

## Circle Casting/Banishing

What You'll Need:

- A bowl of hot water in which you infuse dried hyssop
- Dish of salt
- Bowl of water
- Fire candle
- Air incense
- Four quarter candles
- Self-lighting charcoal
- A thurible
- Your unconsecrated athame, wand, chalice, and pentacle
- An aspersorium—a ritual device used to sprinkle salt water. It is usually a bundle of fresh herbs. Rosemary is a good choice. Fingers work, too.
- Anointing oil (lavender, rosemary or hyssop is a good choice)
- Simple sweet cakes
- Wine or juice
- A libation bowl.

Prior to beginning a full circle casting, heat a cup of water and steep two teaspoons of dried hyssop into it. Sprinkle this infusion all over your body to cleanse it magically prior to the ritual. Another method of magical body cleansing is to bathe in an entire bathtub of the hyssop infusion.

When you are finished with ritual cleansing, wear your robe or other magical clothing. You may also choose to engage in this rite skyclad.

Set all your magical tools on the central altar. Lay out the quarter candles at each of the four compass points and light them.

Begin the circle casting by standing in the eastern quarter of your circle. Face the circle's perimeter, hold out your arms and say:

**I awaken the Power to Know!**

Repeat this at the southern edge of your circle, saying:

**I awaken the Power to Will!**

Repeat this in the west, saying:

**I awaken the Power to Dare!**

Repeat this in the north, saying:

**I awaken the power to Be Silent!**

Return to the central altar and say:

**The Powers of the Elements have been summoned, and the circle binds them as one.**

Bless the elements of water and earth. Hold your natural athame over your bowl of water and say:

**I consecrate thee, O creature of water, In the names of the Great Mother and the Horned Lord.**

Hold your natural athame over the dish of salt, saying:

**I consecrate thee, O creature of earth, In the names of the Great Mother and the Horned Lord.**

Use your natural athame to place three scoops of the salt into the water and say:

**Water and earth I cast thee 'round,  
By thy essence, life be bound.  
Flowing vision, holy birth,  
Blessed be by water and earth.**

Take your aspersion (bundle of herbs or your fingers) and your bowl of water to the eastern perimeter of your circle. Walk the perimeter deosil, using the herb bundle to sprinkle your saltwater mixture. When you return to the east, bless yourself with the water and salt mixture. While doing so, say:

**I am blessed with the elements of water and earth.**

If you want to bless someone within your circle, dab some of your water and salt onto their heart, saying:

**You are blessed with the elements of water and earth.**

Bless the elements of fire and air. Hold your natural athame above the lit fire candle, saying:

**I consecrate thee, O creature of fire, in the names of the Great Mother and the Horned Lord.**

Hold your natural athame above the incense, saying:

**I consecrate thee, O creature of air, in the names of the Great Mother and the Horned Lord.**

Sprinkle some of the loose incense over the lit charcoal. Once it begins to smolder, say:

**Fire and air, I cast thee 'round,  
By thy essence, life be bound.  
Knowledge of thy true desire,  
Blessed be by air and fire.**

Take the incense to the eastern edge of the circle. Hold up the incense burner in an offering gesture and walk deosil around the perimeter. Once you return to the east, bless yourself with fire and air (use the incense burner with incense in it, since the lit charcoal and incense together represent the blended elements of fire and air), saying:

**I am blessed with the elements of fire and air.**

If you want to bless someone within your circle, fan some of the incense across the person's heart, saying:

**You are blessed with the elements of fire and air.**

Bless yourself in the names of the god and goddess with the anointing oil. In this part of the ritual, you can feel free to insert the names of specific deities where I have written "Great Mother" and "Horned Lord." If you are not working with specific deity names, simply recite the text below.

Dab a bit of your blessing oil onto your forehead or your heart with your middle finger, drawing a small earth-invoking pentagram. While doing so, say:

**I am consecrated in the names of (the great mother) and (the horned lord).**

Bless other attendees of your circle similarly.

