



Container Magick Workbook

What is container magick?

Container magick is a form of folk magic that involves using containers to hold various ingredients and items associated with specific intentions. The concept is rooted in the idea that the container can symbolically and energetically hold and amplify the intentions of the practitioner.

A History of Container Magick

The practice of infusing a spell into a physical container and positioning it in a designated location spans centuries. From ancient Greece and Egypt to the Middle Ages in Britain, and in modern traditions such as Hoodoo and Appalachian folk magic, these objects have manifested in various forms like spell jars, witch bottles, and bags.

Here are some examples:

- The English Tradition of Witch Bottles: Beginning in the late Middle Ages, Witch Bottles were created and used in Britain and other parts of Europe as a magical counter-practice to ward off curses and other forms of baneful magic. These bottles were typically created by experts in helping and healing magic known as cunningfolk. They were made using urine or other bodily fluids, bent pins, nails and other sharp objects. They were then hidden in the thresholds, chimneys, walls, and gardens of homes to grant them and their inhabitants protection from magical harm. (see more below)
- The Practice of Creating a Spertus/Spiritus Bottle: Another form of vessel magic involves the trapping and/or keeping of a spirit within a sealed bottle or jar. Sometimes, these spirits were kept as essences which were intended to aid a practitioner's magical workings as a familiar might. Other times, these bottles were used to keep unwanted spirits out of a practitioner's hair by sealing them away with some means of keeping them either amused or confused.
<https://spiritsanddistilling.com/beasties-in-the-spirits-bottle-tradition-gimmickry-and-risk/>
<https://museumofwitchcraftandmagic.co.uk/object/spirit-bottle-witch-bottle/>
- Spirit Bottles on the American Battleground: Piggybacking on the English tradition of Witch Bottles to protect against maleficarum, there also arose a phenomenon of similar charm bottles in the era of the American Civil War. These artifacts of Anglo-American folk magic are most commonly found in what would have been the areas where Civil War soldiers would live, sleep and convalesce; they are believed to have been used to keep the spirits of the dead at bay.
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/25/us/witch-bottle-virginia-civil-war-trnd/index.html>
- Bottle Trees of Congo & the Southern United States: Similar to the Spirit Bottles of the American Civil War and the Spertus of European Spirit-Based Magical traditions, the creation of bottle trees began in Central Africa as a means to ward off evil spirits, who were said to have become trapped in the bottles if they came too close to the tree. This custom was continued in the United States by those who were enslaved and brought to the Southern United States and controlled islands. They are still created and used in the



Southern and Greater Appalachian regions of the United States.

<https://smithsoniangardens.wordpress.com/2013/02/28/the-american-bottle-tree/>

- Amulet Bottles of Latin America: Amulet Bottles or Charm Bottles created in South and Central America are filled with herbs, talismans, written prayers, small icons and more to invoke the help of spirits and saints in magical work. Often, such bottles are filled with holy oils in addition to the charms and amulets placed into them, and then kept on the practitioner's working altar. <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/06/cac.html>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/28/fashion/latin-america-relicarios-devotional-pendants.html> <https://www.luckymojo.com/charmvial.html>
- Honey Jar and Vinegar Bottle Spells of Black & African-Diasporic Magical Traditions: Honey Jar spells are some of the most widely discussed examples of container spells within modern practice. Also referred to as Sweetening Jar Spells, these are typically used to turn a person or situation in the practitioner's favor—such as in love spells, spells to win the favor of a prospective employer, etc. Despite their name, these jars have also been made with various kinds of sugar, syrup, molasses and other sweeteners in addition to honey. On the other end of the magical spectrum—but from the same family of practices—there are also spells known as Vinegar Bottle spells. These spells are utilized to sour a situation. The oldest examples of these spells were intended to force a couple apart by sowing discord between them, and were created using very specific curios (in specific numbers) which were then suspended in household or magical vinegar and sealed.
<https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1041&context=jtb>
- In Norway and Sweden, "sorcery bags" from the late 1800s to early 1900s were used for various protective purposes. These included bags with stones to protect children from ailments like rickets, bags placed on graves to shield the dead from sorcery, and bags hung around livestock to safeguard them. One bag, found in a barn wall, protected animals, while others specifically guarded cows or protected children from illness. Additionally, a later find in 1972 revealed bags with paper inscribed with Arabic letters in red ink, demonstrating the diverse influences and uses of these magical items.
<https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=FzKYEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT8&dq=Swedish+sorcery+bags&ots=5x9niuIh-5&sig=yFUYjDNZNQc7oZaTm00HWCzNzZg#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Witch Bottles

