

Class 12 – Firebowl

Covered in this Class

1. Preparation for This Class
2. Incense
3. Charging the Firebowl
4. Two-Element Cleansing With the Firebowl
5. Other Uses for the Firebowl
6. Exit Ritual, Day Greeting and Day Ending

1. Preparation for This Class

- *Video Clips:* Charging the Firebowl, Four Element Cleansings (use the Firebowl portion ONLY). Day Greetings and Day Endings (use the East direction only).

For this class you will need your Firebowl, which should be:

- Made of brass, cast-iron, ceramic or a hard hardwood
- 4 to 6 inches in diameter
- 4 to 5 inches deep
- A shape that is easily held with one or both hands
- Light enough to carry in one hand if necessary
- Stable when placed on a flat surface
- Slightly curved-in and flared back out at the top rim to promote “columning” of incense or smoke (see Figure 12.1)

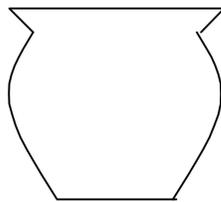


Figure 12.1 Firebowl profile

In addition, you will need the materials that go into your Firebowl, which include:

- Ground fire clay or clean, fine sand. Non-scented cat litter, which is ground fire clay, works well for this as long as it does not have chemicals or deodorants in it. You will need enough to put 1-2 inches in the bottom of your Firebowl as an insulator to protect the firebowl itself, your hands and any surfaces from the heat.
- Self-starting charcoal, which can be purchased from religious supply stores or online. The round charcoals with bowl-shaped depressions in the middle are best. The pie shaped depressions don't work as well.
- Wooden or paper matches. Use only wooden or paper matches to light your candles and charcoals. The scent and energetic side-bands associated with butane and other petroleum products change the fire-bands you're working with.
- Finely chopped or shaved wood chips or tree bark. This is used to insulate the charcoal from the tree resin or incense and to facilitate the burning of the materials in your Firebowl.
- Pine resin. You can collect pine resin yourself, or purchase it.
- Finely ground or rubbed sage. If you collect sage, you can grind it in a blender or coffee grinder.
- Sun Yellow utility candle.

2. Incense

Different kinds of incense powders or plant resins are chosen to create specific effects. Every incense or resin has a "signature" (a particular scent or way of burning) that can be classified by element. For instance, general-purpose incenses are usually high in Air and Fire, while incense candles are usually high in Water. It's useful to collect and test a number of different resins and incenses to develop your own stock.

A Word of Caution: Do not assume that vendors know how to classify the incense they sell by elemental characteristics or correspondences. Most vendors know very little about spiritual and psychic practices or about the four elements. Always test these incenses and resins yourself to determine what elements they represent. Many incenses change drastically when they are burned in a Firebowl.

To test resin or incense, burn a little piece of it in your Firebowl, then smell the scent and watch the smoke. Compare the results to the table on the next page to determine its elemental makeup.

Elemental Mix	Smoke	Scent	Examples	Comments and Uses
General Purpose	Moderate amount of smoke, tending to rise and spread moderately rapidly. Smoke leaves a slight bluish haze.	Some “edge” or “stickiness” in the scent.	Yellowish or red-orange pine tree pitch. Sage, pinion, juniper, copal. Dragon’s Blood, frankincense, and myrrh contain all 4 elements. Three Kings and Cathedral brand incenses sold in church supply stores.	Has a good mix of the four elements, usually higher in air and fire. Good for general use and emergencies.
Air	When burned in a Firebowl, smoke rises quickly and dissipates rapidly. Has a very light smoke that leaves the air relatively clear afterward. Does not leave a blue haze.	Delicate, fast-rising scent or no odor.	Sandalwood, sage, mint and sweet grass.	The incense itself is often pale colored, containing lots of white or transparent material. Good for studying – will keep you awake. Can be used to remember dreams.
Fire	When burned in a Firebowl, smoke rises quickly. Smoke is red or yellow in color. Amount of smoke is light or moderate, rises quickly, spreads rapidly and leaves a slight bluish haze.	Has a sharp scent that tends to “bite” the nasal passages and sinuses.	Pine, juniper and frankincense.	Incense itself is often red, orange or yellow. Good for studying – will keep you awake. Use on gloomy days to liven up the energy.
Water	When burned in a Firebowl, thick smoke rises and spreads slowly, dissipates slowly.	Often has a fruit or flower scent, or a heavy, sweet, wet, thick and cloying scent that lasts for days.	Gardenia, lotus blossom and strawberry.	Incense itself is often pink, blue, dark red or brown. Material often feels damp. Use for meditation/introspection. Use also to remember dreams.
Earth	When burned in firebowl, smoke tends not to rise but to “boil” out and settle to the floor, spreading slowly.	Heavy, not sweet, not wet, “earthy” scent that can last for days. Scent is also dry with a slight “edge” to the nasal passages and sinuses.	Musk, mosses, myrrh, and dark or heavy pines.	Incense itself is often brown or green. Be sure to dry any kind of moss before burning. Use to stabilize an area.