Go to the eastern edge of your circle, point your natural athame outward, walk deosil, and say:

**I summon the Circle, the Circle I summon.  
Power, peace, and protection will come in  
And bind to the womb of our spiritual birth,  
Through air, fire, water, and earth!**

Return to the east. Draw the invoking air pentagram, saying:

**I summon, stir, and call thee up,  
Mighty Ones of the East, Powers of Air**

**To witness my (our) rites and to seal this circle!**

Continue to the southern quarter. Draw the Invoking-fire pentagram and say:

**I summon, stir, and call thee up,  
Mighty Ones of the South, Powers of Fire  
To witness my (our) rites and to seal this circle!**

Continue to the western quarter. Draw the Invoking-water pentagram and say:

**I summon, stir, and call thee up,  
Mighty Ones of the West, Powers of Water  
To witness my (our) rites and to seal this circle!**

Continue to the northern quarter. Draw the Invoking-earth pentagram and say:

**I summon, stir, and call thee up,  
Mighty Ones of the North, Powers of Earth  
To witness my (our) rites and to seal this circle!**

Stand at your central altar, facing the south. Hold your hands in the triangles of manifestation positions, then say:

**You who have been from beginning to end,  
My (our) rites and mysteries now attend.  
Most ancient of Maidens, Mothers, and Crones,  
Lord of the Hoof, of Antlers and Bones.  
Where earth meets sun, and wind meets sea,  
I (we) summon you forth, so mote it be!**

If you have a magical working or a sabbat/esbat celebration, this is where you would practice it. At the conclusion of your magic or celebration, you would proceed to the circle closing. For today, sit for a few moments in silence within the circle you have cast and regard this sacred space as an extension of your own life. When you feel ready, proceed to closing the circle, which begins with cakes and wine.

To begin, pour some wine into your chalice and set it on the altar. Hold your natural athame with the blade pointed to the sky and say:

**Now we'll feast in the Old Ones' names,  
Then fetch thy besom and hie the hame.  
To north, to west,  
To south, to east,  
Blessed Be the sacred feast!**

Now turn the point of the athame down. Hold it just above the wine-filled chalice, and say:

**Gracious goddess, lend thy hand,  
Gentle lady of the land,  
From seed to leaf, from bud to vine  
Mystic Mother, bless this wine.**

Dip the blade of the athame into the cup and say:

**Blade and vessel so combined,  
The lover's limbs are thus entwined.  
Blend and merge divine duet,  
Where the blade and cup have met!**

Next, place the cakes upon your pentacle and touch the tip of the athame to each, saying:

**Lord of living, lord of dead,  
King of field and grain and bread,  
Of this life we must partake,  
Horned Hunter bless this cake.**

Pass cakes to each group member saying:

**May you never hunger.**

Pass the chalice around for each member to drink, or fill each participant's chalice with wine, saying:

**May you never thirst.**

Place a small portion of the food and drink into the empty libation bowl as an offering to the deities present. After you have eaten, stand at the center of the circle facing south and say:

**Witches all, our rites conclude  
In merriment, the earth renewed.  
The cock doth crow the end of night,  
We thank the gods who've joined our rite.**

Pause in silence, thanking the gods for attending and bidding them farewell.

**To all I charge thee lock away,  
Our magics and our mystery play.  
Then raise a toast, a hearty draught,  
To bid the gods preserve the Craft!**

Take your athame to the eastern perimeter of the circle and face outward. Draw a banishing-air pentagram, saying:

**Hail, ye Mighty Ones of the East!  
We thank thee for attending,  
And 'ere ye depart for your lovely realms,  
I (we) say hail and farewell!**

Take your athame to the southern perimeter of the circle and face outward. Draw a banishing-fire pentagram, saying:

**Hail, ye Mighty Ones of the South!  
We thank thee for attending,  
And 'ere ye depart for your lovely realms,  
I (we) say hail and farewell!**

Take your athame to the western perimeter of the circle and face outward. Draw a banishing-water pentagram, saying:

**Hail, ye Mighty Ones of the West!  
We thank thee for attending,  
And 'ere ye depart for your lovely realms,  
I (we) say hail and farewell!**

Take your athame to the northern perimeter of the circle and face outward. Draw a banishing-earth pentagram, saying:

**Hail, ye Mighty Ones of the North!  
We thank thee for attending,  
And 'ere ye depart for your lovely realms,  
I (we) say hail and farewell!**

Return to face the east. Hold your athame out and begin to walk widdershins around the perimeter of the circle, saying:

**Earth will crumble our circle,  
Water will cause it to fall,  
Fire will burn what's left in the urn,  
And the winds will scatter them all!**

Return to the east and face inward toward the altar, and say:

**The circle is open, but unbroken.  
Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again!**

This concludes the ritual. Quickly and silently store away all ritual tools and artifacts. Flush ritual water, salt, and used incense in running water. Empty the libation bowl on the bare earth.