The Banishing Ritual of the Lesser Pentagram is one of the most basic and most important Rituals. Start here is my suggestion.
Thelemic view for the purpose of Banishing:

**Purpose**

*The first task of the Magician in every ceremony is therefore to render his Circle absolutely impregnable.*—Aleister Crowley

A **banishing** is generally performed before the beginning of a magical ritual. Its purpose is to cleanse the area for the ritual—whether it be a room or a magick circle—**all those elements that might interfere with the magical operation.** Banishing consists of removing all objects from a place of working in order to put into that reserved space those objects which are pertinent to the operation.

In elaborate ceremonies, the Magician may choose to banish all the elements (*Air, Earth, Fire, Water, & Spirit*), the planets, the signs of the zodiac, spirits, godforms, and even the ten Sephiroth. Even the force to be invoked is banished. As Crowley says, "for that force as existing in Nature is always impure."

Banishing rituals may also be performed for their own sake. This can be done for several reasons—to cleanse a room or home, to eliminate negative or unwanted energy, or to simply calm and balance the mind. Many magicians practice banishing rituals daily.

[edit]

**Methods of Banishing**

A simple method of banishing is by the use of Liber XXV: The Star Ruby or the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram. These two rituals utilize the pentagram in all four quarters. "Only the four elements are specifically mentioned, but these four elements contain the planets and the signs - the four elements are Tetragrammaton; and Tetragrammaton is the Universe." (Crowley, Aleister) Thus banishing by way of the pentagram can be viewed as a general method of banishing anything in the universe.

In Enochian magick, the Thirty Aethers have a close relationship to the elements. Each Aether has three Governors except the 30th which has four. The names of these Governors are taken from the elemental tablets. Thus we see the influence of the elements extending even to the highest reaches of the Aethers.

The Pentagram rituals

First, the pentagram must be somewhat explained. The pentagram consists of the five elements: *Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and Spirit.*

Each element may be invoked or banished at will by the Magician. The manner in which this is done is by the direction the pentagram is drawn. A general rule of tracing banishing pentagrams is to start at the point of the pentagram attributed to the element in question and move away from it, ending where you began. See Liber O, Part IV
(http://www.hermetic.com/crowley/libers/libero.html) for elemental attributions of the points on a pentagram.

"Be alert and on your guard! Watch before you pray! The feeling of success in banishing, once acquired, is unmistakable."

Link to THelemapedia: http://www.thelemapedia.org/index.php/Banishing

Liber O:

The Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram

(i) Touching the forehead say Ateh (Unto Thee).
(ii) Touching the breast say Malkuth (The Kingdom).
(iii) Touching the right shoulder, say ve-Geburah (and the Power).
(iv) Touching the left shoulder, say ve-Gedulah (and the Glory).
(v) Clasping the hands upon the breast, say le-Olahm, Amen (To the Ages, Amen).
(vi) Turning to the East make a pentagram (that of Earth) with the proper weapon (usually the Wand). Say ("i.e." vibrate) I H V H.
(vii) Turning to the South, the same, but say A D N I.
(viii) Turning to the West, the same, but say A H I H.
(ix) Turning to the North, the same, but say A G L A.


(x) Extending the arms in the form of a Cross say:
(xi) Before me Raphael; (xii) Behind me Gabriel;
(xiii) On my right hand Michael. (xiv) On my left hand Auriel;
(xv) For about me flames the Pentagram,
(xvi) And in the Column stands the six-rayed Star.
(xvii-xxi) Repeat (i) to (v), the Qabalistic Cross.

Excellent and clearly directions to start to perform this ritual:

THE THELEMIC LESSER PENTAGRAM BANISHMENT

----- 1st Part: the Qabalistic Cross ----- 
1. Stand Facing East, body straight, feet together and hands at sides.
2. Touch fore-head with right hand and say "Ateh."
3. Touch chest at the level of the heart and say "Aiwass" (personal variation: If you know it, say the name of your Angel.).
4. From the chest, move your right hand directly vertically downward as low as possible without bending the body, touch the base of the pelvic area and say "Malkut."
5. Touch left shoulder with right hand and say "Ve Gedulah."
6. Touch right shoulder with right hand and say "Ve Geburah" (frequent variation to #5 & 6: These two gestures and words are reversed).

