# http://ts2.mm.bing.net/th?id=I.5033985899299041&pid=1.7&w=148&h=148&c=7&rs=1An Imbolc Rite

Historically, Imbolc is the time of year when lambs would be born. It is earliest time of the year when the days first start being visibly longer. There is light without heat. Spring has not yet arrived, but there is hope for spring. This time of season is a good time for planning out goals for the coming year. Imbolc is the halfway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. It is a cross-quarter holiday that is considered a “major” Sabbat (along with Beltane, Lugnassadh, and Samhain).

## Special Materials Needed

* Divination Tool: Can be runes, tarot, or any other preferred divination tool.

## Setting up Ritual Space

All but the most hardcore Pagans will likely hold this ritual indoors. At this time of year, not only does the sun set early, the nights are both cold and windy. Should an outdoor ritual be preferred, the Celebrant should consider building a bonfire for providing both light and heat. Torches may be placed at the cardinal directions.

For an indoor ritual, large pillar candles can be placed at the cardinal directions. The ritual space should be swept with a broom made of natural materials and purified with incense. The altar colors should include red, white, and black. Several acorns should also be placed on the altar.

## Casting the Circle

The Celebrant shall walk the periphery of the ritual space three times, clockwise starting from the east. On the first pass, the Celebrant shall sprinkle salt water along the edge of the sacred space. On the second pass, the Celebrant shall trace the periphery with a rod of incense. With the final pass, the Celebrant shall use an Athame.

Once the circle is walked three times, the Celebrants issue a Gathering call:

### First Iteration

**Priestess:**

"Come shapers, come craftsmen, come molders of clay

Come artists, come singers, come teachers of the way

Come warriors, come hearth-keepers, come healers

Come wise ones, come mystics, come fortune-dealers."

**Covenors:**

"We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"

### Second Iteration

**Priest:**

"We are shapers of dreams, crafters of song

We are teachers of lore, righters of wrong

We are seekers of truth, affirmers of life

We are guardians of peace, soothers of strife."

**Coverers:**

"We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"

### Third Iteration

**Priestess:**

We remember the fire, the well, and the tree

We remember the call that all must be free

We remember the Lady, and the Lord of the Sun,

We remember the charge to love all and harm none

**Covenors**:

"We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"

**Priest and Priestess:** "The Circle is cast!"

**Coven**: "So mote it be!"

## Calling the Quarters

The elemental spirits and deities are called starting in the east, in a clockwise fashion. The appropriate candle is lit after each call.

### Air/East

Guardian of the East, Spirit of Air

In love and thanks we invite you here

The wind howls mournfully throughout the night

Given force by winter’s might

An icy gale chills hands and face

And blows dead leaves from place to place

Guardian of the East, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Air, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### Fire/South

Guardian of the South, Spirit of Fire

In love and thanks we invite you here

The heath fires glow with resplendent light

And gives us heat throughout the night

Candles, torches, and braziers bright

Repel the darkness and grant us sight

Guardian of the South we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Fire, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### Water/West

Guardian of the West, Spirit of Water

In love and thanks we invite you here

Flurries spiral down from a slate-gray sky

Pure white snow piles up waist-high

The lakes are frozen, as are the streams

In morning light, the clear ice gleams

Guardian of the West, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Water, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### Earth/North

Guardian of the North, Spirit of Earth

In love and thanks we invite you here

The mountain peaks gleam white with snow

The valleys are barren here below

The life force sleeps beneath the ground

The Wheel of the Year shall soon turn ‘round

Guardian of the North, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Earth, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### God

God of the Sun, Lord of the Light

In love and thanks we invite you here

The diminished sun lights the eastern sky

Pink and crimson greets the eye

Though weak against cold winter’s might

The sun shall soon push back the night.

God of the Sun we give thanks to thee

Lord of Light, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### Goddess

Maiden Goddess, Giver of Life

In love and thanks we invite you here

Your youth and vigor have been restored

Winter’s wrath will be abjured

The path to spring is underway

Evidenced by the strengthening day

Maiden Goddess we give thanks to thee

Giver of Life, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

## Guided Meditation

*Covenors may be seated (if this is an indoor ritual) or remain standing if outdoors. Celebrant reads the meditation.*

Close your eyes and make yourself comfortable. Take three cleansing breaths. Breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… breathe out… We are traveling away from this place. We are traveling somewhere else – to a place of perfect winter.

You open your eyes in this other realm. It is winter and the night sky is full of stars. The full moon shines with a cold, white light. You warm yourself near a large, crackling bonfire. It sends smoke and sparks into the air. You inhale the reassuring scent of the burning logs. The radiant orange glow from the fire banishes the chill from your hands, face, and feet.

