



Season Two Edition

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Tall Tail (James Weimer)
Know-It-All (Sam Hanson)

Artsy Heartsy (Daniel Oakley)
Pixel (Caytlin Vilbrandt)
Sketchbook (Michael Simpson)



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My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic

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Want more MLP:RiM?

Visit the MLP:RiM website at: *http://mlprim.com*

I'd like to dedicate this to all our fans, all the gamers who stuck with us through our first edition, and to the bronny community.

Your love, tolerance, and unfailing positivity continues to teach us all about the magic of friendship.

~ *Tall Tail (James Weimer)*

Thank you to all of the MLP:RiM team for bringing your talents together to make this wonderful game, and to Lauren Faust for introducing us to the wide, wide world of Equestria.

~ *Know-It-All (Samuel Hanson)*

Thanks to David for getting me to go for this project, and to the whole MLP:FiM community for being amazing.

~ *Artsy Heartsy (Daniel Oakley)*

I dedicate this to my husband, who encourages me in everything I do, and whose love of MLP:FiM surpasses even mine.

~ *Pixel (Caytlin Vilbrandt)*

Thank you to my friends for getting me into ponies, and my family for supporting me doing this project.

~ *Sketchbook (Michael Simpson)*

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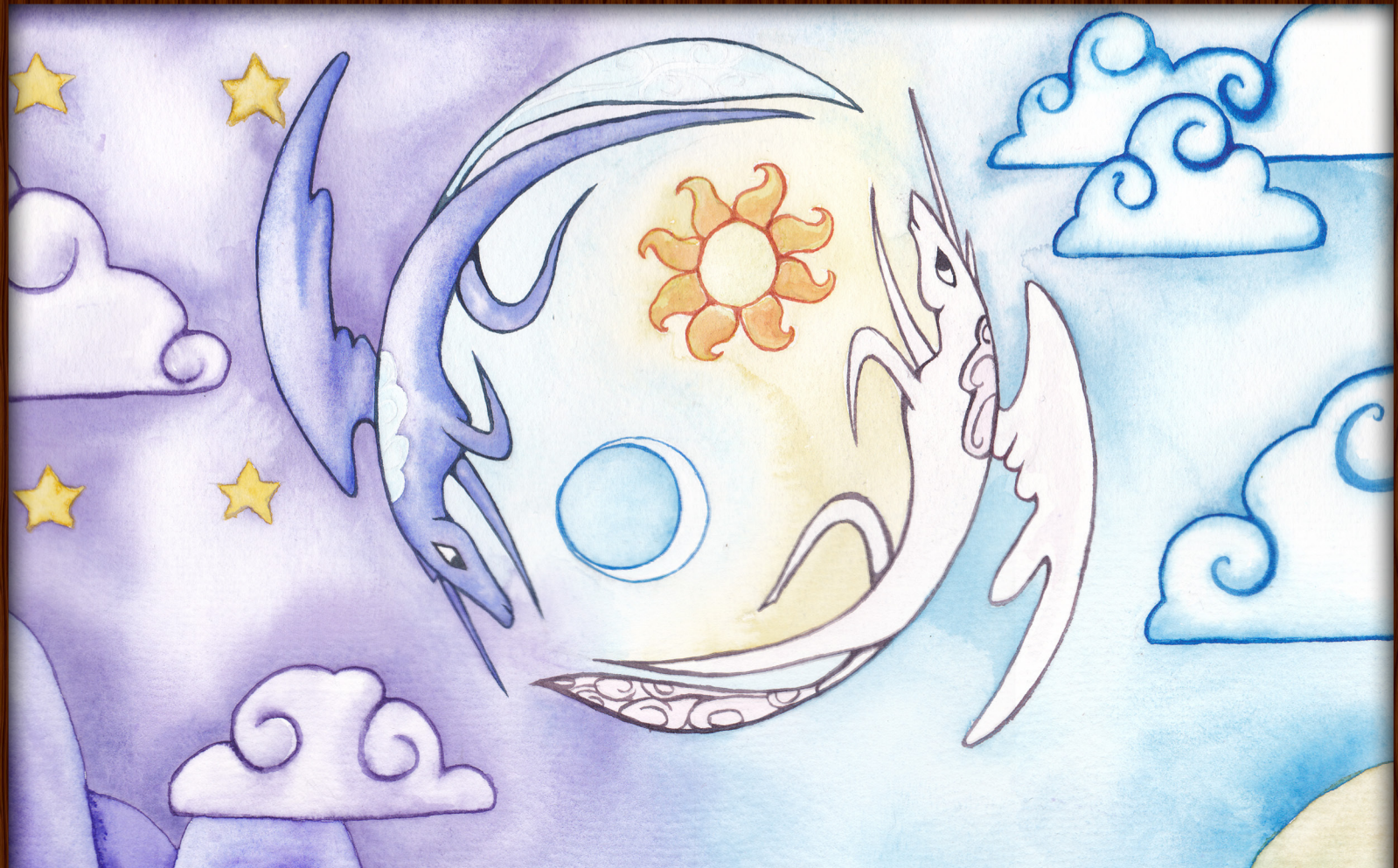
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Introduction





Welcome to MLP:RiM, Season 2 Edition (S2E)

Whoever you are, wherever you're from, on one thing we can all agree:

Everything is better with ponies.

It is with this in mind that we set out to make My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. With many game systems on the market ranging from vampire intrigue, to cyberpunk dystopias, to dragon-slaying and the diving-into of dungeons, we felt that it was time for something bright and colorful to join these noble and distinguished ranks. Something positive. Something friendly. Something uplifting and just plain **fun**.

Pen and paper roleplaying games occupy a unique place in modern society. For many of us adults, they provide one of the last safe places for our imagination to take flight; indeed, in some ways, they may be the last bastion of our childhood. Unlike video and computer games, a good pen and paper roleplaying game doesn't just provide you with a choice of A or B and ask you to choose one; instead, it presents you with a situation and asks, 'What do **you** want to do?'

We have tried to capture this ideal with My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. The magical land of Equestria is a wide, wide world of adventure, danger, wonder, and self-discovery. It is a place that, while not safe, is full of imagination; a perfect setting for a pen and paper roleplaying game. We have avoided complex math as much as possible, and have instead substituted narrative concepts and ideals of communal storytelling, to emphasize the unique place pen and paper roleplaying games hold in the world of gaming. This is not a game to be beaten, but rather a method of telling fun stories together.

So, gather some friends and read on, my little ponies; and as you do, ask yourself:

What do **you** want to do?

What is this?

This is the 'Season Two Edition' of My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, a tabletop pen and paper roleplaying game system based on the My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic cartoon created by Lauren Faust and Studio B, and owned by Hasbro Inc. This is provided free for all to use and play, and is a labor of love and friendship for the brony community.

It is called the 'Season Two Edition,' or 'S2E,' due to the fact that it is based as much as possible upon the canonical information presented by the original cartoon up through its second season. Part of the mission of this game system is to undergo revisions after each season of the cartoon, and release a new edition each season to reflect those revisions, thus staying constant with the information presented by the show. We have done our best to design a game system which, while being as 'fanon-friendly' as possible, is centered squarely on the canon of the original show.

This is a system for communal storytelling, designed for two to six players and one Game Master (or 'GM'). It is played using a single twenty-sided die (or 'd20') per person, as well as pencils, this rulebook, and assorted character sheets. Players are given a situation by the GM, describe the actions attempted by their characters, and use the d20 and their character sheets to determine the results of these actions.

Above all, this is a vehicle for telling stories, making friends, and having fun.

Hey! Isn't this just like [insert game system here]?

Probably.

Experienced pen and paper roleplayers will undoubtedly recognize several aspects of My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic which are similar to other game systems, and that is not unexpected. While much of the game was developed to be as original as possible in concept and execution, as the old saying goes, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.' The simple fact of the matter is that good art stands on the shoulders of the giants who came before, and that if someone before you had a good idea, use it—and if possible, improve on it.

We have altered almost every mechanic in the system enough to consider it 'ours' rather than 'copying' or 'stealing' from someone else, and the core system is original work. Having said that, we would like to take a moment now to give proper credit to the giants whose shoulders we stood upon to make this game. These are only the influences we are aware of; the world of gaming is a vast web of influences, and there are likely many we aren't aware of enough to name. To those, we offer our simple thanks.

First and foremost, like many gaming systems, we owe a thank-you to Gary Gygax for his creation, 'Dungeons & Dragons.' Without D&D, not only would this system not be possible, but we may not have gotten into gaming at all.

Secondly, White Wolf's 'World of Darkness' influenced much of how skills are defined and how the core of the game flows in a narrative style, as well as how part of the Dragon racial mechanics and Willpower mechanics were designed.

Third, 'Giant in the Playground Games' influenced much of how the attribute and talent systems were designed to afford players flexibility without becoming overly complex.

Fourth, Atlas Games' 'Ars Magica' influenced much of how the magic and spellcasting system was designed to allow great customization, as well as how part of the Unicorn Pony racial mechanics were designed.

Finally, Giftkrieg23's 'The Savage World of My Little Pony' is—to us—the grandfather of all My Little Pony pen and paper game systems. It blazed the trail this game system follows, and we owe him a brohoof for being the pioneer in this area. In particular, his system of 'Daunts' influenced much of how the Energy/Courage/Fortitude system functions.

How do I read this book?

This book is separated into four distinct sections.

The first section is this one, the **Introduction**. It is designed to give you some background on the game, and to ease you into the style and flavor of the book. For the full experience, it is recommended that you read all the way through.

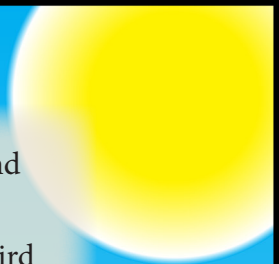

The second section is **For Players**, and forms half of the core content of the book. In this second section, the

Want to Help?

We are always on the lookout for feedback from game groups who want to help make My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic the best game system it can be. If you and your game group are interested in sending us feedback, opinions, summaries of your individual group's Episodes, and/or suggestions, please contact us at:

TallTailTellsTales@gmail.com

This game is for you, and we strive to incorporate as much feedback as possible into each edition.



mechanics of the game are presented and explained, from character creation, through gameplay, and on into character advancement and the spending of experience points.

The third section is **For GMs**, and forms the other half of the core content of the book. In this third section, the duties and responsibilities of the GM are outlined and explained, from creating an Episode, through gathering a group of players, and on into running the game itself.

The fourth and final section contains **Character Sheets** for players to use when creating their characters to play.

New Players: What is Roleplaying is Magic?

We have one word for new players:

Relax.

If you've played a pen and paper roleplaying game before, you already know how to play My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. Some of the mechanics may (and likely will) be new and different to you, but you already understand the core logic of how a game system works, and all you're going to find in this book is, perhaps, a new way to play.

If you've played in unmoderated, or 'freeform,' roleplaying before, you already know many of the ways in which My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic differs from other pen and paper game systems. You understand the concept of narrative flow in roleplaying, and all you're going to find in this book is, perhaps, a new way to codify roleplaying.

If you have no experience with roleplaying at all, you have a lot to learn. However, we wrote this book for you, and within its pages, you'll find everything you need to sit down with a group of friends and play a game of My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. The best way to learn roleplaying is to sit down and do it, and chances are good that if this game system is your first, you're playing with the best group of people to learn with: friends.


Regardless of your background or experience, you're likely to find something new in this book, whether it's how to play a game which is light on rules but heavy on concept, or how to use rules to tell a story rather than simply play a game.

Returning Players: What's new in S2E?

We have two words for returning players:

Thank you.

You stuck with us through our rough beginnings, and we hope that you'll find S2E to be a different, but also much better, experience in every facet of gameplay. We have redesigned almost everything from the ground up to improve on S1E; taking from it many lessons and good ideas, and trimming away or replacing what didn't work—or didn't work as well as we thought it would. If you were one of the game groups who kept in touch with us and provided feedback, you're very likely to find that a considerable portion of that feedback has been incorporated into S2E. This game is for you, and you helped make it better. Thank you; we owe you a cupcake.



Some of the changes you'll find include new mechanics such as Energy/Courage/Fortitude—a reworked 'hit point' type system which focuses more on all aspects of becoming discouraged or damaged, an expanded spellcasting system for greater flexibility, power, and customization for Unicorn Ponies, cool new and expanded flight- and weather-based abilities for Pegasus Ponies, a robust experience reward system for Earth Ponies, new mechanics for utilizing Special Purposes and Talents, new ways to use—and risk—Willpower to push your character to new heights, Dragons as a playable race with their own unique abilities and dangerous weaknesses, and last—but certainly not least—a fully realized system for acquiring and spending experience points to advance your character across multiple Episodes.

You spoke, we listened. We think you'll like what we came up with.



What do I need to play?

The list of materials you need to play My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is very short in comparison to other pen and paper roleplaying games.

Each player needs a character sheet (found in the back of this book), a pencil or pen, and one twenty-sided die. Optionally, players may wish to bring paper to take notes on the story to help them remember key points. Players might also wish to bring a copy of this rulebook for themselves, though a game group can get along fine with one copy for the group as a whole.

The GM needs even less; a copy of this rulebook, a pencil or pen, paper, and their notes on the Episode they are running. My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic - S2E seeks to be very GM-friendly, allowing GM's to focus on the story, not enforcing the rules.

Aside from that, everyone should bring a cooperative, friendly attitude to the table, and the desire to have fun and tell a good story as a group. That's it—you're ready to begin!

Who are you?

The My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic team is composed of five individuals—one woman, four men—and is published under the company header of Roan Arts LLC. Roan Arts LLC is a small company formed to create and publish artistic projects from video games, to hobby games, to books and comics. Apart from My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, Roan Arts LLC is developing START, a universal framework system for pen and paper gaming.

James Weimer (Tall Tail) is a co-founder of Roan Arts LLC and the mind (genius or deranged, you decide) behind My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. He is an avid gamer and passable writer from the southern east coast with lofty aspirations to become a professional game designer. He's also available for bar mitzvahs and birthday parties.

Samuel Hanson (Know-It-All) is a brony from Florida and a co-founder of Roan Arts LLC. The love of games (and ponies) led to his joining the MLP:RiM team where he applies his (apparently) useful skills in developing game mechanics. When not trying to figure when to use a +1 or a -1, Know-It-All enjoys playing video, computer, and tabletop games, and—of course—watching Friendship is Magic.

Daniel Oakley (Artsy Heartsy) is a geek living in Brisbane, Australia. He does a little of everything, focusing on computers and graphic design.

Caytlin Vilbrandt (Pixel) is a comic artist and designer from the Pacific Northwest. She spends her days fighting crime and saving puppies from trees, but when she comes home at night, she draws a lot of comics. And watches a lot of pony. Actually, that's a lie; if you ask any of her friends, they'll tell you she spends 90% of her time drawing her comic, *Walking on Broken Glass* (<http://www.brokenglasscomic.com>). But be warned, it's rated R for violence.

Michael Simpson (Sketchbook) is a visual artist who has worked in illustration, graphic design, and 3-D animation. A good portion of his free time is spent doing artistic things for fun (and profit). He also has a passion for all sorts of games, from those on his trusty (well, *mostly* trusty) Playstation 3, to good old fashioned board games and tabletop games.

Who is best pony?

Tall Tail: I have been a fan of Pinkie Pie since day one (okay, maybe episode three). Her quirky humor and out-in-the-open, positive lifestyle helped me learn the value of being upbeat, straightforward, and optimistic in my daily life. I credit Pinkie Pie's lessons with being the reason I wake up happy in the morning. And also, who doesn't love Gummy?

Know-It-All: Applejack is the best pony because she is honest and dedicated to doing the right thing. Where other ponies get by with magic, fantastic natural abilities, and reality-bending luck, Applejack uses willpower and hard work to get things done.

Artsy: Fluttershy, because she's a year older than Pinkie Pie. Pipsqueak, Spike, and Pinkie come in a close second though.

Pixel: Sweetiebot is best pony. That's all there is to it. But if you make me choose a canon pony, I'm sticking with Sweetie Belle. She's my MBTI pony, and I like her lots.

Sketchbook: I would have to say that the best pony is Fluttershy. I feel like she is the one that I can best relate to, as well as being pretty darn cute. Even though she is timid and super-kind, she isn't afraid of showing some backbone when the situation calls for it. You might even say she 'kills with kindness;' and I feel that that's the best way to be.



DARANGO

777 1re Avenue

STARTING STONE



For Players



The Magic of Friendship

Equestria is a magical land of adventure, opportunity, wonder, and friendship; but it is also a land of action, danger, old mysteries to unravel, and new challenges to overcome. From vanquishing frightening beasts from the Everfree Forest to learning lessons about the magic of friendship, as a player, you will guide your character through any number of situations and rely on yourself and your friends to succeed.

Perhaps your character maintains a dual identity as a mysterious masked hero, helping ponies before vanishing back into their mild-mannered alter-ego. Maybe your character is a talented artist, or magician, or athlete, striving to become the best at what they do. Or your character might simply be a number one assistant or another hard-working citizen of Equestria, making their way in the world as best they can--but destined for greatness.

Whatever their persona, goals, ambitions, or talents, nopony goes through life entirely alone. Even the most talented pony in Equestria benefits from having friends by their side, and a group of friends can accomplish what nopony can on their own. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, friendship means more than just a few companions for an adventure; it is a powerful force worth fighting for.

You're all my very best friends

In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, there are three main 'roles' for the group of friends sitting around the gaming table to fill: Players, Characters, and the Game Master. It's important to understand what these roles represent, and how they fit together. This section of the book deals with players and their characters, going in-depth into the concepts and mechanics of roleplaying with *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*.

Players are the driving force behind the action and adventure of the game, and it is the duty of the players to be creative and expressive in moving the story forward. At their core, players are responsible for entertaining themselves and each other, and ultimately, they are the ones with the power to steer the game in whatever direction they wish. This means that (despite appearances to the contrary) players have the most responsibility among the game group to ensure that the game they are playing is a fun, engaging, and rewarding experience.

Characters are the method of driving the story forward and of providing players with a vessel and a mechanism for making things interesting and fun. If the players are the 'directors' of a game of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, then the characters are the 'actors;' they provide the flavor and flair which give the game a personal feel.

The Game Master (or 'GM') is the writer, assistant, and supervisor for the game, and is responsible for fleshing out the world around the characters. While the players control only their characters, the GM controls everything else--but they are not the driving force behind the game, they merely assist the players in various ways to create a good story. Where the players have the most conceptual responsibility (that is, to ensure the quality of the game), the GM has the most logistical responsibility; it is the GM's job to ensure that the game progresses smoothly and that the players have the situations, resources, and challenges they need to make the game fun.

She's just being Pinkie Pie

Many beginner roleplayers (and some experienced ones) have a tendency to fall into one of a few behaviors which can negatively effect the gameplay experience. It is important to know these behaviors so that they can be avoided, and help ensure that the group roleplaying is rich and enjoyable for everyone. The first and most prevalent of these behaviors is called 'Meta-Gaming.'

Meta-Gaming is the use of information which a player knows but that their character would not, in deciding upon the actions of that character. An example of meta-gaming would be for a player who saw in their GM's notes that a griffon is coming to town, to have their character be looking for a griffon or telling ponies that a griffon is coming to town. The reason this is meta-gaming is that, while the player has seen the GM's notes, their character has no way of knowing about a griffon coming to town.

Meta-Gaming is one of the most fundamentally difficult behaviors to avoid, as it seems to be self-contradictory; a player controlling a character not using knowledge that player has, often seems strange to players who engage in meta-gaming. The reason it should be avoided is for the sake of immersion; pen and paper roleplaying is at its best when the players feel as if they are their characters, instead of simply controlling them. In essence, meta-gaming is like reading the ending of a book first; it ruins the fun of reading the story. In the case of the griffon example above, it is more 'immersive' and fun for everyone at the table if the player has their character act as if they do not know about the griffon coming to town, and thus act as surprised as everyone else.

You've gotta share, You've gotta care

Another behavior to avoid is called 'Main Character Syndrome.' Main Character Syndrome is when a player acts as if their character is the most 'special' or 'unique' character, disregarding the importance of the characters other players are playing. Most often, this manifests itself as unnecessarily quirky or disruptive behaviors for the character, which serve to draw attention and make the game more fun for the player controlling the character, but not for the other players in the game.

While a character is always very personal to their player, it is important not to 'hog the spotlight,' so to speak, and to try to use your character (and sometimes step back from the action) to make the roleplaying experience fun for everyone. Often, these kinds of character 'quirks' seem to be a fun idea, but end up being a disruptive element or an unnecessary 'speed bump' to the flow of the game.

An example of main character syndrome would be for a character to be afraid of sunlight; while this might seem like an interesting and fun quirk in theory, in practice it simply means that every time the other characters want to do something during the day, they have to first deal with the fear--instead of focusing on the more important challenges at hand. Rather than adding to the fun and flavor of the game, it becomes a tedious and unnecessary barrier to overcome before the game group can get on with having fun.

Avoiding Main Character Syndrome

It's easy to avoid Main Character Syndrome; just follow this rule: Any time you have an idea for your character and think it would be fun or neat, take a moment and ask yourself, "How does this make the game more fun for everyone else?" If you can't come up with an answer in a few seconds, reconsider it.



If I can't find a friendship problem...

It is not uncommon for a game session to hit a point where the action has slowed down. Usually, this happens when the players didn't pick up on a clue the GM gave them, or when the players are trying to do things one way, and the GM can't or won't tell them that they are focusing on the wrong thing, or that what they are trying to do won't work. Whatever the cause, this slowdown is no one's fault specifically, and can be easily handled if the players and GM cooperate.

In these lulls in the action (or 'bottleneck scenes') it is important for a player to find something for their character to do, and not just get stuck--as that leads to boredom. If a door won't open, look for a secret switch, or a key. If a monster won't go away, look around for an escape route. If nothing is going on, backtrack to see if there is something you missed. Often, this provides the GM with a way to let the action move forward, by improvising a potential solution or 'work-around' for the situation at hand.

...I'll make a friendship problem!

While it is important to keep the action moving, it is also important to be constructive when seeking methods of doing so, instead of starting trouble for the sake of entertainment. Being disruptive or creating a problem in order to have something to do is yet another behavior to avoid, which is called 'Starting Drama.'

An example of starting drama would be for a character who, whereupon finding a barn door locked, decides to burn down the barn instead of look for another way in--or a character who doesn't have anything to do and who starts a fight to stir up some action. Often, a GM will work with a player to help them find a solution to a problem or find something to do, but it is important to leave options open. If a character sets fire to a barn, as in the example above, it will force events down a specific track, instead of giving the players and the GM some 'breathing room' to work out more constructive solutions.

Stop it, Discord; You're not playing fair

It is the role of a GM to provide challenges for the players and their characters, and from time to time, it is not uncommon for players to feel as though the GM is being unfair in the difficulty of a challenge. It is natural for players and GM's to 'lock horns' over things from time to time, but it is also important that ultimately, they trust each other. When a player decides that the GM is the 'enemy,' they are falling into another behavior to avoid, called 'Beating The GM.'

An example of beating the GM would be for a player to try to have their character go against the guidance of the GM, and try to do everything they can to use rules and technicalities to limit what the GM is able to do. The reason this is a behavior to avoid is two-fold. First, a GM's enjoyment of the game is dependent on the players succeeding in their adventure, but also in truly earning their success and overcoming challenges; a good GM is not too lenient, not too strict, but fair. After all, the GM wants to have fun just as much as the rest of the game group.

Second, trying to limit the GM's abilities only leads to less overall fun for the group. While it seems like a good idea to make sure the GM isn't 'cheating,' it also prevents the GM from 'cheating' to help the group when they're stuck, or 'cheating' to prevent an unlucky turn of events from ending the adventure unfairly. A GM needs a certain amount of leeway to improvise and react to the story as it unfolds, so that the game remains fun for the whole group. In short, the GM is not the enemy, but rather a friend and assistant to the players--whose job includes presenting challenges and hurdles to overcome.

You simply must stop reading those dusty old books

Unlike many pen and paper game systems, My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is not designed to feature a comprehensive system of rules, tables, and equations which cover every possible action and ensure complete balance. Instead, it focuses on the narrative, storytelling elements of roleplaying, and assumes that players and their GM will play fair and work together to create a good story.

There are many ways in which this system could be abused to accumulate power for an individual character, and in fact it was designed with that kind of flexibility in order to encompass many concepts and allow the players and the GM to use their imagination as much as possible. Players seeking to make characters who are 'powerful,' or who seek to 'win' a pen and paper roleplaying game are advised to find a different game to play. Players seeking to use their imagination to create a fun story for everyone at the game table, however, are encouraged to keep reading.

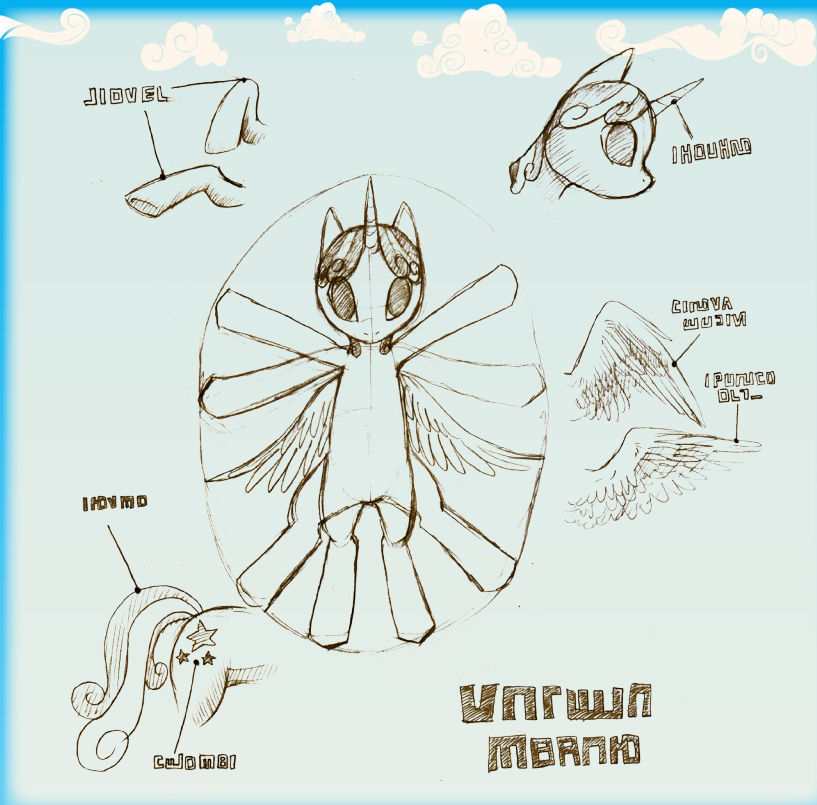
Make some friends!

Now that some core concepts have been discussed, and some disruptive behaviors have been outlined to be avoided, the next section will cover character creation utilizing the game mechanics themselves. Character creation is best done (and is a lot of fun) when done as a group, so gather your game group together, pass out character sheets, and make some friends!

Banish Rules Lawyers To The Moon!

Veteran pen and paper roleplaying gamers will be familiar with the term 'rules lawyer.' While this type of behavior is usually always discouraged, it is especially important to do so in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. If a rules debate arises, rather than looking for a hard rule or regulation, work together to come up with a temporary solution. House rules are to be encouraged!





Cutie Mark Crusader Character Creators! (Yay!)

Character creation in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* is designed to be a group activity, both with the other players in the game group and with the GM. It deals more with interpretation, conceptualization, and definition of a character than with choosing options from a list or allocating points. As such, while character creation can be done individually, it is better (not to mention more fun) to work together.

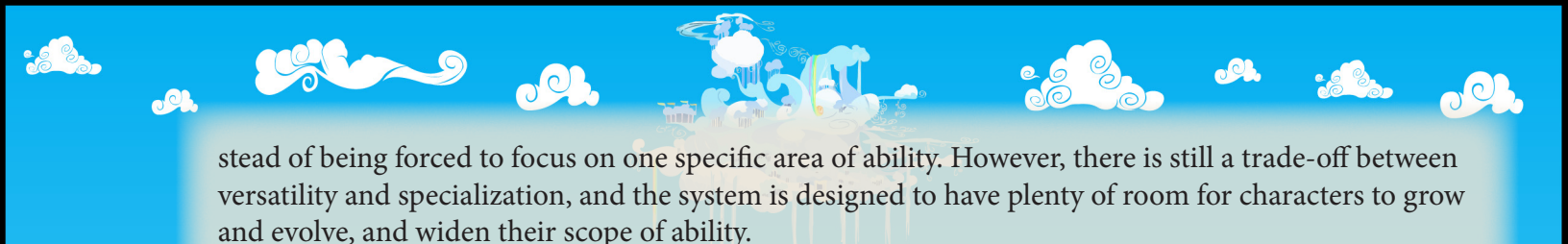
Focus on what you're already good at

New players (and some experienced ones) often tend to try to design a character in a pen and paper roleplaying game to 'min-max,' or try to get the numbers to work before coming up with a character concept. This is natural, as many times a player has to find out what kind of character is possible before they know if a concept will work. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, however, there is significant flexibility in character creation to make or adapt a character concept, to allow players to think first about their character, then about the mechanics.

For this reason, players are encouraged to design their characters 'concept first.' Much of character creation in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* asks the player to explain or define their character's concept, and adapts the mechanics to fit--thus it makes character creation much more fun and easy when the character concept is already being developed.

Anything you can do, I can do better


Many roleplayers have a natural tendency to try to do everything right from the start with their characters. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, this is called being a 'Trixie.' Character creation is designed to give players a large degree of freedom and flexibility to make a well-rounded character, in-



stead of being forced to focus on one specific area of ability. However, there is still a trade-off between versatility and specialization, and the system is designed to have plenty of room for characters to grow and evolve, and widen their scope of ability.

For these reasons, it is best during character creation to focus on what is essential to your character, instead of trying to encompass everything you want them to have or do in the long run. A character who tries to do everything right from the start, after all, often ends up not being able to do anything very well.

There's nothing we can't overcome!



A balanced character who focuses on a reasonable number of areas is especially well-suited to My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, due to the group nature of character creation. When creating characters, don't be afraid to work together with other players to create a well-rounded group of friends. Unlike many game systems which assume that characters are strangers at the beginning of the game, My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic assumes that the players' group of characters are already friends-- or are at least destined to become friends.

For this reason, it is important to work together to create characters who compliment each other in terms of their personalities as well as their abilities. For example, a character who is very shy might work well with a character who is very charismatic or adventurous, and vice versa. A character who is very bold might work well with a character who is very artistic, and vice versa. The important thing to remember is that temporary conflict within a group of friends is natural, but that the group should not be designed to be inherently adversarial with each other. There is a reason the characters are already (or soon to be) friends, and character creation is the time to develop the nature and origin of that friendship.

It's a good thing I'm so organised

Character creation follows sixteen steps, from beginning to end. These steps are as follows:

Step One: Choose your character's race, whether pony or dragon.

Step Two: Choose your character's age category.

Step Three: Define your character's Special Purpose and Cutie Mark.

Step Four: Determine your character's Primary Attributes.

Step Five: Determine your character's Secondary Attributes.

Step Six: Choose your character's Talents.

Step Seven: Define your character's Job.

Step Eight: Define your character's Skills.

Step Nine: Apply your character's Unique Abilities.

Step Ten: Choose your character's Guiding Element of Harmony.

Step Eleven: Define your character's Flaws (if any).

Step Twelve: Determine your character's appearance and style.

Step Thirteen: Determine your character's possessions and assets.

Step Fourteen: Determine your character's background and history.

Step Fifteen: Determine your character's starting point into the game.

Step Sixteen: Spend any experience points available to your character.



All the different kinds of ponies

The first step of character creation is to choose your character's race, whether it is one of the breeds of ponies, or a dragon. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, there are four playable races: Earth Ponies, Pegasus Ponies, Unicorn Ponies, and Dragons. Each race has its own strengths, areas of talent and skill, and signature abilities which the other races do not, making each and every character special.

Earth Ponies

Earth Ponies are the hard-working and stout-hearted 'everyday' residents of Equestria. While they lack the unique powers granted to the other breeds of ponies, Earth Ponies share a strong and deeply personal connection to the earth. By the virtue of not having the inherent abilities of the other breeds, Earth Ponies are no strangers to hard work, ingenuity, determination, and cooperation. They often take life lessons to heart more readily than other ponies, and usually have a deeper (albeit more 'common sense') understanding of the world around them.

All in all, Earth Ponies tend to be very 'salt of the earth' type ponies--from bakers, to farmers, to builders, to teachers and community leaders, Earth Ponies make the world go 'round and are always ready to do what is necessary. That is not to say that they are not just as varied and unique as the other

The Pluto Problem

During the episode 'Lesson Zero,' an Alicorn foal (fan-nicknamed 'Pluto') is seen in Twilight Sparkle's imagination of magic kindergarten. This sparked some debate over whether Alicorns were limited to the Princesses (Celestia, Luna, Cadence), or if there were more to be found in Equestria.

Coupled with the confirmation of inter-breed procreation in 'Baby Cakes,' the case could be made for Alicorns to be a naturally-occurring breed of pony. However, there is currently not enough canonical information about Alicorns for them to be included as a standard playable race in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* - S2E.

breeds; indeed, Earth Ponies have been known to be world-renowned musicians, artists, designers, and even athletes. It simply means that Earth Ponies--whatever their vocation--are passionate, steadfast, and connected to not only nature, but all the important and subtle things which make the world go 'round.

While it may appear that Earth Ponies are the least 'powerful' of the pony breeds, in some ways, the reverse is true. While they do not gain the unique abilities of flight or magic that the other breeds do, Earth Ponies have a significant advantage when it comes to experience points and advancement. Early on, Earth Ponies tend to be 'all-around' and versatile characters, able to fill a variety of roles within the group. However, as they advance, Earth Ponies have the potential to become better in more areas than other ponies do. While the other breeds of pony may have aerial acrobatics or magical mysticism at their disposal, Earth Ponies have the grit and determination to be the best at whatever they do.