Salt-glazed stoneware jugs, often engraved with a bearded man, became popular for counteracting witchcraft and protecting against negative energies in the 17th century. The development of specialized containers called Bellarmine jugs illustrates the evolution of these apotropaic practices during this period.

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/discover_history_explore_nature/history/colonialpemaquid/bellarmino.html



[https://www.thenovium.org.uk/article/33861/Bellarmino-Jug#:~:text=Witch%20bottles%2C%20or%20Bellarmino%20jugs%2C%20were%20Counter,bottle%20was%20buried%20\(underground%20in%20the%20walls%2C](https://www.thenovium.org.uk/article/33861/Bellarmino-Jug#:~:text=Witch%20bottles%2C%20or%20Bellarmino%20jugs%2C%20were%20Counter,bottle%20was%20buried%20(underground%20in%20the%20walls%2C)

Household Magick

This type of container spell has origins in the 1600s, when continental Europe was in the grips of a major witch panic. Common contents found in witch bottles include pins, nails, thorns, urine, fingernail clippings and hair. These bottles were commonly discovered buried under fireplaces, beneath floors, and embedded within walls. Another form of apotropaic magick is used to ward off unwanted events.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23320106?mag=is-there-a-witch-bottle-in-your-house&seq=3>

Crafting your Container Spell

1. Choosing a container
2. Choosing Ingredients
3. Cleansing the Container
4. Directing, Communicating, & Activating the Energy
5. Sealing Your Magick
6. Programming Your Spell
7. Charging the Spell
8. Fueling the Spell
9. Ending the Spell

Choosing a Container

In container magic, each material used in your spell contributes energy. As these materials are gathered and placed in the container, their energy grows and transforms. The container serves to unify diverse energies, forming a cohesive goal.

Common Containers

- Jar
- Bottle
- Bag or pouch
- Box
- Glass ball
- Vial
- Poppet (doll)

Is it the right container?

Who



- Spells targeting a large group or area, using stationary containers like jars or boxes are best. Placing them in a fixed position maximizes their effectiveness.
- For spells targeting individuals, sachets and poppets are ideal.

How Long

- For long-term goals, jars, boxes, and bottles are ideal as they are designed for semi-permanent magical works.
- Sachets and charm bags are suitable for short-term goals.
- Poppets work well for goals that can be short or long-term, depending on whether they are made from durable materials for multiple spells or disposable materials for a single use.

Practical

- Choose a container that can withstand the actions of the spell—such as burning, stabbing, freezing, or burying—unless you intend for the container to be destroyed as part of the spell.
- Ensure your container can accommodate all necessary ingredients.
- Do you plan to reuse the container? Jars, bottles, and boxes can be reused for multiple magical workings.
- If you intend to dispose of the container after the spell, choose a disposable option.
- Use materials that you have on hand or you can easily obtain.
- Reuse containers, but consider their functionality. If the spell requires opening, choose a container that seals securely. For freezing spells, opt for freezer-safe containers. If the container needs to be portable, consider smaller options like pouches or vials.

Magical

- When choosing a container, consider its sympathetic properties. An old pill bottle might be suitable for healing spells, while a poppet could be ideal for spells targeting individuals. Old plastic food storage containers are effective for containment spells like freezer spells, and jars are ideal for inner healing work.
- Once you've chosen your container, use divination to confirm. My favorite ways to do this are simple meditation tapping into intuition, using a pendulum, or flipping a coin.

To use a Pendulum

- Take some deep breaths to ground yourself.
- Hold the end of the chain or string between your thumb and forefinger in your dominant hand.
- To learn what motion signifies "yes" and "no," you can make a statement that you know is true and another that is false.
- Then, ask if this is the correct container for your work.
- Typically for me, a back-and-forth swing means yes, while a side-to-side swing could mean no. A clockwise motion is a yes, and a counterclockwise is a no.

