My Little Pony

Role Playing is Magic

Season One Ruleset

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Introduction

Welcome to My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic!

This is a labor of love for the brony (and bronette!) community by Tall Tail and Know-It-All, and is presented free for all to play and use. We intend to revise and update the game's core rulebook with each successive season of My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic, incorporating new lore, mechanics, and rules as they are established by the show. To that end, you won't find everything you want within these pages; we have been very careful only to incorporate essential things and things which have been well-enough established by the show to warrant their inclusion.

What should you expect out of My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic? We are long-time Dungeons & Dragons fans, in addition to many other pen & paper RPG systems, and set out not to simply create a module for My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic within a pre-existing system, but rather to build a new system from the ground up to support the style of play and the atmosphere of the show. To that end, we don't feel that there is a simple way to explain the game (such as "Dungeons & Dragons with ponies"); it is its own system.

But we'll try!

My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is based on both freeform roleplaying as well as concepts from other pen & paper RPG's which many veteran players will surely recognize. It has elements of World Of Darkness, Unisystem, Dungeons & Dragons, Ars Magica, and Mythic, as well as several others in smaller but no less influential ways. The game is very rules-light, and uses interpretation and adaptation, rather than tables and strict rules, to determine not just the outcome of rolls, but the rolls themselves. We believe it is better described as a "collaborative storytelling system" than as a roleplaying game system. It's not designed for dungeon diving; it's designed for storytelling.

To fanfiction writers and their fans, we apologize in advance. My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is not designed with fanfiction settings in mind... much. While many brony community fanfiction stories are outstanding works of world-building and development, if we included one we'd have to include them all; and that is a herculean feat simply beyond our abilities. Instead, we have made slight allowances within the rules, and created a system which is non-specific in many areas, to allow players and GM's to utilize non-canonical settings. However, the core of the game is as canonical as we have been able to comfortably and reasonably make it, and will remain that way.

At its heart, My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is designed to let players and GM's create the atmosphere of the show in their own games; to bring Equestria to the table and make it their own. It is our hope that playing the game will help to bring a group of players together with their GM, promoting cooperation and having fun as a group. We hope that playing the game will help you to enjoy the magic of friendship.

Thanks for playing, and if you have any questions or comments, we'd love to hear them! You're more than welcome to e-mail *talltailtellstales@gmail.com*, and we'll try our darndest to get back to you as soon as possible. We'd love to hear feedback, stories about your play experience, game session transcripts—anything!

Have fun, everypony!

Character Creation

Choose your Race:

Earth Pony	A standard pony with no 'magic,' but a courageous heart
Pegasus Pony	A winged pony which can walk on/interact with clouds
Unicorn Pony	A horned pony which can naturally perform some magic

Dear Princess Celestia,

   Sorry you're not in the rules just yet! Alicorns (Celestia, Luna), Griffons (Gilda), Dragons (Spike, Red, Green), et cetera, are currently lacking enough in canonical information to warrant their exclusion from the standard set of playable races—both for balance reasons and to stay true to the known source material. Rest assured, though, we want them in the game as much as you do! As the series progresses and more information comes to light, they may (hopefully) become playable as this system is revised and updated. As of the My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic - Season One Ruleset, however, they are best left as NPC's, side characters, and plot devices.

   In the same way, most everything in the system is designed with canon in mind; if it's not in the show (or at least heavily, heavily implied), then it's not in the system. While we want people to be able to roleplay out their favorite fanfics, there's simply too much fanon, not to mention conflicting fanon, to try to include it all. However, the system is designed to be very flexible, and if you and Luna decide to add or change your own house (palace) rules, we won't complain. Having fun with friends is the most important rule.

Your Faithful Game Designers,
   Tall Tail & Know-It-All

Earth Ponies

Earth Ponies, at first glance, appear to be the least powerful playable ponies; the quintessential underdogs. However, while other races of ponies have more flashy or spectacular abilities they are able to call upon, Earth Ponies typically have more grit and determination in place of the specific powers other ponies get. In essence, their lack of powerful abilities makes them more courageous out of necessity, more versatile in the long run, and more encouraging and inspiring to their friends.

Firstly, an Earth Pony is more readily heartened by success than others. When an Earth Pony expends a point of Courage to improve the d20 roll when attempting a task, if they succeed at that task, they immediately regain the point of Courage they spent, as well as an additional point (up to their maximum). In this way, an Earth Pony is more apt to try harder more often than others.

Secondly, an Earth Pony is more accustomed to hardship and labor, and can face down their fears more easily than other ponies. When an Earth Pony is required to spend Courage to overcome a frightening situation, they spend one point of Courage less than they would be required to; one point if they fail their check, and no points if they succeed. In this way, an Earth Pony can face their fears even if they are nearly exhausted of courage.

Finally, an Earth Pony is able to encourage their friends with their own determination. When the group of friends an Earth Pony is with is required to spend Courage to overcome their fears, an Earth Pony may spend extra points of Courage (beyond any they are required to spend); if they do so, for each point of Courage they spend, they may choose one friend—and that friend is then not required to spend their own Courage to overcome their fears. In this way, an Earth Pony inspires the friends around them.

Earth Pony Foals

Unlike other breeds of ponies, Earth Pony Foals do not suffer any diminished level of their abilities; they are able to use all of their racial abilities right from the get-go.

Pegasus Ponies

Pegasus Ponies are gifted with feathered wings enabling them to fly, as well as being able to walk on, and interact with, clouds. While these are fairly specific abilities, and only seem to have a limited number of applications, they can be very potent in the right hooves. While their powers lend a Pegasus Pony great personal ability and individual power, they are not necessarily loners by nature, and can often be a great asset and companion to their friends.