Mechanically, Earth Ponies gain a +2 bonus to their Heart attribute, a +1 bonus to their Mind attribute, and their unique racial ability called "The Earth Pony Way."



Notable Earth Ponies include:

Sapphire Shores, entertainer and the Pony of Pop

Ace, fourth-best tennis player in all of Equestria

Hoity Toity, premier Canterlot fashion mogul

Cheerilee, Ponyville's head schoolmistress

Photo Finish, famous fashion photographer

Pegasus Ponies

Pegasus ponies are high-flying, athletic ponies gifted with wings and the ability to interact with clouds. While not all Pegasus Ponies are sky-bound speedsters or aerial acrobats, all Pegasus Ponies can move through the air as quickly and easily as they can on the ground, making them overall a bit more naturally athletic and physically capable than the other breeds of ponies. After all, being capable of flying all day and carrying things while doing so is a great way for a pony to end up in outstanding physical condition.

In general, Pegasus Ponies tend to be very passionate about their goals and drives in life; it is not uncommon for a Pegasus Pony to go out on a limb or take a risk to accomplish something important to them. While this does not mean that Pegasus Ponies are reckless (indeed, some of them can be timid), it does mean that more often than not they tend to be the trailblazer in a group adventure--whether through an adventurous spirit or a curious mind.

Pegasus Ponies have the unique gift of flight, as well as the wondrous ability to interact with clouds in ways no one else can--and even create weather effects themselves. If Earth Ponies have a unique connection to the earth, Pegasus Ponies have a unique connection to the sky. From lightning strikes to rainstorms, Pegasus Ponies can use clouds to create weather effects--and can even create certain effects (such as whirlwinds, or contrails of lightning or rainbows) by themselves. Aside from this, all Pegasus Ponies have some inborn talent for flight--even if they rarely show it. This talent can take time to develop, but it is always present to one degree or another.



Mechanically, Pegasus Ponies gain a +2 bonus to their Body attribute, a +1 bonus to their Heart attribute, and their unique racial ability called “Sky-Bound Soars and Daring Dives.”

Notable Pegasus Ponies include:

Rainbow Dash, only known practitioner of the Sonic Rainboom

Ditzy Doo, notoriously incapable avian migratory guide

The Wonderbolts, Equestria’s premier aerial acrobatic team

Derpy Hooves, famous paper-bag-wearing adventurer

Daring Do, heroic explorer and world traveller

Unicorn Ponies

Unicorn Ponies are the most magical and intellectual of the pony breeds, capable of performing magical acts and casting spells by the virtue of the horn protruding from their forehead. Unlike the other breeds of ponies, whose abilities are more subtle, Unicorn Ponies manifest their unique and magical connection to the world around them overtly. Unicorn Pony magic is difficult, if not impossible, to hide--and few Unicorn Ponies would seek to hide it anyway, as it is their magic and spellcasting ability which makes them unique among the breeds of ponies.

By and large, Unicorn Ponies are a proud breed of pony, and take great pleasure in being a part of important and interesting things. Whether it is seeking to be a vital part of high society, becoming the very best in a chosen area of interest, taking on a dangerous mission for the fate of Equestria, or simply being a part of a wonderful friendship, Unicorn Ponies can often be found at the heart of important events. While not all Unicorn Ponies are prideful, and indeed humility is not an uncommon trait, all Unicorn Ponies are well aware that they are special--and that there is no hiding that fact.

Unicorn Ponies have arguably the most powerful unique ability in their spellcasting and wielding of magic. From their ability to magically manipulate objects to the unique and varied ways in which they learn to use their magical talents, Unicorn Ponies have a power that no other breed of pony can match directly. However, it is the overt nature of their magic which is also its drawback; a Unicorn Pony has no way to hide their magical power, and is often in the proverbial spotlight whether they want to be or not.

Mechanically, Unicorn Ponies gain a +2 bonus to their Mind attribute, a +1 bonus to their Body attribute, and their unique racial ability called "Magic Makes it all Complete."

Notable Unicorn Ponies include:

Twilight Sparkle, star pupil of Princess Celestia

Star Swirl the Bearded, father of the amniomorphic spell

DJ Pon3, disc jockey and master of vinyl scratching

Prince Blueblood, royal nephew of Princess Celestia

Fancypants, the most important pony in Canterlot





Dragons

Dragons are the mysterious and largely unknown reptilian race of fire-breathing serpents. While the existence of Dragons in Equestria has been known for a long time, not much is known about their society, or how they age, or about their life cycle in general. What little is known about Dragons comes mainly from unconventional sources of lore and wisdom, and thus is not generally widely known to the rest of the world.

Dragons have an inherently value-driven way of viewing of the world; they typically have a clear and instinctual understanding of the importance of things. For this reason, Dragons struggle with tendencies toward possession for its own sake. On the one hand, a Dragon's natural inclination is to gather and protect things of value and importance. This is not limited to objects of monetary worth, but may include anything a Dragon places value on, or anything a Dragon is aware that someone else places value on. This can even be conceptual things, such as a friend's feelings, the happiness of others, or the safety of a love interest. Because of this, Dragons (especially those exposed to a group which reinforces moral behavior) can be among the most powerful and staunch allies to their friends and community.

On the other hand, a Dragon struggles with taking this protective tendency too far, into the realm of becoming territorial or possessive. For example, a Dragon gains a new assistant for their job--one they feel is important; the Dragon may become territorial over their job, viewing their new assistant as a threat and attempting to remove them. Or a Dragon gains the ability (or status) to accumulate objects of value; the Dragon may become possessive, trying to accumulate everything of value they can. It is important to note that a Dragon who 'hoards' in this way is not evil, but is being guided by a deep, instinctual desire to fulfill the role of a guardian to important things. Although they are taking it too far, the Dragon is attempting to protect and safeguard this perceived wealth.

Dragons are intrinsically magical creatures--just like ponies--though their magical nature is less immediately evident and overt; in many ways, they share traits with Pegasus Ponies and Unicorn Ponies more than Earth Ponies, though they can certainly identify with, and get along with, anypony. The key difference is that, while ponies tend to have magical connections to things, or may harness and wield magic, Dragons embody magic with their very existence. From their ability to breathe flame, to the development of their wings, to their magical growth in response to their hoarding nature, Dragons are living, breathing magical creatures.

Doing a Disservice to Dragons

The decision to include Dragons as playable races in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic - S2E was, we feel, a necessity. After 'Secret Of My Excess' and 'Dragon Quest,' we felt that enough information had been conveyed about Spike and his kin to justify creating a playable race out of them.

However, if the debates on Dragons which surrounded the episodes at the time are any indication, some players and game groups will undoubtedly feel that certain elements of Dragons should be done differently. We certainly acknowledge that we don't have a comprehensive explanation of Dragon lore, and that some of what we have come up with is our best interpretation and speculation--no matter how much we have attempted to stay true to canon and select insights from Lauren Faust.

For this reason, we designed the Dragon race to be as adaptable to house rules as possible. If you feel we got it right, you will find a fully-constructed Dragon race ready to play. However, if you feel we've done a disservice to Dragons, please feel free to modify them to suit your gaming group's preferences and convictions.

Mechanically, Dragons gain a +1 bonus to each of their Mind, Body, and Heart attributes, and their unique racial ability called “King of the Hoard.”



I am a big pony

The next step of character creation is to decide how old your character is, by choosing an age category. Often, the age of the characters will decide part of the tone of the story, as well as how it is approached by the game group. For example, a given situation might be handled differently by very young ponies than it would be by older and more experienced ponies. While it is usually best for all of the characters to be the same age category, it can sometimes be interesting and fun to vary the characters' ages somewhat. If this is done however, it is important to keep in mind that a character's age category determines, to a limited degree, how 'powerful' they are at the beginning of the story; varying the characters' age categories should be done carefully.

Just how old is Granny Smith?


While real-world comparisons to pony ages could be drawn in this section, and exact years of age could be assigned to each age range, it is important to note that characters in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* are not real-world horses, and so may not conform to real-world horse aging. As such, it is less precise, but overall better, to use broad age categories rather than exact years and dates.

Foals

Foals are ponies who have recently left their infancy stage and are beginning to explore the world. They are still considered youths, however, and follow many of the same rules as children. Foals attend school regularly, live with and are taken care of by a family member or other guardian, and typically (in the case of Pegasus and Unicorn Ponies) are not capable of utilizing their unique racial abilities--or at least not to their full extent. They do not support themselves by holding down a job, and are often not required to perform any jobs or tasks for their community. It is during their Foal stage of growth and development that a pony typically figures out their Special Purpose and thus gains their Cutie Mark.

It is important to note that Foals are not necessarily treated in exactly the same way that very young children are; in human terms they can range anywhere from elementary school to high school in their experience and social freedoms. It is not uncommon to see Foals out at recess or performing in a talent show during the school day, yet sometimes going out without parent or guardian supervision to a bowling alley. Likewise, sleepovers and tree-house fan clubs are not uncommon things for Foals to engage in, yet some Foals occasionally go into the Everfree Forest without supervision.

Because of these freedoms, it is not uncommon for Foals to have adventures together without the presence of older ponies to supervise, but these adventures tend to be of a smaller scale and a more limited scope. Where older ponies might go on an adventure to rescue a kidnapped friend or answer the summons of Princess Celestia, Foals might go on an adventure to find a missing chicken or gather what they need to put on a musical number for a talent show. Whatever their adventure, however, Foals tend to approach situations with a wide-eyed innocence and a sense of child-like wonder and enthusiasm which older ponies sometimes lack--and likewise, Foals tend to lack the experience and ability which older ponies have developed over time.



Mechanically, Foals have one attribute point to spend during character creation, the “Tireless” Talent (as a temporary Talent; see below), and the option to be a ‘Blank Flank’ instead of beginning play with a Special Purpose and Cutie Mark. In addition, Pegasus Pony and Unicorn Pony Foals may suffer diminished use of their unique racial abilities (or unique uses of their abilities), as detailed in the racial abilities section. Earth Pony Foals, whose age does not affect their unique racial abilities, gain 10 experience points to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements.

Foals gain the “Tireless” Talent as a bonus to represent the energy and exuberance most children display. However, this is not a permanent gain; many Foals who grow up lose their boundless youthful energy, and a few retain it into adulthood. To represent this, when a Foal character grows up into the Filly/Colt age category, they are faced with a choice; they may purchase the Tireless Talent for 5 experience points (a discount from its normal cost), or lose it. A character who took the Tireless Talent during character creation keeps it regardless of growing up, and if a character elects to lose it when growing up, they may always purchase it as normal later for its full experience point cost.

Examples of Foals include: *Apple Bloom, Scootaloo, Sweetie Belle, Silver Spoon, Diamond Tiara, Pip-squeak, Twist, Sunny Days, Peachy Pie, Snips, and Snails.*

Typically, stories featuring Foal characters tend to be low-powered, light-hearted, and are reminiscent of the fun and carefree episodes featuring the Cutie Mark Crusaders.

Fillies/Colts

Fillies (female) and Colts (male) are ponies who have left the Foal stage behind and have entered the beginnings of adulthood. While no longer considered youths, Fillies and Colts nevertheless occupy a unique place in Equestria society somewhere between childhood and full adulthood. It would perhaps be most accurate to say that Fillies and Colts represent the ‘young adulthood’ of the pony life cycle. Some Fillies and Colts live on their own in this stage of life, starting their own businesses, supporting themselves independently, or even going to work for someone else; however, others might still remain a student, or apprentice themselves to another pony.

Fillies and Colts almost universally hold down one sort of job or another, though these can vary wildly--from leading a town’s weather patrol, to running a farm, to being a baker’s apprentice. In this way, Fillies and Colts have ‘grown up’ beyond the Foal stage in terms of their responsibilities and day-to-day activities, but often retain elements of their childhood exuberance, curiosity, and wonder at the world. While some older ponies can tend to be pragmatic or lead simple lives, Fillies and Colts usually have an aspect of idealism and romanticism to them in approaching the world. In short, they are older in body--but still young at heart.

Their age brings a measure of experience which younger ponies lack, which makes Fillies and Colts more ‘powerful’ and capable overall than younger ponies. However, Fillies and Colts tend to still be somewhat diverse in their abilities and areas of skill, reflecting their tendency to experiment and try new things as they seek their place in Equestria. While they have found their Special Purpose and gained their Cutie Mark, the world does not automatically provide a place for Fillies and Colts to call home, or a way for them to express their passions and what makes them special. It is this experimentation and wandering, learning, growing, and ‘finding yourself’--at the young-adult level--which defines the unique stage of pony life which the Fillies and Colts age category embodies.

Mechanically, Fillies and Colts have two attribute points to spend during character creation, and gain 25 experience points to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements.

Earth Pony Fillies and Colts, however, gain 35 experience points (instead of 25) to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements.

Examples of Fillies and Colts include: *Trixie, Twilight Sparkle, Rainbow Dash, Applejack, Fluttershy, Rarity, Pinkie Pie, Derpy Hooves, Heartstrings, Golden Harvest, Roseluck, and Braeburn.*

Typically, stories featuring Fillies and Colts tend to be medium-powered, centering on self-discovery and learning, and are reminiscent of normal 'slice of life' episodes featuring the Mane Six.



Mares/Stallions

Mares (female) and Stallions (male) are ponies who have progressed beyond the Filly and Colt stage and have grown into full adulthood, both physically and in terms of their maturity and place in the world. While Mares and Stallions tend to be less energetic and idealistic than younger ponies, this is typically because they have moved beyond the 'experimentation' stage and have emerged with their goals and views on life refined by their experiences. It would be unfair to say that Mares and Stallions are 'boring' or are less 'fun' than younger ponies; they simply have finished their youth and now focus on their passions and interests with the steadfastness of maturity.

Mares and Stallions hold not only a job or vocation, but also tend to carry some measure of social status, even if it is only on a local or personal level. For example, while one stallion might be the most important pony in a major city, another might hold a minor but distinguished public office; one mare might be a beloved teacher in a small town, while another might sway the opinions of the celebrity elite. This reflects that Mares and Stallions tend to be recognized, on one level or another, by those around them as they have been making their mark on Equestria. A Mare or Stallion might not be an advisor to Princess Celestia herself, but it is a near-guarantee that somepony knows them.

Having lived and worked in Equestria well into their adult life, Mares and Stallions are more experienced and capable than younger ponies. They have had time to not only accomplish more over the course of their life, but also refine and focus their efforts. Because of this, it is unusual to find Mares or Stallions who dabble in a little bit of everything; most have found their preferred way to express and cultivate their Special Purpose, and have focused themselves to work toward bettering themselves in that area. While younger ponies tend to be more focused on growth and development, Mares and Stallions tend to focus more on the accomplishing of goals, making their mark on the world, and social issues.

Mechanically, Mares and Stallions have three attribute points to spend during character creation, and gain 50 experience points to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements. Earth Pony Mares and Stallions, however, gain 60 experience points (instead of 50) to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements. In addition, Mares and Stallions automatically begin play with the 'Toast of the Town' character advancement for free.

Examples of Mares and Stallions include: *Mr. Breezy, Mr. & Mrs. Cake, Zecora, Fancypants, Prince Blueblood, Big Macintosh, Hoity Toity, Cheerilee, Aunt & Uncle Orange, and Sheriff Silverstar.*

Typically, stories featuring Mares and Stallions tend to be high-powered, centering on accomplishing a task or goal, and are reminiscent of the two-part 'adventure' episodes dealing with serious issues.

Hatchlings

The best-known kind of dragon which has been encountered and is not already a massive size is Hatchlings, sometimes called “baby dragons.” This term, however, can be misleading; a Hatchling is fully capable of growing into a full-sized adult in a very short span of time by indulging in their possessive tendencies. The danger of doing so is that it can cause a Hatchling to spiral out of control and become a rampaging, feral monster; and a dragon who has grown in this way who then resists their tendencies and keeps them at bay reverts back into a Hatchling. A Hatchling is roughly equivalent to somewhere between a Foal and a Filly or Colt character, and is best suited to adventures with those age groups.

Locked away for a thousand years

Obviously, ponies age beyond full adulthood. Ponyville itself has a retirement home for aging ponies, and Equestria is ruled by a pair of princess sisters who have lived for over a millennium. However, ‘elderly’ ponies are generally best treated as they are in the show, being used as side characters and background cast--and as for truly ancient and seemingly immortal ponies, not enough is yet known about how they function to warrant creating a corresponding age category.

Mechanically, Hatchlings have two attribute points to spend during character creation, and gain 15 experience points to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements.


Examples of Baby Dragons include *Spike*, *Twilight Sparkle’s number one assistant*.

Drakes

Dragons who have reached their ‘teenage’ years are called Drakes. Drakes found in dragon society are typically brutish, cruel, uncivilized, and highly competitive, though certainly not all Drakes are alike. Physically, the Drake stage is when a dragon begins to truly mature and grow some of the signature features of dragons; most notably, their wings. While a Drake still runs the risk of greed-induced growth into a feral monstrous dragon, they also gain considerable power from their advancing age. A Drake is roughly equivalent to somewhere between a Filly or Colt and a Mare or Stallion character, and is best suited to adventures with those age groups.

Mechanically, Drakes have three attribute points to spend during character creation, gain a +1 bonus to their Body attribute, and gain 35 experience points to use at the end of character creation to purchase character advancements.





They all say that you will get your mark

Now that your character has their most basic information (breed and age) set, the next step in character creation is to develop their Special Purpose and Cutie Mark. A pony's Special Purpose is potentially their most powerful mechanical asset, reflecting that it is the central drive and core passion in a pony's life, as well as the area of ability in which they truly excel. From the moment they first discover it, a Special Purpose defines--and empowers--a pony in their efforts to shape the world around them. Mechanically, when a pony's Special Purpose applies to a task, they get half-again their roll result as a bonus. This is explained in more detail later.

A Special Purpose is often within a pony, waiting to be discovered, before it ever manifests itself as a Cutie Mark; young ponies usually find that their Special Purpose--once discovered--turns out to be related to something in which they already had exhibited a unique talent or special interest. Because of this, all ponies have skills and abilities which are largely in line with their Special Purpose; creating one for a character sets the tone and theme for that character and is the first major step in developing them and making them unique.

Dragons, on the other hand, do not have a Special Purpose or Cutie Mark; they instead gain a mechanic called 'Dragonheart,' which allows them to use their inborn, instinctive force of will as a source of power--but also as a risk factor, as letting that primal power build too high can cause a dragon to begin to grow into a monster.


Special Purposes

There is no set and exact formula for developing and defining a character's Special Purpose; they are just as diverse, and vary just as widely, as ponies themselves. However, there are a few guidelines which can assist with creating a character's Special Purpose. Often, no one guideline sets a pony's Special Purpose; usually it is a combination of how a few apply to them which provides the basis for their Special Purpose--though ponies can certainly embody a particular guideline almost exclusively. Thus, when creating a character, it is best to use these guidelines as a way of measuring the validity of a Special Purpose; the more appropriately (or abundantly) the guidelines apply, the more justified the Special Purpose. Of course, the GM has the final say on all characters' Special Purposes to ensure game balance, and should work with players to help develop ones which are unique.

All Special Purposes can be expressed comfortably in a single sentence beginning with "My Special Purpose is..." If a Special Purpose is too long to fit comfortably into this one sentence, it is likely too specific, or too complex; a Special Purpose is often simple and straightforward. For example, "...to find gems, make clothes, be beautiful and fabulous and refined, and run a successful boutique in Ponyville selling dresses" does not fit comfortably into the above sentence, and is an example of a Special Purpose which is far too complex and specific. Something like "...to bring out the beauty in the world" fits comfortably into the sentence and is thus a much better Special Purpose, as it is broad enough to apply to many specific things but is still narrow enough to relate to certain talents and areas of interest.


For a Special Purpose, as in many other things, it is best to keep it simple.

A pony's Special Purpose often relates to one or more of the following six dimensions of their character concept: their **Goals**, their **Passions**, their **Calling**, their **Convictions**, their **Heritage**, and/or their **Destiny**.



A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Goals** has an end result, or a logical conclusion, which the pony strives to accomplish. While a pony may never reach that conclusion within their lifetime, it remains as a well-defined end result to work toward. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To be the best flier in Equestria" relates to a pony's goals because it has a stated end result, and because it can be achieved through effort. Although it may never be done, it still forms the basis for the Special Purpose. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Rainbow Dash.

A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Passions** is very personal to them, and involves a deep need to express or embody an ideal or concept in their own unique way. It is usually artistic in nature, but doesn't need to be defined by any particular form of art. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To bring out the beauty in the world" relates to a pony's passions because it involves the expression of beauty as a personal ideal which is interpreted individually. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Rarity.



A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Calling** is often in service to others directly, and involves concepts of selflessness, compassion, and duty. While this lends itself to nurturing and caring for others, it can easily be more bold; as it relates to service and duty, a Canterlot Royal Guard is likely to embody this kind of Special Purpose as well. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To care for those in need" relates to a pony's calling because it is in service to others. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Fluttershy.

A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Convictions** has to do with how that particular pony thinks the world should be, in relation to how it currently is, and what can be done about it. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To bring joy to everypony" relates to a pony's convictions because it assumes that the world is currently not joyous enough, and that the pony should strive to change that by making others happy. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Pinkie Pie.

A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Heritage** involves not just their familial lineage, but also their traditions, their roots, and their responsibilities. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To run the family farm" relates to a pony's heritage because it assumes the mantle of tradition and responsibility according to their roots. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Applejack.

A Special Purpose which relates to a pony's **Destiny** is the hardest to define, but has to do with a pony's fate, their cognizance and faith in having a greater destiny, and factors which are largely out of the pony's control--but are tied into who they are at heart. Often, a Special Purpose which relates to a pony's destiny is unknown to the pony, or is at least nearly impossible for them to put into words, as it is more of a feeling than a statement and is generally only able to be defined in words when their life is looked at in retrospect. For example, a Special Purpose such as "To be a legendary magician" relates to a pony's destiny because much of it has to do with factors outside the pony's control, yet it is tied to the kind of pony they are at heart rather than guiding what they seek to accomplish, and is almost impossible for a pony to define as a statement until after the fact. The best embodiment of this dimension of a Special Purpose is Twilight Sparkle.

Mechanically, a Special Purpose allows a pony to shine when they are attempting to do things which are in line with it. Whenever a pony does something which is appropriate to their Special Purpose, they gain a bonus on the roll equal to one-half (rounded up) the number on the dice after it is rolled.



Cutie Marks

A Cutie Mark is a mark on the flanks of a pony which is always somehow indicative of a pony's Special Purpose, though the relation between them can be vague, symbolic, or even metaphorical. While there is no set formula for determining a Cutie Mark, as with the Special Purposes they represent, there are a few guidelines which can be helpful.

First, a Cutie Mark may relate to a pony's name in some way. For example, Applejack's Cutie Mark involves apples, and Rarity's Cutie Mark involves gems, which are rare. However, this is not a set-in-stone rule; Pinkie Pie's Cutie Mark does not appear to relate to her name more than that pies are sometimes found at parties. While names are important, a pony gets their name well before they discover their Special Purpose or Cutie Mark; the two may not correlate directly.

Second, a Cutie Mark may relate to a pony's personality in some way. For example, Fluttershy's Cutie Mark uses soft, shy pastel colors, and Rainbow Dash's Cutie Mark is very bold and prominent. While this relation may be subtle, it is usually always present to some degree.

Third, a Cutie Mark may relate to their unique method of fulfilling their Special Purpose. For example, Pinkie Pie's Cutie Mark indicates parties, which is her particular unique method of bringing joy and happiness to others and thus fulfilling her Special Purpose.

Finally, a Cutie Mark is often a play on words, or a clever symbol, rather than a direct and literal representation of their Special Purpose. For example, Rarity's Special Purpose is a trio of gemstones; gemstones are found within rocks, which symbolizes bringing out the beauty in things.

Blank Flanks

At various times when they are Foals, ponies discover their Special Purpose and develop their Cutie Mark. However, for a period of time before they do, a pony is a Blank Flank. Being a Blank Flank is an option for Foal characters, and is taken in lieu of having a Special Purpose and Cutie Mark. A Blank Flank has a few advantages over a pony with a Special Purpose, due to their lack of definition of that same Special Purpose. A Blank Flank might be good at anything, from being a famous scientist to an influential artist.

Mechanically, this is reflected by a special ability. Once per scene, a Blank Flank character may choose one roll and gain the normal bonus they would gain as if that roll were in line with their Special Purpose. This gives Blank Flank characters much more flexibility than a character with a Special Purpose.

However, being a Blank Flank is not a perpetual condition; eventually, everypony gets their Special Purpose and Cutie Mark. Each time a Blank Flank character succeeds at a roll in which




I'm gonna be a Blank Flank forever!

The mechanics for 'forcing' a Blank Flank character to eventually discover their Special Purpose and develop their Cutie Mark are intended to give a sense of verisimilitude to the growth and development of Foals, not to dictate the flow of a particular game or story.


During a game in which it is important that a Blank Flank character progress in a certain way (such as not earning their Cutie Mark until a particular point in the story, or remaining a Blank Flank throughout the story), game groups are encouraged to disregard the 'forced development' mechanics entirely.

For game groups who seek a more uncontrolled growth and development for their Blank Flank characters, however, these 'forced development' rules can be interesting and fun.



they used their special ability bonus as noted above, they earn one Crusade Point, and should note what the task was that they succeeded at (for later use, detailed below). Each time they fail at a roll in which they used their special ability bonus, however, they lose one Crusade Point. Once a Blank Flank character has earned ten (or more) Crusade Points, they must discover their Special Purpose and gain their Cutie Mark. However, each time they earn a Crusade Point, if their roll was a Critical Success, they immediately gain Crusade Points enough to reach ten—and must discover their Special Purpose and Cutie Mark accordingly.

When a Blank Flank is forced to discover their Special Purpose and gain their Cutie Mark in this way, their past actions should inform the nature of their Special Purpose. For example, a character who, as a Blank Flank, earned several Crusade Points by defending their friends from frightening monsters, might develop a Special Purpose according to that kind of behavior or tendencies.



At the GM's discretion, this forced development may be put off until the end of a play session or even the end of an Episode, but may not be put off any further than that. If the GM does put off this forced development, the character may continue to use their special ability bonus for being a Blank Flank until the GM decides they must fulfill this forced development; potentially earning further Crusade Points and thus further context to inform their Special Purpose once the character discovers it. However, after reaching ten Crusade Points, a character can no longer lose them; in essence, they cannot 'negate' their forced development by losing subsequent rolls while the development is being postponed.

Dragonheart

Dragons, the mysterious and powerful race of reptilian guardians, are known far and wide for their fire breath; but in truth, that is only an indication of their true power. Dragons have a fiery and passionate heart, which they can kindle in times of need to push themselves to heroic feats, or restore their strength of will. All dragons have this powerful will and strength of heart, but all too often it turns to pride, greed, and hatred. A dragon's greatest danger is from itself, as a dragon's heart is prone to greed—and once a dragon has started down the path of greed and selfishness, it is difficult to stop.


This is reflected by the dragon's equivalent of a Special Purpose, which also serves as its main weakness. On the one hand, a dragon can 'kindle' this instinctual strength to accomplish feats normally beyond them; but on the other hand, the bestial nature of this strength can serve as their undoing—causing them to become fiercely selfish more easily, growing in size and power, until they are unstoppable and entirely out of control. A dragon character thus must be aware of how powerful their instinctual will is in comparison with their conscious will; letting either fall out of balance can be dangerous.

Mechanically, a dragon character gains a pool of 'Dragonheart Points,' which they can either use to give themselves a temporary bonus to their rolls for the duration of a scene, or to restore lost Willpower. However, this pool of Dragonheart Points also serves as a measure of their instinctual will and power, and can cause them



Advanced Drama & Dragons

Playing a dragon takes more responsibility and maturity than playing a pony, as a dragon player is expected to accept and roleplay the greedy and instinctual nature of their character from time to time. As a dragon, sometimes you will have to play the 'bad guy.' If you are not willing and able to do this, or if your play group is not comfortable with having a dragon in their midst, it is best not to play a dragon.



to lose control over themselves as they give into their instinctual desire to hoard things of value; their tendency for greed.

During character creation, a dragon character gains a number of Dragonheart Points equal to their Heart attribute score. How these points are gained and used, as well as what bonuses and penalties they carry, is discussed in the following sections.

A Steady Diet To Make Growth Speed

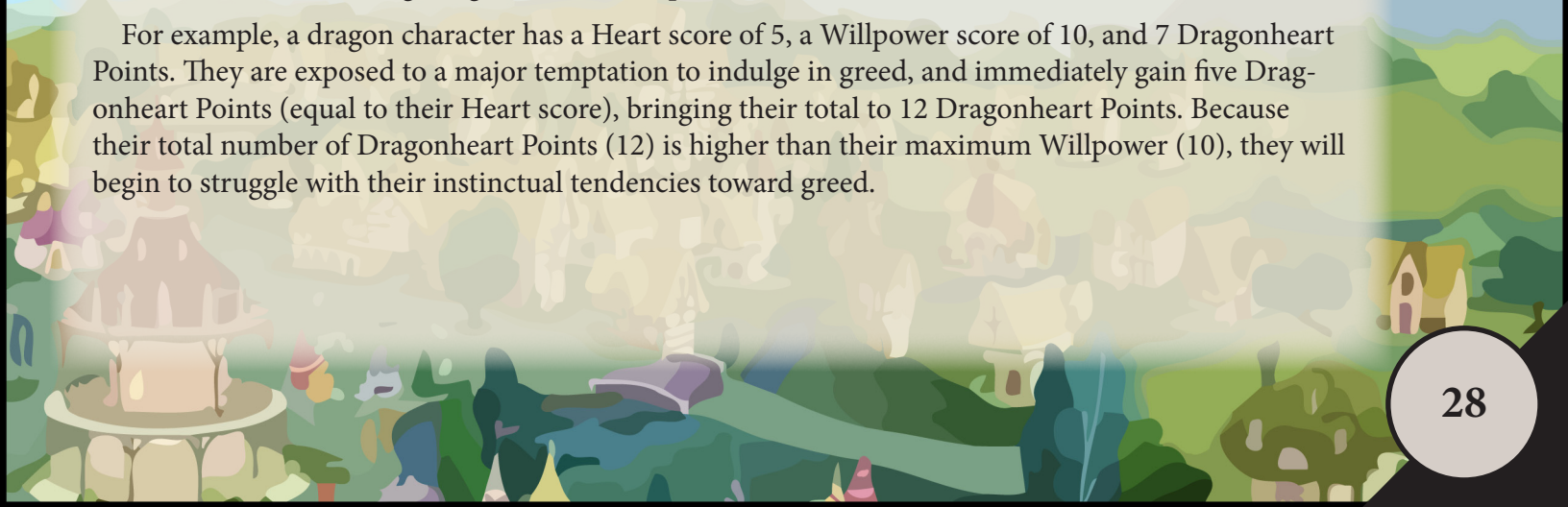
A dragon character gains Dragonheart Points in two ways: by spending experience points to gain them voluntarily, or by gaining them involuntarily when exposed to situations in which they are tempted to indulge their greedy heart. Having too many Dragonheart Points is dangerous, as it can cause a dragon character to start going out of control; however, having too few deprives a dragon character of their most powerful ability—their deep, inborn will and strength of heart.

Any time a dragon character could spend experience points to gain character advancements, they may choose to spend experience points to add Dragonheart Points to their pool. This reflects a dragon character who is getting in touch with their ‘inner dragon’ through self-discovery, reflection, and discipline. For each experience point spent, the dragon character gains a number of Dragonheart Points equal to their Heart attribute score. Unlike involuntary points gained from exposure to temptation, however, spending experience points to gain Dragonheart Points cannot increase a dragon character’s total number of Dragonheart Points above their maximum Willpower score. Any ‘extra’ Dragonheart Points which have been gained in this way instead become points of Willpower restored to the dragon character, up to their maximum. If they are already at their maximum Willpower, any extra points are simply lost.

For example, a dragon character has a Heart score of 4, a Willpower score of 8 (out of 10 maximum), and 7 Dragonheart Points. They choose to spend one experience point to add Dragonheart Points to their pool. They add four Dragonheart Points (equal to their Heart score) to their total, which would normally give them 11 Dragonheart Points total. However, as this voluntary gaining of points cannot increase them above their maximum Willpower (10), they instead have 10 Dragonheart Points (not 11), and the extra point becomes a point of restored Willpower—increasing their Willpower to 9 (out of 10 maximum). Thus, they end up with Heart 4, Willpower 9 (out of 10), and 10 Dragonheart Points.

When a dragon character is exposed to a major temptation to indulge in greed (as explained later), they gain a number of Dragonheart Points equal to their Heart attribute score. Unlike voluntarily gaining points, however, this involuntary increase can raise their total number of Dragonheart Points above their maximum Willpower—and it is then that a dragon begins to have trouble restraining their desire to hoard and indulge in greed (as also explained later).

For example, a dragon character has a Heart score of 5, a Willpower score of 10, and 7 Dragonheart Points. They are exposed to a major temptation to indulge in greed, and immediately gain five Dragonheart Points (equal to their Heart score), bringing their total to 12 Dragonheart Points. Because their total number of Dragonheart Points (12) is higher than their maximum Willpower (10), they will begin to struggle with their instinctual tendencies toward greed.



Kindling Dragonheart

There are two ways a dragon character can use their pool of Dragonheart Points to their benefit. The first is by 'kindling' their instinctual will and power, spending Dragonheart Points to gain a bonus to all of their rolls for the duration of a scene. This allows a dragon character to go into a 'heroic' state, accomplishing difficult and dangerous tasks they would normally be unable to perform. Kindling their abilities in this way is taxing on a dragon's will, requiring a conscious and focused decision to harness their inner power. For this reason, this ability may only be used once per play session.