7. Clasp hands flatly, palm to palm in front of the body at the level of the heart. Say "Le Olahm."

8. Pause, say "Amen" and bring hands back down to sides as in #1.

9. Take three steps to the East. With the right hand trace the Earth Banishing Pentagram (see page 14). This may be done by; first, placing your right hand before your body on a level with your left hip; second, move right hand directly to a point above your head; third, move right hand directly to the level of right hip; fourth, move right hand to level of right shoulder; sixth, return hand directly to starting point before left hip. In doing this, maintain some simple gesture of the hand in a direction outward from the body. You may hold a knife, direct three fingers outward, make a fist with the thumb pointed outward between the two fingers nearest the thumb or you may make any similar gesture of direction of force away from your body.

10. Say "Jahovah." At the same time WILL that the God of the Israelites stand before you and anything harmful from the East. Imagine the pentagram glowing with a fiery and potent force.

11. Return to center. Turn to South. Take three Steps. Trace the same pentagram. Say "Adonai." WILL that the Lord of all that exists stand before you and ward off anything that is harmful from the South. The Pentagram glows.

12. Return to center. Turn to West. Take three steps. Trace the pentagram. Say "Eheieh." WILL that the God who Exists and who spoke to Moses from the burning bush stand before you and ward off anything that is harmful from the West.

13. Return to center. Turn to the North. Take three steps. Trace the pentagram. Say "Agla." WILL that the mighty and eternal God stand before you and anything harmful from the North.

14. Return to Center. Face East. Spread your legs and hold your arms parallel to the ground so that your body assumes the shape of a pentagram.

15. Say "Before me Raphael." Imagine a vast column of yellow light. Imagine a cool and refreshing breeze coming from the East.
16. Say "Behind me Gabrael." Imagine a vast column of blue light. Imagine a rushing of waters in the West. An archangel stands behind you toward the West.
17. Say "On my right hand Michael." Imagine a vast column of red light. Imagine a great heat and a roaring of flames in the South. An Archangel stands to your right hand toward the South.
18. Say "On my left hand Urial." Imagine a vast column of mixed browns and greens. An Archangel stands at your left hand toward the North.
19. Still holding the form of the pentagram and facing East, say "For I am the flaming pentagram in the column of the six-rayed Star." On the words "flaming pentagram" visualize a band of white light connecting the previously traced pentagrams in a circle about you at the height of your heart. This is the magical circle. On the words "six-rayed Star" imagine the variously colored columns of the four archangelic powers bending together above you and below you. You are now surrounded by three mutually perpendicular circles which form a sphere of protecting force. There are alternatives to the words and visualizations of this instruction --- experiment for various effects. In some instances, it is best to allow an open space above and below to permit the descent and rise of power. The visualizations given here permit maximum protection, but do not greatly aid externally directed Magick.

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3rd Part: the Qabalistic Cross

This is done in exactly the same manner as the first part of this ritual.

-oOo-

Postscript to the ritual

This full ritual is easily changed and elaborated according to the whim of the magician. The Hebrew portions should not be changed until the ritual is well learned through practice. After this ritual is fully learned, divine and lesser names from other pantheons (e.g. Greek, Egyptian, Roman, Celtic etc.) can be substituted with interesting effect. The way of tracing the pentagrams should not be changed until this first form is well learned (minimum practice time before use of other pentagrams is 3 months of daily use --- don't rush this). Later, other methods of tracing for invoking as well as banishing and for the four elements and spirit can be used. The vertical and horizontal motions in the first and last part should be retained. All else is subject to immediate elaboration and eventual alteration. Almost every user has a special variation of the statements and visualizations in part 19. One can expand around the Hebrew names: "By the name and in the name of Jehovah the gates of the East are closed and sealed." Any other fitting modification can be made, so long as it tends to strengthen the ritual. Notwithstanding this, it is best to begin and practice this ritual with the simple words given here. The Hebrew names in the second part should be uttered with an entire breath.
drawn out into a vibration like singing with a sustained note. Some prefer to associate a particular note of the 12-tone scale with each letter in he Hebrew names — this works, but takes much practice.

In banishing it is not advisable to name a particular thing to be banished after forming the {pentagrams. Such a naming may be done before the pentagrams are traced. When time does not permit the use of the entire ritual, a thing to be banished is visualized or imagined to be some distance away and a pentagram is traced between yourself and the thing to be banished. This may be done mentally instead of physically. In any event, WILL the dissolution of the thing to be banished and visualize it melting away behind the pentagram.

Hebrew Words Used in the Lesser Pentagram Ritual:


Aid in pronunciation of these words can be obtained from O.T.O. Newsletter #4. Members of O.T.O. may obtain tape cassette #M-6 for further instruction. {N.B. Tape M-6 is no longer available} The entire set of pentagrams and much additional matter on this ritual may be found in O.T.O. Newsletter #4 — available from O.T.O. at the address shown on the cover page of this booklet. Cost is {$2.00}.