Firstly, a Pegasus Pony's wings allow them to fly just as easily as walking and requiring no more effort. They can lift off from a run or a dead stop, hover as easily as glide, and can even wing-over and change direction rapidly. As long as they are conscious, able to fly, and their wings are not bound, a Pegasus Pony can fall from any height without injury by slowing their fall with their wings. In addition, a Pegasus Pony can push themselves to fly twice as fast as they could gallop at full speed. In this way, a Pegasus Pony is able to reach areas and move faster and in ways that other ponies may not be able to.

Secondly, a Pegasus Pony is able to carry another pony, a small cart, a heavy sack, or other similarly heavy loads while flying, as long as their wings are free. However, when doing this, they cannot fly any faster than they could walk. In addition, a Pegasus Pony is able to kick, pull, lift, throw, and perform other physical feats while flying just as easily as they could do so on the ground. In this way, a Pegasus Pony can help their friends and perform tasks while airborne without having to land.

Finally, a Pegasus Pony is able to naturally walk on and interact with clouds and smoke (but not mist) as if they were solid objects, and in ways other ponies cannot. For example, kicking a cloud apart, positioning a cloud, sitting or laying on a cloud, punching holes through smoke, spinning clouds, and even more unique interactions—such as jumping on a rain cloud to make it rain, opening and closing holes in clouds, and kicking a cloud to cause it to discharge thunder and/or lightning. In this way, a Pegasus Pony can influence aspects of the environment which other ponies cannot.

Pegasus Foals

As a foal, a Pegasus Pony cannot fly well, as their wings have not yet fully developed. However, they are still able to make use of their wings to enhance their ability to move about on their hooves. This can include using a strong flap to jump higher or further than normal, using rapid flaps to increase their speed when galloping, 'skimming' along the ground or other surface for short periods of time, and even propelling light vehicles by acting as an 'engine' of sorts.

While there is no exact age at which a Pegasus Pony's wings reach full development (that is, it is different from pony to pony), it is typically right around the time they earn their Cutie Mark. The exact stage of development at which a given Pegasus Pony's wings become fully usable should be determined by the player and the GM.

Unicorn Ponies

Unicorn Ponies, by the virtue of their horn, are gifted with the ability to naturally perform magic. However, this does not mean that all Unicorn Ponies are skilled magicians with a variety of tricks and powerful spells at their disposal. Far more often than not, a Unicorn Pony only has a little magic, and that much is usually related to their Special Purpose in one way or another. So, while they may appear at first glance to be the most powerful race of pony, a Unicorn Pony needs their friends just as much as anypony.

Firstly, a Unicorn Pony has the ability to magically move and manipulate objects within a short distance from them in the same way that they might be able to if they had hands. This can range from tying knots, to pouring drinks or holding maps, to lifting and retrieving objects from across a room. Generally, they cannot affect the physical properties of the object (such as changing hay into rubies), but rather simply telekinetically handle them. In addition, they cannot affect objects with a total weight they would not be able to physically lift without enduring fatigue, and while they can use this effect without needing to concentrate especially hard, they may only do so with a reasonable number of objects at once in contrast to their level of physical activity. For example, they can maintain lifting several books while standing still and talking, but might only be able to move a single basket while actively running or performing other strenuous physical activity. In this way, a Unicorn Pony can often do just a bit more than other ponies.

Secondly, a Unicorn Pony may choose one Magic Trick to know. A Magic Trick consists of one Effect and one Subject from the list of Magical Aspects found later in this book. This Magic Trick must relate to their Special Purpose in some way, and is limited in its application to apply to their Special Purpose. For example, a Unicorn Pony whose Special Purpose is making music might know the Magic Trick "Create Illusion" ('Create' being the Effect and 'Illusion' being the Subject), though they would only be able to use it to create magical music or other effects relating to music. In this way, a Unicorn Pony has a special talent made manifest through their magical abilities.

Finally, a Unicorn Pony may know additional magic, provided they have a keen Mind. For each point of Mind they possess, a Unicorn Pony may make one additional pick from the list of Magical Aspects found later in this book. This pick is not a full Magic Trick, in that it is not both an Effect and a Subject--instead, it is an Effect or a Subject; this ability helps to expand a Unicorn Pony's magical abilities, but magic is a powerful tool and is not easily learned. Each pick a Unicorn Pony makes in this way must relate to their Special Purpose in some way, and is limited in its application to apply to their Special Purpose. For example, if the Unicorn Pony cited above has two points of Mind, they might select the Subject "Plants" as one of their picks, meaning that they would now have access to the "Create Plants" Magic Trick. However, due to the limitation of their Special Purpose, they would be limited to using this Magic Trick to create musical instruments, or other objects somehow reasonably pertaining to making music.

Unicorn Foals

As a foal, a Unicorn Pony generally cannot make use of any of their magical abilities yet; their magical abilities do not manifest themselves until the age at which they earn their Cutie Mark, although they may manifest themselves as part of the event which earns said Cutie Mark.

Choose your Age:

Foal — A young pony not yet grown (Applebloom, Scootaloo, etc)

Filly/Colt — A young adult pony (Twilight Sparkle, Rainbow Dash, etc)

Mare/Stallion — A fully-grown pony (Mayor Mare, Mr. & Mrs. Cake, etc)

Foals

A Foal is a young pony, generally considered to be of 'school age,' who may or may not still be a Blank Flank (at the player/GM's discretion). In human equivalencies, a Foal is the equivalent of an elementary/middle/highschool aged child, ranging from age six to sixteen.

Typically during this time, a Foal attends school and is usually under the care of their parents or another guardian. They generally do not have jobs, and much of their time is spent with friends and having adventures. This stage is the "childhood" of ponies.

During this stage, a pony gets its Cutie Mark and Special Purpose—though there is no exact science to when, why, or how they receive them. The best explanation known is that a Foal gets their Cutie Mark when they discover what makes them special.