To 'kindle' their ability in this way, a dragon character first spends a point of Willpower. This point of Willpower does not convey its normal bonus; it is simply the cost to use their ability, reflecting the focused act of will it takes to tap into their instinctual power. Once the point of Willpower is spent, the dragon character may choose to 'kindle' a number of Dragonheart Points up to their maximum Willpower. Each Dragonheart Point 'kindled' in this way is lost, and the dragon character gains a bonus to all rolls for the duration of the scene equal to the total number of Dragonheart Points 'kindled.'

For example, a dragon character has a Willpower score of 8 (out of 10), and 6 Dragonheart Points. To use their ability, they spend one point of Willpower (reducing them to 7 out of 10), and choose to 'kindle' four Dragonheart Points. This reduces their total number of Dragonheart Points to 2 (their previous total of 6, minus the 4 spent), and gives them a +4 bonus (equal to the number of Dragonheart Points 'kindled') to all rolls until the end of the scene. Once they do this, however, they may not use this ability again until the next play session.

Stoking the Flames

In addition to using their instinctual will and strength of heart to empower their actions, a dragon character can harness their inner power to bolster and restore their conscious will. This reflects a dragon character making peace with their 'inner dragon,' reconciling their bestial and instinctual will with their conscious self. In effect, they subsume their instinctual will to restore their conscious focus. This is costly, as it suppresses their instinctual power, but can serve a valuable purpose in maintaining their control and focus.

To subsume their instinctual power and restore their conscious will, a character may, once per play session, choose to 'sacrifice' a number of Dragonheart Points to restore their Willpower. Each Dragonheart Point sacrificed in this way is lost, and restores one point of Willpower (up to the character's maximum). However, the instinctual will of a dragon can never be entirely suppressed; a character cannot use this sacrificing of points to reduce





their total number of Dragonheart Points below the number of their Heart attribute score.

For example, a dragon character has a Heart score of 5, a Willpower score of 4 (out of 10), and 8 Dragonheart Points. Once per play session, they may choose to sacrifice Dragonheart Points to restore their Willpower. They can sacrifice up to three Dragonheart Points (lowering their total from 8 to 5, but no further, as their Heart score is 5), restoring three points of Willpower (bringing them from 4 to 7 out of 10). Once they do this, however, they may not use this ability again until the next play session.

Then, the Resulting Bigger Size

A dragon must always keep their instinctual nature in check; it is all too easy for them to succumb to greed and become a monster if their deeper instincts gain the upper hand over their conscious will. This is reflected by a dragon character's number of Dragonheart Points, as it compares to their maximum Willpower. For as long as a dragon character keeps their Dragonheart Points equal to, or less than, their maximum Willpower, they retain full control over themselves. It is when their Dragonheart Points are above their maximum Willpower that they risk their instinctual nature taking over.

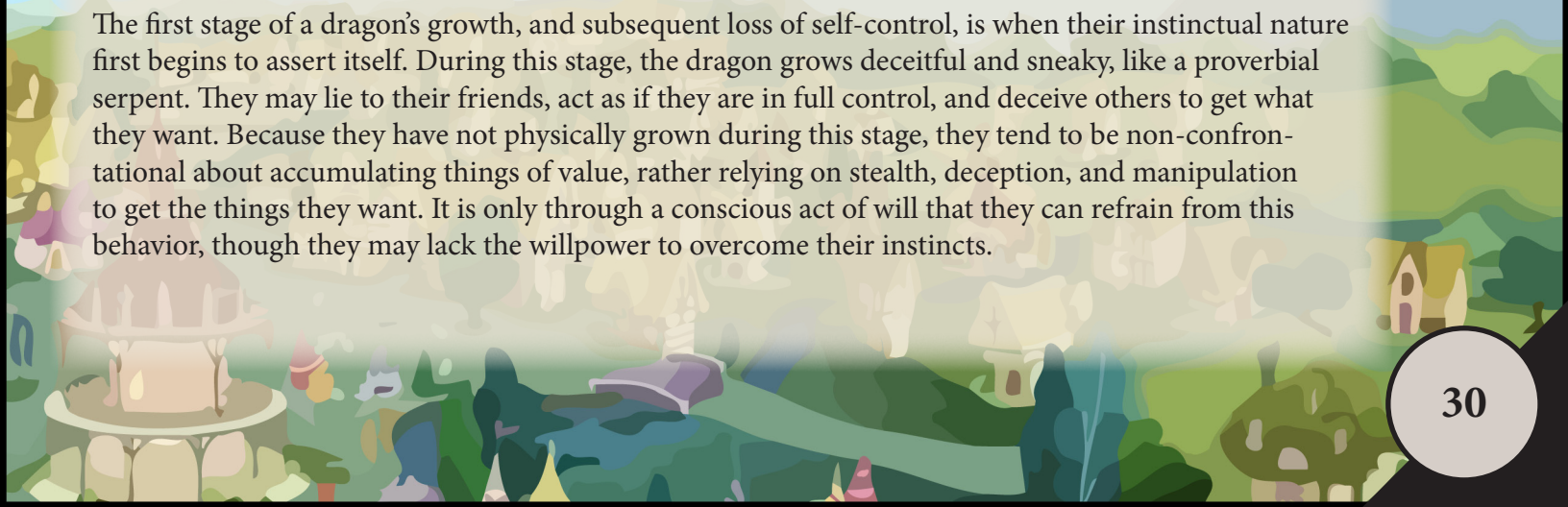
The difficulty with giving in to their instinctual power is that, the stronger it grows, the more powerful the dragon grows; if caught early, a dragon losing control can be captured and restrained—but a fully grown dragon is almost impossible to defeat for all but the most powerful characters in Equestria. Thus, a dragon losing control over their inner power might be thought of as a snowball rolling down a hill—easily caught early on, but unstoppable once it has grown too large.


Whenever a dragon character is exposed to a situation in which they are tempted to indulge in hoarding, greed, and selfishness, they gain a number of Dragonheart Points equal to their Heart score. In this way, a dragon's passion and will can work against itself. When exactly a tempting situation arises is up to the GM, though a player whose character encounters a situation in which they would be tempted is encouraged to bring it to the attention of the GM, and let the GM decide if the situation warrants adding Dragonheart Points to their total. Once a dragon character's total number of Dragonheart Points is higher than their maximum Willpower, they may begin giving in to their instinctual nature.

A dragon character goes through five 'stages' of giving in to their instinctual nature, from the initial awakening of their greedy heart, through their growth and increase in power as well as aggressiveness, finally to the point where they lose control of themselves and become the frightening monster most dragons are thought to be. Each of these five stages is explained in the following sections, including how they are encountered, what effects they have on the character, and how they can be reversed.


Stage One: What's Happening To Me?

The first stage of a dragon's growth, and subsequent loss of self-control, is when their instinctual nature first begins to assert itself. During this stage, the dragon grows deceitful and sneaky, like a proverbial serpent. They may lie to their friends, act as if they are in full control, and deceive others to get what they want. Because they have not physically grown during this stage, they tend to be non-confrontational about accumulating things of value, rather relying on stealth, deception, and manipulation to get the things they want. It is only through a conscious act of will that they can refrain from this behavior, though they may lack the willpower to overcome their instincts.





When a dragon character's number of Dragonheart Points first exceeds their maximum Willpower, they enter Stage One. A dragon character's player should let the GM know that they have entered Stage One, but if possible, should not let the rest of the play group know. It is not disastrous for the rest of the players to know, but the dramatic narrative of a dragon beginning to lose control can be more fun for the group as a whole if the players must discover it has happened as well. While in Stage One, a dragon character should change their behavior slightly, trying to accumulate things of value without drawing attention to themselves by doing so. If the player does not follow this guideline, however, the GM may take temporary control of their character from time to time to make the character do so.



A dragon character may attempt to avoid Stage One by focusing their will against their instinctual nature. This is done by spending Willpower points. For each point of Willpower spent to fight back their greed, the character's number of Dragonheart Points is reduced by one. If this reduces their total to equal to or below their maximum Willpower, they return to normal (returning to normal is covered in more detail later).

A dragon character rarely lasts in Stage One for long. Each time a dragon character in Stage One succeeds at acquiring something of value and secreting it away, they gain an additional Dragonheart Point. They no longer gain Dragonheart Points through temptation; once their instinctual nature has begun to take over, they only gain Dragonheart Points through acquisition of valuable things. What constitutes a valuable thing to the character, however, is up to the player and the GM to decide.


Once they have a number of Dragonheart Points higher than their maximum Willpower plus their Heart attribute score, the dragon character progresses to Stage Two. Because this can be a very narrow window of time, it is the best time to catch and prevent further progress, before the cost and difficulty of doing so becomes too high.

For example, a dragon character has a Heart score of 4, a Willpower score of 2 (out of 10), and 9 Dragonheart Points. Upon being tempted to give in to greed, the GM gives them four additional Dragonheart Points (equal to their Heart score), bringing their total to 13; because this is higher than their maximum Willpower (10), they enter Stage One. While in this stage, they can spend Willpower to reduce their number of Dragonheart Points, and they must attempt to secretly acquire things of value, increasing their number of Dragonheart Points. If their number of Dragonheart Points is reduced to 10 or less (equal to or less than their maximum Willpower), they return to normal. However, if their number of Dragonheart points exceeds 14 (their maximum Willpower plus their Heart score, or 10 plus 4), they progress to Stage Two.



I Don't Want to be a Bad Dragon!

By and large, Stage One is the most casual aspect of dragon growth and loss of control. It is primarily in the player's hands as to how the character goes about showing their more greedy side and sneakily acquiring things of value. However, some players don't want to play this aspect of a dragon. It is important to realize that playing a dragon carries with it the responsibility to show this side of their character. If you are not prepared to do so, it is best not to play a dragon in the first place.





Stage Two: Beginning to Mature

Upon reaching Stage Two, a dragon character no longer actively fights their nature. They grow, physically, enough to not need to be quite as sneaky as they were before, but are not yet a rampaging monster taking everything in sight. A dragon in Stage Two will still cooperate with their friends, but tend to be a bit erratic in their behavior when things of value can be acquired. They might steal from friends, justifying that their friend 'really doesn't need this anyway,' or might choose to acquire something valuable rather than help their friends with the task at hand. However, the accumulation of valuable things is now less important to the character than is the coveting of, or desire for, valuable things.

A dragon character in Stage Two grows to roughly the size of a Mare or Stallion, and gains a bonus to their Body score equal to half of their normal Body score (rounded up), to reflect their newfound strength and physical ability. The bonuses for growth should be tracked independently of a character's base Body score, as they do not increase the associated secondary attributes (Energy, Fortitude, and Willpower), and they lose the bonuses upon returning to normal.

While in Stage Two, a dragon character should become a bit more confrontational about acquiring valuable things, but should not seek to harm their friends directly. While a Stage Two dragon might steal from a friend behind their back and justify it that it was something the friend wouldn't miss, they would not try to fight that friend for it directly; while they might neglect to help a friend who is fending off a monster in order to dig up a gemstone, they would not lead their friend into danger intentionally to get them out of the way.

In Stage Two, whenever a dragon character acquires something of value, they gain two Dragonheart Points; however, they gain one Dragonheart Point even if they fail to acquire it, reflecting their covetous side coming out. Like Stage One, they may spend Willpower to reduce their number of Dragonheart Points. If their number of Dragonheart Points is reduced below the necessary amount for them to have progressed to Stage Two in the first place, they immediately return to normal (returning to normal is explained in more detail later). However, if their number of Dragonheart Points exceeds double their maximum Willpower plus their Heart attribute score, they progress to Stage Three.


For example, a Stage Two dragon character with a Heart score of 5 and a maximum Willpower of 10 returns to normal if their Dragonheart Point total reaches 15 or less (being the threshold between Stage One and Stage Two), and progresses to Stage Three if it exceeds 25 (reaching 26 or more).

Stage Three: Running Wild

Upon reaching Stage Three, a dragon character begins to rampage. This means that the player is no longer always in control of their character;


Isn't this too easy?

It may seem like it is easy for a dragon character to return to normal from Stage One and Stage Two, using their racial abilities to 'bleed off' excess Dragonheart Points, and spending Willpower to do so as well. This is intended to give dragon players a way to counteract their character's dangerous growth before things get out of hand, and so is intended to be somewhat 'easy.' However, it is important to note that, beyond Stage Two, it becomes much more difficult for a dragon character to reign themselves in, and that returning to normal is very taxing for a dragon. In short, while the first two stages are the 'easiest' to recover from, they are not without cost; and further stages of growth are much more dangerous to the dragon.



the GM takes over the majority of control, and the player may sometimes regain it. This is the primary danger of Stage Three; the loss of control of the dragon. Dragons in Stage Three are likely to do anything—from attacking friends to doing considerable property damage—in order to acquire things of value.

A dragon character in Stage Three grows to roughly three times the size of a Mare or Stallion, and gains a bonus to their Body score equal to three times their normal Body score, to reflect their newfound strength and physical ability. This bonus does not stack with the bonus from Stage Two; it replaces it. The bonuses for growth should be tracked independently of a character's base Body score, as they do not increase the associated secondary attributes (Energy, Fortitude, and Willpower), and they lose the bonuses upon returning to normal.




A dragon character in Stage Three is not controlled by their player, but rather by the GM; however, they may spend a point of Willpower to regain control over themselves for a single action. This allows the character's player to use their character's increased power to do something good in the midst of their rampage; regaining control like this is often portrayed as a temporary 'change of heart.' Once a dragon character runs out of Willpower in Stage Three, however, they do not become sidelined as normal; instead, their Willpower is treated as being at one point, and they may not 'regain control' using it for the rest of Stage Three.

A Stage Three dragon is beyond the ability to fight off their own instinctual nature through an act of will; they must be brought down and stopped by others. A dragon character in Stage Three must be sidelined by other characters to be stopped. Once they have been stopped, however, they immediately return to normal.

During Stage Three, a dragon character no longer tracks their growth through Dragonheart Points; the GM decides if, how, and when they proceed to Stage Four.

Stage Four: Greedy Old Thing

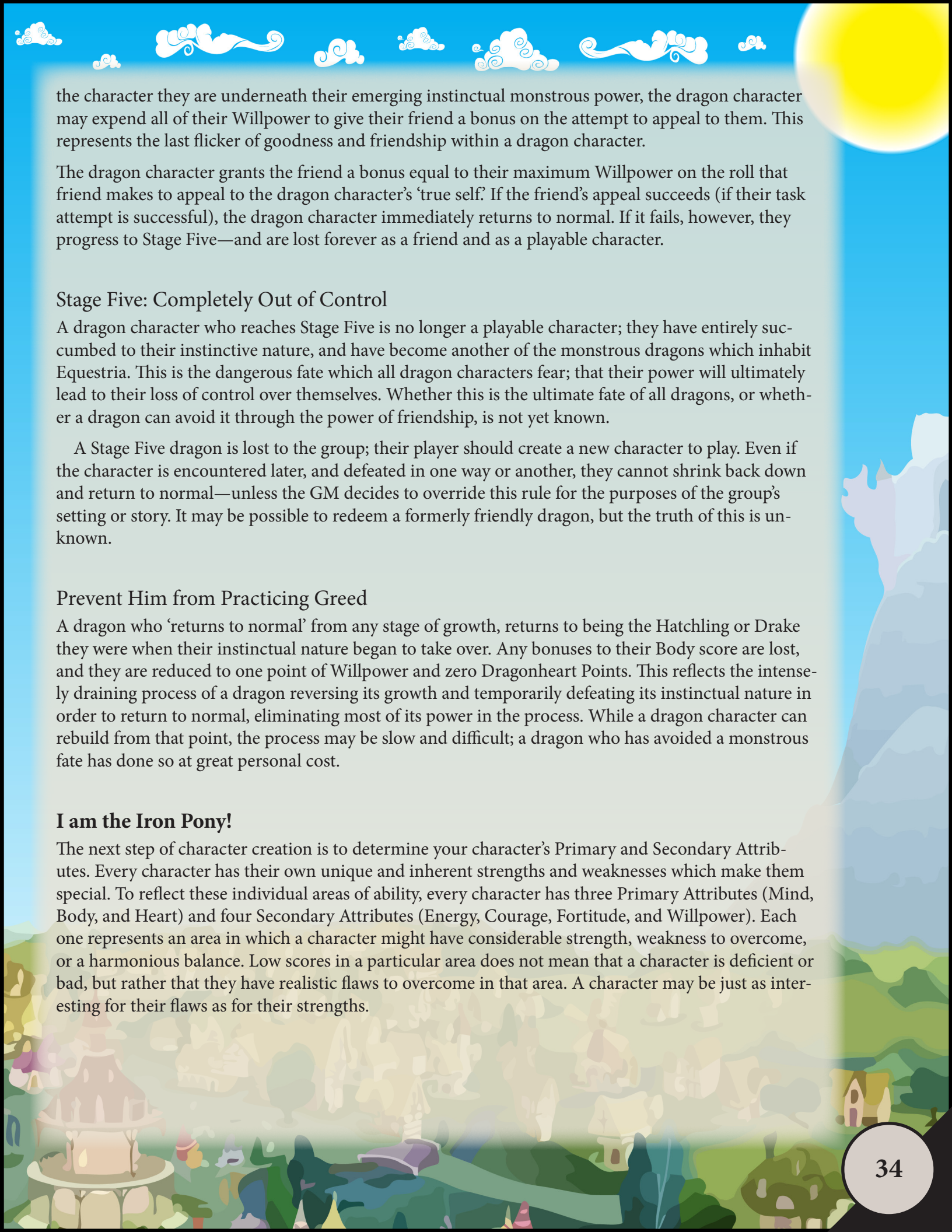
Upon reaching Stage Four, a dragon character is on their 'last legs' before completely being lost to their monstrous growth and bestial instincts. A Stage Four dragon is what most picture as the image of a dragon; a massive reptilian monster terrorizing the countryside, building a horde and guarding it fiercely. What separates a Stage Four dragon from one which is completely out of control, is that a Stage Four dragon might still return to normal—though the chances are very slim.



During Stage Four, a dragon character's attribute bonuses are no longer tracked; they are a narrative character under the control of the GM, for all intents and purposes. The one exception is that a Stage Four dragon has one final chance to return to normal before they are lost forever to their instinctual nature. One time during Stage Four, when presented with the unique opportunity for a friend to appeal to their 'true self,' or

Redeemed Dragons

There are no rules for redeemed dragons, because it is unknown what happens to a dragon who has been 'redeemed' in their fully-grown state. Do they return to their Hatchling or Drake size, or do they simply regain control of themselves in their new and massive form? Because there is no conclusive canonical information on dragon redemption, if your game group decides to pursue it as a storyline, there are no official guidelines (yet) in MLP:RiM to help you; you're on your own.



the character they are underneath their emerging instinctual monstrous power, the dragon character may expend all of their Willpower to give their friend a bonus on the attempt to appeal to them. This represents the last flicker of goodness and friendship within a dragon character.

The dragon character grants the friend a bonus equal to their maximum Willpower on the roll that friend makes to appeal to the dragon character's 'true self'. If the friend's appeal succeeds (if their task attempt is successful), the dragon character immediately returns to normal. If it fails, however, they progress to Stage Five—and are lost forever as a friend and as a playable character.

Stage Five: Completely Out of Control

A dragon character who reaches Stage Five is no longer a playable character; they have entirely succumbed to their instinctive nature, and have become another of the monstrous dragons which inhabit Equestria. This is the dangerous fate which all dragon characters fear; that their power will ultimately lead to their loss of control over themselves. Whether this is the ultimate fate of all dragons, or whether a dragon can avoid it through the power of friendship, is not yet known.

A Stage Five dragon is lost to the group; their player should create a new character to play. Even if the character is encountered later, and defeated in one way or another, they cannot shrink back down and return to normal—unless the GM decides to override this rule for the purposes of the group's setting or story. It may be possible to redeem a formerly friendly dragon, but the truth of this is unknown.

Prevent Him from Practicing Greed

A dragon who 'returns to normal' from any stage of growth, returns to being the Hatchling or Drake they were when their instinctual nature began to take over. Any bonuses to their Body score are lost, and they are reduced to one point of Willpower and zero Dragonheart Points. This reflects the intensely draining process of a dragon reversing its growth and temporarily defeating its instinctual nature in order to return to normal, eliminating most of its power in the process. While a dragon character can rebuild from that point, the process may be slow and difficult; a dragon who has avoided a monstrous fate has done so at great personal cost.

I am the Iron Pony!

The next step of character creation is to determine your character's Primary and Secondary Attributes. Every character has their own unique and inherent strengths and weaknesses which make them special. To reflect these individual areas of ability, every character has three Primary Attributes (Mind, Body, and Heart) and four Secondary Attributes (Energy, Courage, Fortitude, and Willpower). Each one represents an area in which a character might have considerable strength, weakness to overcome, or a harmonious balance. Low scores in a particular area does not mean that a character is deficient or bad, but rather that they have realistic flaws to overcome in that area. A character may be just as interesting for their flaws as for their strengths.

Primary Attributes

Primary Attributes are the three main categories of a character's inborn, inherent ability. Everything from their physical strength and grace of movement, to their intellect and artistic creativity, to their willpower and compassion for others is based upon the three Primary Attributes of Mind, Body, and Heart. These Primary Attributes do not reflect job training or skill levels, but rather the character's natural level of ability.

Mechanically, all Primary Attributes begin at 1, and increase based on bonuses from a character's race, as well as Attribute Points spent during character creation (each Attribute Point increases a Primary Attribute by one point), and increases due to advancements purchased with experience points. Whenever a character attempts a task, they work with the GM to decide which Primary Attribute (or two) the task is governed by; this forms the basis for calculating the success or failure of the task.

Mind

The Mind attribute represents many overall things about a character. First, it represents their intellect, reasoning, problem-solving ability, and logic; their analytical ability. Second, it represents their memory and knowledge; how much they can remember, and how much sheer information they have access to. Third, it represents their perception and senses; how well they see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and notice about those senses. Finally, it represents their artistic ability and creativity, as well as their adaptability and versatility.

Characters with a high Mind score tend to be all-around clever, intellectual, creative, and perceptive characters. They approach situations intelligently and rationally, and notice things others do not. They are likely to find solutions no one else has thought of, and remember important facts no one else did. They are often natural leaders, but can also be some of the best advisors and educational characters in any group of friends.

Body

The Body attribute also represents several general aspects of a character. First, it represents their physical, muscular strength and power. Second, it represents their toughness, stamina, and ability to resist injury and fatigue. Third, it represents their speed, quickness, and reaction time; their overall swiftness. Finally, it represents their agility, dexterity, flexibility, and bodily coordination; their ability to maneuver and move gracefully.

Characters with a high Body score tend to be stout, strong, athletic, and fast characters. They approach situations with a mentality of being ready for hard work, and are undaunted by difficulty. They are likely to succeed in



a clinch, and can usually be depended upon to accomplish any task set before them. They are often the go-to characters in many situations, and can be some of the most relied-upon characters in any group of friends.

Heart

The Heart attribute, like the others, represents a few broad aspects of a character. First, it represents their charm and force of presence; their charisma and bearing. Second, it represents their sensitivity, empathy, compassion, and care; their ability to connect with other creatures. Third, it represents their willpower and determination; the force of their spirit. Finally, it represents their vitality and vigor; their inclination to be energetic and their 'get-up-and-go.'

Characters with a high Heart score tend to be strong-willed, compassionate, charismatic characters. They approach situations from their own perspective, and often help avert disaster with their personalities. They are likely to make friends and allies with the most unexpected creatures and characters. They are often supporting characters in most situations, though when they see what must be done, they can become a rallying force in any group of friends.



Secondary Attributes

Secondary Attributes are the main assets a character has to face difficult or dangerous situations, and to push themselves to new heights when they need to. Everything from a character's steadfastness in the face of adversity, to their determination to try harder than ever before, is based upon the four Secondary Attributes of Energy, Courage, Fortitude, and Willpower. Unlike Primary Attributes, Secondary Attributes are not determined by racial bonuses or spending points, but rather by adding together two or more Primary Attributes. Characters may lose points in these Secondary Attributes in a number of ways, and if a character reaches zero in any Secondary Attribute, they may become 'Sidelined' (explained later).

Mechanically, whenever a character is exposed to a situation or effect which is hazardous to them, they must make a roll using either Energy, Courage, or Fortitude as a bonus. Succeeding at the roll means that the character has resisted the worst of the harm; failure means that they have not, and causes them to lose points in one of those categories. Willpower, however, functions as a pool of points a character may spend voluntarily to 'try harder' at a task, gaining a significant bonus to their roll at the expense of a Willpower point.

Energy

The Energy attribute represents a character's resistance to fatigue; it is their stamina and vigor. Whenever a character is exposed to a draining situation or hazard, such as thirst or starvation, exhaustion, or even being turned to stone or magically made drowsy, they may lose Energy.

A character regains Energy by resting, eating, drinking, or other means which fight off fatigue. A character's maximum Energy is determined by adding their Mind and Body attributes together, and increases when they are increased.

Courage

The Courage attribute represents a character's resistance to intimidation; it is their stoutheartedness and bravery. Whenever a character is exposed to a frightening or intimidating situation or hazard, such as facing the fearsome roar of a deadly beast or being publicly humiliated, they may lose Courage.

A character regains Courage by triumphing over adversity, being encouraged by friends, being safe and secure, or other means which lift their spirits. A character's maximum Courage is determined by adding their Mind and Heart attributes together, and increases when they are increased.

Fortitude

The Fortitude attribute represents a character's resistance to injury; it is their health and wellness. Whenever a character is exposed to a physically harmful situation or hazard, such as being wounded, exposed to an illness, or even poisoned, they may lose Fortitude.

A character regains Fortitude by being given proper medical care, taking a restorative potion, healing naturally, or other means which rejuvenate the body. A character's maximum Fortitude is determined by adding their Body and Heart attributes together, and increases when they are increased.

Willpower

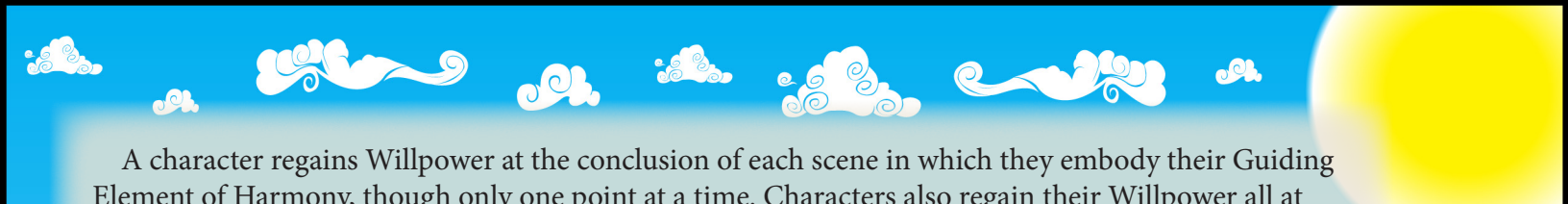
The Willpower attribute represents a character's ability to push themselves temporarily to new and greater heights of ability; it is their determination to try harder at the task at hand. Whenever a character makes a roll, whether by attempting a task or by being forced to react, they may choose to spend a point of Willpower to gain a significant bonus to that roll, at the expense of the point of Willpower.

In addition, Unicorn Ponies may 'risk' Willpower by casting certain spells and using magic in certain ways, and Dragons may use their racial ability to gain bonuses by spending Willpower, as well as restore their own Willpower.

Hit Points, Schmidt Points

Players who are used to game systems involving Hit Points as the primary method of governing whether a character is 'up' or 'downed' may have some initial difficulty with the method employed in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic - S2E. To help understand the system, think of it like this:

Your character has four pools of 'hit points,' some of which also act as their defenses, some of which may be spent to help you accomplish difficult tasks. Running out of any one category of points causes your character to be 'downed.' Damage and healing, thus, are tracked per each individual category.



A character regains Willpower at the conclusion of each scene in which they embody their Guiding Element of Harmony, though only one point at a time. Characters also regain their Willpower all at once at the conclusion of an Episode. A character's maximum Willpower is determined by adding their Mind, Body, and Heart attributes together, and increases when they are increased.

It just comes naturally

After determining your Primary and Secondary Attributes, the next step of character creation is to choose your character's Talents. If Primary Attributes represent your character's overall level of ability in certain broad categories, Talents represent the specific areas in which your character has outstanding ability, or ability which their attribute score would not normally indicate.

For example, a character might have a high Body attribute and the 'Strong' Talent, representing that even though they are all-around athletic and in good physical condition, they are also physically stronger than their Body score would normally indicate. Or, a character might have a low Heart attribute and the 'Sensitive' Talent, representing that even though they don't have much willpower or charisma, they still have a strong sense of compassion and empathy.

Mechanically, whenever a Talent reasonably applies to a task or a roll, the character may make a second roll of the dice and take the better of the two results as their dice roll for the purposes of determining the success or failure of the roll or task. Multiple applicable Talents do not grant additional 're-rolls;' only one extra roll of the dice may be granted per attempt. Characters gain their choice of any two of the following Talents during character creation:

Strong

The Strong Talent indicates outstanding physical force and muscular power. A character who has the Strong Talent might be particularly more brawny than their build would normally be, or might have an unexpected hidden strength.

Tough

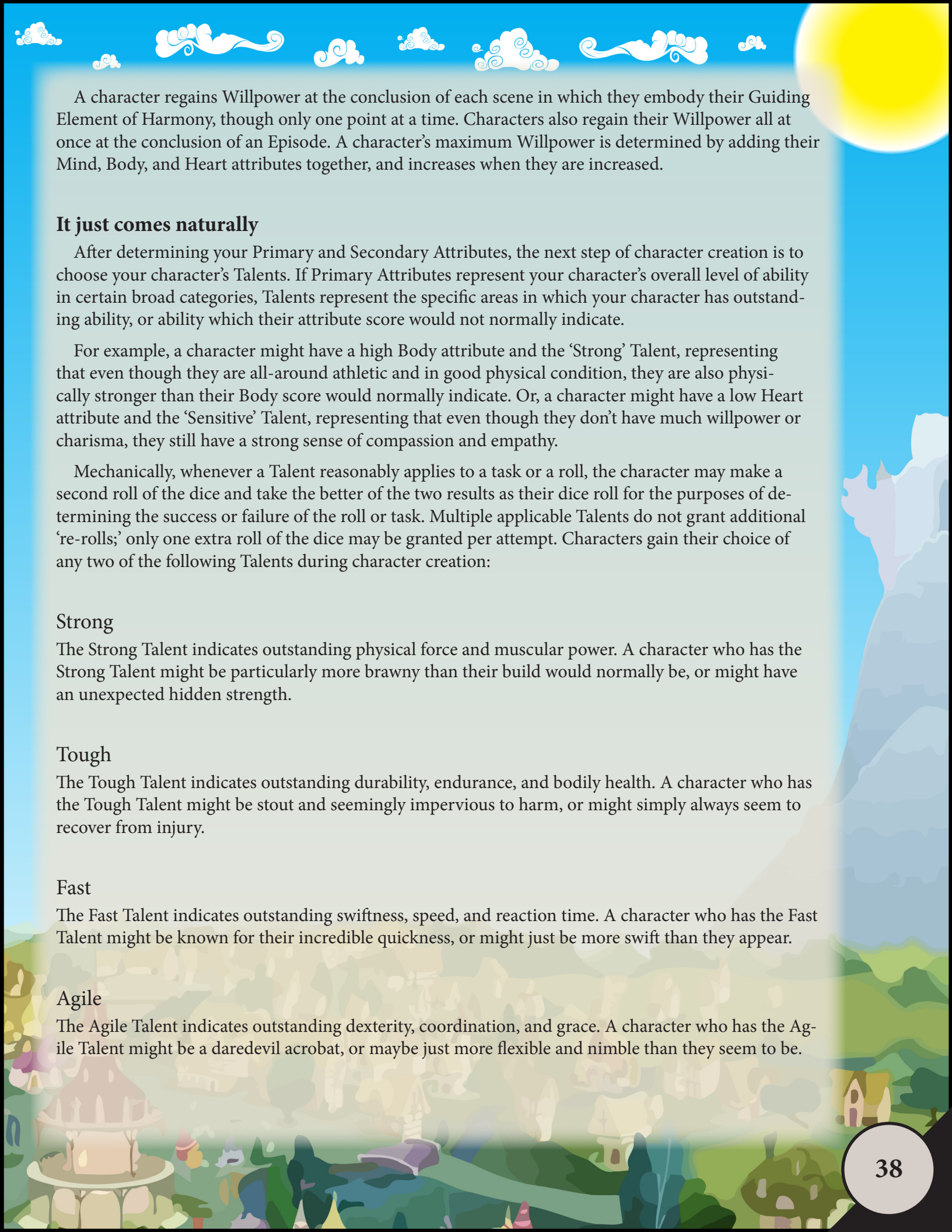
The Tough Talent indicates outstanding durability, endurance, and bodily health. A character who has the Tough Talent might be stout and seemingly impervious to harm, or might simply always seem to recover from injury.

Fast

The Fast Talent indicates outstanding swiftness, speed, and reaction time. A character who has the Fast Talent might be known for their incredible quickness, or might just be more swift than they appear.

Agile

The Agile Talent indicates outstanding dexterity, coordination, and grace. A character who has the Agile Talent might be a daredevil acrobat, or maybe just more flexible and nimble than they seem to be.



Wary

The Wary Talent indicates outstanding awareness, perception, and readiness. A character who has the Wary Talent might always be on edge and aware of what is going on around them, or might be simply more perceptive than normal.