There are many other source for this ritual in the literature, Levi, Crowley, Regardie and Fortune have all written at length on the subject. Ophiel has also published on this subject, but with gross errors in Hebrew.

The Pentagram ritual is capable of very great alterations and adaptations. This one ritual is the most instructive operational ritual other than initiation known to the Western tradition. It has served as a basis for many of Crowley's shorter rituals, including The Star Ruby, Liber Reguli and many others. In adapting the ritual to other uses, note that it is the pentagram traced in a particular manner that makes this a banishment. Other tracings of the pentagram produce distinctly different effects. These various effects cannot be expected until the first use of the earth banishment pentagram is firmly impressed on the unconscious associations of the magician — thus the admonition to practice this first form at great length and with particular
visualizations. After this imprinting of the habit of the magician has occurred, the later elaborations become very open to experiment. If this initial practice is not followed, it is possible that the associations to the pentagrams will never be attained on a sufficiently subtle level.

When the time comes to elaborate or to transform this ritual to a Lunar or a Feminine current, the magician will find value in consulting the tables in Liber 777. Other sources will be of help in obtaining new uses for the basis provided through a full learning of this primary ritual. Just as houses are built of common materials, so also are the greatest workings built up from rituals as fundamental as the Lesser Pentagram banishment. This ritual is used throughout the life of the Magician.

Link: http://hermetic.com/heidrick/mq/14.html

Breakdown of performing the ritual:
The Kabbalist Cross:
The Kabbalistic Cross is self-contained and can be performed as its own ritual. It also interlocks within the larger framework of the LRP. As used by the Golden Dawn, it is based on an interpretation of a passage from Eliphas Levi, who wrote:

"The Sign of the Cross adopted by Christians does not belong to them exclusively. This also is kabalistic and represents the oppositions and tetradic equilibrium of the elements. We see by the occult versicle of the Lord's Prayer, which we have cited in our 'Doctrine', that it was originally made after two manners, or at least that it was characterized by two entirely different formulae, one reserved for priests and initiates, the other imparted to neophytes and the profane. For example, the initiate said raising his hand to his forehead, 'For thine,' then added 'is,' and continuing as he brought down his hand to his breast, 'the kingdom,' then to the left shoulder, 'and the mercy' — then clasping his hands, he added, 'in the generating ages.' Tibi sunt Malkuth et Geburah et Chesed per aeonas — a Sign of the Cross which is absolutely and magnificently kabalistic, which the profanations of Gnosticism have lost completely to the official and militant Church. This Sign, made after this manner, should precede and terminate the Conjuration of the Four [elements]."
The Kabbalistic Cross is made on the body, signifying that one's self is an expression of the
symbols and meanings described by the ritual gestures. The cross has a vertical and
horizontal dimension. The vertical component represents the divine reality. The horizontal is
material or manifest existence. The vertical line is drawn first to show the ontological priority of
spirit, which extends to all planes of reality both above and below our world. The horizontal
axis is then described, such that the two axes of matter and spirit meet in a point at the heart.
A mathematical point has no extension, and so this point, which is in the heart, represents
Hadit, the true Self. It is also the mystical nothing, that silent place where spirit and matter
meet and are one.
In a different and equally valid symbolism, the Kabbalistic Cross represents the manifestation
of the Tree of Life on and as the human body. This expresses the Hermetic concept of the
unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm. The Tree of Life, representing the 'Body of God'
and the aspects of the cosmos is shown to simultaneously be the body of the magician and
the aspects of their being. Here is the doctrine of anthropocosmos — that the exalted physical
and Imaginal body of the magician is the body of God.
The middle pillar of the Tree is first established, extending from Kether above the head to
Malkuth at the feet. This shows that the equilibrium of opposites precedes and is more
fundamental than the duality of contending forces represented by the Pillars of Mercy and
Severity, which are designated by the horizontal bar of the cross.
There are other meanings of the Kabbalistic Cross. The cross generally represents the 4
elements, governed by and revolving about the central point of the cross, which stands for
Spirit. Therefore the symbol as a whole represents manifestation as spatial extension
radiating from the central point of Spirit. Different systems have different elements assigned
to particular arms, but as a general symbol of the four-fold it is unnecessary to view particular
arms as particular elements, but rather see the symbol as showing simply the idea of four
elements in general. This symbolizes the body of the magician, or microcosm, governed and
sustained by Spirit, located at the heart. The heart in the Kabbalistic Cross is therefore a
symbol of Love and Will conjoined, as it is the site of an impulse to manifestation (Will), and is
also traditionally the seat of the emotions and therefore of Love.
In its upright form the cross also represents the trinity heading the pendant lower levels of
reality:
There are many more depths of meaning to the cross, which further reflection and
contemplation can reveal. It is not merely a Christian sectarian icon. Probably the most
thorough work on this subject is Rene Guenon'sSymbolism of the Cross.
Certain words are said when making the Kabbalistic Cross. The phrase is, "Atah Malkuth, ve
Geburah, ve Gedulah, le ohlahm Amen." This means, "Unto thee is the kingdom, the power
"and the glory unto the ages Amen." This is the final line of the Lord's Prayer as given in the King James Bible, translated into Hebrew to emphasize the Kabbalistic manner with which the passage is interpreted in the Golden Dawn rituals. The manner of this interpretation is partially defined by the portions of the body touched while saying the phrase. Atah (unto thee) is spoken while touching the forehead to represent Kether. The ‘thee’ therefore refers to the highest spiritual being. Malkuth (kingdom) is said while indicating the lower portion of the body assigned to the Sephirah of the same name, which represents material reality. Therefore reality is the kingdom of the highest spiritual being. The horizontal crossbar is drawn while reciting *ve geburah, ve gedulah* (the power and the glory), indicating that the two Pillars of Severity and Mercy are referred to. The hands are then held over the heart while saying *le ohlahm Amen* (unto the ages, Amen). One way of understanding this whole movement is to see it as saying that reality and its apparent dualities, polarities and contradictions are eternally ruled by and reconciled in the highest Spirit as designated by the verticality of the cross and by the heart, in which the initial verticality comes to rest in union with the horizontal.