Table 12.1

Additional Notes on Incense

- You can use general-purpose incense in the beginning, while you are testing and developing your own stock of incenses and resins.
- Yellow and yellow-orange pine, sage, sweet grass, juniper, pinion and copal are all natural cleansers when burned, even if you don't charge them (charging is like programming).
- The ground or rubbed sage sold in stores works fine as incense. Whole-leaf sage also works without grinding if you roll it into a ball and light it until it smolders.
- Many types of incense and resin change drastically when you burn them. Make sure your analysis of the elemental makeup of any incense or resin is based on the scent when burned, as well as the behavior of its smoke and other qualities listed in Table 12.1.

3. Charging the Firebowl

Charging the Firebowl programs it for a specific purpose, such as cleansing a space, person or object. Since magic is a precision science, charging your Firebowl for certain operations makes it much more effective. Charging states the intended purpose and programs it into the tool. Charging is not an invocation or prayer to spirit-beings or deities, just a program.

You don't have to key a Firebowl before you use it (keying aligns the energies in a tool and personalizes it for your use). The Firebowl keys itself every time you light it. You won't need to charge your Firebowl for every operation, but you will need to charge it for area and house cleansings. Before charging prepare the Firebowl with the proper materials.

Preparing the Firebowl

1. Fill the bottom of the Firebowl with 1-2 inches of sand or clay.
2. Place a block of unlit self-starting charcoal in the center of the bed of sand or clay.
3. Have your wood shavings, sage and resin ready to put onto the charcoal after it is lit. Make sure your pine resin is broken into small pieces that can be easily added onto the wood shavings.
4. Light your utility candle with wooden or paper matches.

Charging the Firebowl

1. Stand or sit in the South facing North with your Firebowl and materials in front of you.

2. Light the charcoal from the flame of the utility candle. It will begin sparking within seconds. If the charcoal is old or damp, you may need to use tongs to hold it over the flame for several minutes. Also, with old or damp charcoal, you may want to light the top of it in the center of the bowl-shaped depression so that the materials you put on top will burn more easily.
3. Once the charcoal is lit, place it back into the center of your Firebowl and blow Sun Yellow, pulled from the utility candle, into it.
4. Add wood shavings to the charcoal, then pine resin, then sage as needed until the Firebowl is producing a good column of smoke.
5. In a voice of command charge the Firebowl with the house-cleansing verse below, blowing Sun Yellow into the charcoal before you start, between each line and after you complete the verse.

Fire and Air where you are cast,
 Let no spell nor adverse purpose last,
 Not in accord with me!
 Cleanse these walls and cleanse this space,
 Far from here send baneful trace!
 Thus my will, so it be!

6. You may substitute or add verses to suit your purpose. For instance, here are some substitutions or additions you can make:

Add or Substitute	Cleanse these tools and cleanse their space	To clean magical tools and simulacra
Add or Substitute	Cleanse these people and cleanse their space	To cleanse people before a ritual or anytime
Substitute	Anger, grief, trauma or any other applicable term for “spell” or “adverse” or “baneful.” For instance, substitute “fear” for spell. Substitute “cancer,” “anger” or “sickness” for “adverse purpose” or “baneful.”	To apply to specific circumstances so long as the rhythm of the verse is not disturbed.

Table 12.2

4. Two-Element Cleansing With Firebowl

Cleansing a person, space or object with a Firebowl is called a two-element cleansing since the Firebowl covers the elements of Air and Fire (notice it says “Air and Fire where you are cast” in the charge verse). Firebowl cleansings are good for removing psychic imprints from walls, jewelry, objects, people or just about anything else. Cleansings cannot banish spirits or beings – only banishments can do that. However, cleansings can get rid of the psychic residue left by any beings. It’s good to clean sick rooms, objects that belonged to other people or anything or anyone that may have come in contact with any kind of trauma. For instance, if you and a loved one have a severe fight in a room in your house, it’s a good idea to cleanse the room and burn the Sun candle to restore sacred space. If you receive a gift from anyone that may have been influenced by other people’s energy, clean it. If you come into contact with people who have health or emotional issues it’s good to cleanse yourself. A good magical rule of thumb is, “If in doubt, clean it!”