Generally, games with Foals as characters are more casual and fun, akin to Cutie Mark Crusaders' escapades.

Fillies/Colts

A Filly (female) or Colt (male) is a young adult pony, generally considered to be on their own and ready to enter or begin entering the world. In human equivalencies, a Filly or Colt is the equivalent of a high school/college aged person, ranging from age seventeen to twenty-four.

Typically during this time, a Filly or Colt is finished with formal schooling and may enter a sort of 'apprenticeship' phase, though they may also strike out on their own directly. They generally have a job of some sort, though they also spend time with their friends and still have adventures. This stage is the "young adulthood" of ponies.

During this stage, a pony begins following their Special Purpose, and begins to define themselves by it, developing their adult personality and finding their place in the world at large.

Generally, games with Fillies or Colts as characters play out much like episodes of the show itself.

Mares/Stallions

A Mare (female) or Stallion (male) is a fully-grown adult pony, generally considered to be matured and having found their place in the world. In human equivalencies, a Mare or Stallion is the equivalent of a graduate student or professional adult, ranging from age twenty-five to fifty.

Typically during this time, a Mare or Stallion has found their place in the world, and has developed their long-term goals and plans for achieving them. They almost universally have a job, some adult friends, and may or may not have started a family. This stage is the "full adulthood" of ponies.

Generally, games with Mares of Stallions as characters play out much like more serious fanfiction stories, and their concerns are rarely the same as younger ponies.

Create your Special Purpose and Cutie Mark (or choose to be a Blank Flank)

Your character's Special Purpose can be as broad or specific as you wish it to be. It reflects a combination of your character's destiny (and/or possibly, heritage), natural talents, passions and areas of interest, and/or goals. For example, Applejack's Special Purpose is to run Sweet Apple Acres; this is a combination of her passion to do so and her goal to succeed at it, her natural talent for the many and varied skills involved, and potentially her heritage as a member of the Apple family—but is probably not very closely tied to a special destiny she may possess. This is in contrast with Twilight Sparkle, whose Special Purpose of magic seems to have little to do with her heritage or goals, and much more to do with her natural talent, destiny, and passion. In this way, a Special Purpose is not entirely formulaic, and you should work with your GM and fellow players to decide on one which will best suit your character and the group as a whole.

Your character's Cutie Mark is an outward expression and indication of their Special Purpose, and usually (but not always) pertains to their name in some way as well. For example, Rainbow Dash's Cutie Mark is a rainbow in the shape of a lightning bolt, emerging from a cloud. This indicates her Special Purpose, as it implies speed, and likewise pertains to her name. However, by contrast, Pinkie Pie's Cutie Mark is a trio of balloons; while this indicates her Special Purpose, as it implies celebration and cheer, it does not appear to directly relate to her name. In this way, a Cutie Mark is also not entirely formulaic, and you should work with your GM and fellow players to decide on one which will best suit your character and the group as a whole.

A character's Special Purpose has two direct, personal methods of influencing game mechanics, specifically task resolution. First, whenever a character attempts a task related to their Special Purpose, they gain a +2 bonus to the d20 roll to determine success. Secondly, they may choose to expend one point of Courage to gain an additional +3 bonus to this d20 roll (this +3 only applies if the task is related to their Special Purpose; on tasks not related to their Special Purpose, expending Courage grants only a +1 bonus). This bonus caps at +5, however, meaning that characters cannot spend more than one point of Courage on any single task.

Blank Flanks

A Foal, at the player's or GM's discretion, may or may not have yet gotten their Cutie Mark and determined their Special Purpose—this is called being a "Blank Flank." However, as demonstrated by the show, this is not necessarily a detriment to them, as it indicates their potential to be good at anything, and for their development to take unexpected turns. In some ways, whereas other ponies' Special Purposes give them a measure of power a Blank Flank cannot match, a Blank Flank has a measure of versatility which other ponies do not possess.

A Blank Flank does not gain the inherent +2 bonus for attempting a task related to their Special Purpose—as they do not have one yet. However, a Blank Flank may expend one point of Courage to gain a +3 bonus to the d20 roll to determine any task's success or failure; this bonus is not restricted to tasks pertaining to a Special Purpose. This means that while a pony with a Special Purpose can achieve a +5 bonus to a task relating to their Special Purpose by expending Courage, a Blank Flank can achieve a +3 bonus to any task by expending Courage, despite their lack of a Special Purpose.

Determine your Primary Attributes

Every action a character attempts is called a "task," and in the My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic - Season One Ruleset, all tasks are covered by at least one of three Primary Attributes. When a character attempts a task, they first determine which Primary Attribute is most applicable to the task; for example, if a character is attempting to pull a heavy apple cart, the most applicable Primary Attribute would be Body. However, sometimes a task's Primary Attribute is not so obvious; for example, when trying to cheer up a depressed pony, a case could be made for the Primary Attribute to be either Mind or Heart. In the case that more than one Primary Attribute applies, the player and the GM should decide which is the most applicable. For example, in the above situation, if the player is mainly using empathy, it is most likely that the Primary Attribute would be Heart; however, if they are mainly using logic, it is most likely that the Primary Attribute would be Mind. The situation at hand, as well as the intent behind the task, will help to determine the most applicable Primary Attribute.

The first of the three Primary Attributes is Body. Body, like all of the Primary Attributes, covers a number of aspects of a pony, including physical strength, agility, speed, and other aspects related to the physical capabilities of the character.

The second of the three Primary Attributes is Mind. Mind covers a pony's inherent intellectual ability, including logic and puzzle-solving, memory and fact-retention, and cleverness and guile.

The last of the three Primary Attributes is Heart. Heart covers a pony's empathy, compassion, charisma, willpower, and vigor, as well as their overall emotional qualities, capabilities, and characteristics.