In making the Kabbalistic Cross there is a Thelemic tradition of touching the heart while making the vertical gesture, in between saying *Atah* and *Malkuth*, and vibrating the name Aiwass. This is the name of Crowley's Holy Guardian Angel and the narrator of *The Book of the Law*. This entity (or whatever Aiwass actually is) acts as a symbol of the mediation or communication between Thelemites and the divine reality through *The Book of the Law* and its message. It is appropriate to place this name at the heart because, as already described, the heart is the point of contact between the self and God through Will and Love. Therefore it is an apt location to signify the awakening of the Thelemic Gnosis. Additionally, the heart is associated with the Sephirah Tiphareth, which in the A.‧‧‧‧ system is the place where the personal Knowledge and Conversation between the Adept and their Angel first occurs.

There is an oral tradition amongst Thelemites that upon achieving knowledge of the name of one's own Holy Guardian Angel, that one should substitute this name for that of Aiwass when making the Kabbalistic Cross. If one's relationship to one's angel makes this appropriate, then this can certainly be a meaningful addition to the ritual, as well as a way of personalizing the performance to one's own initiatory current.

One powerful visualization that can be done while performing the Kabbalistic Cross is to see oneself as growing larger in stature. One should imagine one's self expanding during the ritual to tremendous proportions at the limits of one's imagination. This exercise at expansion of consciousness seems to have archetypal resonance, and its simplicity belies its effectiveness.

Tibetan Vajrayana techniques often involve the expansion of one's visualized body or the body of a deity to giant proportions. Sometimes the expanded body becomes sacrificed in
some manner, as in the practice of Chod. One is reminded of myths of a primal giant who is slain by some deity and cut in two to create the earth and sky. Odin and Ymir, for example, or Marduk and Tiamat. There is also Purusha, the primordial man in the Vedas, whose death is symbolized by the fire sacrifice. A basic idea held in common by these traditions is that of the Giant's body representing some aspect of the divine Pleroma which sacrifices itself, or is sacrificed for the world to come into being and/or be sustained. These are powerful associations when one considers that the sign of the cross is being made on the body during these visualizations. One is identifying oneself with the universal dying and rising god of regeneration and renewal, with all of the spiritual depths associated with this.
There are a number of immediately perceivable symbolic meanings to the Pentagram’s form. It has five points, representing the four elements and Spirit. It is drawn with a unicursal, or single unbroken line, which shows the unbroken unity of that Spirit with its elemental emanations. The figure fits exactly inscribed within a circle, also demonstrating its dependence from the divine unity. It is in the shape of a human being, which shows the identity of the symbol with the magician themselves. It is in the traditional shape of a star. As it is written in:

The Book of the Law,

"Every man and every woman is a star."

[AL I: 3] The five points also represent the fifth Sephirah Geburah, showing the active power of the magician over the elements in service of the consciousness of the Angel. The five points carry the same meaning as the cross of the elements with the center point representing spirit. Additionally, the Egyptians used a five pointed star to represent the goddess Nuit. Nuit, in The Book of the Law, states that her symbol is

, "The Five Pointed Star, with a Circle in the Middle, & the circle is Red."

