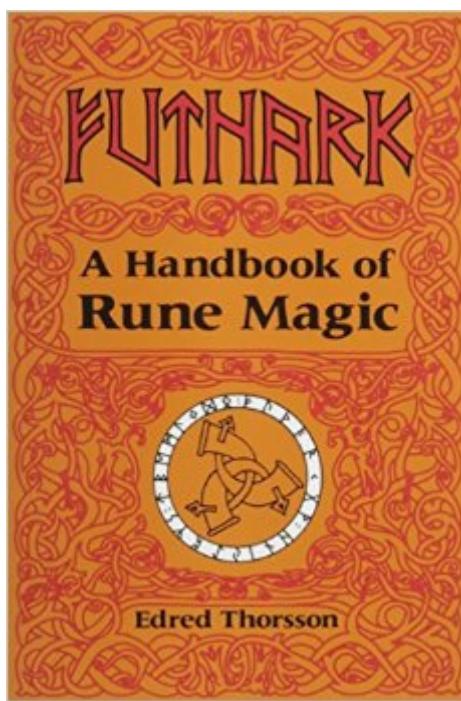


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# Futhark: A Handbook Of Rune Magic



## **Synopsis**

Runes are the ancient Norse alphabet used for communication, divination, and magical work. In Futhark, American runologist Edred Thorsson introduces readers to the 24 runes of the Elder Futhark, their definitions, and mystic properties. The runic system of magic and mysticism is one of the most powerful forms of metaphysical thought available to the Western world. This bestselling classic book on Runes continues to be required reading for those who seek true knowledge of the mystery of the Runes. Thorsson's presentation of this powerful system is lucid and profound and provides a valuable tool for spiritual transformation and self-development.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This was the first popular esoteric rune book to contain some real academic research on runes. Thorsson's PhD gives him the background, research skills, and access to sources to put together a very impressive work. The awkward, dry, scholarly writing style adds to the perceived credibility. Unfortunately, as we can see from other reviews, the average reader tends to accept the book as historical facts about the original runic traditions of Viking & pre-Viking times. Although the book is a cut above the New-Age pack, claims of authenticity are misleading. Although it contains some good research that most of the other rune manuals lack, the esoteric ideas are largely based on the Armanen system invented in Germany in the early 1900s. The Armanen system was typical of the occultism of the day, mixing romanticised & poorly researched ideas about runes with poorly understood techniques borrowed from yoga, and a touch of Western ceremonial magic (itself mainly

descended from Hebrew sources). It was a mish-mash of systems not so different from the anything-goes New-Age fusions of today. The only problem with the book is that it does not always clearly separate recent inventions from pre-Christian sources, leaving the average reader with the impression that it describes a pre-Christian esoteric tradition. It also contains a fair amount of speculation about historical sources that is not clearly identified as such, or made to look more credible than it really is (eg his argument for rune postures). To be fair, if you have done some extra study, and read carefully, the distinctions are often there, but they tend to be worded so that the average reader will not notice when they enter the realms of UPG. This book is useful to those interested in esoteric runology, but those interested in re-creationist or historical rune magic need to take it with a grain of salt. Read it, but first do the groundwork and look at the historical facts, then feel free to make your own speculations rather than rely on the imagination of the popular authors. For those interested in a survey of real historical evidence and examples of rune magic, I recommend *Runic Amulets and Magic Objects*. Sweyn Author of *The Rune Primer*

This book first came out in the late 1980's, and many rune magicians still consider it a classic. Several later authors, including Gundarsson, have been inspired by *Futhark* to some extent. Thorsson discusses the meanings and magical uses of each rune in detail, backing them with references from Norse pagan texts and Germanic folklore. He does occasionally allude to other esoteric traditions, but this doesn't feel as intrusive as it does in some other books. (My only complaint here is the table of astrological and Tarot correspondences at the end of the book; the runes, in my opinion, should be able to stand on their own as a magical system.) I would still recommend this book ten years after I first bought it, although Thorsson's language may be too dry and academic for popular readers.

This book is REQUIRED READING for those who would dare seek true knowledge of the runes. Other books purporting to reveal the mysteries of the runes are best left to the New Agers -- this is the real deal. Be advised that even though this "introductory" text is "for beginners," it is only for those who truly wish to KNOW. There is no mass-market fluff here! Although I am not entirely in agreement with the teachings of Mister Flowers (Thorsson) and the Rune-Guild, this is, by far, the best book I've seen on the subject matter . . . better even than "Thorsson's" later books for more advanced studies. He has written a number of books on the runes, and, even though I have a working knowledge of runelore myself, a few of them were difficult to read. Fortunately, "Futhark" is not one of them. The only real criticism I have is that, personally, I find the concept of "runic

postures" rather silly. Visualize them, carve them, stain them with your blood -- but don't go striking a pose! Aside from that, this was an excellent book, and I recommend it highly.

This is a book for anyone serious about learning to use the runes. Thorsson is extremely well grounded in traditional lore and the material is presented in a logical and progressive manner, though it goes beyond basic material. It can certainly serve as a primer for the determined newbie, but I would recommend Bernard King's "Way of the Runes" as the best primer I have encountered for getting to know the basics. The writing style is admittedly a little dry, but this book must be seen as the scholarly treatise that it is. So why three stars? Thorsson leans very heavily on the Armamen system developed by Guido von List and others a hundred years ago. I would have no problem with this if he pointed it out in the book, clearly delineating what can be verified from the elder lore, what he has drawn from the Armamen system, and what has grown out of his own experience and speculation. The most panned aspect of this work, *stadha-galdr*, or "runic yoga" has gotten it labelled as fluff by many Heathens. It should be known that this practise actually derives from the Armamen system and is not a whole cloth invention of Thorsson's. On the whole, I give the material 4 stars, the presentation 2.

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