Using a Coin



Hold the coin between your hands while thinking of your question.

- Designate one side for yes and one side for no.
- While rubbing your palms over the coin say:

“What will it be
Two out of three
Do you agree or disagree
This is my will
Blessed be”
- Then using your dominant hand, flip the coin, either catching it in your hand or letting it fall to the floor. If caught in your hand, do not look at it before flipping it onto your non-dominant hand.
- Flip the coin 1-2 more times until you have a 2 out of three answer.

Choosing Ingredients

Each ingredient carries an energetic vibration that corresponds with a specific intention.

The ingredients you use will serve as a source of energy, while your energy and intention will direct how each component of your container spell will function.

Common ingredients

Petition or Paper spell

Writing a paper spell articulates desires and intentions in detail, serving as a ritualistic request or prayer. It can address specific spirits or the universe, or simply be a clear way to communicate your intention.

- Begin with gratitude for the opportunities and blessings you have received so far.
- Clearly state your desires, specifying what you seek and how you wish to receive it in detail. Sidenote: It's important to *Set it and Let it*. Set your intention, feed the energy, but let it happen, and be open to receiving something better than what you expected. For this reason, I always add into my paper spells: "This or something better" then let go of the attachment to the physical manifestation, and hold the energy of the feeling of satisfaction you'll have once your intentions are fulfilled.
- Use the present tense as if your desires have already manifested.
- Focus on what you want rather than what you don't want. For example, replace "I don't want to be in debt" with "I am abundantly wealthy."
- Optionally, include a timeframe while remaining open to divine timing.
- Conclude with appreciation and an offering to strengthen your request.



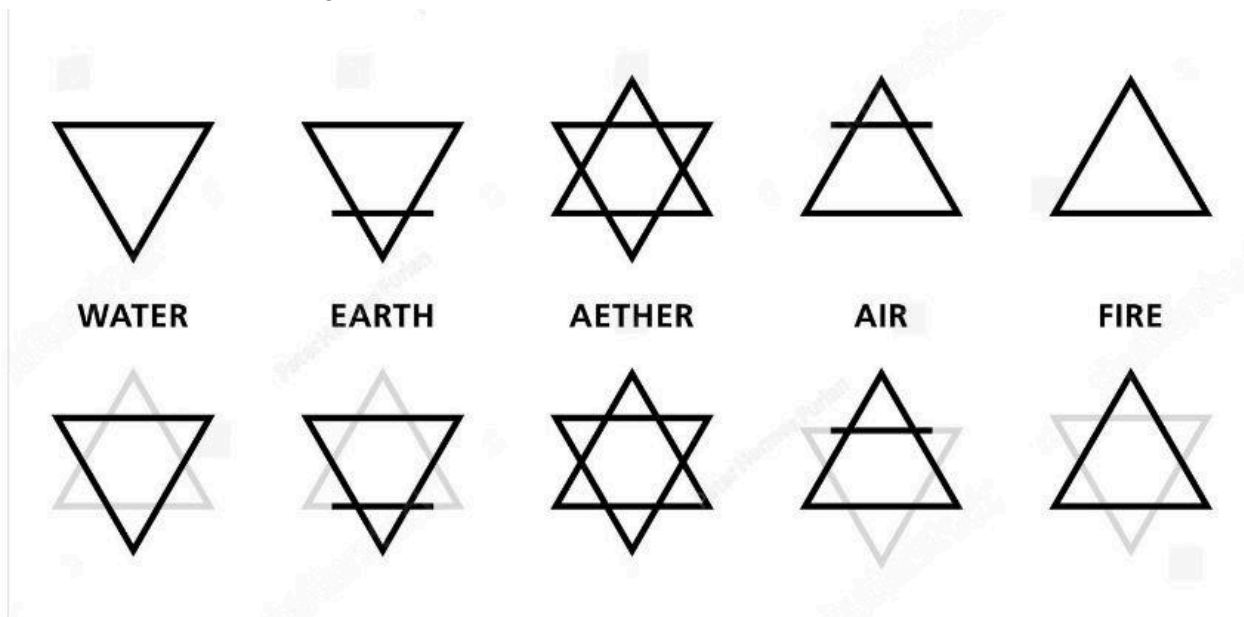
Including a sigil in your container spell enhances its potency by focusing intent and connecting with deeper symbolic meaning, amplifying the spell's effectiveness and alignment with your intentions.

