aging	\$603.30	1	\$1,206.60	\$1,216.50	1	–	–
Death	\$202.20	1	\$404.40	\$411.00	1	–	–
Fear	\$101.10	2	\$202.20	\$205.50	2	–	–
Foolishness	\$302.20	2	\$604.40	\$611.00	2	–	–
Frustration	\$203.30	2	\$406.60	\$416.50	2	–	–
Hatred	\$251.10	2	\$502.20	\$505.50	2	–	–
Jealousy	\$102.20	2	\$204.40	\$211.00	2	–	–
Lecherousness	\$401.65	2	\$803.30	\$808.25	2	–	–
Madness	\$201.10	2	\$402.20	\$405.50	2	–	–
Odium	\$604.40	2	\$1,208.80	\$1,222.00	2	–	–
Self-Love	\$44.40	3	\$88.80	\$102.00	2	\$44,040 T	3
Unluckiness	\$806.60	2	–	–	2	–	–
Weakness	\$102.20	2	\$204.40	\$211.00	2	–	–
<i>Magical Abilities</i>							
Attractiveness	\$203.30	4	–	–	–	\$33,200 T	4
Fire Resistance	\$601.10	4	–	–	–	\$11,600 A	4
Flight	\$1,016.00	4	\$2,032.00	\$2,080.00	4	\$161,000 T	4
Gambling	\$405.20	4	–	–	–	\$52,400 T	4
Invisibility (S)	\$2,033.60	1	–	–	–	\$338,000 T	1
Luck	\$409.60	4	\$819.20	\$848.00	4	\$96,400 T	4
Magic Resistance	\$1,008.00	4	\$2,016.00	\$2,040.00	4	\$81,000 A	4
Pain Resistance	\$402.20	4	–	–	–	\$22,400 A	4
Transformation	\$1,613.20	4	–	–	–	\$133,600 T	4

Type	Standard	LC	Pastille	Aerosol	LC	Charm	LC
True Sight	\$405.20	4	–	–	–	\$52,400 T	4
Water Breathing	\$106.50	4	–	–	–	\$65,100 T	4
Water-Walking	\$303.30	4	–	–	–	\$33,300 T	4
<i>Medical</i>							
Alchemical Antidote	\$503.20	4	–	–	–	\$32,500 A	4
Awakening	\$303.30	4	\$606.60	\$616.50	4	–	–
Birth Control	\$40.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,580 A	4
Eternal Rest	\$4,005.20	4	–	–	–	–	–
Fertility	\$3,052.00	3	–	–	–	\$523,000 T	3
Final Rest*	\$202.20	4	–	–	–	\$22,200 A	4
Healing	\$101.10	4	–	–	–	–	–
Health	\$405.20	4	–	–	–	\$52,400 A	4
Hybridization	\$1,021.00	2	–	–	–	\$211,000 T	2
Long Slumber	\$9,027.50	3	\$18,055.00	\$18,137.50	2	–	–
Paut*	\$402.40	4	–	–	–	–	–
Reanimation	\$4,019.20	2	–	–	–	–	–
Regeneration	\$642.00	3	–	–	–	–	–
Resurrection*	\$24,160.00	3	–	–	–	–	–
Sleep	\$101.10	3	\$202.20	\$205.50	2	–	–
Tranquility	\$202.20	4	\$404.40	\$411.00	4	\$22,200 A	4
Universal Antidote	\$702.60	4	–	–	–	\$26,700 A	4
Youth	\$12,400.00	3	–	–	–	–	–
<i>Mental Abilities</i>							
Charisma	\$203.90	2	–	–	–	\$39,200 T	2
Foresight	\$411.00	4	\$822.00	\$855.00	4	\$110,400 T	4
Hardheartedness	\$203.30	4	–	–	–	\$32,200 A	4
Memory	\$806.60	4	\$1,613.20	\$1,633.00	4	\$66,800 T	4
Wisdom	\$1,206.50	4	–	–	–	\$66,200 T	4
<i>Mental Control</i>							
Drunkenness*	\$201.10	2	–	–	–	–	–
Friendship	\$602.20	3	\$1,204.40	\$1,211.0	3	–	–
Forgetfulness	\$206.30	2	–	–	–	–	–
Gullibility	\$302.20	2	–	–	–	–	–
Love	\$1,203.30	2	\$2406.60	\$2,416.50	–	–	–
Truth	\$404.40	2	\$808.80	\$822.00	2	–	–
<i>Skills and Physical Abilities</i>							
Allure*	\$20.80	4	\$41.60	\$44.00	4	\$8,020 T	4
Craftsmanship	\$805.20	4	\$1,610.40	\$1,626.00	4	\$52,800 T	4
Gardening*	\$41.10	4	\$82.20	\$85.50	4	\$11,040 T	4
Hearing	\$251.10	4	–	–	–	\$11,250 T	4
Hunting*	\$41.10	4	\$82.20	\$85.50	4	\$11,040 T	4
Keen Sight	\$501.65	4	–	–	–	\$16,800 T	4
Mathematics*	\$202.60	4	\$405.20	\$413.00	4	\$26,200 T	4
Medicine*	\$1,002.60	4	\$2,0005.20	\$2013.00	4	\$27,000 T	4
Music	\$300.55	4	\$601.10	\$603.25	4	\$5,800 T	4
Sailing*	\$71.10	4	\$142.20	\$145.50	4	\$11,070 T	4