Smart

The Smart Talent indicates outstanding intellect, memory, and reasoning power. A character who has the Smart Talent might be truly brilliant or a genius, or might just be more knowledgeable than the average pony.

Adaptable

The Adaptable Talent indicates outstanding versatility, improvisation, and quick thinking. A character with the Adaptable Talent might be a master of making the best of a situation, or might simply be a bit more versatile than average.

Creative

The Creative Talent indicates outstanding ingenuity, unique style, and artistic ability. A character with the Creative Talent might have a truly unique and revolutionary artistic flair, or might be more of a 'diamond in the rough' with hidden style.

Charismatic

The Charismatic Talent indicates outstanding influence, force of presence, and majesty. A character with the Charismatic Talent might be majestic and possessed of a powerful force of presence, or might simply be a convincing and influential speaker.

Sensitive

The Sensitive Talent indicates outstanding compassion, empathy, and insight. A character with the Sensitive Talent might be able to tell at a glance how someone feels and what is on their mind, or they might have a 'sixth sense' about when something is wrong.

A Pony with class

There are no character classes to choose from in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, and because of the open-ended nature of character creation, it can be difficult for players who are used to class-based character creation to adapt.

Players who experience this difficulty could help themselves by considering the selection of their character's Jobs and Skills to be much like building a custom character class which is specifically tweaked to fit their character.





Willful

The Willful Talent indicates outstanding determination, mental fortitude, and boldness. A character with the Willful Talent might be an indomitable and bold individualist who faces down danger without fear, or might simply show impressive courage from time to time.

Tireless

The Tireless Talent indicates outstanding vigor, vitality, and energetic essence. A character with the Tireless Talent might be an exuberant and inexhaustible ball of energy, or simply a 'night owl' who never seems to need much sleep.

What does everypony do?

After determining your character's Attributes and Talents, the next step of character creation is to define their Jobs and Skills. Jobs and Skills are one of the ways in which a character becomes unique from other characters who might be similar—or identical—in terms of their basic concept. Where Attributes represent a character's natural inborn abilities and strengths, and Talents represent a character's areas of outstanding or surprising ability, Jobs and Skills represent a character's areas of training and practice.

When defining your character's Jobs and Skills, consider their background up until the current time in your group's game. What have they done? What have they learned? Where have they been? Who have they known? What challenges have they overcome? All of these questions can help to inform what areas of your character are suitable for development through Jobs and Skills.

Jobs

A Job is a character's profession. It is a broad area of training and education that a character knows and is able to practice reliably in a variety of ways. Everypony has a Job, representing that characters in Equestria all have some function to perform or role to play in the world—and some industrious characters may even have multiple Jobs. Perhaps your character is a performer, or a farmer. Maybe they help make the weather, or teach children. They might even be a gourmet chef, or a sturdy royal guard. Whatever their exact profession, this core social function is likely to be their Job.

Mechanically, Jobs are broad areas of training which can provide a bonus to rolls a character makes. Any time a character attempts a task which a Job applies to, they gain a bonus to the roll equal to the Level of the Job. Multiple applicable Jobs do not stack; the applicable Job with the highest Level is the one which grants the bonus. Jobs can stack with Skills, however, and vice-versa.


During character creation, a character gains one 'Job Point' to spend. A Job Point can be spent to either create a new Job that character has access to (Jobs are created at Level 1), or increase the Level of one of their existing Jobs by one. The exception to this rule is that Earth Pony characters gain two Job Points (instead of one) during character creation.



Creating a Job

Instead of choosing Jobs from a list, players in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic work with their GM to create and define their character's Jobs. This allows a level of nuance and flavor which might otherwise not be present in a more generic list. However, it also requires some work and a good grasp of a character's concept, as well as an understanding of how a Job is created and defined.

First, the player should come up with roughly five 'duties' which define what the character does in their Job. These are much like listing the duties and responsibilities of a profession when listing it on a professional resume; they should outline what fulfilling the Job entails, though they can be reasonably vague or non-specific. For example, a player might put down "manage a gourmet kitchen," "develop new recipes," "cook a variety of dishes," "present food artistically," and "manage a pantry inventory" as the duties of their character's Job.



From this list of duties, the player and the GM should work together to define the Job using a professional title. This can be reasonably non-specific, as it applies to an area of training and knowledge instead of an employment rank. In the example above, the player and the GM might work together to come up with "Head Chef" as the Job the example duties seem to embody. While "Chef" might have sufficed, the duties of "manage a gourmet kitchen" and "manage a pantry inventory" seem to have a more managerial inclination to them, so "Head Chef" might better define the Job.

Finally, once the duties and the title of the Job have been defined, the player marks down all of it on their character sheet as one of their character's Jobs. During play, the Job's duties help to inform when the Job may or may not reasonably apply to a task; and if further definition of the specific duties and areas of training that the Job entails come to light, they can be added to the Job's entry with the GM's approval.

What to Avoid

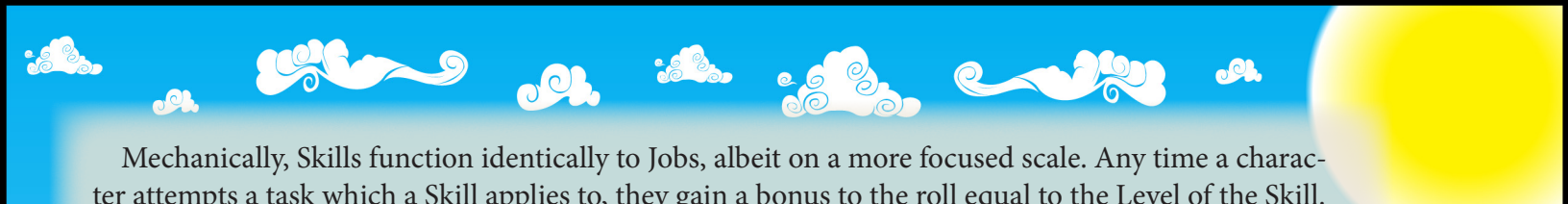
A normal tendency of new players (and some more experienced ones) is to confuse a Job with a Skill. The most important difference is that, where a Skill is specific, a Job is broad and may potentially encompass a variety of skills within its duties. For example, where "Painting" might make a good Skill, it is too specific to be a Job; a Job which could be in line with that concept might be something along the lines of "Artist."

However, it is important not to make a Job which is too broad. Typically, it is the GM's role to limit the scope of a Job, but it is important for players to understand what might make a Job too broad. A Job which cannot be reasonably and mostly defined with a list of roughly five duties is more than likely too broad. For example, "Citizen" is too broad to be a Job, as it encompasses many more duties than could be listed normally, and indeed might encompass other Jobs entirely.



Skills

Where Jobs are broad areas in which characters have general training, Skills are individual areas where a character has focused their efforts to gain more specialized training. A character's Skills allow them to branch out from their Jobs, or to focus on specific areas of their Jobs where they want to excel. Usually, characters tend to have a mix of both types of Skills. From an area of expertise within their Job, to a hobby outside of it, a character's Skills tend to be just as diverse and varied as they are themselves.



Mechanically, Skills function identically to Jobs, albeit on a more focused scale. Any time a character attempts a task which a Skill applies to, they gain a bonus to the roll equal to the Level of the Skill. Multiple applicable Skills do not stack; the applicable Skill with the highest Level is the one which grants the bonus. Skills can stack with Jobs, however, and vice-versa.

During character creation, a character gains a number of ‘Skill Points’ to spend equal to their Mind attribute score. A Skill Point can be spent to either create a new Skill that character has access to (Skills are created at Level 1), or increase the Level of one of their existing Skills by one. The exception to this rule is that Earth Pony characters gain a number of Skill Points equal to one-and-a-half times their Mind attribute score, rounded up (instead of equal to their Mind attribute score) during character creation.

Creating a Skill

Skills, like Jobs, are not chosen from a list, but rather are created and defined by the player and the GM. However, unlike a Job, a Skill does not use a method of listing duties to help define its scope. Instead, to define a Skill based on an area of training you seek to turn into one, consider whether or not that area of training could be covered by a school course focused on it, or if it is too specific to be the subject of a focused course, or if it would require a more ‘general overview’ type of course to cover.

If it could be covered by a focused course, it is probably appropriate to define with a Skill. If it is too specific to form a focused course around, it may be too specific to define with a Skill; widening the scope of the subject may reveal a slightly larger topic which would be better defined with a Skill. If it would require a ‘general overview’ type of course to cover, it may be too broad to define with a Skill, and may be more appropriate to being (or being a part of) a Job instead.

For example, a character who is meant to have a hobby as an amateur scientist might have the Skill “Chemistry.” Chemistry could be covered by a focused course, making it a suitable subject to be defined by a Skill. If the character had chosen “Covalent Bonds” instead, it would have been too narrow, as it would be part of a larger subject more appropriate to being defined as a Skill. Likewise, if they had chosen “Science” instead, it would have been too broad and would require a ‘general overview’ type of course to cover, making it inappropriate to be defined by a Skill—though it might work as (or as part of) a Job such as “Scientist” instead.

What to Avoid

A normal tendency of new players (and some more experienced ones) is to confuse a Skill with a Job. The most important difference is that, where a Job is broad and may potentially encompass a variety of Skills within its duties, a Skill is focused and specific. For example, where “Artist” might make a good Job, it is too broad to be a Skill; a Skill which could be in line with that concept might be something along the lines of “Painting.”

However, it is important not to make a Skill which is too specific. Typically, it is the GM’s role to limit the specificity of a Skill, but it is important for players to understand what might make a Skill too specific. A Skill which could not be listed as the subject of a focused school course, but rather would be part of a larger subject which would be more appropriate to being the topic of a focused course, is likely too specific. For example, “Nails” is too specific to be a Skill, as it is more appropriate to being part of “Carpentry,” which would be more appropriate.

A Part of Who You Are

The next mechanical aspect of character creation is to apply the unique, racial abilities your character gains due to their race and breed. Every race gains a unique ability, and it is these unique abilities which separate them from the other races and give them their power. A race's unique ability sets part of the tone for characters who are a member of that race; for example, Earth Ponies tend to be adaptable and highly skilled due to their lack of more 'magical' abilities, Pegasus Ponies tend to be 'go-to' characters because of their physical advantages, Unicorn Ponies tend to be planners and leaders due to their ability to use magic to shape situations, and Dragons tend to be either heroic guardians or valuable assistants because of their natural instincts.

There are four unique abilities in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. First is the Earth Pony unique ability, called "The Earth Pony Way," which grants extra experience points, gives a discount to experience point costs for character advancements, and allows them to avoid disaster from time to time. Pegasus Ponies have the unique ability "Sky-Bound Soars And Daring Dives," which gives them additional bonuses to their flight- and weather-based abilities. Unicorn Ponies have the unique ability "Magic Makes It All Complete," which covers their spellcasting and gives them the ability to 'improvise' spells and achieve powerful effects with help from friends. Finally, Dragons have the unique ability "A Dragon's Heart Is Prone To Greed," which allows them to perform heroic deeds, but also puts them in danger of giving in to greed.

In this section, each unique ability is explained in detail.

The Earth Pony Way

Earth Ponies, the straightforward residents of Equestria, lack both the gift of flight and weather-shaping which Pegasus Ponies gain, as well as the ability to wield spells and magic the way Unicorn Ponies do. This does not mean that Earth Ponies are any less unique than the other breeds of pony; it simply means that Earth Ponies must work harder at things than the other breeds do, and aren't able to rely on fantastic powers to get the job done. However, out of this work ethic comes a powerful practical ability: the ability to learn quickly, readily apply knowledge, and adapt to a variety of situations. It is this straightforward, hooves-on approach to the world which is the Earth Pony way.

Quick Learners

At the conclusion of each Episode of My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, players and the GM work together on the group's 'letter to the Princess.' In this phase, the positive lessons on life and friendship which the group identifies that their characters learned over the course of the Episode are what determine how many experience points the group is awarded for completing the Episode (the 'letter to the Princess' phase is explained in more detail later). The experience points are given evenly to the whole group, but Earth Ponies always seem to learn just a *little* more than their winged and horned friends.

Mechanically, every time the group goes through the 'letter to the Princess' phase and is awarded experience points, Earth Pony characters gain one additional experience point. For example, at the conclusion of an Episode, the group develops their 'letter to the Princess' and identifies three lessons their characters learned. Normally, this would mean that each character gains three experience points. However, the Earth Pony characters in the group gain one extra, for a total of four—giving them slightly more than the rest of the group.

It is important to note that Earth Pony characters do not gain extra experience points in this way as a result of any flaws they might have; this bonus to earned experience only applies to experience points earned during the 'letter to the Princess' phase at the conclusion of an Episode.

More than gaining additional experience points as the game progresses, however, Earth Ponies gain additional benefits right from the beginning of the game. They gain additional Job Points and Skill Points (detailed in the Jobs and Skills sections), and gain extra experience points during character creation based on their age category (detailed in each age category section).

Hard Workers

Because of their lack of more mystical abilities, Earth Ponies are able to readily apply their knowledge and experience better than most ponies. After each play session (or more frequently, at the GM's discretion) of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, characters are given the opportunity to spend experience points to purchase advancements, increasing their abilities or gaining new ones. There are a variety of advancements, each one with its own cost in experience points which must be paid in order for a character to gain it. In addition, characters may spend experience points to gain a bonus to their dice rolls for the duration of a scene, essentially buying a temporary bonus (advancements and temporary bonuses are explained in more detail later). Earth Ponies have a discount on all of these costs.


Mechanically, whenever an Earth Pony character spends experience points, whether to purchase advancements or a temporary dice roll bonus, they spend one less experience point per purchase—to a minimum of one experience point per purchase. For example, if an Earth Pony character wants to buy a three-point temporary bonus (or a 'Major Bonus;' a +6 to all rolls for the duration of a scene) which would normally cost three experience points, they instead pay two experience points due to their one point discount. As a further example, if an Earth Pony character wants to buy three advancements, each costing five experience points (for a total of 15 experience points), they would instead pay four experience points each (for a total of 12 experience points) due to their one point discount per purchase.

It is important to reiterate that an Earth Pony's experience point cost discount cannot lower the cost of a purchase below one point; they must always pay at least one experience point per purchase they make.

Down to Earth


Characters always run the risk of bad luck, and always have the potential to have good luck. In *My Little Pony:*





Roleplaying is Magic, this is represented by the ‘Rule of 1’ and the ‘Rule of 20,’ respectively. Whenever a character makes a task attempt, if their dice roll comes up as a 1, their attempt is automatically a failure—and more than that, is automatically a ‘critical failure.’ Likewise, if their dice roll comes up as a 20, their attempt is automatically a success—and more than that, is automatically a ‘critical success.’ Critical failures and critical successes are explained in more detail later.

Critical failures and critical successes represent that sometimes, things go much worse than a normal failure would indicate, or much better than a normal success would indicate. For example, if a character suffered a critical failure when jumping over a log, they would not only fail to clear the log, but would also suffer some further bad luck—such as waking up an angry snake sleeping in the log. If they gained a critical success, however, they would succeed as well as have some particularly good luck—such as the height of their jump revealing the tracks of a missing animal they have been searching for.




Sometimes, however, particularly good luck is unnecessary or cannot easily be expressed—and sometimes, particularly bad luck can be disastrous. Earth Ponies, lacking the magic to turn events in their favor, are fortunate enough to occasionally avoid catastrophic bad luck.

Mechanically, Earth Ponies have the ability ‘bank’ a critical success, and use it to offset a critical failure later. When they would normally gain the effects of a critical success, an Earth Pony can choose to bank it instead of gaining its effects (it remains a success, but is not treated as a critical success). Earth Ponies can only have one critical success banked at a time. Any time they have a critical success banked, if they suffer a critical failure, they may choose to spend their banked critical success to avoid the effects of the critical failure (it remains a failure, but is not treated as a critical failure). This removes the banked critical success, and the Earth Pony must wait until they again gain a critical success to bank another.

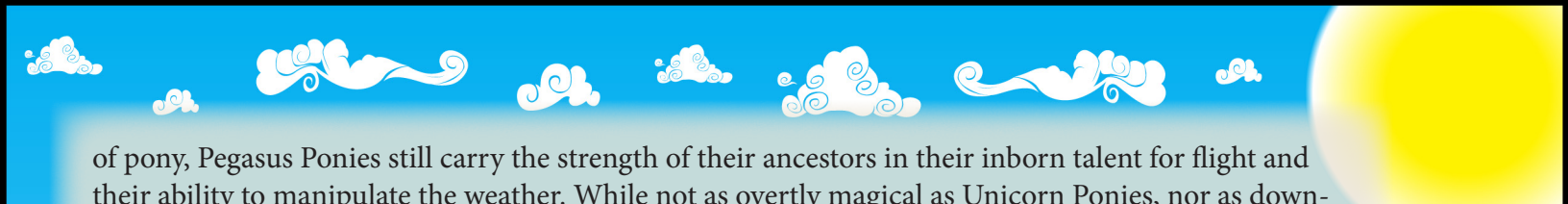
While this ability in and of itself can be useful for immediately offsetting a critical failure when one pops up, it does not need to be declared that it is being used until after the GM has described the effects of a critical failure; however, it must be declared that it is being used before anything further occurs. Likewise, a character can bank a critical success after the GM has described what that critical success would have done, but nothing else may have happened. In either case, the player and the GM should work together to decide how the critical success, or critical failure, was avoided or negated. Typically, this takes the form of a ‘close call.’

For example, an Earth Pony character is painting a banner in preparation for a festival, when they roll a critical success. The player decides immediately that they don’t need the critical success, and declares that they are ‘banking’ it before the GM describes its effects. Later, when hanging the banner, they roll a critical failure. This time, they wait until the GM describes the effects the critical failure: the banner falls down, touches a torch, and is lit on fire. Before anything else happens, the player declares that they are spending their banked critical success in order to offset the critical failure. Together, the player and the GM decide that just before the banner would have touched the torch, a sudden wind extinguished the torch. Thus, while the character still failed to hang the banner, they had a ‘close call’ avoiding what might have been disastrous bad luck.



Sky-Bound Soars and Daring Dives

Pegasus Ponies, the winged weather shepherds of Equestria, are descended from an ancient society of noble and proud warriors. Although they have, for the most part, become a more peaceful breed



of pony, Pegasus Ponies still carry the strength of their ancestors in their inborn talent for flight and their ability to manipulate the weather. While not as overtly magical as Unicorn Ponies, nor as down-to-earth as Earth Ponies, Pegasus Ponies have the gift of versatility. Where the other breeds are limited to staying on the ground, Pegasus Ponies can perform sky-bound soars and daring dives—and while others may be able to cast spells, Pegasus Ponies have the fury of thunderstorms, as well as the peaceful calm of a sunny day, at their command.

Pegasus Ponies may fly as easily as they walk or run, and gain the use of their wings as a racial ability. This means that Pegasus Pony characters may hover, glide, and fly instead of standing, walking, and running. Pegasus Ponies typically have a great deal of control over their flight, even being able to carry on conversations while hovering upside-down without needing to concentrate. They can also walk on clouds and interact with them as if they were solid objects, and even use clouds (or their own bodies) to invoke weather effects.

Pegasus Ponies gain two additional attributes (sometimes called ‘Flight Attributes’): Aerobatics and Weathercraft. These extra attributes are treated as bonuses to any and all rolls a Pegasus Pony makes which involve the use of their ability to fly or control the weather. During character creation, a Pegasus Pony character determines the starting score of both attributes (explained below), and may improve them by buying advancements as if they were Primary Attributes (Mind, Body, and Heart). Although the starting scores of Aerobatics and Weathercraft are based on a Pegasus Pony’s Primary Attributes, improving their Primary Attributes later does not change the score of Aerobatics or Weathercraft; after character creation, they effectively become their own independently-advanced Primary Attributes.

To determine the starting scores of these extra attributes, a Pegasus Pony character first adds in a Primary Attribute, then may ‘spend’ a number of points equal to another Primary Attribute, split as they choose between the two extra attributes, as follows: Aerobatics begins with a score equal to the Pegasus Pony’s Body attribute score, and Weathercraft begins with a score equal to the Pegasus Pony’s Mind attribute score. The Pegasus Pony character may then spend a number of attribute points equal to their Heart attribute score, split as they choose between Aerobatics and Weathercraft, to improve them further.

For example, a Pegasus Pony with Mind 2, Body 3, and Heart 3, must determine their Aerobatics and Weathercraft attributes. First, they set Aerobatics at 3 (equal to their Body), and Weathercraft at 2 (equal to their Mind). They then have three attribute points to spend (equal to their Heart) to improve these two attributes. They spend one point on Aerobatics and two on Weathercraft, bringing them each to a total of four (3+1 and 2+2). Their starting attributes, including the ones they gain from being a Pegasus Pony, are thus: Mind 2, Body 3, Heart 3, Aerobatics 4, Weathercraft 4. As they go on playing the game, however, increasing their Mind, Body, or Heart scores will not increase their Aerobatics or Weathercraft scores; once set during character creation,

Advanced Anemometer Arithmetic

Although it has no direct influence on game-play by default, some game groups may wish to know what the Wing Power of their Pegasus Pony characters are. While Wing Power can change from task to task based on how well the character is flying from moment to moment, there is a basic conversion you can do to find your character’s potential average Wing Power: Take half of your character’s Aerobatics attribute, and multiply it by their Body attribute (Aerobatics / 2 * Body). For example, a Pegasus Pony character with Aerobatics at 5 and Body at 3 would have a potential average Wing Power of 7.5.

they are then no longer 'linked' afterwards and must be advanced on their own.

Aerobatics

All Pegasus Ponies have an inborn talent for flight. Although they may develop it later than most or show it only at great need, every Pegasus Pony has skill in both speed and maneuvering while airborne. This is reflected by the Aerobatics attribute. Whenever a Pegasus Pony character attempts a task which deals with their speed, maneuvering, or stability while flying, they gain their Aerobatics attribute as a bonus on their roll result—in addition to the Primary Attribute the roll is already based on.

For example, a Pegasus Pony character must fly through a shower of falling rocks without being hit by one of the boulders as it tumbles from the sky. The player and GM decide that the task is Body-based, and that it qualifies for the character's Aerobatics attribute to apply as well. Thus, when making their roll, they will add both their Body and Aerobatics attributes to the dice roll, giving them a higher chance of success.

Weathercraft

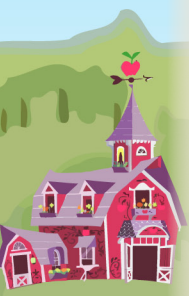
Pegasus Ponies also have the ability to interact with clouds, and to create weather effects using them—or even using their own bodies. This is typically a more advanced ability to learn how to use, and thus is more common among older Pegasus Ponies than among younger ones—though certainly younger Pegasus Ponies may have great skill in manipulating the weather as well. This ability is reflected by the Weathercraft attribute. Whenever a Pegasus Pony character attempts a task to manipulate the weather, whether through using clouds or using their own body, they gain their Weathercraft attribute as a bonus on their roll result—in addition to the Primary Attribute the roll is already based on.

However, Pegasus Ponies do not simply create weather at will, or manipulate it from out of nowhere. A Pegasus Pony character's player must work with the GM to rationalize how their character is creating or manipulating the weather before they are able to make an attempt at doing so. For example, simply saying that their character "makes it rain" is not a valid task attempt; it would be better to say that they jump up and down on a raincloud to make it rain from the cloud—or that they try to leave a contrail of small raining clouds as they fly. This gives the GM a basis for determining what aspects of a character apply to the task, and how difficult it is to accomplish; in the example above, using a cloud to make it rain, or trying to create small rainclouds by flying, might allow different Jobs and/or Skills to apply to the task.

For example, a Pegasus Pony character must make it rain on a burning house to put out the fire. The player and the GM work together to decide that there are clouds in the nearby sky, and the player declares that their character is grabbing a raincloud, positioning it over the house, aiming, and squeezing it to make it rain on the fire. The player and the GM decide that the task is Mind-based, and that it qualifies for the character's Weathercraft attribute to apply as well. Thus, when making their roll, they will add both their Mind and Weathercraft attributes to the dice roll, giving them a higher chance of success.

Call in the Weather Patrol

While most of the unique things a Pegasus Pony can do with their wings can be classified as Aerobatics or Weathercraft, sometimes there are tasks a character may attempt which use both, such as clearing the sky of clouds. In the case that it is impossible to decide between Aerobatics or Weathercraft, with GM approval, a character may simply use whichever is higher.



Pegasus Pony Foals

As a Foal, a Pegasus Pony does not typically have full use of their racial abilities; they develop as the pony reaches adulthood. Like Unicorn Pony Foals, Pegasus Pony Foals' racial ability limitations are based primarily on discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark. A Pegasus Pony Foal normally cannot fly or manipulate the weather if they are a Blank Flank (except for "Pegasus Pony Prodigies;" see below), although they do still gain some benefits. Effectively, a Pegasus Pony gains use of their racial abilities in a staggered fashion; first having limited use of their wings, then developing their full abilities later.

A Pegasus Pony Foal who is a Blank Flank still gains Aerobatics as an extra attribute, though it starts identical to their Body score and they do not gain points based on their Heart score with which to increase it. Although they cannot fly, a Pegasus Pony Foal who is a Blank Flank may use their Aerobatics bonus (with GM approval) on applicable tasks where they would be able to make use of their not yet fully developed wings. This might be anything from flapping to help them run faster or jump higher, to propelling a scooter, or even slowing a fall.


Upon discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark, the magic inside them causes a Pegasus Pony's racial abilities to come to fruition. They gain the full benefit of their racial abilities, and determine their Weathercraft score, as normal (Aerobatics, however, has already been determined; it is not 're-determined' at this time). In addition, at the time they discover their Special Purpose and develop their Cutie Mark, a Pegasus Pony gains the normal Heart-based number of points to spend between Aerobatics and Weathercraft to improve them.

Pegasus Pony Prodigies

Some Pegasus Ponies learn to fly before others; this may be because of special training such as attending Junior Speedsters Flight Camp, or simply due to sheer natural ability. While nothing but discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark can allow a Pegasus Pony Foal to manipulate the weather, some Pegasus Pony Foals are able to overcome their natural inability to truly fly before that point.

A Pegasus Pony Foal who is a Blank Flank may be declared to be a Pegasus Pony Prodigy during character creation, or at any time they could spend experience points to purchase character advancements. Doing so lifts the ban on full flight for that character, allowing them to fly immediately afterward. This does not change how their Aerobatics attribute score is determined (as explained above), but it does change how their abilities develop later, diminishing the increase in power the Pegasus Pony Foal experiences upon discovering their Special Purpose and determining their Cutie Mark later on.






A character who is a Pegasus Pony Prodigy has come into a portion of their 'inner magic' early, and as such does not experience as dramatic an increase in power as most Pegasus Ponies do later, but gain the ability to fly earlier than most. When their abilities come to fruition upon discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark, a Pegasus Pony Prodigy does not gain the full number of points from their Heart attribute score that they would normally gain. Instead, they gain two points less than they would normally be entitled to, to a minimum of one point.

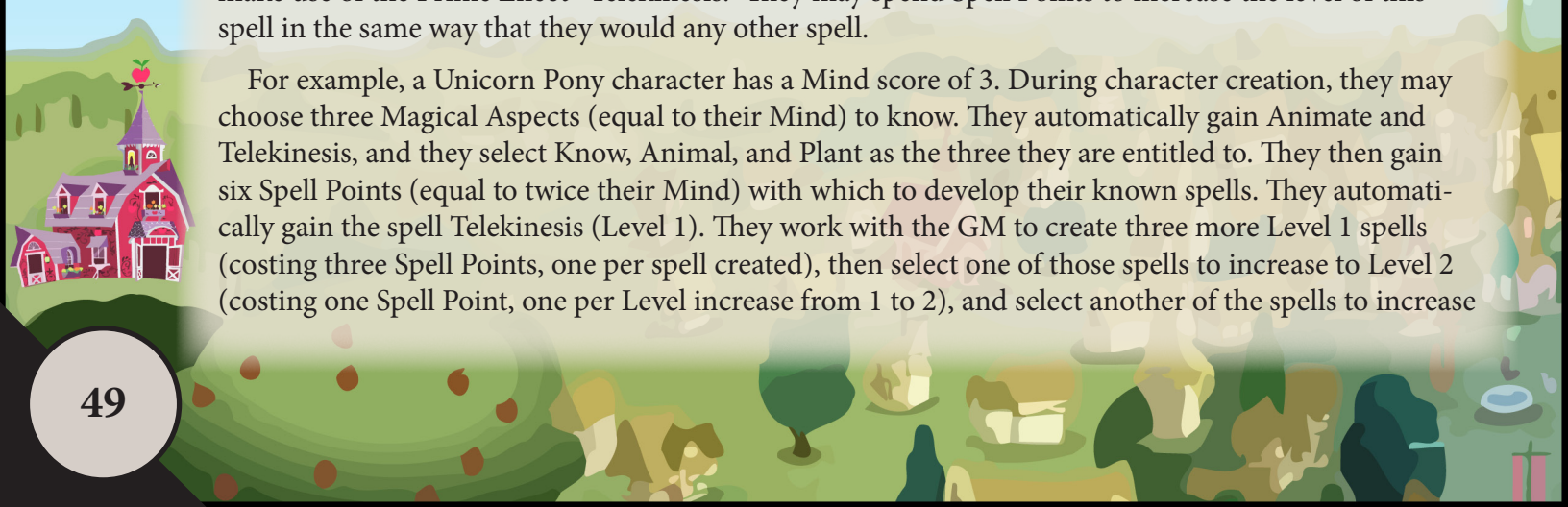
For example, a Pegasus Pony Foal who is a Blank Flank and a Pegasus Pony Prodigy would determine their Aerobatics score as normal for a Blank Flank, and would be able to fly immediately. However, upon discovering their Special Purpose and determining their Cutie Mark, they would gain two less points to spend between Aerobatics and Weathercraft, to a minimum of one point. So, if their Heart score was 4, they would gain two points (4 - 2); if their Heart score was 2, however, they would still at least gain one point to spend.

Magic Makes it all Complete



Unicorn Ponies are the noble and majestic practitioners of the arcane; by virtue of their horns, they are able to learn and cast powerful spells, and manipulate the mystical forces of magic itself. Unicorn Ponies have been the wardens of magic for so long that they are synonymous with it; even the most simple and practical Unicorn Pony knows spells and uses magic as part of their everyday life. Because of this, magic is very personal to Unicorn Ponies, and although they all utilize it, very few utilize it in the same way. While they have training and talents just like anypony does, from a Unicorn Pony's perspective, the simple truth is that magic makes it all complete.

During character creation, Unicorn Pony characters may choose a number of Magical Aspects equal to their Mind score to know, though they may not choose any Prime Effects as part of these selections (without GM approval). In addition to the ones they select, they automatically know "Animate," as well as the Prime Effect "Telekinesis." Unicorn Pony characters also gain a number of 'Spell Points' equal to twice their Mind score to use to create and enhance spells. Each Spell Point may be spent to either create and learn a new spell at Level 1, or increase the Level of a spell they know by one. Unicorn Pony characters automatically know the spell "Telekinesis" (which begins at Level 1), which allows them to make use of the Prime Effect "Telekinesis." They may spend Spell Points to increase the level of this spell in the same way that they would any other spell.



For example, a Unicorn Pony character has a Mind score of 3. During character creation, they may choose three Magical Aspects (equal to their Mind) to know. They automatically gain Animate and Telekinesis, and they select Know, Animal, and Plant as the three they are entitled to. They then gain six Spell Points (equal to twice their Mind) with which to develop their known spells. They automatically gain the spell Telekinesis (Level 1). They work with the GM to create three more Level 1 spells (costing three Spell Points, one per spell created), then select one of those spells to increase to Level 2 (costing one Spell Point, one per Level increase from 1 to 2), and select another of the spells to increase

Magic is Serious Business

The Unicorn Pony racial abilities of spellcasting and wielding magic are the most complex mechanical racial abilities out of any of the playable races. It is highly recommended that players who are new to pen and paper roleplaying games, or players who are new to playing spellcasting characters, play a race with a less complex set of racial abilities, or work closely with their GM until they have a good and solid handle on using magic and casting spells.

to Level 3 (costing two Spell Points, one per Level increase from 1 to 3).

Magic Kindergarten


Magic and spellcasting in Equestria has a long history, dating back at least to the Pre-Classical Era. However, modern magical practices and spellcasting techniques are found in a few standards which every Unicorn Pony uses, and it is these foundations which make up the Unicorn Pony racial ability. In short, magic is composed of combinations of ‘Magical Aspects,’ and is used via improvised and/or trained ‘Spells’ created from these combinations. It takes study, talent, focus, and willpower to utilize magic, and while magic can be improvised, doing so is risky and unstable. Typically, spellcasting and the use of magic is a scholarly and academic pursuit learned through schooling, though it is not unheard of for Unicorn Ponies to be self-taught. Whatever the origin of their ability, however, any Unicorn Pony with magical power must have the intellect, discipline, training, and willpower to utilize it properly—as Magical Mishaps are a very real danger of failure.

Magical Aspects

The foundation of magic is in the 25 Magical Aspects which make up its effects. A Magical Aspect can be one of three types: Effects, which describe the manipulation or action of a spell, Subjects, which describe the object or physical component of a spell, and Prime Effects, universal effects which are considerably more powerful, useful, and rare than any others. It is best to think of Effects and Prime Effects as verbs, and Subjects as nouns. Magical Aspects are combined to form spell effects by coupling one or more Effects with one or more Subjects to reasonably describe the intended action. The more Aspects in a description, the more a spell does, the more specific and complex it is, and thus the more difficult it is to develop, learn, and eventually master.


