

## The Grove of the Forest Druid

### Path of the Druid

The path leading to recognition (ordination) as a Druid has three major stepping stones, bard, oblate and druid. One is not expected to master all these stones; that would take a lifetime. As members of The Grove progress from one stone to another they are expected to lay a foundation for further study and mastery. Along the way some may decide that they want to specialize in the roll of bard, oblate or druid. That is encouraged, however, we expect all members of The Grove who want to lead their or sister groves to be conversant and experienced with all three steppingstones.

The entire path can take as long as you want it to. The path expects that you will spend at least one month in second steppingstone practice and another month in third stone practice the shortest time to completion is a little more than two months. The “little more” time is the time that it takes you to complete the first stepping stone activities.

### The First Steppingstone

The bards formed a professional hereditary caste of highly trained, learned poets. The bards were historian-story tellers who learned the history and traditions of clan and country, as well as in the technical requirements of a verse technique that was syllabic and used assonance, half rhyme and alliteration, among other conventions. They served as officials of the court of king or chieftain. As such they performed a number of official roles. They were chroniclers and satirists whose job it was to praise their employers and damn those who crossed them. It was believed that a well-aimed bardic satire, *glam dicenn*, could raise boils on the face of its target. The bardic system lasted until the mid-17th century in Ireland and the early 18th century in Scotland.

To stand firmly on the first stepping stone in the middle of a stream of fast-moving water an initiate should:

1. Select a specific culture in which you want to become learned. One might feel a calling to the ancient Celts, Norse, Greek, Roman, or Dravidian. Select a culture that calls to you.
2. Study the history of the selected culture so that you could sit around a campfire with friends and tell them where the culture came from (their foundation myth) and what happened to it.
3. Learn about some of the goddesses and gods of the culture and identify the goddess and god that you feel called to work with. Note that they will call you, rather than you selecting them.
4. Learn a few (three to five) of the myths or folk stories of the culture, again so that you could sit around a campfire and become a bard, a storyteller. Not only should you be able to tell the story, you should also be able to apply the story to modern life events. For example, the story of the selkie is well known in Irish, Scottish, Faroese, and Icelandic folklore and it is a nice, albeit sad story, but why should we care today? What can we learn and apply from the story today?
5. Write a short (one page or less) essay in which you describe what you have learned and the stories that you have told. When you enrolled in the program you were provided with an email address. Email your material as an email attachment to The Grove using that address. Upon completion of this stone a first-stone certificate will be emailed to you.

## **The Second Steppingstone**

Once you have started to master the bardic skills it's time to take a big leap to the second steppingstone. Now you are close to the midpoint of the stream. In our tradition the oblate is a soothsayer or someone

who practices divination. The Oblate serves the community by gaining insight into a question or situation by way of an occultic process.

To stand firmly on the second stepping stone in the middle of a stream of fast-moving water an initiate should:

1. Select a tool to use in divination. Choose a tool that interests you. It does not have to be a tool or method used in the culture you selected for the first stone. Possible tools include the following:
  - a. Astrology
  - b. Divining rods
  - c. Numerology
  - d. Oghma sticks
  - e. Pendulum
  - f. Rune stones
  - g. Scrying
  - h. Tarot cards
2. Practice divination every day for at least a month. If you discover that the tool you selected doesn't really resonate with you then select another, but start your month-long practice time over again as well so that you really start to master the tool.
3. Keep a practice journal. Write down what your question was, the answer that you divined, and you might want to note the time of day, weather conditions, and Moon phase. Some people find that the time of day, weather or Moon phase affects their accuracy.
6. After practicing for at least a month review your practice journal and then write a short (one page or less) essay in which you describe what you have learned about your ability to use

divination as a tool. When you enrolled in the program you were provided with an email address. Email your material as an email attachment to The Grove using that address. Upon completion of this stone a second-stone certificate will be emailed to you.