Type	Standard	LC	Pastille	Aerosol	LC	Charm	LC
<i>Minor Elixirs*</i>							
Astronaut	\$50.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,550 A	4
Child Empathy	\$20.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,520 T	4
Clear-headedness	\$30.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,530 A	4
Femininity	\$40.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,540 T	4
G-Tolerance	\$50.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,550 A	4
Gusting	\$20.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,520 T	4
Hard Drinking	\$30.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,530 A	4
Ignition	\$20.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,520 T	4
Iron Fists	\$30.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,530 T	4
Masculinity	\$40.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,540 T	4
Motion Tolerance	\$20.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,520 A	4
Photogenicity	\$20.55	4	–	–	–	\$5,520 T	4

Table Notes: A = Amulet; T = Talisman; (S) = Formula requires Security Clearance to know.

*Notes on specific elixirs:

Allure: New elixir. The subject gains two levels of Allure (*GURPS Power-Ups 3: Talents*, p.6).
Duration: 1d hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$10; ½ week; defaults to Alchemy-3.

Bird Control: The prototype and exemplar of a general class of formulae, all the same price, using the same basic categories (bird, fish, mammal, reptile, vermin) as Animal spells.

Birth Control: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.50). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Dragonslaying: The “heart” part, at least in Merlin, is metaphorical, and plenty of Merlin’s dragons are willing to sell small quantities of their blood at prices much lower than \$500/drop. That no such dragons have (true) breath weapons (as opposed to spells), meaning this elixir will never affect them, may explain the willingness. Accordingly, base material cost is just \$100.

Drunkness: In Merlin, this elixir does not have to be taken in wine; any drink at least 2.5% alcohol by volume is sufficient.

Final Rest: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.50). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Gardening: New elixir. The subject gains four levels of Green Thumb (*GURPS Basic Set*, p.90).
Duration: 1d hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$20; 1 week; defaults to Alchemy-1.

Hair Growth: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.49). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Hair Removal: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.49). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Hunting: New elixir. The subject gains two levels of Stalker (*Power-Ups 3: Talents*, p.15).
Duration: 1d hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$20; 1 week; defaults to Alchemy-1.

Invulnerability: The potion is controlled because it’s perceived by most countries as only useful for those seeking a fight. The amulet, on the other hand, is analogous to a LC 3 ballistic vest.

Mathematics: New elixir. The subject gains four levels of Mathematical Ability (*GURPS Basic Set*, p.90). *Duration:* 8 hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$100; 1 week; defaults to Alchemy-5.

Medicine: New elixir. The subject gains two levels of Healer (*GURPS Basic Set*, p.90).
Duration: 8 hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$500; 1 week; defaults to Alchemy-5.

Minor Elixirs: These new elixirs grant various perks from *Power-Ups 2: Perks*, as listed below. These are all *Form:* Potion only. *Recipe:* \$10-25; ½ week; defaults to Alchemy-1.

Astronaut: No Degeneration in Zero-G, p.11. *Duration:* 24 hours. \$25.

Child Empathy: Good with (Children), p.13. *Duration:* 8 hours. \$10.

Clear-headedness: No Hangover, p.14. *Duration:* 2d hours. \$15.

Femininity: Extreme Sexual Dimorphism, p.10. *Duration:* 2d hours. \$20.

G-Tolerance: Acceleration Tolerance, p.13. *Duration:* 1d hours. \$25.

Gusting: Air Jet, p.10. *Duration:* 1 hour. \$10.

Hard Drinking: Alcohol Tolerance, p.13. *Duration:* 2d hours. \$15.

Ignition: Ignition, p.10. *Duration:* 1 hour. \$10.

Iron Fists: Iron Hands, p.6. *Duration:* 1d hours. \$15.

Masculinity: Extreme Sexual Dimorphism, p.10. *Duration:* 6 hours. \$20.

Motion Tolerance: Sea Legs, p.14. *Duration:* 6 hours. \$10.

Photogenicity: Photogenic, p.4. *Duration:* 2 hours. \$10.

Paut: See *GURPS Thaumatology* (p.52). Assumed materials cost is \$200 (1/100 of the TL8 starting wealth of \$20,000).

Resurrection: This potion was briefly classified for study, then released generally. Given its limits (only if applied within an hour of death, to a corpse neither destroyed nor beheaded), it is generally considered by society to be a potion of emergency resuscitation rather than one that raises the “truly” dead.

Sailing: New elixir. The subject gains two levels of Born Sailor (*Power-Ups 3: Talents*, p.13).
Duration: 1d hours. *Form:* Any. *Recipe:* \$35; 1 week; defaults to Alchemy-1.

Sunblock: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.49). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Tooth Care: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.50). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -1.

Weight Loss: See *GURPS Technomancer* (p.50). For 4th edition, skill modifier is -3.

Youth: Industrial alchemists skilled enough to make this -9 potion can demand a high-Wealthy income of \$4,000/week.