

Flame Chase



Evocation, Fire

Level: 7

Range: 30 yds. + 10 yds./level

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 3

Duration: 2 rds. + 1 rd./level

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: ½

Upon casting this spell, the wizard causes several flame paths to form on the ground, which then pursue target creatures chosen by the wizard. Those caught will be engulfed either in a flame column or a flame burst, as described later. This spell is likely to cause many small incidental fires. These are normal, non-magical fires that can be extinguished by normal means or allowed to burn out. Croplands, dry forest, grasslands, and similar areas might burn uncontrollably.

Flame Path: The spell creates one flame path for every two levels of the caster, to a maximum of six paths at 12th level. The 3-foot-wide paths begin 3 feet from the caster and each travels straight toward one target creature. To target a creature, the wizard must be aware of it, it must be in range, and it must be in contact with the ground when the spell is cast. A flame path cannot be sent against an object.

Each flame path travels at a rate of 24. The fire does not require combustible material such as wood, grass, or weeds; it can travel over bare outdoor or indoor surfaces. It can travel across any surface except water, snow, ice, and other wet surfaces. A flame path is able to climb a vertical surface of less than 45°, as long as the surface is wide enough (3 feet; a rope, for example, is not wide enough).

Combustible items in the flame's path must save vs. magical fire or be set ablaze. The flame path continues to follow the target creature until the creature is caught, the spell ends or is dispelled, or until the creature crosses a surface where the path cannot follow. Non-targeted creatures caught in the flame's way are burned for 1d6 points of damage (save for half damage).

Flame Column: When a path catches its target, the creature is engulfed in a flame column and takes 3d6 points of fire damage immediately, plus 1d6 points of damage per round for the remaining duration of the spell. The flame column stays with the creature until it burns out or is dispelled. Items engulfed in the column must save vs. magical fire or be destroyed.

Flame Blast: Those outdistancing the pursuing flames or who evade the flame column by crossing a wet surface face one more danger. If a target creature is within 10 feet of the end point of the flame path after the flames have moved for the round, and if the flames are unable to close the distance due to the creature's speed or an obstruction, then the flames leap to the creature instead. This flame blast causes double the normal flame column damage (6d6 points) in a burst, expending the path's remaining power immediately. Creatures and items caught by the flame blast save vs. spell at a -2 penalty.

Optionally, separate initiative rolls can be made for each flame path to determine when it moves during the round. A flame blast always occurs at the end of a round, after all attacks and movements have been made.

The material components for this spell are a small pouch filled equally with sulphur and coal dust, a live caterpillar, and a live firefly. All are expended in the casting.

Notes: Uncommon for Fire mages, otherwise very rare. (Updated from DRAGON Magazine.)