### **The Third Steppingstone**

Now it's time to take a big leap over the water in the center of the stream, the part of the stream where the water is deep and fast moving. In our tradition the Druid is the shaman-priest who officiates at ceremonies and who travels to the other worlds. You should start to master two responsibilities as you learn to stand firmly on the third stepping stone in the middle of the stream. First, you should develop the ability to undertake shamanic journey so that you can work with your helping spirits in the lower world, the middle world, and the upper world. Second, you should develop the ability to author (at least in outline form) ritual for both private and public use.

1. Read the series of blog posts that start on September 12, 2015 on the blog at [www.TheModernDruid.net](http://www.TheModernDruid.net) and which end with the November 17, 2015 blog. These blogs are followed by a series on Andean shamanism and then Norse cosmology. All of the blogs are linked below.
2. Read the Core Shamanism – Part 5 video again and then take your first shamanic journey. The Modern Druid home page has a short shamanic drum session on the home page that you can use to accompany you on your journey.
3. Practice shamanic journeying every day for a month. That is long enough for you to develop a good skill level and for it to become a habit.
4. Keep a practice journal. Write down what your question was that lead you on your journey and the results of your journey

5. The line between witchcraft (Wicca) and Druidism is beginning to blur and so, if you wish, you may include Wiccan elements in your rituals. For example, while Wiccan, you might want to open a circle and call the quarters. One well known shamanic teacher, Alberto Villoldo, has incorporated calling the quarters into his rather eclectic energy medicine practitioner program. We too are rather eclectic so if a practice works for you and does no harm to others then incorporate it. I suggest that you find YouTube videos that show pagan ceremonies, both Druid and others, and use the elements that resonate with you to outline the general form of your public and private rituals.
6. Write a summary, one-page or less, about your experiences on shamanic journeys and attach your ritual script or outline. Email your essay and script. When you enrolled in the program you were provided with an email address. Email your material as an email attachment to The Grove using that address. Upon completion of this stone a third-stone certificate will be emailed to you.

# List of Videos

## Core Shamanism

- [Part 1 – Introduction](#)
- [Part 2 – Other Worlds](#)
- [Part 3 – Power Animals](#)
- [Part 4 – First Shamanic Journey](#)
- [Part 5 – Cosmology](#)
- [Part 6 – Cosmology – Upper World](#)
- [Shamanic Invocation](#)
- [Why Shamanism](#)
- [What Does It Take To Be A Shaman](#)
- [Magic and Religion](#)

## Shamanic Practices

- [Soul Retrieval](#)
- [Personal Revelation](#)
- [Shamanic Extraction – Part 1](#)
- [Shamanic Extraction – Part 2](#)
- [Shamanic Extraction – Part 3](#)

## Andean Shamanism

- [Part 1 – Cosmology](#)
- [Part 2 – Core Shamanism vs. Andean Shamanism](#)
- [Part 3 – The Mesa](#)
- [Part 4 – The Despacho \(Altar\)](#)

## Northern European Shamanism

- [Part 1 – Introduction](#)
- [Part 2 – Norse Cosmology](#)
- [Part 4 – Asgard](#)
- [Part 5 – Vanaheim](#)
- [Part 6 – Alfheim](#)
- [Part 7 – Nildavellir](#)
- [Part 8 – The Last Two Norse Worlds](#)
- [Part 9 – Rune Casting](#)
- [Part 10 – Learn Rune](#)
- [Part 11 – Loki](#)

## Celtic Shamanism

- [Part 1 – Do you have Celtic Roots](#)
- [Part 2 – A Little History](#)
- [Part 3 – The Tuatha de Danann](#)
- [Part 4 – The Comings and Goings of the Tuatha de Danann](#)
- [Part 5 – Celtic Goddesses and Gods](#)
- [Part 6 – Celtic Religious Orders](#)
- [Part 7 – Ogham](#)
- [Part 8 – Spring and the Goddess](#)

## Celebrations

- [Winer Solstice – Alban Arthan \(Welsh\)](#)
- [Yule](#)
- [Inti Raymi \(Andean\)](#)