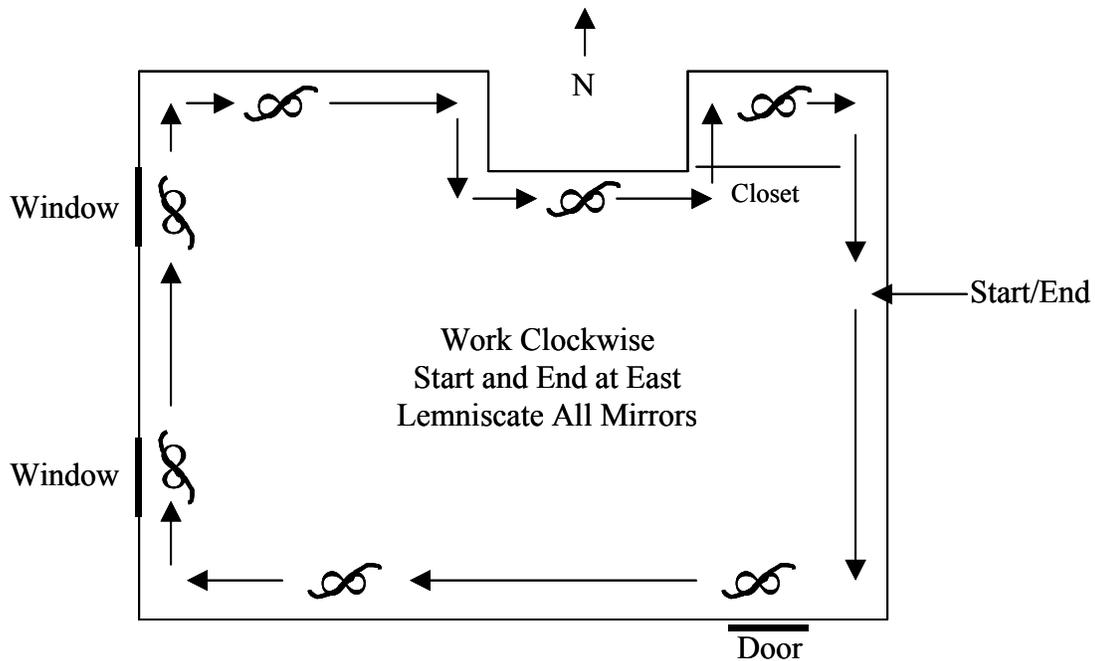


Figure 12.2 Diagram of Area Cleansing

House or Area Cleansing

1. Charge your Firebowl following the directions given in the previous section. You may want to put little containers of extra sage, wood chips

and pine resin in the firebowl, around the edges, so you can add more materials as needed. Metal jar lids or tiny sauce dishes work well for this purpose.

2. Carry your firebowl with you and move to the center of the East-most wall of the area you want to cleanse (Figure 12.2). If you want to cleanse your entire house, go to the East-most interior wall of the East-most room in your house. If your house has multiple stories, start on the lowest story and work your way up. If you are cleansing just an area, go to the East-most wall of that area.
3. Facing the wall, move the Firebowl so that the smoke from the bowl creates a Lemniscate on the center of that wall about chest height. A Lemniscate looks like a “Lazy 8” or the infinity symbol (∞). Watch the smoke to make sure it “sticks” to the wall (i.e., doesn’t bounce off the wall). If the smoke bounces off, draw another Lemniscate (or several more) until it sticks.
4. Move clockwise or to the right down the wall, holding your Firebowl chest high, allowing the smoke to trail along the wall and blowing the smoke onto the wall if necessary. If the smoke bounces off any section of wall, go over that area again, pushing the smoke into the wall with the action of the Firebowl and with your intention. Keep going over that section until the smoke is absorbed. These areas usually indicate negative psychic or emotional energies.
5. Put a Lemniscate in the middle of each wall, and over mirrors, windows and any shiny or glassy surface (especially black glass). If you’re doing an especially large area, you may need to add extra wood shavings, sage and resin as you go.
6. When you arrive back at your starting point, put a second Lemniscate over your first one to tie it off (completes the cleansing).

Additional Notes on House and Area Cleansings

- If you are cleansing a large house, you may need extra pieces of charcoal. You can add a new piece of charcoal directly onto the original charcoal without having to recharge the Firebowl.
- If you want to do a very thorough cleansing, make sure to smoke all cupboards, closets, nooks, crannies, and shelves. Treat walk-in closets as small rooms.
- Be sure to carefully smoke and Lemniscate all mirrored and glass surfaces. Mirrors and windows are doorways that allow beings to penetrate your shields (discussed in later classes) through the reflection. The black mirror, in particular, is an access to all worlds.

