

The Magical Properties of Hemp

by AarTiana

Latin/Scientific Name:	<i>Cannabis Sativa</i>
Common Name(s):	Hemp, Industrial Hemp, Bhang, Chanvre, Chronic, Gallowgrass, Ganeb, Ganja, Grass, Hanf, Kif, Marijuana, Neckweede, Tekrouri, Weed (see WARNING! below)
Legal Forms Explored Here:	Hemp Fiber, i.e. Yarn/Twine or Fabric, and Hemp Seed Oil
Planetary Rulerships:	Saturn, Venus, Jupiter, Neptune
Zodiacal Signs:	Capricorn, Gemini
Constellations:	“Two Dog Stars” of Orion, Canis Major (containing Sirius) and Canis Minor (containing Procyon)
Numerology:	2, 5, 6, 7
Elements:	Earth, Water
Holiday Associations:	Litha/Midsummer/Vestalia, Ostara
Direction:	East
Time of Day:	Sunrise
Gods:	Asar/Osiris, Pan, Dionysus/Bacchus, Priapus, Shiva, Fimbul/Fimbullyr, Vaithgantas Rupintojelis/Vaizgamtas
Goddesses:	Aset/Isis, Bast/Bastet, Vesta/Hestia, Venus, Freyja, Indra, Mati-Syra-Zemlya, Amaterasu, Hani-Yasu-No-Kami
Magical Uses:	Has all the qualities of quartz crystal, including magnification or amplification of any magical work, manifestation, “programming” with positive energy, remove negative influence, healing, love, protection, psychic vision, peace, meditation, beauty, harm-none binding, the possibilities are endless!

WARNING!

Because hemp’s plant origins are the same as the illegal drug marijuana, this article will only present working magically with this plant in its imported legal forms, two of which are hemp fiber to make yarn, twine or fabric, and the nutrition-rich hemp seed oil.

The term “hemp” is also used for different plants, mostly to describe other plant-based clothing fibers (wherein *cannabis*, meaning “two dogs,” was known as the “true hemp”). However, a very different example is Barbarian’s Hemp (*Sesamum indicum*) which is commonly known as Sesame, and in Chinese *Hei zhi ma*. Another example, Indian Hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*), is a poisonous member of the Dogbane family that grows mostly in eastern Kansas, and incidentally is an ingredient in some old recipes for witches’ flying ointments and, because of its poisonous tendencies, is not recommended. In any case, none of these would be the same plants, and therefore are not considered as any basis for this article.

History and Lore

On a more mundane level, industrial hemp is very ancient and has been used in many areas of the world as fiber for clothing, and later paper, since approximately 8000 B.C.E., quite possibly due to its amazing resilience to pests, including mold, weeds, and insects, as well as its weather and climate tolerance, fast growth and renewing quality. It is also used extensively as food. This history is immense and lush, but we will focus here on hemp's magical uses.

Ancient Japanese Shinto Priests used a *gohei*, a short stick with undyed hemp fibers (representing purity), which was used in purification rites to drive away evil, and hemp was also used to bind marriages to create happiness. Korean men wore hemp pants, called *paji ma*, for virility and power. In Slavic tradition in the ancient Don Region, hemp oil was sacrificed to the goddess Mati-Syra-Zemlya, meaning "Moist Mother Earth" or "Mother of the Wet Earth" for a good harvest. In northern Europe on Ostara (around March 21 in Northern Hemisphere), wreaths of hemp were made by maidens in honor of Freyja to "toss" onto the doorknobs of the men they wished to attract. Legend from India says hemp came from the heavens via drops of their version of ambrosia that spilled, and became hemp plants, and, in turn, were made into a beverage to honor Indra. The African Dogon tribe used hemp in their worship of the constellations, the "Two Dog Stars" of Orion, which are Canis Major (containing the most notable star, Sirius) and Canis Minor (containing the most notable star, Procyon), due to their legend of a fish-head God who brought them hemp, and interestingly, this God said he came from what today is known as "Sirius B" or the White Dwarf, discovered by scientists hundreds of years later, and even more interesting is the relationship between Sirius A (the star we see) and Sirius B, in that their paths create an intertwining similar in proportion with the intertwining of DNA, the fabric of the Universe! In modern-day pagan, wiccan and witchcraft books, hemp is mentioned as an ingredient in many old incense recipes and resonates with Midsummer, which falls approximately June 21 in the Northern Hemisphere.

Practical Uses

Hemp possesses a magical energy very similar to clear quartz crystal. This property comes from the shape of the fiber itself - if a portion of hemp fiber is "sliced" like a loaf of bread and placed under a microscope, you would see a hexagonal image, as opposed to most fibers which bear a circular shape. However, since hemp is more flexible in its fiber form, or more liquid in its seed oil form, it is much more versatile! Use hemp seed oil alone or blended with any of your other ritual, anointing or magical oils. Remember, hemp magnifies and manifests your magic, use accordingly.

Use some hemp fibers in your magical incense blends to magnify or manifest (i.e. "weave" into existence) your desires more quickly, to increase psychic visions, or in purification blends to rid of negativity, or even in protection blends, and don't forget to add some to Midsummer's ritual incense. Because hemp fibers are known to be strong, you can use the yarn or twine itself in harm-none binding rituals, such as handfastings.