- You can include a sigil in your jar by writing it on paper alongside your paper spell.
- Use oil to draw the sigil on top of your paper or the outside of your container.
- Creating a sigil from your paper spell statement is recommended.

How to Create a Sigil

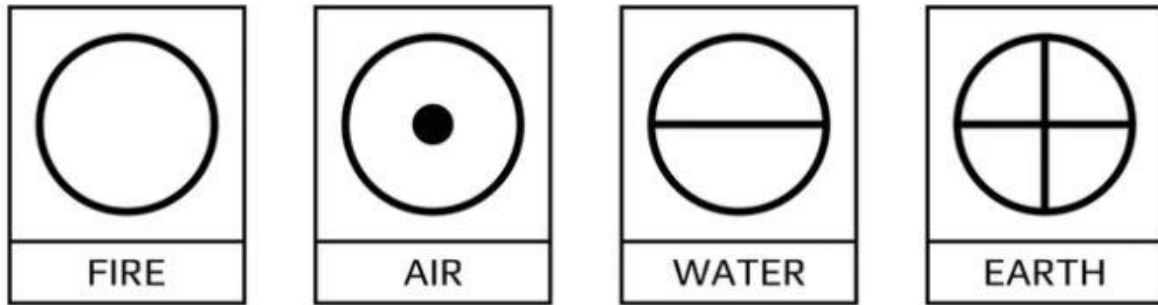
- Choose a word or phrase that captures your desire.
- Remove duplicate letters and vowels, leaving a unique set of letters (e.g., "TRC" and "LV" for "attract love").
- Design a shape that symbolizes your intention. I often choose an elemental triangle aligned with my intention's corresponding element. A heart for love is a good example or a circle for wholeness.
- Inside the shape, write the alphabet and connect each letter with a line.
- Add embellishments as inspired.
- Activate your sigil by burning the paper after you have a copy for safekeeping (use caution) or tracing it with a quartz point in the air.

Alchemical Elemental Symbols

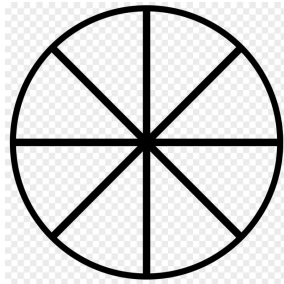




Classical Elemental Symbols



This is the Classical symbol for Aether or Spirit



Personal Tie Item

Commonly known as a taglock, they are used in container spells targeting specific individuals. These include things like hair, nails, jewelry, clothing, or any item closely associated with the intended person. Alternatives might be hair ties, photos, drawings, name and birthdate, business cards, or other items with a strong personal connection.

These act as an energetic tether so your magick knows who it's supposed to be directed toward.

Tip: Write the name on a piece of paper in an ink color that aligns with the intention.

Dirt, Rocks, & Gravel

Dirt or rocks from specific places carry the spirit of those locations. Including them in spells empowers your work with the spirit of that place. For example, using rocks or dirt from your home enhances a home protection spell.

- When gathering these materials, always seek permission and show respect to the land spirit. Offerings such as water, compost, coins, food, dance, or song demonstrate this respect. Common sources of dirt include graveyard soil (from a relative's grave),



crossroads dirt, or soil from a desired location linked to your spell's intention, such as swamp mud for healing properties or beach sand for lunar influences. Mind local laws regarding gathering these materials

Minerals & Crystals

Using crystals in a container spell adds energetic support and amplification with the unique properties of each crystal.

- Minerals & Crystals are versatile in container magic but consider compatible materials. Some crystals are water-sensitive; those with a Mohs hardness of 5 or higher are generally water-safe.
- 'Any crystal will likely get damaged in vinegar or other acidic liquids.