- Treat all doors as walls. If you come to an open door, smoke the side of the door closest to you, then go around the back of the door and smoke that. Then move down the wall that is contiguous to the back of the door. If you come to a door that leads outside the house, treat the inside of the door as a wall and don't do the back (outside face) of the door.
- If you are cleansing an area only, shut all the doors to that area and treat the doors as walls. If you have an opening that has no door, draw a Lemniscate across the center of the open space.
- Since air is an insulator, you can burn air incense inside the house to insulate it from sound or weather conditions.

Cleansing Objects and People

- To cleanse any object, simply specify the object or use the phrase "these objects" in the charge verse. Hold the object in the column of smoke until the smoke clings.
- It can be useful to cleanse a person, especially if they are suffering from an illness or conditions that seem to have mysterious origins or causes. To cleanse another person, charge the Firebowl using "Cleanser this person and cleanse his/her space." Start at their feet and begin smoking them, moving around them in a clockwise fashion (to the left) in an upward spiral that goes up over their head. As you pass the person's face, have them inhale a breath of the smoke to cleanse the lining of the throat and lungs, since those are continuations of the outer skin.
- To cleanse yourself, place the Firebowl on the floor and add plenty of incense for a lot of smoke. Then stand over the Firebowl with one foot on either side and weave back and forth slightly so that the smoke bathes you front and back. This works if you are clothed, but is more effective when you're nude. Yes, naked!

5. Other Uses For The Firebowl

Throughout history almost every spiritual, magical and religious system on earth has used the Firebowl (sometimes called a "thurible"). While it has primarily been used for cleansing and purification of areas, people and objects, the Firebowl can also be used as an aid to meditation or divination.

Using the Firebowl in Meditation

Burn different kinds of incenses for different kinds of meditations in a non-charged Firebowl:

- Burn air incense for consciousness or mind-oriented meditations.

- Burn water incense for emotion, Spirit or intuition-based meditations.
- Burn earth incense for meditations focused on the physical body, daily practicalities or mechanics.

Using the Firebowl in Divination

Burn water incense in your uncharged Firebowl for divination. Use water incense since water is the psychic element. You can use your Firebowl to help you find lost people, or lost or stolen objects. You can also use it to look into the past or future. Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, light the water incense then follow the procedures below for divination.

- For Finding People or Objects:
 - Hold an image of the person or object you are looking for and get very curious about them or it. The image is an “identifier” to make sure you get the right person or object. Focus on the feeling of, “I wonder where...?”
 - Holding the image of the person or object, and the feeling of curiosity, look into the smoke, not at or through it, look into it. Wait for visual images to form. These images may be pictures of the person or object's location, or number or letters that might indicate a street address, zip code or phone number.
 - If you get an image but don't get enough details, focus on the image and ask a second “Where is...?” question. Keep asking these questions until you get all the details you need.
 - You can also ask the image to zoom in or zoom out, shift left or shift right so you can make out more details. If you are looking for a person and get nothing but blackness or images you might associate with an infant (such as a crib), stop looking. The person may have already passed or been born into their next body!
- For Looking Into the Past or Future
 - Get very curious about the time period you want to examine and begin asking questions such as, “Where was I in [name the time period]?” or “What happened to me in [name the time period and/or place]?” If you want to look into the future, ask questions such as, “What is likely to happen on my trip to...?” or “What is likely to happen if I...?”
 - Then, holding that feeling, look into the smoke and wait for visual clues or images.
 - Remember that the future is not set. Divinations into the future only tell you what is most likely to happen if everything stays the

same in the present. If you see something you don't like in the future, you can change the present. A small change in the present produces a larger change in the future. If you see something drastic happening in a future divination, notice the events that happen before or around the drastic event. When you get to the future, you can look for those clues and make changes or different decisions.

- With past and future divinations be prepared to feel intense emotions. Divinations about the past may bring up issues and events that you have suppressed for long periods of time.

6. Exit Ritual, Day Greeting and Day Ending

This week we add Day Greetings and Day Endings to our practice of the Navajo Beauty Way.

The Exit Ritual is:

Sky Father
And Earth Mother
With Intention
I Greet You.

In addition, the first time you go out in the morning or make a special trip out in the morning, do your Day Greeting instead of your Exit Ritual. Face east, extend your arms out in front of you, palms facing each other, extend your awareness as far as you can into the East and say:

Winds of Knowledge, With Intention
I Bid You Good Morning.

In the evening before bed, do a Day Ending instead of your Exit Ritual:

Winds of Knowledge, With Intention
I Bid You Good Night.

If you find your day getting rocky or out of control, you can always restart your day by doing your day greeting – even if it's in the middle of the day, and even if you've already done it!