For example, starting a campfire might be expressed by combining the Effect “Forge” with the Subject “Heat.” Likewise, extinguishing a campfire might be described by combining the Effect “Diminish” with the Subject “Heat.” The combination of “Forge Heat” could also be used to make a fire burn more brightly, or melt snow. The combination of “Diminish Heat” could also be used to cool or freeze an object. “Animate Earth” could be used to bend metal or raise rock walls out of the ground. “Modify Mind” could be used to bring suppressed memories to the surface of a character’s mind. “Reveal Water” could be used to identify what ingredients are present in a bowl of punch.





However, as stated, more Magical Aspects may be part of a spell than just one Effect and one Subject—though this makes the spell more complex and specific, and thus more difficult to master. For example, “Animate Modify Earth Mind” could conceivably bring a statue to life, and “Animate Diminish Forge Modify Body Heat Mind” might even allow a particularly powerful magic-user to conjure a Windigo from nothing—though this kind of spell would be among the most powerful and difficult spells they might ever be able to learn. More complex spells such as these might also likely be approved very sparingly by the game group’s GM, if at all.

In addition to the standard method of combining Effects and Subjects, characters may potentially gain access to Prime Effects. These are stand-alone spell effects which typically can universally affect things in a specific way, or perform a uniquely specific function, and are never combined with other Effects or Subjects to make more complex spell effects. Currently, there are only three known Prime Effects, though according to the setting and story your game group is participating in, the GM may create or allow additional Prime Effects.



Because of this flexibility there are many, many possible combinations of Magical Aspects, and many ways to express the same spell effect using different combinations of Magical Aspects; it is up to the player and the GM to determine which combination best expresses the intended effect of a Unicorn Pony’s use of their magic, and it is up to the GM to decide what uses are appropriate or not appropriate for their group’s story and setting. The total list of all Magical Aspects found in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, as well as their descriptions and examples of how they might be used as part of a spell, can be found below.

Twenty-Five Different Tricks

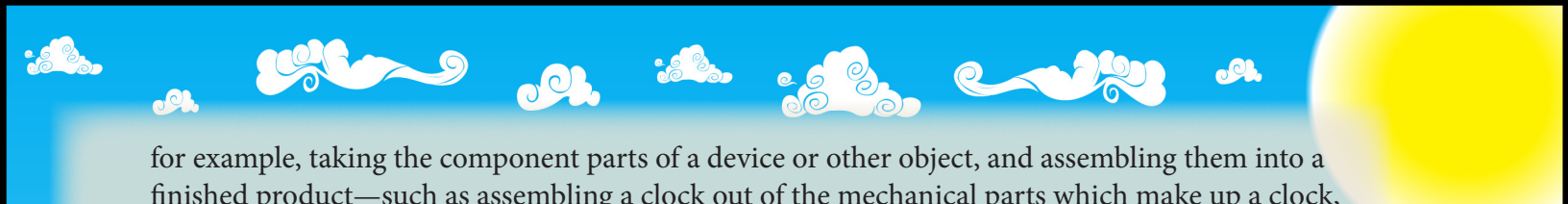
Although there are twenty-five Magical Aspects which a character can combine to create spell effects, it is important to remember that the canon of the show hints at more than twenty-five types of magic existing. This is reflected by the combining of Magical Aspects. All in all, there are far more combinations than a character could realistically learn or make use of, allowing magic to be utilized in almost any way imaginable.

Effects

The following is the list of Magical Aspects which are ‘Effects;’ the part of the spell effect description which is the ‘verb’ or action of the spell effect. A spell effect always has at least one Effect unless it is a ‘Prime Effect’ (explained later).

Animate is the Effect which governs physical manipulation of something, whether through concentration or by self-manipulation. For example, Animate could be used to bend, push, pull, or otherwise manipulate something as if the character were doing it with their hands (or hooves, as the case may be). However, Animate could also be used to give something a self-manipulating capability according to its normal function. For example, Animate could be used to cause a stopped clock to function, a door to open or close on its own, a wagon to pull itself along, or a doll to walk around as if it were alive. In traditional spellcasting systems, Animate is closest to Telekinesis.

Combine is an Effect which allows for the merging, or fusion, of multiple elements into a whole, or a functional hybrid. For example, a character could use Combine to merge a friend with a giant diamond, making them sparkle like diamonds. Combine could be used for assembly of things;



for example, taking the component parts of a device or other object, and assembling them into a finished product—such as assembling a clock out of the mechanical parts which make up a clock, or creating a cake out of the ingredients which make up a cake. Combine also allows for traversal through joining; for example, a character could use Combine (in conjunction with Separate) to allow them to be ‘absorbed’ by an open flame—and then emerge from another open flame, effectively teleporting through the fires. In traditional spellcasting systems, Combine is closest to a fusion of Transmutation and Teleportation.

Deceive is the Effect which obscures or hides things from detection, or gives things false characteristics. The most obvious use of Deceive would be for a character to turn themselves, someone else, or an object invisible, though this is not the only use. Deceive could also be used to prevent a character from remembering something (or give them false memories of something which never happened), or even make them not take notice of a pit right in front of their hooves. In traditional spellcasting systems, Deceive is closest to Illusion.

Diminish is the Effect which makes something a ‘less perfect’ version of itself, damages it, or even eliminates it entirely. For example, a character could use Diminish to cause a room to become colder, fight back overgrown weeds, dispel magical effects or barriers, cause an area to become darker, or even outright destroy something. In traditional spellcasting systems, Diminish is closest to Destruction.

Forge is the Effect which is the reverse of Diminish; it creates something from nothing, or (more often) improves something, making it a ‘more perfect’ version of itself. For example, a character could use Forge to heal wounds or soothe weariness, cause a fire to burn more brightly, purify contaminated water, spawn a glowing ball of light from nothingness, and even repair damage inflicted on a character’s psyche. In traditional spellcasting systems, Forge is closest to a combination of Conjunction and Restoration.

Modify is the Effect which gives something a property or ability it does not normally have according to its function or standard capabilities. For example, Modify could be used to cause a mouse to take the shape of a horse, an apple to take the shape of a carriage, or to alter the characteristics of things. With Modify, a character could make a swarm of parasprites no longer hunger for food—but instead hunger for everything *except* food. Modify could alter a character’s mood, appearance, even change them into something else entirely—or reverse changes. In traditional spellcasting systems, Modify is closest to the concept of Transmutation.

Reveal is the Effect which is the reverse of Deceive; it reveals hidden things and imparts knowledge about things. For example, a character could use Reveal to read another character’s memories, understand a language they are not fluent in, see into the past (or, potentially, the future), discover the properties of an object or item, or view a distant location. In traditional spellcasting systems, Reveal is closest to Divination.

Separate is the Effect which is the reverse of Combine; it splits things into their component parts to various degrees of specificity. For example, a character could use Separate to disassemble a complex piece of machinery into its component pieces, remove certain ingredients from an already-mixed bowl of punch, remove the poison from an injured character’s body, or even dissolve a boulder to reveal the gemstones within. In traditional spellcasting systems, Separate would be closest to a variation of Transmutation.

Subjects

The following is the list of Magical Aspects which are 'Subjects,' the part of the spell effect description which is the 'noun' or object the spell effect is acting upon. A spell effect always has at least one Subject unless it is a 'Prime Effect' (explained later).

Air is the Subject which encompasses atmosphere, gasses, smoke, and other gaseous materials. Vapors and mists could conceivably fall into Air as well.

Animal is the Subject which encompasses lower animals such as cats, dogs, and birds; animals which cannot speak. Creatures such as ponies, buffalo, dragons, and other 'higher creatures' are considered separate from Animal.

Body is the Subject which encompasses the physical bodies (but not the minds) of higher creatures such as ponies, buffalo, and dragons; creatures with the ability to speak.

Construct is the Subject which encompasses manufactured objects, some with multiple interacting component parts, such as clothing, musical instruments, doors, vehicles, and machinery.

Earth is the Subject which encompasses stone, dirt, sand, metal, gemstones, and other non-living solid material found naturally underground. Lava and magma could also be considered part of Earth.

Energy is the Subject which encompasses pure non-magical energy and exotic energy-like effects, such as electricity, plasma, and radiation. Fire, however, is considered separate from Energy.

Force is the Subject which encompasses solid barriers of magical energy; impassable shields and force fields composed of mystical, arcane magic.

Heat is the Subject which encompasses thermal matters such as warmth and coldness, as well as the associated effects of fire, melting, combustion, and freezing.

Light is the Subject which encompasses pure light, but not elements which naturally give off light, such as fire. Light can be as simple as manipulating illumination and shadow, and as complex as creating illusory images.


Magic is the Subject which encompasses pure magical power and the mystical energies which make up spell effects, as well as exotic energies (such as chaos) which are not typically found within spellcasting. While this can allow for the manipulation of spells and related effects, it does not allow for the direct creation of effects.

Mind is the Subject which encompasses the minds of higher creatures such as ponies, buffalo, and dragons; creatures with the ability to speak. It includes thoughts, senses, memories, dreams, and associated elements of the mind.

Plant is the Subject which encompasses natural plants and flora, including trees, flowers, grass, vines, bushes, and other greenery, as well as plant creatures and entities.

Sound is the Subject which encompasses noise and perceived sound, including music, voices, and other tones.

Space is the Subject which encompasses locations and spatial dimensions; it deals with areas of reality and the general spatial elements of locations.



Time is the Subject which encompasses the temporal dimension of reality and the persistence or passage of time.

Water is the Subject which encompasses all non-solid fluids and physical liquids, not only water itself.

Weather is the Subject which encompasses natural weather effects, including clouds, lightning, wind, rain, snow, thunder, and hail.

Prime Effects

Prime Effects are powerful, base uses of magic which are not constructed by combining Effects and Subjects; they function on a more foundational level, and either affect things universally or perform a unique and specific function. Universal application gives them considerably more versatility than other magic, and unique function gives them considerably more power, and thus they are very rare and difficult to learn. There are only three currently known Prime Effects, though the GM may, to suit your game group's setting or story, create additional Prime Effects. To reflect their rarity, Prime Effects cannot be learned in the same way that other Magical Aspects are; the GM must decide on the unique conditions by which each can be acquired, or if indeed they cannot be acquired, according to the group's setting and story.

Channel Friendship is the Prime Effect which allows a Unicorn Pony to perform feats of magic beyond the realm of normal spellcasting by tapping into the power of friendship itself; this can include utilizing powerful artifacts such as the Elements of Harmony, or conjuring mystical forces such as the Fire of Friendship.


Move the Heavens is the Prime Effect which has allowed the Unicorn Ponies to raise and lower the sun and the moon since the ancient days before the founding of Equestria. Although all Unicorn Ponies have the potential to use Move the Heavens, only a few manifest the ability.

Telekinesis is the Prime Effect which allows all Unicorn Ponies to magically move, handle, and manipulate objects as if they were doing so with their own hooves. Unlike the other Prime Effects, Telekinesis is exceedingly common; all Unicorn Ponies have the ability to use it at will, as long as they don't try to do too much.


Creating A Spell

Unicorn Pony characters, for the most part, make use of magic by casting Spells. A spell is a specific magical effect which the player and GM work together to define using Magical Aspects, as well as a method of manifestation (explained later). To create a spell, the player should first have in mind a conceptual idea of what they would like the spell to do when it is cast. This can be a simple statement, for example, "start a small fire" or "freeze something." However, it can be more complex, for example, "conjure a rock golem and control it mentally" or "erase a memory and implant a false one." In general, the more complex the statement, the more difficult the spell will be to learn, perform, and master. The GM has final say in what is, or is not, a valid spell concept statement.

When creating a spell's concept statement, it is important to remember that a Unicorn Pony's magic is usually in line with their Special Purpose. This can be a loose connection, such as a chef having heating and freezing spells, or a builder having spells which shape and alter stone, wood, and other materi-




als; it does not need to be so specific as to make the spell worthless when not being used for the character's Special Purpose. In general, if the spell could be useful to the character for fulfilling their Special Purpose, it is likely to be an appropriate spell for the character to know. It is best to work with the GM to develop a spell's concept statement so that it has a connection to your character's Special Purpose, and the GM has final say in whether or not that connection is sufficient.



Once the concept statement has been defined, the player and the GM work together to decide which Magical Aspects would be involved in executing the spell's effect. For example, "start a small fire" most likely involves Forge and Heat, whereas "freeze something" most likely involves Diminish and Heat. For more complex concept statements, more Magical Aspects will likely apply. For example, "conjure a rock golem and control it mentally" most likely involves Animate, Combine, Forge, Modify, Earth, and Mind. "Erase a memory and implant a false one" most likely involves Deceive, Diminish, and Mind. It is important to note that a spell does not need to only involve Magical Aspects the character knows; while knowledge of Magical Aspects allows a character to improvise spells, when creating a spell for a character to learn, they may involve any Magical Aspects. This reflects the difference between being familiar enough with an area of magic to improvise with it, and the knowledge of a specific spell for a specific effect.

After the spell's Magical Aspects have been identified and defined, the player and the GM work together to decide the list of methods of the spell's Manifestation, or all of the ways it can take effect. The spell's method of Manifestation sets all the ways the spell can be used, and affects the versatility—and thus difficulty—of the spell. For example, starting a fire could manifest as a flame at the tip of a Unicorn Pony's horn, a flame at a point the Unicorn Pony aims for, and/or on an object the Unicorn Pony can see close by; and it might last only as long as the Unicorn Pony concentrates on it, for a set duration, or it might be permanent. Spell Manifestation is explained in more detail later.

With the concept statement, Magical Aspects, and method of Manifestation all determined, the player and the GM work together to come up with an appropriate name for the spell, and the GM determines the Difficulty of the spell according to its Magical Aspects and Manifestation methods. Once these final steps are complete, the spell may be learned by a character by paying the experience point cost as determined by the spell's Difficulty (spell Difficulty is explained in more detail later).



For example, a player wants to create a spell which their character could learn which would allow them to create and control a small floating ball of fire. They begin with the concept statement, "Create and control a small ball of fire." Working with the GM, they decide that the spell involves the Magical Aspects of Animate, Forge, and Heat. They also decide that the spell has limited Manifestation methods—it must remain close to and in sight of the character, but persists for a while on its own; this means that it has the Manifestation methods of Amniomorphic and Temporary. The GM uses all of this information to determine that the spell's Difficulty is 5, and the player names the spell "Ghostlight."

Magical Aspects and Spells

The Magical Aspects a character knows, and the Spells a character knows, do not have to be related. Known Magical Aspects allow a character to improvise magic, giving them flexibility in spellcasting; whereas known Spells allow a character to practice magic more safely, and develop specific uses of magic, giving them stability and power. In terms of classic fantasy roleplaying, a Unicorn Pony is both a 'Wizard' and a 'Sorcerer.'

Spell Manifestation

Spells always have at least two Manifestation methods, chosen from both of the two types: Range and Duration. These are fundamental limits on how the spell functions, and informs the effects of the spell as it is cast, as well as the implications of casting it. Range covers how a spell is 'aimed,' or what it can affect. Duration covers how a spell is maintained, and/or how long it persists before the effect ends. Every spell has at least one Range selection and at least one Duration selection. Each Manifestation method added to the spell affects the Difficulty of the spell, making it more or less difficult to use and more costly to learn.



A spell's Manifestation in terms of its **Range** has three possible selections: Contact, Amniomorphic, and Spectacle. Multiple Range Manifestation methods allow a character to use a spell in different ways; for example, raising a spike out of the ground, and being able to raise a ring, or wall, of spikes with the same spell due to having multiple options for Range.

Contact denotes that a Unicorn Pony must touch the spell's target with their horn or that the horn is the target (or that the Unicorn Pony is the target). Typically, this type of Manifestation method creates a glow at the tip of the Unicorn Pony's horn. The Contact Manifestation method has no effect on a spell's difficulty.

Amniomorphic denotes that a Unicorn Pony must be able to see their target and have a clear and unobstructed 'line of effect' to them; if they threw a pebble at their target, it shouldn't hit anything along the way. Typically, this type of Manifestation method creates a glow around the target of the spell's effects, or a 'beam' of some kind connecting the Unicorn Pony's horn with the target. The Amniomorphic Manifestation method adds an additional 1 to a spell's Difficulty.

Spectacle denotes an effect which targets things in a defined area, or targets something the Unicorn Pony can't see or doesn't have 'line of effect' to as noted above. Typically, this type of Manifestation method has an impressive display which is nearly impossible to miss. The Spectacle Manifestation method adds an additional 2 to a spell's Difficulty.

A spell's Manifestation in terms of its Duration has four possible selections: Instant, Concentration, Temporary, and Persistent. Multiple Duration Manifestation methods allow a character to tailor a spell to the situation more effectively; for example, creating a magical barrier and focusing on it, and being able to create a barrier which lasts for a full scene on its own due to having multiple options for Duration.

Instant denotes that the Unicorn Pony creates a single-use effect which does what it is intended to do in a split-second, and is then finished (such as teleporting, making a flash of light, a clap of thunder, freezing an object solid, or starting a fire). The Instant Manifestation method has no effect on a spell's Difficulty.

Concentration denotes that the Unicorn Pony must keep focusing on maintaining the spell; at the GM's discretion, if the Unicorn Pony tries to do too many other things aside from focusing on maintaining the spell, the spell ends. If it is the only Duration selection, the Concentration Manifestation method subtracts an additional 1 from a spell's Difficulty; otherwise, it has no effect on a

spell's Difficulty.

Temporary denotes that the Unicorn Pony creates an effect which lasts, on its own, for the duration of a single scene. The Temporary Manifestation method adds an additional 1 to a spell's Difficulty. With GM approval, the spell's duration can be longer than one scene, though this increases its Difficulty as well. For each scene beyond the first which the spell can continue to function, the spell's Difficulty increases by 1.

Persistent denotes that the Unicorn Pony creates an effect which is permanent. This is typically due to the effect being perpetually magically sustained (such as a permanent magical lock on a door). The Persistent Manifestation method adds an additional 2 to a spell's Difficulty.

Spell Difficulty

Magic is a powerful force, and only the most disciplined and intrepid Unicorn Ponies can harness it; only the most talented and well-trained can master complex spells. All spells have a level of Difficulty to reflect their relative level of power, and thus how much effort it takes to learn them and how risky they are to cast.

The Difficulty of a spell is the base starting number of experience points it costs to learn the spell or increase the spell's Level (advancements are explained later). It is also the minimum required Mind score necessary to cast the spell safely, and reflects the severity of danger if something goes wrong. For example, a spell with a Difficulty of 5 would cost 5 experience points to learn, would use 5 as its base experience cost to increase its Level, and would require a Mind score of 5 to cast without risk or danger (failure to cast, and the dangers of doing so, are explained later).

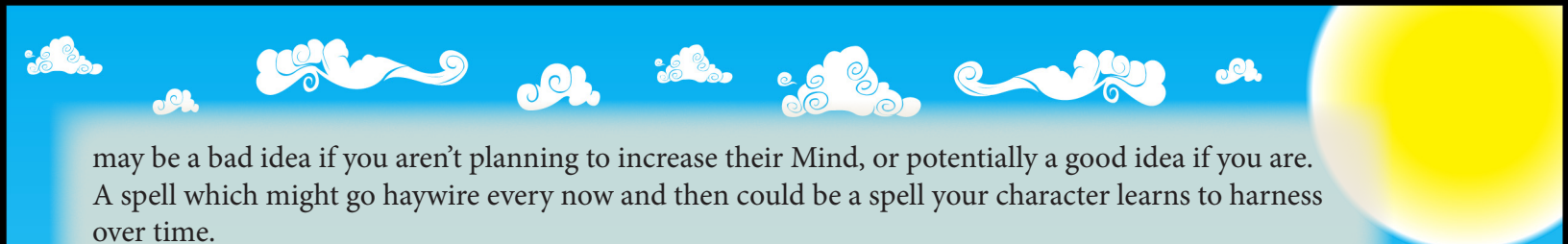
The exception to this rule is that during character creation, when spending Spell Points, a spell's Difficulty is not taken into account in terms of cost; each Spell Point can create a spell or increase a spell's Level by one, regardless of the spell's Difficulty. Typically, this is best taken advantage of to create the more potent spells a character is supposed to have, as waiting until after character creation and spending experience points instead is more costly.

In general, a spell's Difficulty is the total number of Magical Aspects it involves, plus or minus the influence of the Manifestation methods it has, plus or minus any special alterations the GM may apply. For example, a spell which involves three Magical Aspects and the Manifestation methods of Amniomorphic, Spectacle, and Concentration would have a Difficulty of 5 (3 Magical Aspects, plus 1 from Amniomorphic, plus 2 from Spectacle, minus 1 from Concentration being the only Duration selection). Created spells cannot have a Difficulty of less than 1.

What to Avoid

A common mistake when creating a spell is to make the spell too specific to a situation, instead of designing it for use in a variety of situations. For example, creating a spell which "ignites a campfire" is probably too specific, as it pertains only to a campfire. A better spell concept statement would be "ignites a small fire," as it could then be used for the initial effect, but could also be used in other situations.

It is also important to consider how you plan to develop your character, and plan your spells accordingly; creating a spell which has a slightly higher Difficulty than what your character can safely cast



may be a bad idea if you aren't planning to increase their Mind, or potentially a good idea if you are. A spell which might go haywire every now and then could be a spell your character learns to harness over time.

Additionally, it is important to remember that a spell which is being learned and trained does not need to be created involving only the Magical Aspects your character knows; only improvised spells are restricted to known Magical Aspects. This gives a character two distinct areas of ability: the ability to train in any kind of spell so long as they put the effort in, and the ability to learn Magical Aspects to let them improvise magic on the fly.

Finally, remember that spellcasting does not define a character; a character defines their spellcasting. The guideline on ensuring that spells are in line with a character's Special Purpose is in place to serve as a reminder of this. A character's spells should be a set of tools they have developed based on the kind of person they are, not based on the accumulation of power; for Unicorn Ponies, their spells are an extension of themselves. As with the rest of a character's development, their spells should be approached 'concept first.'

Improving Your Spells


Once a spell has been learned by a character, it can be improved. Spells are learned at Level 1, and have no maximum Level they can be trained to; a character with enough time and experience could master and wield a wide variety of powerful spells. By and large, however, most characters tend to end up with an array of spells they know, but only a handful they focus on training; because spells can be costly to improve, characters generally improve them slowly—unless spellcasting is an area of focus for them.

When improving a spell, a character spends experience points to increase its Level by one step at a time. While character advancements are covered in more detail later, it is important to know how a spell's Difficulty influences the experience point cost to improve it. A powerful spell, with a high Difficulty, incurs an increased experience point cost until it reaches a Level equal to its Difficulty. When paying experience points to improve a spell, a character pays an amount equal to the Level the spell is advancing to, or equal to the spell's Difficulty, whichever is higher.

For example, a spell with a Difficulty of 4 will cost four experience points per Level to improve from Level 1 to Level 4, as its Difficulty is higher than its Level until that point. From then on, it will cost experience points equal to each Level it advances to; five experience points to reach Level 5, six to reach Level 6, seven for Level 7, and so on. This reflects that, while difficult spells can be much harder to learn at the beginning, a spellcaster who puts enough time and experience into developing their spells eventually comes to comprehend them all at the same pace.

Spellcasting

A Unicorn Pony can use magic naturally; as long as they are familiar with the Magical Aspects required to accomplish a feat of magic, they can make the attempt by improvising a spell. However, studying and learning spells gives them an edge in using magic by granting them bonuses to their task attempts when using those spells. This is reflected by the two distinct areas of magical ability that Unicorn Ponies may know: Magical Aspects, which allow them to improvise magical effects; and Spells, which allow them to study, know, and practice specific feats of magic in an organized way.



Because of the versatility and the adaptable nature of spells, casting a spell is done as if it were any other task attempt; instead of the casting of a spell being the full action a character takes, a character casts a spell for an intended effect—using it as the basis of a task, not the task itself entirely.

For example, a Unicorn Pony who is fending off a dangerous creature could use their spell “Bonfire” in a number of ways and for a number of effects. Where in traditional spellcasting systems they might have to choose between a fireball spell or a wall of fire spell, in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, they decide how they are using their spell. They might try to create a flame between themselves and the monster, or try to hurl a ball of fire at it, or try to ignite the nearby trees, or any number of other things.

However, because of this task-oriented use of magic and spells, characters must make rolls and task attempts to use magic; they do not always succeed at spellcasting, and failure can be dangerous, as magic can cause powerful mishaps when it goes awry.



Spells You Know

When casting a spell your character knows, you gain a bonus to the dice roll equal to the Level of the spell. This reflects that, while trying to do too much with a spell can still bring about failure, the more your character trains in the use of a spell, the more likely they are to succeed at casting it.

Success when casting a spell you know is typically not reflected in any mechanical change; your character used the spell successfully and accomplished the task they were trying for. A Critical Success might have an extraordinary bit of additional positive effect to it as well; a spell meant to soothe pain might heal wounds too, and a spell meant to cook food might inexplicably make the food taste better than it would normally.

Failure when casting a spell you know typically takes the form of failing to even conjure the necessary power to try the intended effect; essentially, the spell was never cast in the first place. Failure can have certain ill effects as well, depending on the spell’s Difficulty; though, if the spell’s Difficulty is less than or equal to the character’s Mind score, failure has no ill effect—this reflects that the character has enough control over the spell to ensure that even in failure, nothing goes haywire. If the spell’s Difficulty is higher than their Mind score, however, failing to cast the spell causes them to lose one point of Willpower; this reflects that their training in the spell enables them to avoid the spell going haywire, but the difficulty of ‘stifling’ the magical power in this way drains them.

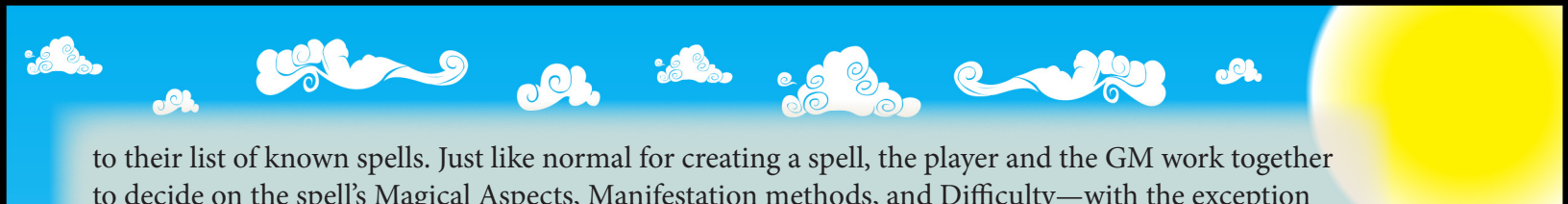
A Critical Failure when casting a known spell imposes the normal point of Willpower loss which failure does, but also typically has some form of backlash along the lines of its intended effects; a spell meant to freeze an object might freeze the caster instead, or a spell meant to crack open a boulder might cause an avalanche.



Spells You Don’t Know

Unicorn Ponies are not restricted to only the spells they have studied and trained in the use of; their knowledge of Magical Aspects allows them to ‘improvise’ spells on the fly. Doing this is dangerous, however, as the character hasn’t spent the time necessary to study, train, and develop the spell; they are attempting to ‘force’ magic to do their bidding—and sometimes, magic just doesn’t cooperate.

To ‘improvise’ a spell, a character creates a temporary spell using only the Magical Aspects they know. Unlike a normal spell, this spell is specific to the task being attempted with it, and is not added



to their list of known spells. Just like normal for creating a spell, the player and the GM work together to decide on the spell's Magical Aspects, Manifestation methods, and Difficulty—with the exception that only Magical Aspects the character knows may be involved in the improvised spell. The character then attempts to use the spell, though they gain no bonus to their roll from the spell; it is effectively a Level 0 spell for the purpose of its bonus to their dice roll.

If the character succeeds at using the spell, they lose one point of Willpower; this reflects the effort required to improvise a spell. A Critical Success negates this Willpower loss, but does not usually give additional bonuses as is normal for Critical Successes; the GM may override this rule, however, to suit your group's setting and story.

Failure to cast an improvised spell is always bad, and runs the risk of being disastrous. Upon failing to cast an improvised spell, a character loses a number of Willpower points equal to the Difficulty of the spell, as well as losing one point of Energy; this reflects the extreme drain of trying to reign in an out-of-control spell with no training.

A Critical Failure imposes all the normal loss of Willpower and Energy points which failure does, but also causes a 'Magical Mishap.' These are explained in more detail later, but are typically the effects of magic going haywire—anything from a teleportation spell scattering a group all across Equestria, to a Unicorn Pony temporarily losing their ability to use any magic at all, can result from a Magical Mishap.

The Fire of Friendship


While improvising a spell is always dangerous, assistance from friends can give a Unicorn Pony the ability to go beyond what they would normally be able to do when improvising a spell. For each of their friends who spend a point of Willpower and do nothing but assist them in casting the spell, a Unicorn Pony can use one Magical Aspect they do not know to improvise a spell. At the GM's discretion, this can include Prime Effects, though it does not normally.

For example, a Unicorn Pony has two friends who each spend a point of Willpower and spend their actions to assist them in improvising a spell. The Unicorn Pony may choose two Magical Aspects they do not know, and may improvise a spell using those Magical Aspects as if they know them. Once the spellcasting attempt has been resolved, however, they do not retain access to those Magical Aspects; it is a temporary power.

Critical Failures and Magical Mishaps

In general, failure to cast a spell reflects that the spell was never cast in the first place; a spell meant to freeze something, for example, simply never formed enough to take effect. However, Critical Failures and Magical Mishaps are the exception to this. In these cases, the magical energy of the spell was summoned, but the Unicorn Pony wasn't able to control it. The resulting uncontrolled power has to go somewhere, and typically takes detrimental effects—or strange ones—as it goes haywire.

A Critical Failure refers to rolling a Critical Failure when casting a spell a character knows. In this case, the magical power typically 'backfires' somehow, though it usually does so in accordance with the theme of its intended effects. For example, a spell meant to put someone to sleep might put the caster to sleep instead, or a spell meant to cause a tree to grow tall and strong might make the tree shrink.



A Magical Mishap refers to rolling a Critical Failure when improvising a spell. In this case, the magical power has gone completely out of control, and the GM may have nearly anything occur as a result. While a Magical Mishap typically still has some effect vaguely related to its intended effects, it does not need to; a Magical Mishap has an inherent element of pure chaos to it as magical energies clash and twist, and might have nothing to do with the original intent of the improvised spell. A spell meant to grow a flower might cause a blizzard of flower petals, a spell meant to temporarily animate the statue of a pony might bring it to life as a fully living and breathing pony instead, and a spell meant to look into the past might even cause its Colt-aged spellcaster to temporarily revert into a Foal.

It is important to note that Magical Mishaps are rarely permanent, though the GM may override this rule if they feel it is necessary or appropriate to the setting, story, or situation.




Unicorn Pony Foals

Unicorn Pony Foals, like Pegasus Pony Foals, suffer diminished use of their racial abilities. However, as their racial ability of spellcasting and wielding magic is potentially the most overtly powerful one, the limitations they suffer as a Foal are the most restricting. During character creation, a Unicorn Pony who is a Blank Flank does not gain any free Magical Aspects or Spell Points. While they may spend experience points to learn them, a Unicorn Pony Foal who wants to begin using magic while they are a Blank Flank does not gain anything for free—they must work hard to develop their magic early. This early development may even include the purchase of the Prime Effect “Telekinesis” (which automatically grants the spell of the same name, at Level 1).

Regardless of any training they may undergo to develop their spellcasting abilities early, Unicorn Pony Foals who are Blank Flanks sometimes get surges of magical power as their abilities begin to awaken and develop. Until the character is no longer a Blank Flank, they follow the ‘Magic Surges’ rules below. Upon discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark, a Unicorn Pony gains full use of their abilities as normal, and no longer has these surges of magic power.

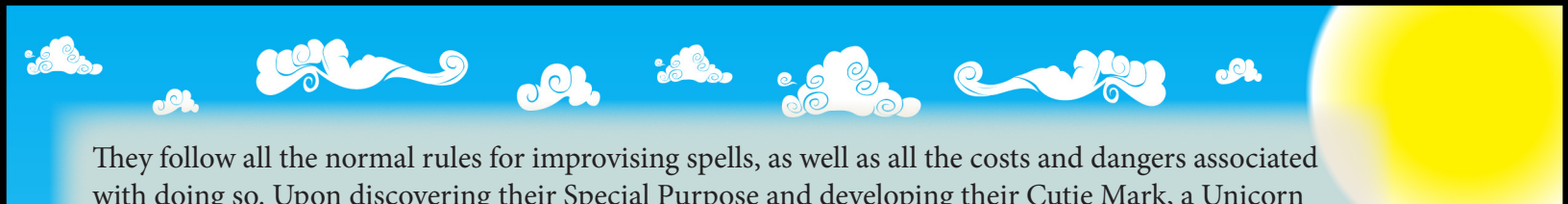
In addition, a Unicorn Pony gaining full use of their magic for the first time (as part of discovering their Special Purpose) typically has something strange and special happen to them. This might take the form of being magically dragged by their horn to a symbol of their Special Purpose, or being a conduit for magical power beyond their ability to harness. Whatever form it takes, a Unicorn Pony’s magic always does something special when it first fully awakens within them.

Magic Surges



Unicorn Pony Foals who are Blank Flanks make a single d20 roll at the beginning of each play session. If the roll result is between 1 and 10, their character plays as normal. However, if the roll result is between 11 and 20, the character’s player may choose one scene during the play session to have their character be considered to be undergoing a ‘Magic Surge’ for the duration of the scene. This Magical Surge can be invoked at any point during the scene, but only lasts until the end of the scene, and a character may only undergo one Magical Surge per play session. A Magical Surge does not have to be used, but an unused Magical Surge cannot be ‘saved’ from one play session to the next; it is lost at the end of the play session in which it is gained.