To determine your character's initial Primary Attributes, follow these instructions:

First, all Primary Attributes begin with a score of one (1).

Second, based on your race, one Primary Attribute gains an additional bonus:

Earth Ponies gain a +1 to Heart.

Pegasus Ponies gain a +1 to Body.

Unicorn Ponies gain a +1 to Mind.

Next, you may be entitled to an additional bonus based on your character's age:

Foals gain no bonus.

Fillies/Colts gain a +1 to one Primary Attribute of your choice.

Mares/Stallions gain a +1 to two Primary Attributes of your choice, or a +2 to one Primary Attribute of your choice.

Lastly, you are entitled to a final +1 to one Primary Attribute of your choice.

No Primary Attribute may be raised above five (5) during character creation.

Determine your Secondary Attributes

Once you have determined all of your bonuses and calculated your final Primary Attribute scores, you will use them to calculate your Secondary Attribute scores. Secondary Attributes are derivative in nature, and are entirely determined by your Primary Attributes; you do not put points or bonuses into these.

Secondary Attributes are used in two ways. First, they are sometimes checked in the same way that Primary Attributes are, and this is generally a reactive check. For example, when faced with a particularly frightening situation, the GM may make your character roll a Courage check to see if they are able to confront the situation, or if they must cower in fear or run away instead.

The second way Secondary Attributes are used are as expendable pools of points. While some expenditures are voluntary in nature, and are used to enhance your character or give them a temporary boost, others are involuntary in nature and are generally losses due to unfortunate circumstances. For example, while spending a point of Courage can be voluntary to increase a single dice roll, losing a point of Health is involuntary and gives no bonus to your character.

The first Secondary Attribute is Health. Health represents your character's resistance to injury, as well as their ability to cope with it. Health is not voluntarily expended; it is lost due to injury and recovered over time. To calculate your character's Health, add their Body and Heart scores together. When your character is struck or injured, the GM may ask you to make a Health check; if you succeed, you lose one point of Health, if you fail, you lose two instead. If your character has no Health remaining, they are knocked unconscious. If they are cared for, they can recover; if they are not, or if all players' characters are knocked unconscious, the group has been defeated.

The second Secondary Attribute is Energy. Energy represents your character's ability to undertake more strenuous tasks than normal, and to endure fatigue and weariness. Energy is both expended voluntarily and lost due to tiring circumstances. To calculate your character's Energy, add their Body and Mind scores together. When your character is subjected (voluntarily or involuntarily) to a tiring experience, the GM may ask you to make an Energy check; if you succeed, you lose one point of Energy, if you fail, you lose two instead. If your character has no Energy remaining, they are considered exhausted and cannot run, fly, or use magic.

The third and final Secondary Attribute is Courage. Courage represents your character's ability to set their mind to a task and focus, to face fear and danger, and to push beyond what they would normally be capable of. Courage is both expended voluntarily and lost due to situations which sap a character's willpower. To calculate your character's Courage, add their Mind and Heart scores together. When your character is part of a frightening situation, the GM may ask you to make a Courage check; if you succeed, you lose one point of Courage, if you fail, you lose two instead. If your character has no Courage remaining, they must cower or flee when subjected to a frightening experience.

Choose your Talents

Characters get two innate Talents during character creation. Talents are general areas in which your character is gifted. They are not areas in which your character is trained; rather, they reflect the areas your character is naturally inclined to excel at. Whenever you attempt a task, if it falls reasonably within an area covered by one or more of your Talents, you gain a +2 to the d20 roll to determine the success or failure of that task. While Talents generally do not overlap with each other, their effects also do not stack; that is, having more than one applicable Talent provides no additional bonus above and beyond the base +2 bonus.

There are ten talents, which are as follows:

Strong	Your character is especially gifted at feats of physical strength and power
Tough	Your character is especially durable and resistant to injury
Fast	Your character is especially quick, able to really pour on the speed
Agile	Your character is especially graceful and gifted at feats of dexterity
Perceptive	Your character has especially finely-tuned senses
Smart	Your character is especially intelligent, with a keen mind
Charismatic	Your character is especially good at influencing others
Empathetic	Your character is especially good at reading others' emotions
Willful	Your character has an especially strong will and determination
Tireless	Your character is especially energetic and never seems to tire out

Choose your Job (foals, skip this step)

Everypony older than Foal age has some kind of job they do, from carpentry to making cupcakes. To reflect this, characters who are older than Foal age choose one Job during character creation. There is no set list for Jobs; players should work with their GM to determine what best fits. As a rule, a Job is generally not listed as a specific skill (such as "Power Tools"), but rather as a profession or job title (such as "Mechanic"), as a Job is a wider set of skills.

Whenever you attempt a task, if it falls reasonably within the scope of your Job, you gain a +1 bonus to the d20 roll to determine success or failure of that task. This bonus does not stack with other Jobs, so having more than one applicable Job to a given task provides no additional bonus beyond the base +1 bonus.

Choose your Skills

Skills are much like Jobs, except that they are specific areas instead of a broad category. A character is entitled to choose a number of Skills during character creation equal to their Mind score, multiplied by their age category (1 for Foals, 2 for Fillies/Colts, 3 for Mares/Stallions). Like Jobs, there is no set list for Skills; players should work with their GM to determine what best fits. As a rule, a Skill is generally not very broad, but rather is a specific area of training (for example, instead of "Science," it would be better to put down "Chemistry").

Whenever you attempt a task, if it falls reasonably within the scope of a Skill you possess, you gain a +1 bonus to the d20 roll to determine success or failure of that task. This bonus does not stack with other Skills, so having more than one applicable Skill to a given task provides no additional bonus beyond the base +1 bonus.

A Skill can be a specific use of a Magic Trick. For example, if a character has access to the "Animate Body" Magic Trick, they could also have the Skill "Teleport." This would reflect that the character has focused on using a Magic Trick in a specific way, and gives them the Skill bonus to the Mind check they'll make when teleporting.