Water Safe Crystals

Clear Quartz
Rose Quartz
Amethyst
Smokey Quartz
Citrine
Agate
Moonstone
Carnelian (though NOT safe in salt water)
Rutilated Quartz
Jasper
Tiger's Eye
Aventurine
Black Obsidian

Unsafe Crystals for Water

Fluorite
Selenite
Apophyllite
Tangerine Quartz
Gypsum
Lepidolite
Opal
Azurite
Apatite
Halite
Malachite
Turquoise



Ulexite
Labradorite
Celestite
Pyrite
Hematite

Plants, bark, and roots

- Plants play a vital role in spell jars, bringing in their specific energies and intentions.
- Choose each plant for its corresponding properties such as protection, love, healing, or prosperity.
- It's easiest to use dried botanicals to avoid mold for non-beneficial magick.
- Consider avoiding the use of botanicals when incorporating water into your spell, as they can lead to mold, fermentation, or even potential explosive reactions.
- Instead, consider a different liquid such as oil, vinegar, or honey.
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Here are some plants, bark, and roots you can try. Remember that you can also use the essential oil of these plants too.

- Rosemary: Protection, purification, and mental clarity.
- Lavender: Calming, love, and healing.
- Cinnamon: Prosperity, success, and energy.
- Mugwort: Divination, psychic abilities, and protection during sleep.
- Bay Leaf: Wishes, manifestation, and protection.
- Basil: Prosperity, love, and protection.
- Juniper: Purification, protection, and healing.
- Frankincense: Spiritual awareness, meditation, and purification.
- Myrrh: Healing, purification, and spirituality.
- Patchouli: Grounding, fertility, and attraction.
- Ginger: Energy, success, and passion.
- Valerian: Sleep, relaxation, and calming.
- Dandelion Root: Divination, wishes, and psychic powers.
- Angelica Root: Protection, healing, and purification.
- Vetiver: Grounding, protection, and banishing negativity.

Common liquids in container magick

- Water
- Moon water
- Saltwater
- Oils
- Herbal infusions
- Vinegar



- Lemon Juice
- Alcohol
- Honey
- Rose water
- Urine
- Tea or Coffee

Insect & Animal Parts

- Insect and animal parts are commonly used in container magic.
- These items are usually obtained ethically, either found in nature or purchased from specialty shops.
- Examples include naturally shed cat whiskers and claws. It's crucial to gather these materials without harming animals. Choose parts based on their sympathetic properties: for instance, wasp parts for protection, butterfly parts for transformation, and grasshopper parts for prosperity.

Mind local laws when collecting nature treasures. Many feathers fall under the Migratory Birds Act.

Here are some insects and animal parts you can try:

1. Crab Shell: Emotional resilience, protection, and adaptation.
2. Rabbit's Fur or Foot: Luck, prosperity, and fertility.
3. Bat Wing: Divination, intuition, and nocturnal energy.
4. Scorpion: Protection, defense, and overcoming obstacles.
5. Lizard Tail or Shedding: Regeneration, renewal, and adaptability.
6. Spider or Web: Connection, creativity, to make things stick or to trap, and manifestation.
7. Moth Wings: Spiritual growth, attraction, and transformation.
8. Snake Skin: Rebirth, shedding negativity, and transformation.
9. Cat Hair, Whisker, or Claw: Luck, independence, and psychic protection.
10. Honeycomb: Sweetening relationships, abundance, and community.
11. Feathers: Communication, flight, and connection to the divine.
12. Antler: Strength, protection, and growth.
13. Wishbone: Luck, wishes, and manifestation of desires.
14. Butterfly Wings: Transformation, joy, and spiritual growth.
15. Wasp Nest: Protection, defense, and strength in boundaries.
16. Beetle: Rebirth, creativity, and protection.
17. Fox Fur: Cunning, adaptability, and stealth.

Cleansing

Now that you've chosen your container and your ingredients, it's time to begin the spell. First, set up your working altar or space as you prefer. I like to arrange everything at once, cleanse



myself and all ingredients, then cast protection. However, set up in a way that suits your preferences or traditions.

There are dozens of ways to cleanse the container but the most important thing to remember is to clean it inside and out.