A Magical Surge is when a Unicorn Pony Foal’s developing magical abilities flare to life briefly. While undergoing a Magical Surge, a Unicorn Pony Foal may ‘improvise’ spells as if they knew *every* Magical Aspect (except for any Prime Effects which they do not already know, except for Telekinesis).



They follow all the normal rules for improvising spells, as well as all the costs and dangers associated with doing so. Upon discovering their Special Purpose and developing their Cutie Mark, a Unicorn Pony Foal no longer undergoes Magical Surges.

King of the Hoard

Dragons are powerful, reptilian creatures whose inherent magic rivals any other race even in their youth; once they become adults, there are few beings anywhere who can contend with a Dragon. From limited spellcasting, to flight, to their different tails and other physical features, hardly any two Dragons are entirely alike—and this is reflected in their personalities as well as how they wield the potent magic they embody.

To reflect their wide variation and unique aspects, Dragons gain traits—some of which are pre-set, and some of which must be chosen—during character creation. Some of these traits are based on how old the Dragon is; for example, a Hatchling has not yet grown their wings. Some of these traits are based on the Dragon's temperament, or lineage. But all of these traits help to form the core of a Dragon character. As a Dragon ages, they gain traits they become eligible for, such as a Hatchling who grows into a Drake gaining wings.

Universal Traits

The following three traits are ones which all Dragons, regardless of age, gain during character creation. Two of them are decisions which must be made, and cannot be altered once selected. These trait choices form the foundation of a Dragon's style and unique existence, and are very personal to them.

Heritage

A Dragon must choose their Heritage, or what type of society they were hatched in and spent their formative early infancy in. This early rearing period has a profound impact on a Dragon, and instills them with a special ability. These Heritage choices are not necessarily literal, but may be thought of as archetypes.

A Dragon who hatched in an *Equestrian* society spent their early infancy in a loving, caring, nurturing environment. Because of this, they have the “heart of a pony,” so to speak, and have a strong tendency toward optimism and cooperation. Dragons with an Equestrian Heritage gain a pseudo-Special Purpose. They develop their ‘Special Purpose’ in the same way that a pony character does, but they receive a diminished effect due to not being a pony themselves. Rather than the standard ‘half-again the dice roll’ which a pony's Special Purpose provides, a Dragon's ‘Special Purpose’ provides only half the effect it would if it were a standard Special Purpose—effectively being ‘one-quarter-again the dice roll,’ so to speak.

A Dragon who hatched in a *Draconic* society spent their infancy in a harsh environment which required a constant struggle to survive in. Because of this, they learned the value of relentless willpower and ambition, and have a strong tendency toward suspicion and aggression. Dragons with a Draconic Heritage generally have a powerful will stemming from their tendency to be aggressive and combative. Whenever their Energy, Courage, or Fortitude attributes drop to zero, and they would normally become ‘sidelined,’ they may choose to immediately ‘burn’ a point of their Willpower. Doing so spends the point of Willpower, and restores one point to whichever attribute would have been reduced to zero,

preventing the Dragon from becoming sidelined. This allows them to continue to face a difficult or dangerous situation for as long as their Willpower holds out.

Tail Type

A Dragon must choose the type of tail they have; all Dragons have a tail ending in some type of weapon or tool, though the exact type varies from Dragon to Dragon. Regardless of which type of tail is chosen, the Dragon may treat it as being an Appropriate Tool for the purpose of gaining a Tool bonus to any tasks attempted using the Dragon's tail which are appropriate for its type. Tools, and Tool bonuses, are explained in detail later in this book. The three types of tails are: **Club**, a heavy bludgeon like a hammer or a mace, **Spade**, a shovel-head-like tip with a sharp edge, or **Spikes**, retractable piercing spines from the last length of the tail itself.



Immune to Fire

All Dragons are immune to heat, flame, and even lava which would be deadly to other races. The only exceptions to this rule are that a Dragon is not immune to a phoenix's flame, the flame of another Dragon, or the magical flame of another mystical creature.

Fire Breath



Dragons may breathe fire whenever they wish, and may count their flame as an Appropriate Tool for the purpose of gaining a Tool bonus to any tasks attempted using the Dragon's fire breath which are appropriate to its use. Tools, and Tool bonuses, are explained in detail later in this book.

Hatchling Traits

Even at a very young age, a Dragon has some level of power. Hatchlings and Drakes both gain the following traits during character creation.

Dragon Magic

Dragons have the ability to learn some small amount of magic and use it via their flame breath. This is not the same as a Unicorn Pony's spellcasting ability, but allows Dragons to gain a little grasp of magic; enough to know a useful trick or two. Dragons do not begin play knowing any spells; any magic they wish to gain they must learn as they make their way in the world (at the GM's discretion, this restriction may be waived).



A Dragon does not gain access to Magical Aspects the way that a Unicorn Pony does, and thus cannot ‘improvise’ spells the way they do; they are restricted entirely to set spells and so have very little flexibility. A Dragon may purchase spells with experience points in the same way that a Unicorn Pony does, with a few exceptions and limitations. First, they may only learn a spell which a Unicorn Pony character they are friends with (or who would teach them) already knows; a Dragon can be ‘taught’ spells in this way, but cannot research them and create them on their own the way a Unicorn Pony can. Second, a Dragon can only learn a spell they could reasonably utilize via their fire breath; the exact nature of how this is justified and manifested is subject to GM approval, and should be developed with the GM’s assistance. Finally, a Dragon cannot learn a spell with a Difficulty higher than their Mind score. Spells and magic are explained in more detail in the Unicorn Pony racial ability section.

A Dragon may only know a number of spells less than or equal to their Mind score; if they wish to learn a new spell, they can choose to ‘forget’ one they know, and replace it with the new spell, though doing so permanently removes their ability to use the replaced spell.

Thick Scales

Dragons have thick scales which can protect them from harm in the same way that armor protects the wearer from some types of injury. Whenever a Dragon rolls to resist harm from a physical injury which armor would help to protect against, they may treat their scales as being an Appropriate Tool for the purpose of gaining a Tool bonus to the resistance roll. Tools, and Tool bonuses, are explained in detail later in this book.

Drake Traits

As a Dragon ages, they gain more power and ability; upon reaching the Drake stage of growth, a Dragon gains access to the following traits; these may be gained during character creation, or upon growing up to the Drake stage.

Dragon Migration

Drakes grow a pair of leathery wings which allow them to fly in much the same way that Pegasus Ponies do. However, this is flight only; Dragons cannot manipulate clouds, produce weather effects, or do any of the other magical things Pegasus Ponies can do due to their wings. Dragons also do not gain the Flight Attributes which Pegasus Ponies gain; they are typically not as fast or graceful as a Pegasus Pony is when airborne.

Big, Bad Dragon

Drakes grow physically as they mature, becoming stronger, faster, and all around more physically powerful. Drakes automatically gain their choice of one of the following Talents: Strong, Tough, Fast, or Agile. If the Dragon already has all four of these, then this ability has no effect on them.

The Spark that Resides in the Heart of us all

After applying your character's unique racial abilities, the next step of character creation is to decide upon their Guiding Element of Harmony. The Elements of Harmony are powerful magical artifacts in and of themselves, but they are the embodiments of deeper, philosophical ideals which make up the foundations of friendship. As such, the Elements of Harmony as artifacts can be thought of as simply being objects which channel the deep power of these virtues, whereas the true Elements of Harmony are the virtues themselves; virtues every friend has, to one degree or another.

While a good friend has some amount of each Element of Harmony within them, they also embody one Element more so than the others. For example, while Fluttershy is certainly generous and loyal, she most embodies the Element of Kindness; while Rainbow Dash is certainly fun-loving and honest, she most embodies the Element of Loyalty. This is the key to a character's Guiding Element of Harmony; which of the six Elements of Harmony they embody the most. Every character has a Guiding Element of Harmony, and it informs many aspects of their personality.

Mechanically, a character's Guiding Element of Harmony has fairly minimal impact on gameplay in its standard form, though it can certainly be the key for considerably important story elements (such as controlling the Elements of Harmony artifacts themselves) if your group's story involves them. In its standard form, a character's Guiding Element of Harmony performs two functions. First, embodying your character's Guiding Element of Harmony in their roleplaying during a scene may help them recover lost Willpower. Second, your character's Guiding Element of Harmony determines any additional effects they get from their 'second wind,' as well as any additional effects they grant to others when inspiring them to recover from being sidelined. All of these functions are explained in more detail in the individual entries for each Element of Harmony, or later in this section.

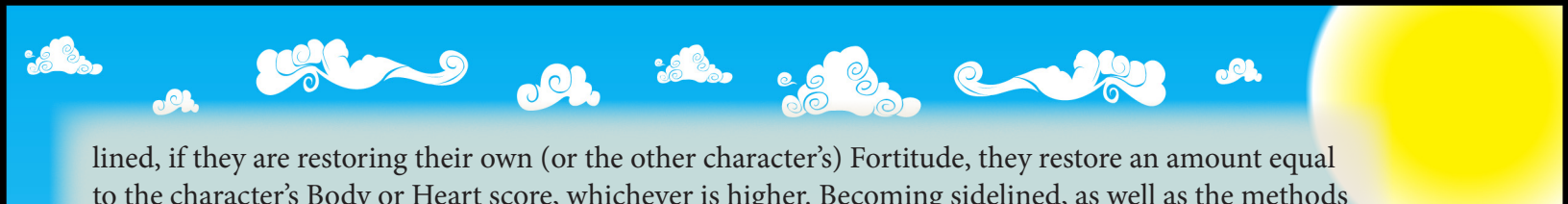
The Elements of Harmony

There are six Elements of Harmony, of which characters may choose one to be their Guiding Element of Harmony: Kindness, Laughter, Generosity, Honesty, Loyalty, and Magic. Each one embodies a number of philosophical concepts and ideals which can inform a character's personality and outlook on life, helping them to make decisions and react appropriately to situations. However, it is important to note that a character's Guiding Element of Harmony does not restrict their behavior in any way; as stated before, a character has aspects of each Element within them. Their specific Guiding Element of Harmony is simply the one which they best exemplify.

The Element of Kindness

The Element of Kindness is found in characters who have a deep compassion for others, and an acceptance of others for who they are. A kind character seeks not only to do no harm, but also to heal hurts in others, and nurture them. While they aren't necessarily as generous, encouraging, or devoted as others might be, a character who embodies Kindness has a deep compassion and empathy for others which most do not. They are more aware of someone's feelings and well-being, and how their actions—and the actions of others—might affect them. For this reason, a kind character tends to be reluctant to engage in confrontation and might try to stop it before it starts, but would be the first to make peace afterward and take care of those who were harmed.

When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Kindness uses their 'second wind' to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being side-



lined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character's) Fortitude, they restore an amount equal to the character's Body or Heart score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.

The Element of Laughter

The Element of Laughter is found in characters who are optimistic at their core, and seek to use their positivity and energetic good cheer to make the world a better place. A cheerful character tends to be upbeat and rarely discouraged or fearful; even when things are at their worst, they can find the silver lining in the dark clouds. While they can tend to be odd and appear to not take things seriously, this is often not the case; a cheerful character generally understands the gravity of a situation, but chooses to focus on the positive and fun aspects of it instead of dwelling on the grim and negative. For this reason, a cheerful character tends to be more apt to encourage others than to oppose them; they are more likely to throw a party to try to change someone's attitude than to argue with them.

When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Laughter uses their 'second wind' to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being sidelined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character's) Energy, they restore an amount equal to the character's Mind or Body score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.


The Element of Generosity

The Element of Generosity is found in characters who readily make sacrifices for others, giving of their time, effort, possessions, and even opportunity. While Generosity is similar to Kindness, it differs in that while a kind character might nurture someone by making sure that they get the medical care they need, a generous character would absolutely insist on taking care of the person themselves. It's not enough for a generous character to make sure someone gets something nice or something they need; a generous character has a deep need to make, give, or deliver it themselves, personally. This can get them into trouble by causing them to try to take on too many responsibilities, but it is this theme of dedicated self-sacrifice which is the mark of a character who truly embodies the Element of Generosity.

When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Generosity uses their 'second wind' to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being sidelined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character's) Fortitude, they restore an amount equal to the character's Body or Heart score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.

The Element of Honesty


The Element of Honesty is found in characters who focus on personal integrity, responsibility, and straightforward morality. An honest character is more than simply someone who doesn't tell lies; they have an 'honest heart,' and try to be exceedingly dependable in all aspects of their life. An honest character usually has very strong self-discipline, and firm convictions in what they think is right or wrong; they rarely (if ever) lie or cheat, even with their enemies. To an honest character, a commitment they have made is a sacred duty; an oath or vow that they must fulfill at any cost. This can lead to an honest



character being blind to the assistance others can offer, as they focus on their own personal responsibility and how important it is to their ‘honest heart’ that they make good on their promises. But it is this dependability and firm moral core of steadfast integrity which defines an honest character.

When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Honesty uses their ‘second wind’ to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being sidelined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character’s) Courage, they restore an amount equal to the character’s Mind or Heart score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.

The Element of Loyalty



The Element of Loyalty is found in characters who place immense value on those who they consider important, and choose those friends over others—and even themselves. A loyal character desires value and acceptance from their friends, and regularly does things in service to their friends which they do not—or cannot—do in service to others. While a loyal character shows aspects of the other Elements in the things they do, they usually show them more when serving their friends; while they might help others and reap the glory for themselves, when helping friends they are likely to do so even to their own detriment. This is the difference between a loyal character and anyone else: a loyal character will push themselves far beyond the lengths they would normally go to when they do so out of loyalty to their friends.


When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Loyalty uses their ‘second wind’ to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being sidelined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character’s) Courage, they restore an amount equal to the character’s Mind or Heart score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.

The Element of Magic

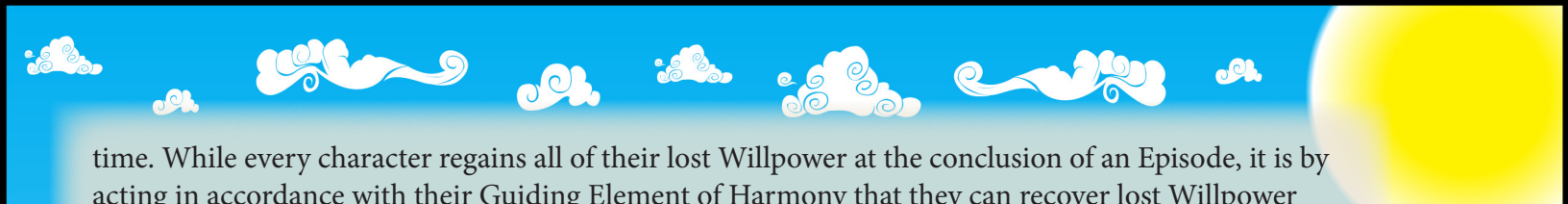
The Element of Magic is found in characters who approach the world with an outlook of faith and wonder, and strive to see what makes things special. A wondrous character focuses on the unique and the important, looking for what makes each pony, each situation, each experience, ‘magical.’ Often, a wondrous character tends to have an innocent, even naive, outlook on life; they have an optimism which is similar to (but more restrained than) a cheerful character’s. A wondrous character approaches situations with a unifying faith in the world around them and their friends, and more often than not, it is they who more readily see the ‘magic’ of friendship for what it truly is.

When a character whose Guiding Element of Harmony is Magic uses their ‘second wind’ to recover from being sidelined, or spends Willpower to inspire another character to recover from being sidelined, if they are restoring their own (or the other character’s) Energy, they restore an amount equal to the character’s Mind or Body score, whichever is higher. Becoming sidelined, as well as the methods of recovering from it, are explained in more detail later.

The Power of Harmony



In addition to informing a character’s behavior and giving them an edge in recovery, a character’s Guiding Element of Harmony is the primary method they have of recovering lost Willpower over



time. While every character regains all of their lost Willpower at the conclusion of an Episode, it is by acting in accordance with their Guiding Element of Harmony that they can recover lost Willpower sooner, albeit at a slower pace.

At the end of each scene in which the GM and the player agree that the player's character acted in accordance with their Guiding Element of Harmony (albeit in their own way), that character regains one point of lost Willpower. This 'one at a time' rate of restoration can be slow or fast depending on the pace of the game, and characters who often use Willpower to push themselves are likely to find that they still run low. However, this way of restoring Willpower ensures that characters who are roleplayed well can always push themselves that extra mile when they really need to.

A Big Old Storm of Chaos

The other side of positive character aspects like the Elements of Harmony is that many characters also have flaws. Flaws are entirely optional; a character is not required to have any, and players and the GM should work together to decide if they are appropriate to use for the group's setting or story. Flaws can give a story flavor, giving characters something to overcome within themselves; but they can also be dangerous, as flaws affect a character's mechanics and make it harder for them to achieve victory in the situations they apply to. On the other hand, flaws may award characters additional experience points, making the game progress a bit more quickly. All in all, taking a flaw is always risky, and should not be done casually.

Flaws, Fears, Faults, and Failings

In this section are ten pre-made flaws which players may work with their GM to adapt to their characters. These pre-made flaws are not the only options for flaws; a player who has an idea for a flaw may work with their GM to create one of their own. However, the following pre-made flaws should serve as guides and examples for how to create a flaw; a flaw should impact, but not cripple, some mechanical or conceptual aspect of a character. Flaws should apply in a certain general type of situation; remember that a flaw is not specific to a single scene or encounter, but rather is something a character might have to struggle with themselves over regularly.

Fraidy-Pony

Your character is timid and more than a little skittish; they do not handle fear and intimidation well. Whenever your character loses points of Courage, they lose an additional point.

Plum Tuckered

Your character tires out more easily than others and is simply not built for handling hard work. Whenever your character loses points of Energy, they lose an additional point.

Delicate

Your character does not deal with pain or injury well, and can be more easily hurt than others. Whenever your character loses points of Fortitude, they lose an additional point.

Shy

Your character has a hard time with social interactions, being shy and nervous around others. When your character makes a roll involving their Heart attribute for the purpose of social interaction, they don't apply their Heart attribute score as a bonus to the roll.

Clumsy

Your character is uncoordinated and is not suited to acrobatic or athletic pursuits. When your character makes a roll involving their Body attribute for the purpose of feats of acrobatics or athletics, they don't apply their Body attribute score as a bonus to the roll.

Dense

Your character isn't as well-educated as others, and has trouble applying themselves to academic and scholarly tasks. When your character makes a roll involving their Mind attribute for the purpose of academic study or application, they don't apply their Mind attribute score as a bonus to the roll.

Intense Phobia

Your character is intensely afraid of something, and can't stand being near it for long. Work with your GM to decide on an appropriate focus for your character's phobia. When your character is in the presence of the focus of their phobia, they must make a Courage check each round; each time they fail this check, they lose one point of Courage.

DO NOT FEAR US

Due to some aspect of your character, whether it be their heritage, past actions, or even rumors and gossip about them, most characters distrust your character and react fearfully to them in some way, until they get to know them.

You Are So Random

Due to your character's reputation for being unreliable, odd, or even just random, most characters don't take your character seriously until they get to know them.

Low Society

Due to your character's social standing, most higher-class characters tend to treat your character with disdain until they get to know them.



Never Lose Faith in Your Friends

The primary benefit of taking a flaw (or a few) is that flaws can help a character earn extra experience points. At the end of each Episode in which a character suffered meaningful difficulty or hardship as a result of one (or more) of their flaws, the character gains one experience point. This must be more than a simple 'speed bump' of inconvenience; a character must be considerably hindered by a flaw for it to grant the bonus experience point.

For example, a character with the Fraidy Pony flaw probably wouldn't earn extra experience by losing one extra point of Courage, but they probably would if they suffered a few extra points lost, which led to their becoming sidelined during an important scene. A character with the Low Society flaw wouldn't gain extra experience by being looked down upon by high society ponies visiting their town, but might if they had to work much harder at convincing those high society ponies to trust them about an important matter.

Multiple flaws do not grant multiple bonus experience points; a character can only gain one experience point per Episode through their flaws. The main benefit of having multiple flaws, then, is that it gives a character a higher chance of encountering a situation in which one of their flaws might apply. Of course, it is also dangerous for characters to have too many flaws, as a character who is hindered by one flaw, and another who is hindered by five flaws, both only earn one bonus experience point for the Episode.

Chic, Unique, and Magnifique

With the mechanical aspects of character creation finished, all that remains is to flesh out your character in terms of their unique style and aspects of their life and history. The following sections will guide you through key elements of these 'flavor' parts of development, meshing your character's concept with their reality, and reminding you of certain aspects to make sure they are not overlooked. First is the character's physical appearance, style, and mannerisms.



Short Tails are 'in' this Season

A character's body type and physical features are important, as it denotes how they move, stand, and present themselves—as well as how others react to them. For example, a stout workhorse and a tall majestic stallion might have the same mechanical aspects, but might be roleplayed differently. A simple and plain filly and one with very elegant features might be treated differently by others. And a chubby dragon, versus one with more sleek, angular features might present themselves entirely differently. A character should at least have a well-defined body type, coat color, eye color, and mane/tail style and color. Additional features provide more information and are always helpful, but these are the essential features to define.

In The Eye of the Beholder

How does being handsome or beautiful affect the game? The short answer is that it doesn't. There are no mechanical ways of reflecting a character's physical beauty and attractiveness, because beauty is a subjective concept; what one character finds attractive, another could find repulsive. That's not to

say that your GM won't choose to use beauty as an aspect of your game, only that being handsome or beautiful does not make a character better.

The Rainbow Wig Just Kills it for Me

In addition to physical features is a character's style of dress and any accessories they may have. From a fancy gala dress to worn work duds, from a hoof-stitched Nightmare Night costume to the shining golden armor of the Canterlot Royal Guard, a character's style of dress (or lack thereof) can influence them considerably. When considering your character's style of dress, think about if they would change outfits often, or stick to a standard one. Do they prefer frills and frippery, or plain and practical? Often, a character's style can inform much of how they act.

THE ROYAL CANTERLOT VOICE

Just as important as how a character looks and dresses, is how they speak and interact with others. This is not just their tone of voice, but also the language and vocabulary they use, and their level of formality. A character who speaks plainly on the farm and in a royal court might find that the two societies react differently. A character who uses a complex vocabulary among scholars and among construction ponies might find themselves misunderstood. Does your character talk real plain-like? Or do they utilize an alternate and more elegant lexicon? Do they use crazy-wazy made-up words? Or are they more radical and awesome when they talk? Um... are they soft-spoken? OR DO THEY USE THE TRADITIONAL ROYAL CANTERLOT VOICE? As the saying goes, it's not what you say, it's how you say it.

Mine!

Personal possessions and assets can be tricky to define for a character. On the one hand, having more things can help a character from time to time, whereas having less gives them less to work with. But it is important to note that most characters only have a few things which are important to them, and that a character's personal possessions can often be simplified instead of being extensively cataloged. During character creation, it is important to work with your GM as well as your fellow players to determine what is fair for each character to have.

This is Smartypants

First is personal items; these are things generally carried on, or with, the character. For example, a hat, or a toolbelt, would be examples of a personal item, whereas a carpentry shop would not. This can include items which a character may retrieve easily, such as an old stuffed doll, or a sewing kit. In general, anything which the character is carrying with them, or may carry with them easily, is a personal item.





Go Gummy, it's Your Birthday

Pets, animal companions, and number one assistants, are generally not granted in this section. Because they represent a potentially important asset which can make accomplishing tasks and overcoming challenges easier, they are gained by spending experience points to purchase character advancements for each type. However, there is one exception. Animals such as barnyard animals, which are not necessarily domesticated pets or companions, can be granted in this section, as they are not much of a mechanical advantage.

Welcome to Carousel Boutique

Structures such as homes and businesses can be important to a character's concept; a character who makes and sells dresses needs a shop in which to make and sell those dresses, and a librarian needs a library. Even vehicles, such as wagons, chariots, and hot-air balloons, can fall into this type of holding. Perhaps your character lives in a covered wagon which can unfold into an impromptu shop, or has a stately mansion in addition to their bustling retail business. While it is important to keep things fair and agreeable to everyone at the table, these types of assets are important.

We take Cash or Credit

Unlike in many traditional roleplaying games, money and wealth are much less important in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. Rather than keep track of exactly how many Bits a character has, it is better to come up with a general level of wealth they possess. For example, instead of listing '1254 Bits,' it is generally better to define a character's wealth as something like 'rich enough to buy wagons and supplies, but not mansions.' However, if your group's setting or story demands more precise accounting, listing Bits and gems may be more appropriate.

The Story of My Whole Entire Life...

A character's backstory and outlook are important to have developed, but it is also important to leave some 'wobble room' to adapt to the story as it develops. At its most basic level, this can mean to try to avoid absolute intolerance or hatred; a character who hates and always attacks Earth Ponies, for example, is far too inflexible. However, a character who dislikes them—but can still tolerate them—is much more viable. No character emerges from character creation fully formed; every character changes over time as experiences and their own decisions affect them.

Above its most basic level, however, it is important to keep a character's backstory from being too rigid. It can be fun, for example, for a GM to work with a player to introduce a character who is a 'cousin' or 'old friend.' So, rather than listing in detail every event of a character's life up until the present day, it is better to give more broad overviews and general summaries, and fill in details as the game goes on. Good roleplaying develops a character both forward and backward.

I Had it All Along!

During play, an issue may sometimes arise where a character did not specifically state that they are carrying a certain item, but when a situation arises in which they wish to use it, they act as if they have it. Typically, it is best to consider the likelihood of the character having taken the item with them. A hammer as part of a tool belt they are wearing is likely; a hammer as part of a gala dress they are wearing is not. If it is likely that they would have it, the GM may decide they 'had it all along.'

...Up Until Today

What is your character doing now, at the time the story starts? It is best to work with the GM and your fellow players to decide upon the situation of the characters at the time the game begins. Sometimes, a story involves something happening which disrupts the everyday life of the characters; whereas other times, it involves a character beginning the inciting conflict themselves. Regardless, it is good not just to know where your character has come from with their backstory, but also where they are now as the game begins.

Not just another Jane Doe

The final step of character creation is to spend the experience points your character is entitled to as part of character creation, to purchase character advancements. These initial character advancements serve to give your character their first truly freely-chosen and unique improvements; almost no two characters are ever alike after these experience points are spent to develop them. Character advancements are explained in more detail later.

These experience points do not disappear at the end of character creation; any which are not spent stay with the character. However, experience points on their own do not do much, and by default, character advancements must be purchased before or after a game session, not in the middle of one. Thus, it is best to spend these experience points during character creation, instead of saving them. More often than not, characters end up with 'leftover' experience anyway.





The Wide, Wide World of Equestria


An unnatural thunderstorm forms over the town one night, and in the flashes of lightning, the silhouettes of strange serpentine creatures can be seen circling in the clouds. An oddball cousin comes to visit for the weekend, but their ways are strange in the eyes of ‘normal’ ponies. After the big spring festival, a young foal has gone missing in the Everfree Forest. While cleaning out a dusty attic, an old forgotten chest is found, containing a map to hidden treasure. In Equestria, adventure and life lessons can come from almost anywhere; even the most seemingly simple and ordinary events can become something ponies remember for the rest of their lives.

In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, your characters will embark on these adventures and memorable events, trusting in themselves and their friends to see them through hardships and share in triumphs. Because characters may do anything from fighting off a fearsome beast to planning and executing an important festival over the course of their story, the game is designed to follow a loose narrative/cinematic style of play rather than a more rigid one. Actions a character makes, and tasks they attempt, are not chosen from a list of abilities and powers, but rather are described and developed, then resolved by interpretation using the rules.

New players, or those who are used to more ‘tactical’ pen and paper roleplaying games, may have some difficulty adapting to this method, initially. But this section of the book is dedicated to explaining how the game is played, and serves as a guide to introduce players to the narrative, character-driven style of play in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*.

Shall We?

At its heart, *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* is played in two distinct ‘modes’ based on the situation at hand: ***Narrative Mode***, and ***Cinematic Mode***. While each mode is discussed in more detail later, it is important to get a brief overview and introduction to both, to get a feel for when the game



is being played in each mode. Veteran roleplayers will likely recognize these modes easily, but for new players, this summary can help to avoid confusion.

Narrative Mode is the mode most of the game is played in. It is a loose and reasonably informal ‘discussion’ style of play, where the characters are not generally being threatened and are free to take whatever actions and attempt whatever tasks they wish. There is no set turn order during Narrative Mode, and the GM decides when the focus shifts between characters who are not near each other. Time can pass quickly or slowly in Narrative Mode, as well as being paused entirely. In video game terms, this is typically the part in most roleplaying games when the characters are free to roam a town or world map between action sequences or encounters.

Cinematic Mode is the mode in which most of the action of the game is played. It is more formal and structured, primarily because the passage of time from moment to moment is more important in the situation at hand. In general, Cinematic Mode is used whenever the characters are in an ‘action sequence,’ or a situation where they (or others) are in danger, or are on a time limit. There is a loose turn order, and the concept of ‘rounds’ in Cinematic Mode, explained in more detail later. In video game terms, this is typically the part in most roleplaying games when the characters are in combat, or must accomplish something in a set amount of time.

Once Upon a Time...

A bright, sunny day dawns, bringing with it the promise of adventure and friendship; the trees are lit in oranges, reds, and yellows, and the brisk morning chill hangs in the air. What do you do this morning?

This is Narrative Mode, the mode most of the game is played in, and the most informal of the two game modes. Narrative Mode is primarily character-driven; the GM will typically give the set-up to the situation, and let the players and their characters go about their business, responding to them and reacting to the actions they take. Narrative Mode could be thought of as the time between action sequences when the characters can decide on what they are doing, and begin doing it. This can be anything from planning and preparation, to exploration and investigation, to going about their business, even to resting and recovering.

The princess is coming to town in a few days, and everypony needs to help set up for the parade. Several friends explore an old cave outside of town, looking for buried treasure. One character is looking for another, and asks around town to see if anypony knows where they are. After a hard day’s work, a group of friends relax and cook a meal to enjoy together. All of these are examples of situations appropriate to Narrative Mode.

Giving Everyone a Turn

Because there is no strict turn order in Narrative Mode, it is not uncommon for one character to keep going and going without considering that other characters might be waiting to take their actions. With only one GM at the table, only one character can act at a time—and it is easy to become the center of attention. For this reason, consider the other players when having your character act in Narrative Mode; from time to time, make sure no one is waiting to have their character do something, and if they are, put your character temporarily on hold and let them have a turn.

For example, when exploring an old ruin looking for a lost foal, instead of having your character try

everything they can think of before letting anyone else have a turn, have them try one or two things, then put them on hold so that others can try something. While the GM will generally put a character on hold to let others have a turn, it is important not to rely on the GM, and to put yourself on hold and check with the rest of the group. This promotes a friendly table atmosphere.

Playing With Time

The passage of time is less important and less strictly enforced in Narrative Mode, and as such, it can be ‘played with’ to a certain degree. Typically, this takes two forms: a ‘meanwhile’ or a ‘time skip.’ A meanwhile is usually found when the group of characters have split up. In an effort to keep events running concurrently, the GM will ‘pause’ one group, then have the second group take their actions for the same period of time, alternating between the groups.

For example, if two characters out of a group of four have been doing things for an hour of ‘in-game time,’ the GM may put them on hold, rewind the clock, and shift to the other two characters, so that they can act for that same hour; ‘meanwhile,’ the events are running at the same time. A ‘time skip,’ on the other hand, is usually a fast-forward of in-game time to avoid tedious scenes and actions.

For example, if the characters go to sleep for the night, the GM will typically time skip until the following morning—or until something happens that night.



Making Yourself Known

Because Narrative Mode is much more loose and informal than Cinematic Mode, characters are not generally prompted to take each individual action; for this reason, it is important for a player to state clearly what their character is doing or not doing during a scene in Narrative Mode. Sometimes, new roleplayers (and some more experienced ones) have a tendency to use the ‘of course my character would have’ logic. For example, a group makes a quick trip into town, then goes out exploring and comes across a cliff. One player claims that their character has a rope, even though their did not say that their character had gotten it, or picked up climbing gear; because ‘of course my character would have’ gotten those things.

This kind of logic is not valid in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. While a GM might, from time to time or after having gotten to know a group of characters’ tendencies, let something like this slide, the general rule of thumb is that if you didn’t state that your character did something, then they didn’t do it.

We Ain't Got All Day

A baby carriage careens down a steep hill toward the edge of a high cliff, but a fearsome pack of Timber Wolves stands between the group and the carriage. Will you succeed in the rescue?

This is Cinematic Mode, the mode most 'action sequences' of the game are played in. Cinematic Mode is mostly action-driven; characters attempt tasks and react to the situation at hand, in order to overcome some pressing challenge. The characters and the GM alternate taking 'turns' during 'rounds' of play which keep track of time more strictly than Narrative Mode. Cinematic Mode could be thought of as a turn-based 'combat mode,' though it is important to note that not all challenges have an adversary; sometimes, the situation itself is what must be overcome.

A pack of menacing Timber Wolves has the group surrounded, and they must fight their way out. A bridge has gone out, and the group must rescue ponies before they fall into the raging river. Parasprites are devouring all the food in town, and the group must stop them before there's nothing left. To rescue a missing foal, the group must distract an enraged dragon. All of these are situations appropriate to Cinematic Mode.

The Turn Order

In Cinematic Mode, the game progresses in 'rounds.' A round is an incremental measurement of time, usually only a few seconds, in which several actions take place. The group of characters and the GM alternate taking turns, and each time that both have taken their turn, a new round begins. The point of following a structured format of turns and rounds is to emphasize the importance of each action taken during a stressful or dangerous situation, and to show how each action can quickly change the course of such a situation. This section will explain how each round of Cinematic Mode progresses.

Twists and Turns

The GM always has the first turn during a round of Cinematic Mode. During their turn, the GM sets up the scene and describes the situation, as well as enacting the events which take place around the characters during the round. The GM 'plays the monsters' on their turn, though they also play the environment, non-player characters, and any additional elements and aspects of the situation at hand. This includes any actions taken against the group of characters.