Determine your Guiding Element of Harmony

Player Characters in My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic are considered to be a group of friends, as in the spirit of the show itself. To this end, as well as to help develop their personality, characters must choose one of the Elements of Harmony to be their own. This is considered to be their 'Guiding Element of Harmony,' and will help to govern certain aspects of their personality as well as provide a mechanical means for interacting as a group.

   While the main cast of the show has a perfect balance of these elements, this kind of distribution is not required to play. If possible, it is generally better and more fun to try for an even distribution, but there is absolutely nothing wrong with a group having characters whose Guiding Element of Harmony is the same, or who do not have all of the Elements of Harmony represented in their group.

The six Elements of Harmony are as follows, including a description and explanation.

Kindness

Kindness represents a character's compassion for others and acceptance of others for who they are, as well as their care not to overstep their boundaries and impose their will over somepony else. In short, Kindness is trying to take care of others without being inconsiderate or forceful about it. While this can lead to timidity and/or pent up issues of anger, it also means that disagreements tend to be easily forgiven and resolved. A character who is kind runs the risk of being taken advantage of by others, and often is reluctant to leave their comfort zone.

Generosity

Generosity represents a character's willingness to give of themselves and/or go out of their way for someone else. While this can lead to a character giving too much and not knowing when they need to take a hard line with others, it also means that they tend to be the one who gets themselves into trouble this way. A character who is generous runs the risk of taking on more work, or giving more of themselves, than they can reasonably handle.

Laughter

Laughter represents a character's cheerfulness, positivity, and upbeat energy, as well as their ability to inspire and encourage others. While this can lead to seemingly inexplicable behavior, and can be a front for self-confidence issues, it also means that the character tends to create the positive atmosphere they most thrive in. A character who is full of laughter runs the risk of becoming unsettled if their outlook is shaken at all, and requires stability in others.

Honesty

Honesty represents a character's dependability and forthright attitude, including their desire to be the one who can always be counted on for whatever is needed. In short, instead of directly reflecting a character not telling lies, honesty more refers to a character having a 'true heart.' While this can lead to a character trying to handle too many things (or too difficult things) on their own, it also means that they tend to never shy away from a challenge. A character who is honest runs the risk of biting off more than they can chew, but is usually highly responsible.

🌈 Loyalty

Loyalty represents a character's willingness to choose their friends and loved ones over personal gain. While this can lead to complete reliance upon support from friends, and thus, confidence issues, it also means that they can achieve things they never thought possible in the service of their friends. A character who is loyal runs the risk of becoming dependent on the approval and even reverence of their friends and loved ones, and often goes out of their way to prove (sometimes unnecessarily) that they are valuable to those friends and loved ones.

✨ Magic

Magic represents a character's sense of wonder, worth, and specialness. In short, rather than directly referring to spellcasting and power of that nature, magic refers to a character's ability to recognize what makes someone or something special (or magical) through their own sense of wonder at the world. While this can lead to a reluctance to show off their own specialness, or even a feeling of disconnection from other things (the feeling of being an 'observer' instead of interacting with the world), it also means that they often have a unique perspective on things which others lack. A character with magic runs the risk of trying to understand everything, and can suffer from a tendency to diminish their own self-worth.

A character's Guiding Element of Harmony has a few impacts on gameplay. Primarily, it is the method by which a character regains lost Health, Energy, and/or Courage. At the end of a scene in which a character personifies their Guiding Element of Harmony through their behavior and actions well (at the GM's discretion), they regain three points, spread however they choose, between Health, Energy, and Courage. This cannot increase their total in any one area beyond their maximum as established by the Secondary Attributes section.

In addition, if the character overcame the harmful side of their Guiding Element of Harmony (a kind character's tendency to be overly timid, for example), or the inverse of their Guiding Element of Harmony (deceit for an honest character, for example) in a meaningful way (again, at the GM's discretion), they regain an additional two points. However, if the character gave in to the harmful side of their Guiding Element of Harmony (a generous character getting themselves into a bind by taking on more than they can handle, for example) or the inverse of their Guiding Element of Harmony (a Laughter character becoming cynical, for example) in a meaningful way (again, at the GM's discretion), they regain an additional one point.

The other way in which a character's Guiding Element of Harmony impacts gameplay is that it provides a way for characters to gain a direct benefit from being close to their friends. Once per session, a character may choose to use their Guiding Element of Harmony to give themselves, or another player, a bonus to a single check having to do with their element, equal to the number of friends they are playing with at the time.

For example, a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Loyalty chooses not to save themselves from danger, but rather to rush back and help one of their friends. They are playing with five other players, and choose to make this check their "harmony" check. To rush back in time to save their friend, they gain a +5 to the check (for the number of other players).

As an alternative example, a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Laughter chooses to help inspire a friend not to be frightened. They are playing with three other players, and choose to use a song, or words of encouragement, to grant the other player a +3 bonus to their check to resist fear.

Choose additional magical aspects (Unicorn Ponies only)

If your character is a Unicorn Pony, they may be entitled to additional magic aspects during character creation. A Unicorn with a Mind score of 3 or higher is entitled to make one additional pick from the list of Magical Aspects later in this book. A Unicorn with a Mind score of 5 is entitled to two additional picks, instead of one. This is in addition to the picks Unicorn Ponies gain from their Mind score.

Start Playing!

The last thing to do is for each player to come up with their character's backstory, concept, personality, and so forth (if they have not done so already), and to establish (with the GM's help) whether or not the characters are already friends, and if so, how they became so.