The energy from the brave fire reminds you of the sun’s increasing power. Although it is night, and the air is chilly, you can sense the beginnings of seasonal change. You feel the spirit of life beneath your feet. It is vast and quiet. It is not yet awakened, but its slumber is nearly over.

Look now to the moon. It’s pale, steady light contrasts with the dynamic and colorful bonfire. There is a steadiness and steadfastness to the moon’s glow. It offsets the overabundant heat of the bonfire. In its cool glow, you find balance. Draw its cleansing, calming light into your body and spirit. The light brings clarity of thought and enhances your senses. Everything is brought into focus.

Look out into the forest. You see the individual flakes of snow that fall from the branched of evergreen trees. They drift silently to the ground in gentle spirals. Shadows dance on the pure white snow. Somewhere an owl hoots in the distance. It is a solitary sound. A cold, dry wind blows flurries across your boots and the sensation of cold air on your face is exhilarating. It is a good time to be alive.

In this place of solitude, you feel the delicate balance of forces between the waning winter and the nascent spring. It is a time to contemplate the future, to plan what shall be planted, to prepare for the goals for this year.

Now is the time to contemplate the future for the coming year. Look into fire and see its crackling flames. See the flowing, ever-changing patterns. What secrets does it reveal to you?

*Silence for a time.*

We are ready to leave this place. Remember the tranquility and solitude of the winter forest. Remember how good the cold wind felt and keep this memory for when the days ahead turn hot. The wheel of the year turns ever forward. Soon winter will pass and spring will come.

Close your eyes to this place. Breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… breathe out… When you are ready, open your eyes.

## Magical Working

Celebrant shall complete a divination. For a small gathering the Celebrant can perform a divination for each Covenor. For a larger gathering, the Celebrant can conduct a general divination for the circle/coven.

## Cakes and Ale

*If there are two Celebrants (Priest and Priestess), the Priest shall distribute the bread/cakes and the Priestess shall distribute the cup of wine/ale/juice.*

Priest or Priestess: “The celebration of bread and wine is not unique to Wicca. Many religions in many cultures have venerated the bounty of grain and vine. Bread and wine sustain the body and bring us together as a community. In the Wiccan tradition, these gifts also bring us in communion with the God and Goddess. And so we bring you these gifts so that we may be united with one another in spirit.”

**Priestess**: “With the cup, we are one.”

**Covenor**: “Blessed be”

**Priest**: “We are one people, we share one bread.”

**Covenor:** “Blessed be.”

## Releasing the Quarters

Elemental spirits and deities are released in the opposite order in which they were called. The appropriate candle is lit after each call.

### Goddess

Maiden Goddess, Giver of Life

We give you thanks for coming here

In winter’s gloom, you promise spring

We affirm the wondrous blessings you bring

Though field and forest slumbers still

They shall awaken by your will

Maiden Goddess, we give thanks to thee

Giver of Life, blessed be

Hail and Farewell!

### God

God of the Sun, Lord of the Light

We give you thanks for coming here

Your power increases against the night

Warming rays, increasing might

Though still unable to melt the snow

Each day we feel your power grow

God of the Sun, we give thanks to thee

Lord of the Light, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### North/Earth

Guardian of the North, Spirit of Earth

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the mountains and peaks so white

They sparkle in sun and glimmer so bright

Return to the fields, so stark and cold

As we await spring to take hold

Guardian of the North, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Earth, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### West/Water

Guardian of the West, Spirit of Water

In love and thanks we invite you here

Return to the frozen lakes and streams

Beneath, the life force slumbers and dreams

Return to the wondrous drifts of snow

They shimmer in sunlight with a sparkling glow

Guardian of the West, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Water, blessed be

Hail and Farewell!

### South/Fire

Guardian of the South, Spirit of Fire

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the torches and candles bright

We give you thanks for the gift of sight

Return to the flaming hearth so brave

Against the cold, our lives you save

Guardian of the South we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Fire, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### East/Air

Guardian of the East, Spirit of Air

We give you thanks for coming here.

Return to the skies of churning grey

As we await the warming day

Return to the gales, so brisk and cold

Winter’s grip will soon lose hold

Guardian of the East, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Air, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

## Releasing the Circle

The Celebrant walks the perimeter of the circle in a widdershins (counter-clockwise) direction, starting in the east.

**Priest**: “May all spirits attracted to our light return to your realms in peace, harming none.”

**Priestess**: “The circle, though open, remains unbroken.”

**Celebrants and Covenors**: “Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again!”