For example, the GM describes how an unnatural thunderstorm has caused a bridge to go out. Several ponies are clinging to the bridge, in danger of falling into the river below. While the group of characters rush to the scene, however, several lightning bolts come from the sky, on a course to strike two of them, and strong gusts of wind push against them all, as if the storm is trying to slow their approach.

Taking the Initiative (Away)

Veteran roleplayers will undoubtedly notice the lack of an 'initiative' system to determine who goes first and in what order during Cinematic Mode. In My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, turn order is handed more narratively than tactically. Because the difficult situations in the show tend to be presented as more of a narrative back-and-forth than a tactical engagement, the simply structured and standardized progression of Cinematic Mode is meant to focus more on character actions and promoting that 'back-and-forth' feel. Thus, there is no 'initiative' type system in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic.

Look Out!

Immediately following the GM's turn, any characters who are influenced by the events of the GM's turn may be entitled to make a 'Reactive Task' in response. Typically, Reactive Tasks are defensive in nature, attempting to avoid potential harm to the character—though they may be more aggressive, or sacrificial; a character may sometimes wish to accept potential harm in order to accomplish something, or save someone else from harm. Reactive Tasks are explained in more detail later.

Reactive Tasks are generally only granted to characters in danger of harm, though the GM may sometimes grant them in order to stop something from happening, such as to push someone out of the way of harm directed at them. All characters who are entitled to Reactive Tasks take them simultaneously, sharing one turn amongst themselves. This means that the players may choose any order in which to take the actions; one character's Reactive Task result might influence what the next character does as their Reactive Task.

For example, the two characters in danger of being struck by lightning bolts in the previous example would be entitled to Reactive Tasks (probably to avoid the lightning, though this would be up to the character's player), though the rest of the group might not.

Let's do this!

Once any Reactive Tasks have been resolved, it becomes the group of characters' turn. During their turn, characters may make an Active Task, which can be more involved than a Reactive Task as it is attempted on the character's terms. As with performing Reactive Tasks, all the characters share one group turn, and may have their characters attempt actions in any order they wish, adapting to the results of each Active Task attempted. Active Tasks are explained in more detail later.

For example, once the Reactive Tasks in response to the lightning strikes have been resolved in the previous example, the group of characters now gain their group turn, and each character may make an Active Task attempt. This might be anything from trying to fly through the strong headwinds to save the ponies in danger, casting a spell to try to repair the bridge, or trying to knock a tree down to dam up the river.

Consequences

After the Active Tasks of the characters are resolved, the GM has a chance to relate any further consequences of the characters' actions; this can also be an opportunity for the GM to give hints, or highlight certain dangers as being more important than others. Once this is done, a new round begins, with the GM taking their turn as normal.

For example, the characters who tried to fly through the headwinds couldn't get through, in the previous example. The GM takes the time at the end of the round to describe how the winds became more fierce the harder they tried to fly through them, and that flashes of lightning showed silhouettes of serpentine creatures up in the clouds. This allows the GM to 'highlight' certain aspects of the situation, to help players make informed decisions about their characters' actions.



Nice Work, Rainbow Crash!

Sometimes, things go wrong. This is a truth in any interaction, and a game is no different. Because of this, the players and the GM may sometimes need to 'retcon' (from the phrase "retroactive continuity") things. Retconning is the act of going back and changing something which has already happened, or inserting an event which did not occur, as if it did. Typically, retconning is a practice to be avoided, as excessive retconning can lead to confusion. However, from time to time it is necessary, and with the GM's approval, can be done.

Retconning for Clarification

Sometimes, though the game is designed to promote description and discussion, someone will misunderstand something someone else said or had their character do, and it may be necessary to retcon for clarification. For example, if a non-player character gets offended over something a character said, but the character didn't say it—rather, the GM misunderstood the player's description—it may be necessary to retcon, and have the non-player character not have become offended and angry in the first place.

Retconning for Narration

Sometimes, there are continuity errors which have led to confusion over the situation at hand or have led to unnecessary mistakes. In this case, it may be necessary to retcon for narration. For example, a group is sent to retrieve a red gem from a cave, but one of the players wrote down 'blue gem' instead, or the GM meant to say 'blue gem' instead, and when the characters retrieve the 'wrong' gem, it is clearly a mistake. It may be necessary to retcon, and have the characters have actually retrieved the correct gem.

Getting 'er Done

The backbone of roleplaying in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* is understanding and making good use of 'Tasks' (sometimes called 'rolls' or 'checks' for convenience). A Task is anything a character does which is, or might be, governed by a roll of the dice. This can range anywhere from trying to leap over a pit, to trying to remember an ancient story, to casting a magic spell, to resisting intimidation or injury, to convincing someone that you are right about something.

Most actions a character can take are considered to be tasks—even those which generally do not require a roll of the dice (such as walking down the street), because of the potential for them to require a roll of the dice in certain situations (such as walking down the street during an earthquake). In this section, tasks will be explained in detail, as well as how to make use of them correctly, and what is required for most tasks.

Dr. Whooves Says...

Retconning is a powerful tool, and one which it is sometimes necessary to use. However, it is equally important to ensure that it is used responsibly, and with the consent of everyone at the table. If a retcon is proposed, it should be opened to discussion—and potentially a vote—to allow anyone with objections to it to raise them openly. Sometimes, where a retcon in one way might make the story easier, it might be better to retcon things another way, or leave things as they are, to make the story even better.

Can Bees Squawk?

Tasks, for the most part, break down into two types: Active Tasks and Reactive Tasks. Both of these have a special use as well, and may be optional. Active Tasks are tasks attempted by a character by their own choice and on their own initiative, whereas Reactive Tasks are tasks attempted by a character in response to a situation which prompts them to act. The special uses of these are that a character may sometimes simply ‘assist’ another character as an Active Task, and that a character must sometimes just resist harm as a Reactive Task. All of these are explained in more detail in this section.

Active Tasks

Whenever a character has the freedom and the opportunity to attempt to do something of their own free will—instead of being prompted to act based on an opposing change in their situation—they are making an Active Task. For example, if a dragon breathes flame toward a character, the actions they take to avoid or defend against the flames would not be considered an Active Task, as they are taken in response to the opposing change in the situation. However, once they had avoided the flames, and had the freedom to act on their own initiative, their actions would be considered to be Active Tasks.


Active Tasks, by and large, are more dynamic than Reactive Tasks (explained later), because when a character is free to act on their own volition, they typically take more interesting actions. For this reason, it is Active Tasks which tend to drive the story forward. For example, in the dragon example above, a character diving out of the way of a dragon’s flame breath is not generally very dynamic and interesting. However, their Active Tasks afterward might have a significant narrative impact; bringing down the roof of a cave onto the dragon’s head, or trying to reason with the dragon, or any number of other actions the character might take at that point, are much more dynamic and will move the story forward.



Lending a Helping Hoof

Sometimes, there is simply nothing for a character to do, in the eyes of their player—or at least nothing which would be in keeping with the concept of the character themselves, or which would suit the flow and feel of the story. For example, a character who is very timid might simply not be able to bring themselves to argue with the town bully, or if the group’s ‘brave’ member is facing down a threat, it may be inappropriate to step in and steal the spotlight, so to speak. However, in many cases, it may make sense for them to be supportive of their friends who are taking action. In these cases, a character may choose to simply ‘assist’ one other character, instead of taking an action themselves. Typically, this relates to situations in the rounds of the game’s Cinematic Mode, where the proverbial ‘spotlight’ is on another character for the moment.

Mechanically, when a character ‘assists’ another character, if that character is making a dice roll as part of a task attempt, they gain a unique bonus to the roll based on the number of friends assisting them. This is called a ‘Harmony bonus,’ and is explained in more detail later. In addition, assisting



a character may have other costs and benefits associated with it, including granting a Unicorn Pony character expanded use of their spellcasting and magic, at the extra cost of a point of Willpower from the character assisting them.

Reactive Tasks

Whenever a character is being prompted to take action in response to an opposing change in their situation, they are making a Reactive Task. For the most part, Reactive Tasks might be called ‘defenses’ or ‘defensive actions,’ but this does not capture their full scope. While a character may certainly find themselves making Reactive Tasks in response to potential harm to themselves, they may also make Reactive Tasks when something is occurring which is immediately pressing; for example, if an infant pony is about to fall off a bookshelf, a character may be prompted to make a Reactive Task—presumably to catch them.

It is important to note that Reactive Tasks are usually, but not always, defensive or preventative in nature; a character always has the option to simply accept the impending consequences of the situation through inaction, or to adopt a strategy of ‘the best defense is a good offense.’ For example, if a building’s rafters are falling down onto a character, that character is not required to try to dodge them; they may choose to try to ‘catch’ them instead—though acting in this way might lead a character to accept harm they might have avoided otherwise.

Resisting Harm

While Reactive Tasks are in response to an opposing change in a character’s situation, they still typically allow a great deal of freedom; while not as wide open in choice and options as an Active Task, a Reactive Task may still allow a character to do a large number of different things. The exception to this rule is when the Reactive Task a character must make is directly resisting harm done to them.

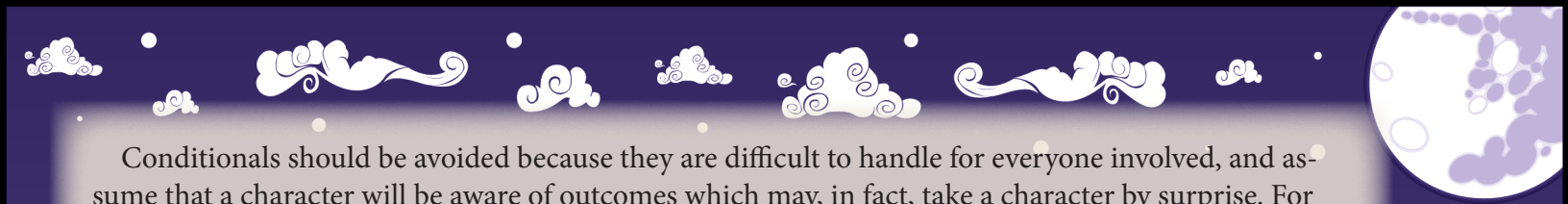
Typically, this is the case when a character has accepted harmful consequences to their person, or if they have failed to avoid them through failing to successfully perform an action. A ‘resisting harm’ Reactive Task is generally done to measure how badly the character was harmed. The effects and types of harm, as well as how they are handled, are explained in more detail later.

Biting Off More Than You Can Chew

All tasks must be explained and clearly stated, so that the players and the GM are aware of what the character is attempting to do. However, there are several guidelines for stating a task which should be followed to ensure that it is being done properly and fairly to everyone at the table. The first of these guidelines cover avoiding trying to do too much with a task, how to tell if this is the case, and why it should be avoided.

Conditionals

In general, the first aspect to be wary of is whether or not the task statement has ‘conditionals’ in it. These are typically terms like ‘if,’ ‘unless,’ or ‘when,’ and tend to turn a task statement into a statement of a strategy instead of an action. For example, a task stated as “look for the missing pet mouse unless anyone would see me” is using the conditional “unless” to turn the action “look for the missing pet mouse” into a strategy instead of an action.



Conditionals should be avoided because they are difficult to handle for everyone involved, and assume that a character will be aware of outcomes which may, in fact, take a character by surprise. For example, in the missing mouse example above, the character may not be aware that they have been seen, or may not be able to avoid being seen; it is not fair for them to assume such a broad outcome and try to achieve it through a single task. Actions in roleplaying are best done step by step, to allow for unexpected outcomes.

Complexity

The next aspect to be wary of is whether or not the task is overly complex. Usually, this involves a single task trying to do several things which are dependent on each other, or which would split the character's focus too much. For example, a task stated as "chase down the runaway pig, tackle it, tie it up, and drag it back to the farm" is probably too complex; each individual part is dependent on the next, and should be broken up into a few actions. Some of these actions could be combined, however—for example, "chase down the runaway pig and tackle it" could be a single action because they constitute a single exertion or motion, whereas "tie it up" and "drag it back to the farm" should be individual actions.

Over-complexity should be avoided because it pushes the action along too fast, and leaves little room for interrupting events or for a situation to change in response to actions taken. For example, in the runaway pig example above, the pig may break the rope while being tied up, or someone might come along and try to take the pig before it is brought back to the farm; it is restrictive to the story to try to do too much with a single task. Actions in roleplaying are best done step by step, to allow the characters and the GM to react.

I Was Busy Napping


In addition to trying to do too much, it is important not to do too little with a task; certain component parts of a task should not be made into tasks themselves, in the interest of keeping the game's pace from slowing down too much. The following guidelines help address doing too little with a task, how to tell if this is the case, and why it should be avoided.

Observation

In general, a character does not need to attempt a task in order to use their senses normally; everypony can see, and hear, and smell, as part of their normal everyday experience. As it relates to the performance of other tasks, observation in this manner does not usually require a task itself. For example, running up to the edge of a cliff and jumping off of it to leap over a gap does not generally require a task to look for the edge of the cliff, or judge the distance of the gap; these are assumed to be done as part of the run and leap.


The exception to this rule, however, is active observation. For example, looking around in the dark to try to spot the source of heavy breathing in the shadows, is a proper use of observation as its own task. In short, unless the primary action a character is taking is observation, it can simply be left as part of a larger task, in the interest of keeping the game moving.

Micromanaging



Not every step of every task requires a task in and of itself. In the same way that a pony doesn't need to focus on flexing every individual muscle as part of taking a step—but instead simply takes the step itself, a character doesn't need to use a task for each individual part of a larger single action. For example, when drawing a picture, a character wouldn't need to make a task attempt for each line on the page—but rather, a single task attempt for the picture itself.

The exception to this rule is that it may be overridden by the GM for narrative purposes. For example, while a baker making a cake might make one task attempt for the whole cake, a group of foals making a cake for the first time might need to make task attempts for each major step in the recipe—as this would make the scene more entertaining and fun, whereas making the baker take all of the same steps might make the game tedious.



I Know What You're Up To...

The next guidelines for properly stating a task deal less with things to avoid, and more with things which are good to do. First are making the objectives, or intended outcomes, of tasks known to the other players and the GM. These guidelines can help a task become more linked to the narrative of the story, instead of simply being character actions.


The Ideal Outcome

When stating a task, it is important to also state what the intended outcome of the task is. This allows the other players to decide whether or not to adapt their characters' actions to follow suit, and allows the GM a bit of insight into the task in terms of its value to the narrative of the story. For example, a character who flies away from a dragon might intend to flee from it, or might intend to distract and 'bait' it away from their friends. These intended outcomes give the task different narrative value, and the GM may assign different difficulty levels to them in the interest of enriching the story.




Disabling God-Mode

It is important to remember that, while task statements should include the intended outcomes of the action being taken, they should not include the actual outcomes themselves if the task has any chance of failure. This is an age-old roleplaying concept called 'God-Modding,' in which a character attempts, and accomplishes, a task—without giving the option for failure. Because of the role of dice, and chance, as well as story elements you may not be aware of, it is important to disable this 'god-mode' and simply attempt tasks, instead of assuming they will be accomplished in their task statement.



Secondary Outcomes



In addition to the intended outcome of the task, it is important to state any secondary outcomes which might have been considered and intended. This allows the GM to adapt the world and its reactions more dynamically to the task being attempted, and gives them options for how to govern the task's actual outcome in more depth than simply success or failure. For example, a character who tries to blind a rampaging monster with a flash of light might state a secondary outcome of "at least warn the others, or signal my location." This allows the GM to gain insight into the action, and while the monster may not be blinded, it doesn't necessarily mean the action was entirely wasted.



I Could Just Scream

The final guidelines on stating a task deal with making any weaknesses in the task known. This may seem like a detrimental thing to do on the surface, but it is important to remember that the GM is not the enemy. In the same way that stating the intended outcomes of a task help the GM to potentially mitigate direct failure, stating the weaknesses of a task (if any; they are optional) help the GM to add flavor and dynamic tension to a scene by creatively making use of and emphasizing them. Typically, task weaknesses fall into three general categories, discussed in this section.

Pulled Punches

A character might ‘pull their punches,’ or stop short of giving their all in attempting a task for any number of reasons; perhaps they are worried about overextending themselves, or harming someone else in the process. Perhaps they are unsure of the task itself, whether or not it is the right thing to do at the moment. By and large, however, ‘pulled punches’ are intended to avoid drastic consequences at the cost of giving less than total effort.

Overextending

A character might ‘overextend’ themselves in attempting a task, by putting forth effort and leaving themselves open to harm in the process. For example, a character might overextend by flying through an avalanche to save a friend, rather than flying around it. This opens the character to harm, which the GM may utilize to make the story more interesting and present a new or different situation to the characters.

All or Nothing

A character might go ‘all or nothing’ in regards to a task, attempting something which will generally either succeed wonderfully or fail spectacularly. For example, a character might jump in front of an out-of-control wagon to try to stop it from careening over the edge of a cliff. Whether they succeed or fail at the task, the outcome is likely to be memorable and spectacular, and the GM may use this to ‘spotlight’ the action itself.

Fancy Mathematics

Any time a task requires a roll of the dice to determine its outcome, it may be called a ‘roll’ or a ‘check’ for convenience. Many factors apply to this kind of task, including numerical and mathematical rules which must be followed to ensure that the task is resolved fairly. This section will detail when a task is considered to be a ‘check,’ and how to handle checks that are made—including all of the mathematical rules involved.

Ten Seconds Flat

It is important to note that not all tasks require use of the dice to resolve; in effect, not all tasks are checks. In general, the GM will tell you when you need to make a check, but it is good to understand the principle involved. Whenever a task has a reasonable chance of failure, whether through difficulty, chance, a stressful situation, or the task’s narrative implications, a check should be made. Whenever a

task has little effect on a situation, or is routine enough not to need a chance for failure, a check should not be made. For example, a character walking down the street has no reason to need a check to accomplish the task. However, if they were trying to walk straight during an earthquake or in hurricane-force winds, they would need to make a check then.

I Have to Figure this Out!

Every check is based on one or more Primary or Secondary Attributes. This reflects the core aspects of the character which govern their ability to successfully complete the task by succeeding at the check involved. However, there is no comprehensive list stating which attributes form the basis for which actions. Instead, it is up to the player(s) and the GM to agree upon a basis, through their understanding of the attributes themselves and what they represent, and their understanding of what the task, or check, involves in terms of those attributes.

Primary Attribute Checks

Typically, all Active Tasks (and most Reactive Tasks) which require a check will use Primary Attributes (Mind, Body, and Heart) as their base. Primary Attribute Checks reflect a character's core capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses, and are well-suited to the typical things a character may do from day to day. Primary Attribute Checks may be thought of as checks in which a character is applying themselves.



Secondary Attribute Checks

Typically, Reactive Tasks which involve resisting harm require a check based on a character's Secondary Attributes (Energy, Courage, Fortitude, and Willpower). Secondary Attribute Checks reflect a character's resistances and ability to deal with hardship, and are well-suited to counteracting the difficulties a character may face which could harm them. Secondary Attribute Checks may be thought of as checks in which a character is resisting something.

Split Checks

Sometimes, a task cannot easily be determined to be governed by only one attribute. In this case, it is best to make the check a 'split check,' using two attributes instead of one. The attributes must be of the same type (i.e., two Primary Attributes or two Secondary Attributes, but not one of each type) to make a split check. A split check uses half of each of the two contributing attributes as its base, and the total of the two is rounded up if necessary.

Tough Task ahead I face

Once the basis for the check has been determined, the check must be performed. This involves rolling a twenty-sided dice (d20) and adding all bonuses which apply, as well as voluntary expenditure of certain points, and the application of certain special rules. While making a check becomes easy and second-nature given time and practice, learning how to make a check can be one of the first major

hurdles to new players who are learning how to play *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. For this reason, this section will cover, in detail, how to make a check from start to finish—including explanations of all the mathematical processes and formulae involved—to determine its result. The following sections will then cover how to interpret this check result.

Harmony Bonus

First, determine the check's Harmony bonus, which is granted by characters who are assisting yours. For each character who is using their action to assist yours in the task, your character gains a cumulative +1 bonus to the check result. For example, one friend assisting grants a +1, two friends assisting grants a +3 (+1, +2), three friends assisting grants a +6 (+1, +2, +3), four friends assisting grants a +10 (+1, +2, +3, +4) and so on; each friend adds to this bonus an amount equal to one more than the last friend's contribution.

The restriction on this bonus is that no more than five friends may assist a character for any given check (making the highest possible Harmony bonus a +15). With full assistance from all of their friends, the Harmony bonus a character receives may be the single largest bonus they gain to a check.

Spending Willpower

Second, the character may decide to spend a single point of Willpower on the task to improve its check result (only one point of Willpower may be spent per check). It is important to note that this must be done before the d20 is rolled; a character chooses to exert extra effort before they know if the task could have succeeded without it. Because of this, and the potential for wasting Willpower, it is important to carefully consider how important the task is to your character and the situation at hand.

If the character spends a point of Willpower, they gain a bonus to the check result equal to the amount of Willpower they had before the point was spent. For example, a character with seven points of Willpower who spends one on a check gains a +7 to the check, and then is reduced to six points of Willpower. The next time they spend Willpower on a check, they gain a +6, and are reduced to five points of Willpower. If a character spends their last point of Willpower, they become sidelined as normal after the check is resolved—however, they gain a bonus equal to their maximum Willpower to that check; this represents the 'last throw' of a character's will.

Situational Experience Bonus

Third, your character may have spent experience points to purchase a situational bonus for the duration of a scene; if this is the case, they gain this bonus to their check result. Experience points, as well as the costs and benefits associated with situational bonuses of this nature are explained in more detail later.

Tool Bonus

Fourth, if your character is using any applicable tool (gear, item, equipment) in attempting the task, they may gain a bonus to their check result depending on the quality and appropriateness of the tool itself. Tools, as well as the bonuses they may grant, are explained in more detail later.



Attribute Bonus

Fifth, the score of whichever attribute that forms the basis for the check is added as a bonus to the check result; in the case of a 'split check,' half the total of both contributing attributes (rounded up) forms this bonus. For example, a character with a Mind score of 3 and a Body score of 2 would gain a bonus of +3 to the check if it were based on Mind, and a +2 if it were based on Body; if it were a Mind/Body split check, they would gain a bonus of +3 (half of Mind = 1.5, plus half of Body = 1, for a total of 2.5, rounded up to 3).

Job Bonus

Sixth, if one of your character's Jobs applies to the task, they gain a bonus to the check result equal to the Level of the Job. If multiple Jobs apply, they do not stack; instead, only the Job with the highest Level grants a bonus to the check.

Skill Bonus

Seventh, if one of your character's Skills applies to the task, they gain a bonus to the check result equal to the Level of the Skill. If multiple Skills apply, they do not stack; instead, only the Skill with the highest Level grants a bonus to the check.

Spell Level Bonus

Eighth, if the the task involves casting a spell your character knows, they gain a bonus to the check result equal to the Level of the spell being cast.

Dice Roll

Ninth, the d20 is rolled. Whatever number comes up on the face of the d20 is added as a bonus to the check result. In addition, the d20 roll result itself may be used as the basis for other bonuses. If the dice roll comes up as a 1 or a 20, however, the rest of this process (except for a Talent-granted roll-again, below) is aborted; critical successes, critical failures, and what happens on a 'natural' 1 and a 'natural' 20 are explained in more detail later.

Talent Roll-Again


Tenth, if your character has a Talent which applies to the task, they repeat the d20 roll, and choose the highest of the two results to count as the bonus the dice roll grants to the check result. This 'roll-again' is only done once per check; multiple applicable Talents do not grant multiple re-rolls.

Special Purpose Bonus

Eleventh, if your character's Special Purpose applies to the task (or if they are a Blank Flank and have chosen to use their special ability on the task), they gain a bonus to the check result equal to half the bonus granted by the d20 roll, rounded up. For example, if a 15 was rolled on the d20 and the charac-

MY BRAIN IS FULL OF BUCK

This section is written to provide a centralized reference point for players and groups who are learning to play My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic. As such, it is packed with a lot of information in a very small space. If it is confusing you, don't worry about remembering all of it; while playing, you can always refer back to this section to help you.



ter's Special Purpose applies, they gain an additional +8 (half of 15 = 7.5, rounded up to 8) to the check result.

Dragonheart Bonus

Twelfth and finally, if your character is a dragon and has chosen to use their 'Dragonheart' ability to gain a bonus to tasks and checks during the scene, they gain this bonus to the check result.

One Pony, Plus...

Once all of the previous steps have been followed, all of the bonuses are added together to produce the total check result. For example, a character making a check has a +3 Harmony bonus, spent a point of Willpower to gain a +5 bonus, has a +3 temporary bonus from spending experience, is using a tool granting a +2 bonus, has a +4 attribute bonus, has a +2 bonus from their Job, has a +3 bonus from a Skill, isn't casting a spell (+0), rolled a 9 on a d20 (after being granted a roll-again by a Talent, their original roll being a 5), has a +5 from their Special Purpose (being half the d20 roll, rounded up), and isn't a dragon (+0). Their total check result would be 36 (3 + 5 + 3 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 3 + 0 + 9 + 5 + 0).

Shoot!

If the d20 roll while making a check comes up as a 1, the check is aborted (unless a Talent grants a roll-again). A 'natural' 1 in this way is always considered to be a failure, and more than that, a critical failure. Critical failures are when something goes so wrong that it often makes a situation worse in some way, and are explained in more detail later. Any Willpower spent is simply lost, as are any other assets which may have been consumed.

I'll Save You!

The exception to this critical failure rule is that, if a Talent would grant a character who rolls a 1 a roll-again of the d20, it instead negates the critical failure. Instead of gaining the roll-again as normal, the character simply treats the d20 roll of 1 as the bonus the d20 roll is granting to the check result. While this low roll result may cause the check to fail, it is not an automatic critical failure due to the influence of the character's Talent.

Yay!

If the d20 roll while making a check comes up as a 20, the check is also aborted (as in the case of a critical failure). However, a 'natural' 20 in this way is considered to be an automatic success, and more than that, a critical success. Critical successes are when things go so fortunately that it often makes the situation better in some way, and are explained in more detail later. Any Willpower spent is restored, as are any other assets which may have been consumed.

What Happened?

Once the total check result has been determined, it is compared to the difficulty of the task as set by the GM. If the check result is equal to or higher than the difficulty, the check—and thus the task—was successful. If the check result is lower than the difficulty, however, the task may have been a failure.

Regardless of the outcome, the GM will relate the effects and events which occur as a result of the task. In addition to this general rule, however, are three special circumstances: Critical Successes, Critical Failures, and Partial Successes.

Critical Success

A critical success is when events have gone so fortunately as to have made the situation even better than a normal success would have. While the GM will generally come up with and relate the effects of a critical success, it is possible that they will ask for player insight and opinion in deciding on its effects. Critical successes may also be manipulated or used for other purposes, such as racial abilities and special abilities granted by character advancements.

Critical Failure

A critical failure is the reverse of a critical success; it is when events have gone so poorly as to have made the situation worse than it was. This may take the form of narrative events, or simply mechanical effects such as a loss of extra points in some area, but the GM will determine the scope of a critical failure. There are a few ways critical failures may be avoided, through racial abilities, special abilities or tools, or other aspects of a character.

Partial Success

At the GM's discretion, they may treat a failed task whose check result was reasonably close to the difficulty set, as a partial success. A partial success is when things went poorly, but not as bad as they could have gone. In general, this is used as a narrative device to avoid catastrophic failure, or to give players and their characters some direction—though each GM may use (or not use) partial successes in their own unique way to suit the game group and story.


Fighting amongst Ourselves

In the case that characters are acting against one another, the check result of the 'aggressor' character becomes the difficulty which the 'defender' character must meet or exceed to avoid the effects of the task. In terms of how the rounds of Cinematic Mode scenes are handled in this case, the GM should separate the group into general 'factions,' and alternate turns beginning with the 'aggressor' faction. For example, if a group of six characters has split in half over a dispute, and starts a fight over it, they become split into two 'factions' of three characters each, with the first group to take aggressive action going first. This situation is to be avoided whenever possible between friends, but it is sometimes inevitable.

Quills and Sofas

Equestria is home to many objects of power and usefulness, from the humble hammer and nail, to the Elements of Harmony themselves. In My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, any object a character makes use of to help them with a task is considered a 'Tool.' Tools can be items being





used, vehicles, and even locations. Rather than make a comprehensive list of every possible tool and its bonuses, tools are judged by their level of appropriateness to the task they are being used for. Because of this, almost anything can be a tool in the right hooves and in the right situation. Like many aspects of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, the impact a potential tool has is defined by the player(s) and the GM, working together.

I've Got Just the Thing

In many pen and paper roleplaying games, a list of equipment is given, along with what bonuses each item gives, and what each piece of gear does. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, 'tools' are governed in nearly the reverse way. Instead of asking "what task is this tool appropriate to," it is better to ask "how appropriate is this tool to the task at hand?" Because of this, players are free to use tools in almost any way they can imagine, using simple guidelines to determine the mechanical impact of their characters' actions with the tool.

For example, a crowbar is well-suited to prying open a door, certainly. However, it could be used for bashing open a crate, giving a little extra reach to a friend dangling from the edge of a cliff, connecting two electrical sources to complete a circuit, or any number of other uses based on the situation at hand and the imagination of the player and their character's ingenuity. This versatility extends to most (if not all) tools, and makes them just as useful as the character wielding them.

It's so Simple, so Practical; so—Me!

Tools can certainly be crafted by characters, but it is important to note that quality doesn't necessarily play as large a role in Tools in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* as it does in other pen and paper roleplaying games—what is most important is the appropriateness of the Tool to the task at hand. Thus, while an opulent dress might help a character impress the Canterlot elite, a simpler and more practical dress might help the character feel more comfortable around them in the first place, which might in turn lead to the same end result.

Magic in the Dress

When a tool is used as part of a task, the player and the GM should work together to decide how appropriate the tool is to the task, in the way it is being used by the character. The task and the method of use are equally important when deciding this appropriateness; a character with an effective tool who uses it in an ineffective way is likely to receive less of a bonus from the tool itself. The appropriateness of the tool in use falls into one of four categories, each one granting a different bonus to the task's check result: **Useless** grants no bonus, **Makeshift** grants a +1 bonus, **Appropriate** grants a +2 bonus, and **Superior** grants a +4 bonus. Each category is explained in more detail in this section.

Useless


A useless tool grants no bonus, as it is not appropriate to the task in general, or at least not in the way it is being used by the character. Examples of useless tools include trying to use a slice of cake to climb a cliff face, using a chair to sew, or drinking hot sauce to quench thirst. Typically, it is evident when a tool is useless for the task at hand, and useless tools can actually make a task harder to accomplish; the GM may, at their discretion, interpret the task as being more difficult than normal if a character is trying to use a useless tool as part of the task attempt. This is explained in more detail later in this section.



Makeshift

A makeshift tool grants a +1 bonus to the task, as it has some limited effectiveness in the way it is being used by the character as an improvised version of a more appropriate tool. Examples of makeshift tools include trying to use a wooden board as a baseball bat to hit a ball, using a jar of fireflies as a flashlight to see in the dark, or breathing through a wet cloth instead of using a gas mask. Typically, a tool is considered to be makeshift when it is being used to emulate the standard or 'common-sense' standard tool for the task; this is the general 'using X as an improvised Y' logic behind makeshift tools.

Appropriate



An appropriate tool grants a +2 bonus to the task, as it is well-suited to the task at hand, and may be the standard tool designed to be used for the task in the first place—though anything which is particularly well-suited to the task may be considered appropriate. Examples of appropriate tools include using binoculars (or a telescope, or a spyglass) to see into the distance, using armor to resist a wound being inflicted, or using a map (or compass) to navigate to a destination. Typically, a tool is considered appropriate when it easily comes to mind as the tool one would ideally use for the task.

Superior

A superior tool grants a +4 bonus to the task, as it is not only well-suited to the task at hand, but is designed or empowered to facilitate the task beyond what an appropriate tool would normally be designed for. Examples of superior tools include an ancient book of spells designed to aid the casting of certain spells, an oven which not only cooks food but also is designed to automatically prevent it from burning, or a camouflage cape which is enchanted to grant its wearer semi-invisibility as well as its normal camouflage. Typically, superior tools are rare; in traditional pen and paper roleplaying games, they would usually be considered 'magic items' or 'artifacts.'

Sets and Costumes

Apart from their general level of appropriateness to the task at hand, tools are also separated into five distinct types, to allow their effects to 'stack' with each other: **Items**, **Devices**, **Equipment**, **Vehicles**, and **Locations**. This reflects that multiple tools of different types can work in combination with each other to produce even greater effects and higher bonuses. For example, using a baseball bat to knock a smoke bomb back at the person who threw it can be made easier if the character with the bat also has special glasses which let them aim their swing better. In general, the rule stands that only one tool of each of the five types can apply to the task at hand; for example, a Device and a Vehicle can both apply, but if two Devices are used, only the one which is most appropriate applies.



Items

Items might also be called 'consumables,' or 'single-use' tools. In general, they are anything which is exhausted or used up by the task they are being used for. Examples of Items might include food or drinks, smoke bombs, fireworks, torches, potions, or medicine.



Devices

Devices might also be called ‘held items’ or ‘kits.’ In general, they are anything wielded by the character actively, requiring overt action or concentrated effort to utilize, which may be used multiple times or indefinitely. Examples of Devices might include weapons, flashlights, metal detectors, books, toys, or power tools.

Equipment

Equipment might also be called ‘gear’ or ‘worn items.’ In general, they are anything worn or carried by the character passively, not requiring much (if any) overt action or concentrated effort to utilize, except in the case that they must be focused on or deliberately activated. Examples of Equipment might include armor, magical necklaces, cloaks, gas masks, backpacks or saddlebags, sunglasses, or goggles.