Character Creation Overview (Cheat Sheet)

Race: Earth Pony, Pegasus Pony, Unicorn Pony
Age: Foal, Filly/Colt, Mare/Stallion
Create Special Purpose & Cutie Mark (Or Be A Blank Flank)
Primary Attributes: Mind, Body, Heart (Start At 1, Race Bonus, Age Bonus, +1 To Any)
Secondary Attributes: Health (Body + Heart), Energy (Body + Mind), Courage (Mind + Heart)
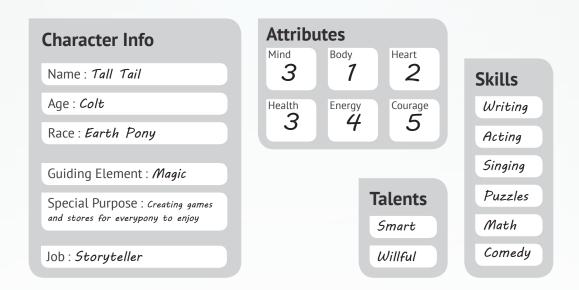Choose Two Talents
Choose One Job (Older than Foal only)
Choose Skills Equal To Mind Score x Age Category (1, 2, or 3)
Choose Guiding Element of Harmony
Choose Additional Magical Aspects (Unicorn only; +1 for Mind 3, +2 for Mind 5)

Sample Character Sheet

Character Info

Name : *Tall Tail*

Age : *Colt*

Race : *Earth Pony*

Guiding Element : *Magic*

Special Purpose : *Creating games and stores for everypony to enjoy*

Job : *Storyteller*

Attributes

Mind	Body	Heart
3	1	2

Health	Energy	Courage
3	4	5

Talents

Smart

Willful

Skills

Writing

Acting

Singing

Puzzles

Math

Comedy

How to Play

My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is based on a combination of several design concepts for gameplay and is intended to be very easy to play, but it is vital that all players (and the GM) have the right mindset going into the game.

The focus of the game is on storytelling, character development and interactions, and plot; not stat-crunching or dungeon-diving. The game has very few hard rules, and its core guiding mechanic has a bit of 'wiggle room' built into it to allow players to determine their own actions, and the GM is expected to use their intuition and judgement--instead of charts and tables--to keep things moving, balanced, and fun for everyone. For example, whereas in another game a player might say, "I move thirty feet forward and make a standard attack," in My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic, a player might say, "I gallop up to the Manticore and kick at its nose!" In the former example, players are concerned with exact movement speeds, attack speeds, and numbers of actions; in the latter, players are concerned with the results of their actions as they relate to the story--and this is the kind of atmosphere the game seeks to foster.

To reflect this, there is very little in the game which directly relates to the GM, except for a difficulty guide and this section on the design philosophies of My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic. For players, this section is meant to show you how the game is played (it truly is quite simple mechanically, but advanced conceptually) and tell you what to look out for. For GM's, this section is meant to give you ideas as to what you can do which is directly supported by the game mechanics.

What you need to play

Each player needs a twenty-sided die, a piece of paper, and a pencil. All dice-rolling in My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is done with a single d20, meaning that players do not need multiple types of dice. The paper and pencil are for the character sheet and note-taking. You should also have a copy of this rulebook handy, if only for character creation and rules referencing--though the game is very light on rules; once all the players understand the basic concepts of the game, you are not likely to need this rulebook again very often.

That's it! My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic was designed to appeal to the free-form roleplaying crowd as well as the traditional pen & paper roleplaying crowd, and so has very little in the way of required materials and setup. If your group wants to use models as a reference, or any other materials to enhance your experience, you are welcome to do so.

The Core Mechanic

The core mechanic of My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is the "check." Most pen & paper roleplayers understand what a skill check, or an attribute check, is. For new players, this definition will do, though it is best to learn by playing:

A "check" is an instance where a dice roll result is combined with numerical bonuses (active or passive) and/or penalties to find a total, and that total is compared to a difficulty rating to determine the success or failure of an attempted task, which may or may not be followed by other effects. For example:

> *Tall Tail's favorite new kite is stuck up in an apple tree! He tries to leap up and pull it down. Tall Tail's player rolls 1d20, getting an 8 on the die. He and the GM determine that the most appropriate attribute to use is Body, so he adds his Body score (1) to his dice roll,*

making it a total of 9. He has no other applicable bonuses, but decides to spend a point of Energy on the task (he cannot spend Courage since he has already rolled, but he can spend Energy after rolling to gain a +1) to bring the total to 10. The GM has already determined that he needs a 10 or better to succeed, and so Tall Tail leaps up, snags his kite, and frees it from the tree. He is slightly tired, but his new kite is safe.

Making a Check

A check can be made actively (a character attempting a task, such as trying to grab a kite) or reactively (the GM calling for a check in response to something, such as trying to dodge a Manticore's whipping tail). In either case, the player must know which Primary or Secondary Attribute applies to the check. While the GM has final say in this matter, it is encouraged that the player and GM work together to decide which attribute is most applicable to the situation and the check being attempted. Once that is determined, the check can proceed.

First, the player must decide if the check is going to be their 'harmony' check for the play session. If so, they add a bonus to the check result equal to the number of other players present in the scene. This must be decided before the 1d20 is rolled.

Second, the player must decide if they wish to spend a point of Courage to increase their check result. This must be decided before the 1d20 is rolled. If the check is related to their Special Purpose, this point of Courage will provide a +3 to the check result; if it is not, it only provides a +1. Only one point of Courage may be spent per check. If the check is successful, the character regains this point of Courage, representing their being heartened by success.

Third, the player rolls 1d20, and takes the result, adding it to their check result. This represents the role of chance and luck on a given situation, and provides uncertainty and risk.

Fourth, the player adds their score in the check's applicable attribute, as well as the rest of their innate bonuses: If they have applicable Talents, Jobs, or Skills, they add an additional +2, +1, and +1, respectively. If their Special Purpose applies, they gain an additional +2.