- Smoke Cleansing: Pass the container through the smoke of cleansing herbs or incense.
- Salt Cleansing: Fill the container with salt and let it sit for a period to absorb negative energies, then discard the salt.
- Sunlight: Leave the container in direct sunlight for a few hours to cleanse and recharge it.
- Moonlight: Place the container under the light of the full moon overnight to purify and empower it.
- Sound Cleansing: Use sound vibrations from singing bowls, bells, or chanting to cleanse the container.
- Water Cleansing: Rinse the container with water (spring water, moon water, or rainwater is a good idea) visualizing it washing away impurities.
- Crystal Cleansing: Place crystals known for their cleansing properties (like clear quartz or selenite) inside the container for a period.

Directing Energy

Once you have your ingredients, it's time to assemble and direct the energies within. The order in which you add the ingredients isn't fixed, but it can add extra energy to the spell. Consider the symbolism and properties of each action.

- Paper Spells are often placed first at the bottom of the container as the foundation for your intent.
- Personal tie items are next, as they strengthen the connection to the target.

Communicating Intention

As you add materials to the container, communicate with them and tell them what to do. This activates the energy allowing you to manipulate and direct it. Treat this process like programming and give attention to each ingredient.

You can activate by breathing life into each ingredient, physically tapping the ingredient three times, or holding it in your hands to sense its vibrations.

Then, as you add materials to the container, communicate their purpose.

“Rue for protection of (name).”



Sealing the Spell

Sealing the container is crucial in container magic, especially for long-term goals. It preserves the stored energy within, which is only released when you work on it or break the seal yourself. Again think about the sympathetic properties of the container. And remember if a container breaks prematurely, the spell must be recreated because the energy escapes before the desired manifestation.

- Jars and bottles are sealed by tightening the caps or corks, often using wax or string in a color that corresponds with your intention.
- Pouches or bags use drawstrings or are stitched closed
- Poppets are sealed by their construction materials.
- A box with a lid holding everything inside.

Programming

Once your container is assembled and sealed, it should be programmed by communicating your intention to the ingredients as a whole. Each ingredient has a unique energy, and programming combines these energies into one force. This can be a simple action that you can repeat if you choose to use it for fueling your spell. You can program the energy by:

- Shaking and mixing the jar
- Tapping the lid a symbolic number of times, like three
- Drawing a sigil or symbols on the container
- Focusing your intention and symbolically pushing the energy into the container with your hands

Charging the spell

Raising energy to charge a spell gives it an extra boost, much like charging a battery to ensure it has enough power to perform at its best. It involves generating and focusing on the vibrations within the container, allowing them to be released into the universe at the right time when your container is fully assembled and ready to empower your will.

- Raise energy by lighting a candle, passing the container through incense smoke, chanting, singing, dancing, visualizing light, using crystals, sunlight, moonlight, moon water, or anointing with oil.
- Ensure that you are communicating your intention to charge the spell. You don't want to unintentionally cleanse all the energy you've just raised.

Fueling your intention



Over time, the container releases stored energy like a battery gradually discharging its power. Fueling is also known as feeding your spells. As you nourish the energy, you sustain the spell's effectiveness.

Simply touching, tapping, shaking, anointing with oil, lighting a candle near it, or passing it through incense can fuel the container. Anything that brings your attention or awareness to the working will feed its energy. Look to the charging methods used for inspiration.

The more you interact with the container, the more effective it becomes at manifesting your magic. I usually work on my containers once a day to maintain their potency.

Ending the spell

When casting a spell, you project energy to manifest desires or repel unwanted things. Ending a spell returns this energy to its source, usually when the spell achieves its goal.

But sometimes, spells are ended by the practitioner if they seem ineffective, there are perceived mistakes or unforeseen outcomes.

To end a spell, break the container seal; ensure you no longer need it before destroying it, as opening it releases stored energy.

Dispose of materials thoughtfully: crystals can be cleansed and reused, while herbs can be composted. Liquids should be handled separately, and petitions burned or cut and disposed of respectfully.

Some containers such as freezer spells need to be thought about in advance. Do you plan to keep the spell in your freezer forever? If not, use a disposable container that can easily be thrown away in the outside bin on trash day. I like to use large plastic yogurt containers that comes with lids for this or an old plastic food storage container. If you plan to use glass in the freezer, opt for a shoulderless (aka wi' [de-mouth jar) and leave 1 and a half inches of space from the top to give room for expansion... and avoid a shattered glass jar.