

Bone Dance



Necromancy

Level: 3

Range: 10 yds./level

Components: S, M

Casting Time: 3 rds.

Duration: 3 turns/level

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

This spell temporarily animates the physical remains of a human, demi-human, or humanoid. The bone dance spell forges a mystical link with the newly made undead creature, enabling the caster to mentally control its movements, just as a puppeteer manipulates the actions of a wooden puppet.

The skeleton or zombie animated by this spell is incapable of carrying out any independent actions; the wizard must mentally command the undead puppet to walk forward, pick up a sword, strike an opponent with it, and so on. A caster concentrating on the bone dance spell cannot speak, cast other spells, or actively engage in melee. The spell occupies the greater part of the caster's attention.

The skeleton or zombie animated by this spell is exactly as the monster described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL Tome. It can be affected by spells that affect undead, and can perform simple actions: grasping, lifting, and carrying; opening and closing unlocked doors, windows, or chests; crude mixing and stirring; and so on. If directed into combat fights as a regular skeleton or zombie.

When combined with the spectral voice spell, bone dance can make for an effective decoy, a menacing bluff, or at least a ghastly form of entertainment. When augmented by corpse link, a dancing cadaver can serve as an effective (and ultimately expendable) scout that can work beyond the immediate visual range of the caster.

The spell ends if the caster's concentration is broken. It also ends if the caster causes the skeleton to move beyond spell range or out of direct sight (corpse link and similar spells lift this restriction). The skeleton or zombie can be destroyed in combat, or the bone dance spell broken by a successful dispel magic.

The material component is an intact skeleton or corpse and a small, crude puppet that the caster must manipulate with both hands to choreograph the bone dance.

Notes: Restricted to necromancers; common.