Finally, the player must decide if they wish to spend a point of Energy to increase their check result. This is the only point spending which may be done after the 1d20 roll has been made, but must be decided before the player learns whether or not they have succeeded or failed at the check. This point of Energy will provide a +1 to the check result. Only one point of Energy may be spent per check. Unlike Courage, the character does not regain this point of Energy if the check is successful; it represents fatigue from trying especially hard.

If the total of all of these bonuses and modifiers meets or exceeds the difficulty rating of the check as set by the GM, the character succeeds at the check. If it is less than the difficulty rating, the character fails at the check.

The Rule of 1, The Rule of 20

There are two important caveats to the check outlined above, which many pen & paper players will be familiar with; the "Rule Of 1" and the "Rule Of 20."

The Rule Of 1 is that, if the 1d20 roll comes up 1, the check is automatically failed by the character. The Rule Of 20, in contrast, is that, if the 1d20 roll comes up 20, the check is automatically succeeded at by the character. This represents the slight chance characters have to fail at something, or succeed at something, by sheer luck.

In either case, any points of Courage or Energy which would have been expended on the check are not lost, and if any character's 'harmony' check for the session would have been used up, it is not. For all intents and purposes, the check becomes 'free' to have made, whether it was automatically successful or unsuccessful.

Specific Checks

While most of the checks in My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic are very situational in nature, there are three specific checks which GM's may call for: Injury, Fatigue, and Willpower checks. These checks are always in response to a situation, and thus are always reactive.

An Injury check is made whenever a character is struck or otherwise comes to physical harm. The check is based on the character's Health score, and the difficulty rating is determined by the GM based on the severity of the harm the character is being subjected to. If the check is successful, the character loses a point of Health; if it is unsuccessful, they lose two instead. Finally, the GM may decide that the injury is beyond the character's ability to endure; that it is overwhelming harm. In this case, if the character succeeds at the check, they lose one point of Health; if they fail, they are immediately reduced to zero Health and knocked unconscious.

Similarly, a Fatigue check is made whenever a character is subjected to a situation which is physically or mentally taxing. The check is based on the character's Energy score, and functions identically to an Injury check. Akin to the concept of 'overwhelming injury,' the GM may decide that the fatiguing effect is overwhelming, and use the same rules as an overwhelming Injury check.

Finally, a Willpower check is made whenever a character is subjected to a situation which is particularly frightening, or is detrimental if not resisted (such as mind control). The check is based on the character's Courage score, and functions identically to an Injury or Fatigue check. It is also subject to the 'overwhelming' mechanic, at the GM's discretion.

Converting Points

Characters who are strong in certain areas may make up for their shortcomings in other areas by 'converting' their Energy and/or Courage. A character who has not been knocked unconscious can convert points of Energy into Health, or Courage into Energy or Health. Though there is no limit on how many of each type of points can be 'converted,' a character may only 'convert' points once per session (though multiple points may be converted).

A Word for GMs

Improvise!

GM'ing a game of My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is likely to be considerably different than your experience running other games. We hope it is different in that it is more enjoyable! But you should be prepared for it.

Preparing to run this game involves less numbers than other games; for example, when the characters are dealing with a Cockatrice, you are less concerned with its hit points and number of attacks, and more concerned with whether or not what the players are attempting to do would defeat the beast if successful, and likewise for the beast itself--and how that will impact the flow of the game and the shape of the story. Preparation for a game of My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic is about creating a story which will allow you to collaborate with your players to make that story fun, engaging, and memorable for everyone. It's about having fun, not winning or losing.

To that end, the most important skill you should develop is your ability to improvise. The system is meant to be very simple and easy for you to improvise with, so take advantage of that! Your characters will inevitably turn your story in directions you never intended it to go, and do things you never expected them to do; instead of saying 'no' and trying to keep them on the path you originally envisioned, roll with the punches and let them explore—it's very likely that an even better story will emerge because of it.

All you need is creativity, an understanding of the difficulty scale, and a clear vision in mind of the world and the situation at hand, and you will be able to improvise situations just as well as any math-intensive preparation you've done before.

The Difficulty Scale

As a GM, whenever a check is being made, it is up to you to come up with the difficulty rating of that check. Typically, in a pen & paper game, you would turn to a table of actions to find out what that difficulty rating is. However, what makes this game different is that it is up to you to come up with that rating on your own, using logic, reason, intuition, and common sense to set it. In this way, a GM in this game is less a master of rules and mechanics, and is expected to be more of a storyteller. However, there is a scale to help you.

Whenever you have to determine a check's difficulty rating, first ask yourself if the action really needs a check. For example, running down the road typically would not need a check; however, running down a road to out-run something, or to catch someone, or to reach somewhere before something happens, might. If an action does not need a check, it is considered automatically successful and you are justified in simply making it so.

By the same token, you are justified in making certain checks simply impossible. This can be because a player is attempting something which cannot be done by anyone, or if there is a good narrative reason. However, be wary of making things impossible; it is integral to a game without many hard rules that the players trust their GM--and making things impossible more than is absolutely necessary is a sure way to lose their trust. In any case, do not tell your players that you are making a check impossible; let them make the check and think that they simply missed the difficulty rating. Also, consider letting an 'impossible' check become possible if characters are using their 'harmony' checks on it, and if a player rolls a 20 on the 1d20 roll, let them succeed on the check 'despite all odds.' After all, sometimes magic does happen.

For other checks, use the following scale to help determine a difficulty rating, by starting at zero and asking yourself two questions about the task, adding the numbers as you go:

1. Who could do this task successfully, given the situation at hand?

    A Normal Pony   Difficulty rating +5

    A Special Pony   Difficulty rating +15

    A Legendary Pony   Difficulty rating +25

2. On a scale of one to ten, how hard would it be for them to do?

Add these together, and you will have a basic difficulty rating to work from for the check. Adjust it as necessary. This algorithm is in place to ensure that a character who has focused entirely in one area has a chance of succeeding at legendary tasks without having to rely on the Rule of 20 to accomplish them.