You can wrap and charge candles (either deosil or widdershins, depending on your magic), ritual tools like your athame handle, and even your wand. For those of you who smudge with whole herbs, increase your magic by using hemp twine or yarn to wrap your herbal “wands” before burning.

Knotwork (also called Cord Magic) is something else that lends itself well, particularly if you use hemp twine (and hemp takes to natural dyes well). Because knotwork is a very powerful manifestation tool, you can also use techniques like macramé, tatting and crochet instead of a rope with knots – then you have something useful, and magical, at the same time! Also, if you can find hemp fabric, this can allow its own type of versatility, although it is usually somewhat expensive. Experiment away!

My Own Experiences Using Hemp in Magic

Since I crochet with hemp often, I am very familiar with the “feel” of an item that is magically charged by me as I create it. Healing energy pours out of my hands while I am handling the yarn, along with my mental intentions for love, light and healing to the recipient, even if I don’t know who that will be, and hemp really makes it “stick” – no doubt due to its quartz crystal/Saturnian qualities. For example, if on a waning-moon Friday (for beauty-Venus) I decide to crochet a small hemp facial scrubbie, not only is this practical for washing my face (and is mold-resistant), I can infuse my magical intentions while making it for removing psychic as well as physical impurities and for allowing true beauty to surface. Please keep in mind that hemp’s “stickiness” can be a disadvantage when trying to clear and reprogram; therefore, take extra time and care.

Here is a beginning crochet pattern to make such a crocheted hemp scrubbie. First, obtain a small amount of hemp yarn, scissors, and a size H crochet hook. To begin, chain 10.

Row 1: Half Double Crochet in the 2nd chain from hook, and each chain across (9 half double crochets).

Rows 2-8: Chain 1, turn, 1 half double crochet in each half double crochet across.

Finishing: Chain 14, join with slip stitch in same corner to form a loop to hang it for drying, chain 1, turn, 14 single crochets inside of the loop, slip stitch to corner again, fasten off, weave in ends, and you are ready to use it for your intended purpose!

You may notice while crocheting hemp yarn that excess yarn fuzz and twigs either fall off or need to be pulled off while crocheting. Don’t throw these fibers away, use them magically instead. They work very well for incense and herbal blends created with intention.

As another example, I have crocheted a hemp yarn “sun” in ritual to represent the Sun God that gets burned in the ritual fire. Even if you don’t crochet, hemp is a great fiber for this. Just wrap it around a cardboard a few times (you can use numerology here

if you wish - for instance, 120 times so it keeps the value of 12), make a few well-placed knots, cut the strings, and you have a hemp version of a corn dolly!

If you wish to crochet a sun, however, obtain a small amount of hemp yarn, scissors, and a crochet hook (size J is great but whatever size you feel comfortable using). To begin, chain 4.

Round 1: Make 11 double crochets in the 4th chain from the hook (in other words, the first chain stitch you made). Join with a slip stitch to the 3rd or the top chain stitch. You will have 12 “spokes” to work with, which resonates with the solar calendar year.

Round 2. Chain 4, 1 double crochet in the next double crochet (from Round 1), then [chain 1, 1 double crochet in the next double crochet] 11 times, chain 1, and slip stitch to the 3rd chain in the beginning of Round 2. End off, you are done!

Approximately ninety percent of the crocheting that I do is creating headwear for others, whether I use hemp or not. When I crochet a piece for someone, even though I have not met them personally, I really “tune in” on them and their spiritual needs, and due to this, my intentions vary to bring the person’s upper chakras in alignment, to open their spiritual growth, and to allow for healing in all forms (especially physically if they underwent chemotherapy and likely wear hats to cover their heads while they regrow hair!). I have done this so much that it automatically happens now!

Crocheting hemp can be another way for your magic, wishes and desires to be carried to spirit, rather than writing on paper. In fact, I attended a Lakota sweat lodge ritual called an *inipi* which represents being cleansed and reborn from the Earth, and we made “prayer” bundles to be thrown into the ritual fire, which were big pinches of tobacco wrapped in cotton cloth (the color chosen was dependent on what you wanted, and I was drawn to red for my wishes of healing the land). With permission from the spirits, I crocheted some hemp into a sun shape, put that with my tobacco, and wrapped my prayer bundle with more hemp, and threw it in the fire for the smoke to carry my prayers to the spirits. Needless to say, that prayer bundle was definitely answered – within the month, the area where the *inipi* was held had burned to the ground during the record-breaking San Diego fires! Even with a disruption as major as that, it was true that it really was the fastest way to heal the land, as well as the people. Such an outpouring of love happened after that, and love is what truly heals! And the plant life is returning in full-force now, so the land is healing, as well as the people of the land!

I hope this article inspires you to incorporate the very versatile, and powerful, magical energy of hemp, and thereby helps to expand your magical practice – Blessed be!

For Further Study

Cunningham, Scott. *Cunningham’s Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. St. Paul, Minn.: Llewellyn Publications, 1984.

Cunningham, Scott. *The Complete Book of Incense, Oils and Brews*. St. Paul, Minn.: Llewellyn Publications, 1989.

Kolander, Cheryl. *Hemp! For Textile Artists*. Portland, Oregon: Mama D.O.C. Inc., 1995.

Internet Resources

How to Crochet at <http://www.crochet.com/lessons/lesson.html>.

The Emperor Wears No Clothes at <http://www.jackherer.com/chapters.html>.

A History of Hemp at <http://www.rexresearch.com/hhist/hhist1~1.htm>.