[AL I: 60] As we can see, the symbolism of the Pentagram serves as a visual resume of the entire ritual. Placing the Pentagram at each of the four quarters shows the elementals or other forces of those quarters the dominion of Spirit over them, as embodied in the magician. This dominion of Spirit is explicitly encoded in the Pentagram’s geometry. The line segments of the Pentagram are in exact extreme and mean proportion to each other. This means that in a line containing two segments, the proportion of the shorter segment to the longer segment is the same proportion as the longer segment to the line as a whole.
In sacred geometry, this symbolizes that the relationship of the microcosm to the lower planes is a reflection of the relationship of the macrocosm to the microcosm. Or as a mentor of mine put it concisely, "We are an Angel to our demons, and a demon to our Angel."

In the Golden Dawn system particular elements are assigned to the points of the Pentagram. These correspondences are based on the cross formed in the heavens by the positions of the fixed signs of the zodiac.
WATER

Particular elements may be invoked or banished, depending on how the Pentagram is drawn in relation to the elemental points. The general rule is that a Pentagram whose first line is drawn towards the point of a particular element invokes that element. A Pentagram whose first line is drawn away from the point of a particular element banishes that element. The exceptions to this rule are the Pentagrams of Spirit. These use the two line segments that are not used by the other elemental Pentagrams. These segments connect the two active elements of Fire and Air and the two passive elements of Water and Earth. To invoke or banish Spirit in its Active phase begin the Pentagram with the segment connecting Fire and Air. Begin the line sloping upwards to invoke, downwards to banish. To invoke or banish Spirit in its Passive phase begin the Pentagram with the segment connecting Water and Earth. Begin the line sloping upwards to invoke, downwards to banish. The forms generated by these rules are given on a chart at the end of this chapter.

In the LRP the invoking or banishing Pentagrams of Earth are used because this element traditionally can be understood as containing, or being a consolidation of the other three. In the Sepher Yetzirah, for example, Earth is the result of the equal combination of the three 'Mother' elements of Air, Fire and Water. Therefore, the Earth Pentagram should be understood within the context of the LRP as a stand in for all of the other Pentagrams.

The difference between the invoking and banishing forms of the LRP is relatively subtle, and consists largely in a distinction of emphasis. The Lesser Invoking Ritual of the Pentagram invokes a current of balanced spiritual force into the ritual space. The Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram performs the same function, but makes more explicit the specific directing of that energy to dissolve and banish any unbalanced forces. As the LRP is often used to open a
ritual space with a preliminary clearing of negative energy, the banishing form will probably be the one most used in this context. However, the invoking form can still be used for the same purpose and, especially if used less frequently, can often have an extra 'kick'. It is also particularly effective when performed by itself as a stand-alone ritual.

THE 4 QUARTERS
These are the four directions to which Pentagrams, divine names and angels are applied. The general attribution is to the four elements, to which the magician in the center stands as Spirit.

In the Pentagram rituals, the cross of the four quarters is understood as being formed by the intersection of the paths of Samekh and Peh on the Tree of Life. This is the central key point of equilibrium in the outer college of A∴A∴. The Man of Earth, ascending in their aspiration along the path of Samekh towards Tiphareth must cross the path of Peh, the Tower. This represents the ordeals of elemental equilibration, of the alignment of the physical, emotional, cognitive and intentional aspects of the phenomenal self to the True Will. The symbolism of Samekh and Peh is parallel to, but independent of the symbolism associating particular elements and archangels to the quarters, as these are not based on the Sephiroth that surround that point on the Tree.

At the cusp of each quadrant a Pentagram is inscribed, a divine name vibrated, and an archangel visualized and invoked. All four worlds are thereby placed in balanced equilibrium in relation to each other. The divine name is Atziluthic, the archangels are Briatic, the Pentagrams in terms of their existence as visualized objects are Yetziratic, and the performance of the ritual itself in a physical space relates to Assiah.

THE CROSS AND THE CIRCLE CO-JOINED
This symbol is formed by the circular movements of the magician about the four quarters. This implies the form of a circle and cross conjoined as such:
This is itself an important ensign of Thelemic Magick. The prototype is the symbol of the rosy cross, the emblem of the Rosicrucian movement. The Thelemic understanding of the rosy cross is that it represents the union of subject and object in Samadhi, and the continual embrace of Nuit and Hadit. The cross is consciousness, extended upon the rose/circle of the infinity of possible experiences of that consciousness. The cross is life, and the rose light. Their union is of the nature of love, expressed through liberty.