When is My Turn?

My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic does not use an initiative system or a system of determining who goes first and when. All in all, players and the GM are expected to cooperate in who goes when, and characters are assumed to be going "one at a time." If, however, a situation arises where the GM feels that the story would be better served by entering a format similar to 'combat rounds' in other games, use the following guideline.

In any given round, it is the GM's 'turn' first; and on this turn, the GM may ask certain characters to make reactive checks. After the GM's 'turn' is over, the players all share one joint 'turn,' and it is up to them to decide who goes in what order, and/or if certain characters act simultaneously. Each character may make one 'action,' and players who cannot come to an agreement on the order of who goes when simply lose their turns instead.

Example of Play:

The bridge is out, across one of Ponyville's streams, and there is a thunderstorm raging. Three ponies named Tumble, Scarlet, and Quill need to cross to get into town before the storm gets worse and they get trapped on the wrong side of the stream.

Tumble looks about for a fallen tree limb long enough to lay over the stream and walk across. The GM decides that this doesn't need a check, and simply says that there is one nearby, but it isn't just a limb, it's a tree trunk.

Tumble and Scarlet try to pick up the tree trunk from either end and carry it to the stream. The GM determines that a Normal Pony could do that, and it would be a 7 out of 10 for them, and thus makes the difficulty rating for each pony a 12. Everyone agrees it is a Body-based check. Tumble decides not to spend Courage or use his 'harmony' check, and rolls a 10. He has a 2 as his Body score, but no other applicable bonuses or modifiers. He succeeds. Scarlet has 'Ranch Hand' as her Job, and the GM agrees that it applies. She rolls a 13, adds +1 for her Job, and ends up with a 14 total--more than enough to succeed. Tumble and Scarlet pick up the tree trunk and carry it over, tossing it over the stream to make a bridge.

The ponies begin to cross, making a Body-based check to cross the slippery, makeshift bridge. Tumble and Scarlet are fine, but poor Quill fails his check! The GM has Quill fall into the rushing stream, and start to get washed away.

Scarlet springs into action, pulling out her lasso and throwing it to try to catch Quill before he gets swept too far downstream. Her Guiding Element of Harmony is Loyalty, so she and the GM agree that she is justified in making this her 'harmony' check. With two friends present, she gains a +2 to the roll, and furthermore expends a point of Courage. Since the task relates to her Special Purpose (handling cattle and other animals), she gains a +3 from this. It doesn't matter, though, as she rolls a 20 on the 1d20 roll and thus automatically succeeds.

Scarlet pulls Quill to the shore, and while he is waterlogged and freezing, he's fine.

Magic

Finally, we come to magic. Spellcasting in My Little Pony: Roleplaying Is Magic isn't done with pre-set spells and spell lists; instead, it is done just like any other task, typically governed by Mind-based checks, and involves a sequence of aspects to govern what a character can and cannot do with their magic. Players familiar with the Ars Magica system of magic and spellcasting will recognize this system as being heavily based on it.

A "magic trick" is a completed set of an Effect and a Subject as taken from this list. Effects and Subjects describe broad areas of ability a character has in terms of magic. For example, if a character wanted to create a magical candle flame to see by, they would need to know the magic trick "Create Fire," where "Create" is the Effect and "Fire" is the Subject, and succeed on a Mind-based check to accomplish the task. If they wanted to extinguish that fire, they would need to know the magic trick "Diminish Fire." Examples from the show include "Change Body" to give Rarity wings, "Create Illusion" to explain Trixie's light-show, "Know Earth" for Twilight and Rarity to find gems, and even "Animate Body" to let Twilight Sparkle teleport.

All in all, the magic system is the most complicated concept in the game. Many possibilities exist for how to use these magical aspects, and players and GM's are encouraged to use good judgement and fair play when utilizing magic.

List of Magical Aspects

Effects

Animate lets the character affect something without changing its basic characteristics, such as causing a snow plow to move on its own, or teleporting something from place to place.

Change lets the character change the basic characteristics of something, giving something capabilities not naturally associated with its kind, or taking away aspects of it.

Create lets the character create from nothingness, or make something a more "perfect" example of its kind.

Diminish lets the character destroy, deteriorate, make something age and other similar effects; essentially, making something a worse example of its kind.

Know lets the character locate something, or know about something through magical divination.

Subjects

Air is used for anything that has to do with the air, including lightning and weather.

Animal is used for animals; this indicates lower animals, not ponies and their ilk.

Body is used for the body of higher animals such as ponies, typically for alterations.

Earth stands for earth and minerals, or any other non-living solid.

Fire is used for fire, and fire's basic effects of light and heat.

Force has to do with effects of solid energy, such as Nightmare Moon's hair.

Illusion deals with false or magical images, sounds, and other senses.

Magic has to do with pure magic; spells affecting spells.

Mind deals with intelligence and the mind, as well as perception, thoughts, and control.

Plants is used for plants and fungi, and their products; cotton, wood, flour, etc.

Water is used for water, or any other liquid, including ice.

"Create Magic" is like a Unicorn Pony's magical multi-tool. It can enhance, amplify, and/or improve other magic, by making the 'other magic' a "more perfect example of its kind" (as per the 'Create' description). If a GM allows, it can also create pure magic (as a substance like creating water, or fire), but what that means is up to the GM.

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my LiTTLE PONY
ROLE PLAYiNG is MAGiC

Character Info

Name :

Age :

Race :

Guiding Element :

Special Purpose :

Job :   +1

Bits :

Backstory, Notes, Equipment :

Attributes

Mind	Body	Heart
Health	Energy	Courage

Talents   +2

Skills   +1