Vehicles

Vehicles might also be called ‘piloted objects.’ In general, they are anything the character is harnessed into or gets into and may pilot or use for its own external capabilities. Examples of Vehicles might include wagons, carriages, hang gliders, gyrocopters, jet packs, scooters, hot air balloons, or ice skates.

Locations

Locations might also be called ‘beneficial areas’ or ‘purpose-specific areas.’ In general, they are anywhere the character might find tools which are conducive to the task at hand, or anywhere which is designed to aid in the task in and of itself. Examples of Locations might include libraries (for research), bakeries (for cooking), performance stages (for theater productions), thick bushes (for sneaking), or magical sites (for spellcasting).

Not Baked Goods; Baked Bads!

As discussed earlier, sometimes, a particular tool which is useless to the task might make that task harder to accomplish. This does not take the form of a penalty to the task’s check result—My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic has no penalties (or ‘negative modifiers’) implemented into check results—but may take the form of the GM increasing the difficulty of the task, and thus the required check result to complete the task successfully.

As a general rule, the GM should apply an increase to the task difficulty equal to how appropriate the ‘useless’ tool would be at impeding the task (or working against it), instead of facilitating it. For example, a character who is trying to sneak through a wide-open, well-lit field, has a useless Location tool. The GM may determine that the field is acting as an appropriate Location tool to anyone who might detect the sneaking character. Because ‘appropriate’ adds a +2, in this case, it adds a +2 to the tasks’ difficulty, instead of the character’s check result. In this situation, the Location is working against the character, making it harder for them to sneak. Likewise, if they were riding a noisy Vehicle and trying to sneak, or wearing brightly-colored clothing which stands out, the GM might add the appropriate ‘bonuses’ to the task’s difficulty. For this reason, characters should be aware of their situation before attempting a task—as tools can work against them.

Confusion! Evil! Chaos!

As wondrous and magical as the land of Equestria is, the fact of the matter is that it is also fraught with danger, hardship, and fearsome challenges. From thunderstorms and dangerous forests, to fearsome creatures like Windigos and Timber Wolves, to maladies such as Cutie Pox, to ancient foes like the villainous Discord, Equestria is certainly not a place for the unprepared. In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, as characters adventure, they are sure to run into hardships which will test their mettle and push them to their limits. This is reflected in their Secondary Attributes of Energy, Courage, and Fortitude, which serve as the primary measure of how well, and for how long, a character can withstand difficult or dangerous situations before succumbing to them.

We can do it!

As explained during character creation, Energy, Courage, and Fortitude represent a character's ability to resist harm. Energy represents a character's resistance to fatigue, Courage represents a character's resistance to intimidation, and Fortitude represents a character's resistance to injury. In traditional pen and paper roleplaying games, these three make up what would be considered the 'hit point' system found in the game—in other words, the character's ability to continue to face a difficult or dangerous situation.

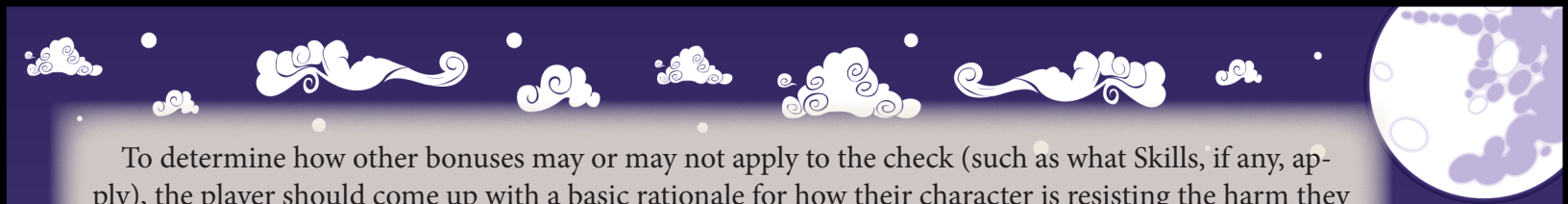
However, where most games deal primarily with threats to a character's health or life, characters in Equestria are more dynamic and sensitive to their world. For example, where a character in a traditional pen and paper roleplaying game might only fail in an encounter with a dangerous situation by losing their life to it, a character in Equestria might fail due to succumbing to their fear of the situation. It is because of these added dimensions that a character's ability to face a dangerous or difficult situation is kept track of with three measurements, instead of only one.

They Have Never Liked Us

In the situation of impending harm being done to a character, they are typically afforded a Reactive Action to attempt to defend against it or avoid it. While this is not always the case, it is the norm. However, should a character fail in their defense, they will undoubtedly lose Energy, Courage, or Fortitude as a result; the only question remaining is how much, or how little, they will lose. To determine this, they must make a resistance check.

A resistance check is a special kind of check. It is performed exactly like a normal check, except that in place of the bonus the check's Primary Attribute would normally grant to the result, the character gains a bonus to their check result equal to whichever Secondary Attribute is being diminished through harm (Energy, Courage, or Fortitude). In effect, the check is based on the Secondary Attribute, not a Primary Attribute.





To determine how other bonuses may or may not apply to the check (such as what Skills, if any, apply), the player should come up with a basic rationale for how their character is resisting the harm they have been subjected to. This can be as simple as something like “bracing for impact” against physical harm, or as advanced as “remembering that my friends would never leave me” against intimidation or fear.

In general, the check is set against a difficulty set by the GM based on the severity of the incoming harm. If the character succeeds at the resistance check, they lose only one point from the Secondary Attribute being affected (the GM may instead allow them to lose zero points, if the harm was particularly weak or if the character had a good enough rationale for their defense). If the character fails at the resistance check, however, they will almost certainly lose more than one point, depending on how severe the GM has decided the harm is; for example, a character falling out of a tree may lose a point or two of Fortitude, where a character caught in the fire breath of a dragon might lose much more.

Intimidation

Whenever a character is exposed to mental harm stemming from fear, terror, cruelty, verbal abuse, or another form of loss of confidence, they lose points of Courage. This form of harm is covered by the broad category of “Intimidation.” Examples of Intimidation may include the roar of a dragon, being surrounded by Timber Wolves, being taunted by classmates, waking up to the smell of smoke, or being publicly humiliated.

Fatigue

Whenever a character is exposed to physical or mental harm stemming from exhaustion, starvation, thirst, over-exertion, or another form of drain, they lose points of Energy. This form of harm is covered by the broad category of “Fatigue.” Examples of Fatigue may include staying up all night, going all day without something to eat, trying to do too much work without taking a rest, running for long periods of time, or being exposed to a Cockatrice’s petrifying gaze.


Injury

Whenever a character is exposed to physical harm stemming from wounds, burns, discomfort, illness, poison, or another form of damage, they lose points of Fortitude. This form of harm is covered by the broad category of “Injury.” Examples of Injury may include stepping on hot coals, falling off of a roof, eating spoiled food, being stung by insects, or having an anvil dropped on your head.

I Just... Can’t

Characters are generally okay as long as they have at least one point of each Secondary Attribute remaining; while they may be terribly frightened, for example, they are still able to muster the courage to continue to face the situation at hand. While they might be bruised and battered and tired, they are still able to muster the energy, and the fortitude, to stand up for their friends. It is when a character runs out of a Secondary Attribute that things take a turn for the worst.

When a character runs out of a Secondary Attribute, they become ‘sidelined,’ or temporarily defeated. Even then, things are not as bad as they could be; characters have a few ways to recover. It is when



every character in a group has been sidelined, that the group is defeated and the game may be over.

Becoming Sidelined

When a character runs out of a Secondary Attribute, it is reduced to zero—even if it would be reduced to negative numbers by pure mathematics. At zero in a Secondary Attribute, they become ‘sidelined,’ or temporarily defeated. They immediately lose their action for the round, even if they have their missing points recovered in one way or another. In addition, until they restore points to being at at least one point per Secondary Attribute, the only action they may take in each round is to use their Second Wind if they have not done so already this scene, though other characters may aid them in their recovery instead (recovery is explained in more detail later in this section). Effectively, a sidelined character is ‘out of the action,’ so to speak.



Group Defeat

If, at any time, all members of the group have become sidelined, and cannot restore themselves to action, then the group has been defeated. What defeat means, and how it is handled, is dependent upon the scene itself, the tone and setting of your group’s game, and the GM’s discretion in regards to the situation at hand. It may be the end of the game, or simply a change in the direction of the plot.

We Must Not Fail

Recovery of lost Secondary Attribute points can be handled in a number of different ways, though each is dependent upon the story and the roleplaying of the characters. There are two methods for handling recovery during the ‘action’ of a Cinematic Mode scene, and one method for use during Narrative Mode scenes, as well as a rule for recovery in the transition between the two game modes.

Getting a Second Wind

Once per Cinematic Mode scene, each character may use their ‘second wind’ to recover from being sidelined. A second wind represents the welling up within a character of the strength of mind, will, or body, to ‘get back into the action,’ so to speak. A character’s second wind must be justified by their reaction to the action taking place; that is, they must have a reason to want to get back into the action—though this can be as simple as acting out of care for their friends.

When a character uses their second wind, they choose the Secondary Attribute which has been diminished to zero, and restore a number of points to it equal to their score in the lower of the two Primary Attributes which determines its maximum score. For example, a character using their second wind to restore their Courage regains a number of points equal to their Mind or Heart score, whichever is lower. The exception to this, as noted in the Guiding Element of Harmony section of character creation, is that—depending upon the character’s chosen element—they may instead be entitled to use the higher Primary Attribute, instead of the lower.

Two special rules surround the second wind, based on special circumstances: If the Secondary Attribute being restored is Willpower, the character simply regains two points of Willpower, instead of basing anything on a Primary Attribute. If more than one Secondary Attribute is at zero, the player chooses one to be restored normally, and the others are raised to one point.

For example, a sidelined character uses their second wind. They have been reduced to zero Fortitude, as well as to zero Willpower. The character may choose to focus on Willpower, which will raise it to two points and raise Fortitude to one. Or they may choose to focus on Fortitude, which will raise it to the lower of their Body or Heart scores (or the higher, if they have the appropriate Guiding Element of Harmony) and raise Willpower to one point. However, once they have used this second wind, they may not use it again for the duration of the scene.

Restoring Faith in Friends

In Cinematic Mode, a character may also encourage their friends, restoring their friends' lost Secondary Attributes at the expense of their own Willpower. By encouraging a sidelined friend to get back into the action, and spending a point of Willpower, a character may grant that friend the effects of a second wind, which does not count against the friend's limit of one per scene. The difference in this, however, is that the friend's second wind is not subject to their own Guiding Element of Harmony, but rather to the character's who is encouraging them, for the purposes of determining whether to use the higher or lower of a Secondary Attribute's two contributing Primary Attributes.

For example, a character spends a point of Willpower and encourages a friend who is sidelined. The friend immediately gains the effects of a second wind, but when deciding if they may use the higher or lower of two Primary Attributes for restoring their points, they use the encouraging character's Guiding Element of Harmony instead of their own.

When Everything Works Out

At the successful conclusion of a Cinematic Mode ('action sequence') scene, any characters who have been sidelined are restored to the minimum number of points necessary to allow them to take actions again. For example, a character who had been reduced to zero Energy and Courage is restored to one point in both. This is to allow the action of the game and story to move forward without having to wait for the most basic recovery to take place.

Proper Care and Sunshine

In Narrative Mode, it becomes easy to restore lost Secondary Attribute points by taking the appropriate actions. For each appropriate action taken, a character restores all of their lost Secondary Attribute points in the corresponding category. For example, a character who attends (or throws) a party with their friends, might restore all of their lost Courage—likewise, a character who spends time with their family and loved ones might as well. A character who gets a good night's sleep, or goes to a spa, might



restore all of their lost Energy. A character who visits the doctor, or otherwise gets proper medical care, might restore all of their lost Fortitude. And so on.

The exception to this rule is Willpower. Willpower is only restored one point at a time, through embodying a character's Guiding Element of Harmony, or all at once at the conclusion of an Episode. This reflects that, as powerful as Willpower can be, it can take time to rebuild.

Perplexing Pony Plagues

Some dangers exist in Equestria which are not easily covered through the standard method of utilizing Secondary Attribute adjustments. For example, while an illness could easily be handled through Fortitude for its damage to a character's health, it is less clear when it will have run its course; and in the case of Love Poison, Cutie Pox, or Poison Joke, which have exotic and magical effects, Fortitude may not be an appropriate way to handle them. In most of these cases, the GM should make the call on how to handle the situation; and if not, then certainly house rules should prevail.

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Fade to Pink

During an Episode which takes place over several days 'in-world,' it can sometimes be important to keep track of a character's Energy, Courage, and Fortitude from day to day. For example, a character who is kept up all night couldn't restore their Energy by getting a good night's sleep. However, once an Episode is complete, a character generally restores all of their lost Secondary Attribute points.

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Spike, Take a Letter

As characters adventure in Equestria, they learn from their experiences and grow over time. This growth is not just in power and ability, but also in their wisdom and how they look at the world around them. In *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, this is represented at the end of each episode by the 'letter to the Princess' which concludes many episodes—imparting lessons learned, and what characters' experiences have taught them. Sometimes, it is a simple confirmation that they were right all along, showing that same growth in action.

In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, it is the same way. At the conclusion of each Episode of the game, the players develop a sort of 'letter to the Princess' about what their characters learned from the Episode, what challenges they overcame, and potentially, what they already knew that they were able to meaningfully apply to situations. To reflect the growth in power and ability which typically goes along with such personal growth, characters gain experience points based on this letter to the Princess, and spend those experience points in a variety of ways to improve themselves.


Dear Princess Celestia...

Experience points are the measure of how much a character has grown over time based on their experiences; because they are spent by players to improve their character in a variety of different ways, how this growth manifests itself is different from character to character. However, the core fact remains that it is the result of experiences and lessons learned. For Twilight Sparkle and her friends, they are fortunate enough to have the responsibility and the honor of reporting on these lessons and experiences in a formal manner, by writing letters summarizing them. However, in many traditional pen and paper roleplaying games, this is not true. Characters are assumed to be growing and advancing, though they may not always show change, or be aware of the nature and reason of their growth.



In My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, character growth is dependent upon the acknowledgement and understanding of the relevant and important lessons and experiences which cause that character's growth. This moves the advancement of a character's ability out of the realm of "what can I accomplish?" and into the realm of "what can I learn?" This is handled in a group discussion style phase at the end of an Episode, in which the characters 'write a letter to the Princess' about what they learned. The letter itself isn't literal, and the group discussion doesn't need to be modeled on a letter. What is most important is the identification of lessons learned and applied, challenges overcome, and character growth occurring.

Today I Learned



Unlike many pen and paper roleplaying games, the players have the most responsibility during the letter to the Princess phase; it is up to them to pay attention during an Episode, identify lessons their characters learned and how their characters grew, and then articulate those points to the GM. The GM then considers what the players presented, makes some decisions on what they agree or disagree with, and awards experience points based on the results.


For example, during an Episode, one player's character ended up saving pony toddlers several times from a bad storm, and taking care of them; by the end of the Episode, whenever danger first showed up, they began to think about the safety of the infants before their own. During the letter to the Princess phase, that character's player uses that experience as a way to express character growth: their character's experience with the infants taught the character that children aren't as annoying as they once thought, and that they might in fact want to work with children as their job.

A Valuable Lesson

The general rule is that for each valid point of character growth presented by each member of the group to the GM, which the GM agrees with, each member of the group gains an experience point. Typically, this should even out to an average of one experience point per major plot point, or game session involving an important challenge the characters overcame. However, it is not uncommon for certain Episodes to give especially high or low experience point rewards, based on how the group did—there is no guarantee that a character will grow as a result of experiences, after all.

For example, in a group of three players, one player's character earns one experience point for the group; the second character earns two, and the third earns one. Pooled together, this totals four points; meaning that each character gains four experience points as a reward for completing the Episode, reflecting the character growth they have shown.

About Friendship



It is important to note that characters in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic are not meant to be overly competitive with each other, and the arena of character growth is no exception. During the letter to the Princess phase, players are encouraged to work together, discussing the Episode, what their characters did, how they grew, and help each other with their characters' growth. What one player might have missed, another might have seen—and it is better for the group not to miss any opportunities. In fact, groups who handle the letter to the Princess phase especially well may find their GM being more generous with experience points than they would be if each player was trying to look out for themselves first.

Growing Up into a Better You

Experience points can be used in three ways by all characters: to purchase character advancements (what most players think of as spending experience points), to purchase temporary bonuses (for a scene-length boost of ability), or to restore lost Willpower early (putting their experience toward faith in themselves). These three ways are in addition to any other ways a character may be entitled to use experience points, granted by special abilities, racial abilities, or the like. In this section, each of these three general ways of using experience points are explained in detail; including a bank of character advancements which characters may purchase.

I'm Totally Using That!

Character advancements are what most players usually think of when they think of spending experience to improve their character. In traditional pen and paper roleplaying games, these might be called 'traits,' 'feats,' 'edges,' 'abilities,' or the like, and run the spectrum from Skill Level increases, to Attribute Points, to special powers, to augmentations to current abilities, to new Skills and Jobs, to pets and companions/assistants. Character advancements, by default, are only purchased before, or after, the action of a game session—unless specifically allowed by the GM, they cannot be purchased 'mid-game,' or in the middle of a situation or scene.

What follows is a list of character advancements in My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, separated into three categories: **Improvements**, which are generally increases in things a character already has (such as improving a Skill's Level), **Developments**, which are generally additions of new things to a character which that character could have gained through character creation as normal (such as a new Job or Spell), and **Special Abilities**, which are generally additions of new things to a character which can only be gained through their purchase with experience points (such as a special power or an animal companion).

Each character advancement has its own experience point cost, requirements to be fulfilled before it can be purchased, effects, and restrictions.

Improvements

On-the-Job Training

Type: Improvement

Cost: (New Job Level +2) Experience Points

Effect: Choose a single Job and increase its Level by one

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Non-Growth Progression

While the standard experience point gain system is designed to work well for games and stories which follow the general style and feel of the cartoon, some fanfiction-based and custom-designed Episodes may not involve character growth as such an important factor. In that case, it is generally best for the GM to simply award one experience point per plot challenge the group accomplished—or, to make things even simpler, one experience point per game session in which the group made real progress toward accomplishing the objective of the Episode.

Arcane Advancement (*Unicorn Pony / Dragon Only*)

Type: Improvement

Cost: (New Spell Level or Spell's Difficulty, whichever is higher) Experience Points

Effect: Choose a single Spell and increase its Level by one

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Awesome Aerobatics (*Pegasus Pony Only*)

Type: Improvement

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Increase the Pegasus Pony attribute Aerobatics by 1 permanently

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Wonderous Weathercraft (*Pegasus Pony Only*)

Type: Improvement

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Increase the Pegasus Pony attribute Aerobatics by 1 permanently

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Egghead

Type: Improvement

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Increase the primary attribute Mind by 1 permanently

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Iron Pony

Type: Improvement

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Increase the primary attribute Body by 1 permanently

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Stout Heart

Type: Improvement

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Increase the primary attribute Heart by 1 permanently

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times





Developments

New Magic Trick (*Unicorn Pony Only*)

Type: Development

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Choose a new Magical Aspect, and add it to the ones your character knows

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

New Skill

Type: Development

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Choose a new Skill. The chosen Skill is at level 1 and provides a +1 bonus to rolls when applicable

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

New Line of Work

Type: Development

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Choose a new Job. The chosen Job is at level 1 and provides a +1 bonus to rolls when applicable

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Hidden Talent

Type: Development

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: Choose a new talent, and add it to the Talents you have

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times

Special Abilities

The Perfect Pet

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: You may have a pet of your choice (with GM approval). This pet will follow you and may follow basic commands at GM discretion



Extra Talented

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Choose a known talent and gain a +1 bonus to any roll that is affected by this talent

Note: This advancement can be taken multiple times. Its effects do not stack; each time it is taken, it applies to a different Talent

Hoof-to-Hoof Combat (Pony Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Your pony character counts their hooves as an Appropriate Tool for the purposes of fighting

Horn Hocus Pocus (Unicorn Pony Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Your Unicorn Pony character counts their horn as an Appropriate Tool for the purposes of using magic

Winged Victory (Pegasus Pony Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Your Pegasus Pony character counts their wings as an Appropriate Tool for the purposes of flying (but not affecting the weather)

Fearless Filly

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Ignore the first point of Intimidation damage received once per scene

Tough as Horseshoes

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Ignore the first point of Injury damage received once per scene





Boundless Energy

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Ignore the first point of Fatigue damage received once per scene

Bounce Back

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: During a Second Wind, remove an additional 1 damage from any category

Uplifting Attitude

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Once per scene, you may Restore Faith at no cost

Squirrel-Speak

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: You are able to communicate with, and understand, animals (what counts as an ‘animal’ is up to the GM)

Tail Proficiency (Dragon Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 5 Experience Points

Effect: Your Dragon character may treat their tail as a Superior Tool rather than an Appropriate Tool (see “Tail Type”)

Dragon Mage (Dragon Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points


Effect: Double the number of Spells your Dragon character may know according to their Mind score

Iron Hide (Dragon Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Your Dragon character may treat their scales as a Superior Tool rather than an Appropriate Tool (see “Thick Scales”)



Inferno Breath (Dragon Only)

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Your Dragon character may treat their fire breath as a Superior Tool rather than an Appropriate Tool (see “Fire Breath”)

Toast of the Town

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Pick a location. While you’re in that location, you get a bonus equal to your Heart on all rolls in which your status as a known pony would be especially beneficial, such as convincing a shopkeeper to give you a discount

Capable Companion

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: You may have a companion of your choice (with GM approval). The companion can follow basic commands and will take the initiative to help the player to the best of its ability

Pony Grit

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Once per scene, you may double the attribute bonus you gain on a single Courage-based resistance check

Equine Endurance

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Once per scene, you may make a single reroll of a Fortitude-based resistance check

Energy Rush

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Once per scene, when you fail an Energy-based resistance check, you may reroll to immediately regain half of the Energy you lost, rounding up



Third Wind

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: Once per scene and after Second Wind has been used, if the character has been sidelined they may remove one point from each type of damage by taking a “Third Wind.”

Down but not out

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: You do not lose your action in the round in which you are sidelined

Give a Smile, Get a Smile

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: When you Restore Faith in a friend to help them recover from being sidelined, you regain two points of Courage and one point of Energy

Proud as Pink Punch

Type: Ability

Cost: 10 Experience Points

Effect: When you assist a friend with an action (granting them a Harmony Bonus), you may ‘risk’ a point of Willpower. If the friend’s task is successful, you regain up to two points of Willpower; if the task is failed, however, you instead lose the risked point

Doormat to Dynamo

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: Once per play session, when you recover from being Sidelined, you may gain a bonus equal to your Heart score to all rolls you make until the end of the scene

Number One Assistant

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: You may have a helper of your choice (with GM approval). The helper can follow complex commands, communicate with you (in some fashion), and will take the initiative to help the player to the best of its ability



Second Wind Hurricane

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: When using Second Wind, first restore two points to each secondary attribute, then follow the normal rules for Second Wind

Flash of Insight

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: When you purchase a temporary bonus via experience points, gain an additional +2 to the bonus for the same experience point cost



Handy Pony

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: Treat all Tools as one effectiveness level higher than they are (maximum Superior)

Bolster with Bravery

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: You may expend 1 point of Courage to remove up to 3 Intimidation damage from a friend

Restore with Resolve

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: You may expend 1 point of Energy to remove up to 3 Fatigue damage from a friend

Cure with Courage

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: You may expend 1 point of Courage to remove up to 3 Injury damage from a friend

Ever Faithful

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: When you spend experience points to regain lost Willpower, you may restore yourself to full Willpower for a single experience point (see “A Leap Of Faith”)

Forward Fortune (*Earth Pony Only*)

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: A banked critical success may be used on a successful roll (yours or another's) to make it a critical success instead

Dodge Destiny (*Earth Pony Only*)

Type: Ability

Cost: 15 Experience Points

Effect: The first critical failure you roll in a scene may be counted as only a normal failure. However, the next failure rolled in the same scene is counted as a critical failure

Last Chance

Type: Ability

Cost: 20 Experience Points

Effect: Once per play session, if your group would be defeated (all characters sidelined with no Second Wind remaining), you are instead immediately restored to full Energy, Courage, Fortitude, and Willpower. This state lasts for three rounds; at the end of the third round, you become sidelined again, your Energy, Courage, Fortitude, and Willpower scores all reduced to zero

Just Like My Book Said

Characters may purchase a temporary bonus at any time, which improves all their check results for the duration of a scene. There are two levels of temporary bonuses: a *Minor Bonus* grants a +3 bonus at the cost of 2 experience points; a *Major Bonus* grants a +6 bonus at the cost of 3 experience points. A character may not have more than one temporary bonus in effect at a time, and at the end of the scene, the bonus disappears.

A Leap of Faith

Characters may spend experience points to restore their lost Willpower at any time, essentially investing their experience and lessons learned into faith in themselves and what they feel they must do. For each experience point spent to restore their lost Willpower, a character regains half of their maximum Willpower, rounded up. This means that by spending two experience points, a character may entirely recover any and all lost Willpower.





For GMs



Starting with the Basics

Welcome, brave GM, to your dedicated section of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. It takes a special kind of person to be a GM—and more than that, a good GM. It also takes hard work, experience, and a unique creative insight to fulfill the role. As a GM, you are responsible for a large number of both artistic and logistical elements; on the one hand, you are expected to keep track of what the characters are doing and how the world around them is reacting to their actions—on the other hand, you are also expected to plan situations and guide the characters to important decisions and events, while thinking ahead of them, and without restricting their basic freedom to choose the direction in which they take the plot.

While every person at the game table shares the role of actors, directors, and writers to one degree or another, yours is the largest and most difficult part; the players have only their characters' perspectives to worry about and focus on, while you are responsible for the world. Be prepared to carry it on your shoulders. It is expected that you have read and understand the rest of this book up until this point before going forward. The GM section uses a more conversational tone, and references the rest of the book for the sake of brevity, assuming an understanding of the MLP:RiM system in its application to players, to delve into the GM's side of things. So, if you haven't yet, go back and read the rest of this book.


What a GM is

A GM has a variety of responsibilities to the game and story that the group is engaged in, but in broad terms, the GM's role is to be responsible for everything the players are not. Before going into the specific areas of a GM's obligations, it is important to get an overview of the primary aspects of being a GM—including what a GM is, and what a GM is not. First, are the five main things that a GM is: a *World Builder*, a *Writer*, a *Narrator*, an *Entertainer*, and a *Number One Assistant*.



A World Builder

Whether your group's story takes place in the magical land of Equestria which we all know and love from the My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic cartoon, or in any of the excellent fanfiction settings established by the Brony community, or even your own custom-created world, it is up to you as the GM to make the world and setting feel 'real.' The term for this is 'verisimilitude,' and it is at the core of a GM's duties.




Verisimilitude doesn't mean that your setting must follow real-world physics and chemistry—after all, the game involves brightly-colored talking ponies, some of whom can fly and use magic. What verisimilitude does mean is that the world should feel like it is fleshed out, and responds and functions with an internal logical consistency. For example, if (in your setting) all magic originates from gemstones found within moon rocks, then the setting should always reflect this fact.

World building requires a great deal of forethought and development; the best settings are those who are understood so well by their GM that the GM could answer nearly any question which comes up over the course of the game. However, it is also important to remember the scope of the story; if the game will take place only in Ponyville, for example, it is not that important to know all the goings-on in Canterlot, or Cloudsdale, or Manehattan.

A Writer

It is not enough to simply know the setting of your group's story—you must write the story itself. Writing an MLP:RiM Episode is not the same as writing a novel or a short story; by its very nature it is a story which will be told collaboratively with your players. Because of this, there are some guidelines and unique challenges presented by Episode creation which a GM must learn to handle. Even if you use pre-made Episodes created by others, it is important to understand the basics to ensure that you will handle the Episode in the best possible way. The basics of writing an Episode is covered in more detail later, with its own section.

A Narrator



Because the players' role is to play their characters to the best of their ability, a GM's role is to play everything else in the world—from other characters, to animals, to the world itself. In this way, a GM might be considered as being required to be the 'best' player at the table; you will have to roleplay as many different characters and creatures, and describe events, with the same amount of skill and dedication that your players are putting into their own characters. It is in this way that memorable events, locations, creatures, and non-player characters are established.

What I do best: Lecturing!

Much of the opening section of the GM part of this book is designed to give new GM's a broad idea of what they face by taking on the role of the GM. While more experienced GM's may be tempted to skip these sections ('I know all this already'), it is best to at least read through it once. After all, there may be some aspects of being a GM which are new to you in MLP:RiM, and if nothing else, it may serve as a friendly reminder and refresher.



An Entertainer

As any gamer will tell you, the most important aspect to any game is the quality and quantity of a game's content. No matter how much effort is put into the world, no matter how intricate the story or how interesting the characters, a game will ultimately become boring without content for the players to engage their characters in. It is the creation and execution of this game content that also falls onto the shoulders of the GM. While players will make their own fun to some extent, it is ultimately up to the GM to ensure that they have things to do; whether it be challenges to overcome, mysteries to solve, adversaries to face, or lessons to learn.

A Number One Assistant

It is the responsibility of every player to know their character, but any experienced player knows that when a game group sits down to play together, it is the GM who gets all of the questions. How does this rule work? What kind of task is this? Should I roll for that? Can I do this? Ultimately, all of these decisions are left up to the GM's approval and/or discretion; and because of that fact, the GM should know the game system inside and out. From assisting players with character creation, to answering their questions, to interpreting the rules and developing house rules of their own, a GM must be a capable and well-informed Number One Assistant.

What a GM is not

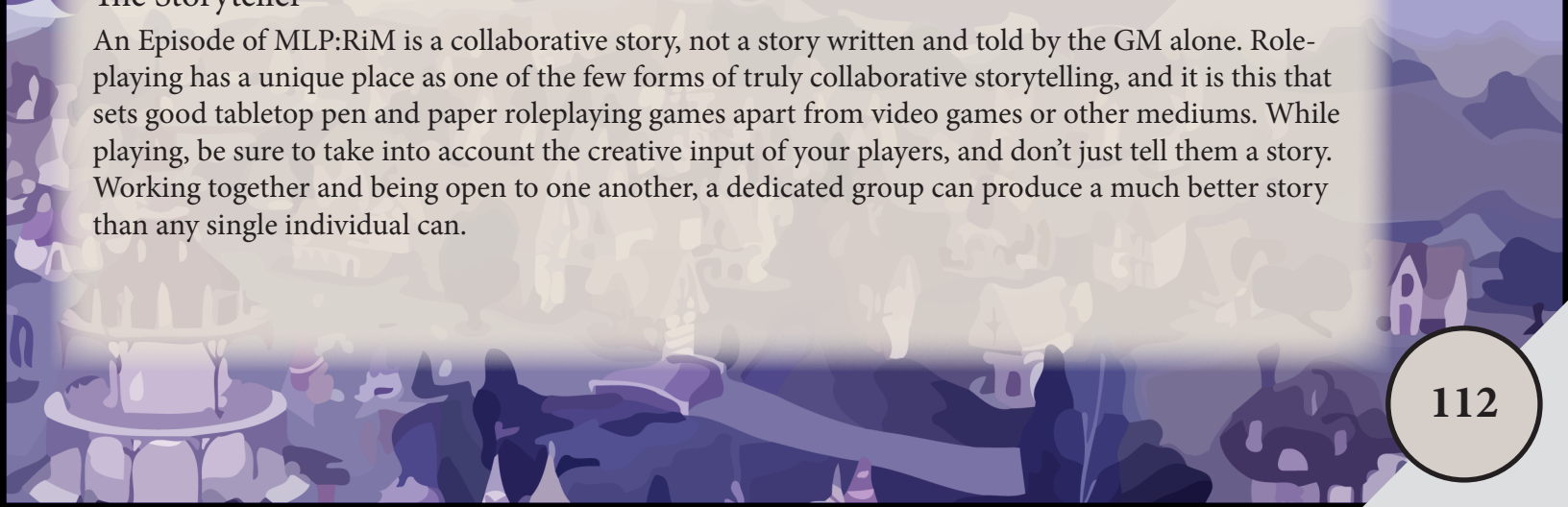
While there are many things a GM is responsible for, and many areas in which they must be active and engaged, there are certain lines it is important for a GM not to cross. If a GM's responsibilities could be considered a 'To Do' list, then the following five areas could be considered a 'Do Not Do' list; the five main things a GM should avoid being: a *Dictator*, the *Storyteller*, the *Decision Maker*, the *Center Of Attention*, and the *Enemy*.

A Dictator

As a GM, you will get many questions pertaining to the application of the rules in various situations and settings. It is important to remember that, while you have the final say in things (GM approval, or GM discretion), it is best to allow brief discussions on these matters from time to time, and get your players' opinions. After all, it is their game and story just as much as (if not more than) it is your game. Don't try to be the sole authority on everything; rather, be the final authority, taking everything into account before deciding.

The Storyteller

An Episode of MLP:RiM is a collaborative story, not a story written and told by the GM alone. Role-playing has a unique place as one of the few forms of truly collaborative storytelling, and it is this that sets good tabletop pen and paper roleplaying games apart from video games or other mediums. While playing, be sure to take into account the creative input of your players, and don't just tell them a story. Working together and being open to one another, a dedicated group can produce a much better story than any single individual can.






The Decision Maker

While it is the GM's responsibility to make sure that the world around the characters functions with verisimilitude and follows its internal logic, it is important that the GM never infringes on the basic freedom of the players to control their characters. Certainly, situations can (and will) arise which are designed to push the characters in one direction or another, but ultimately, the choice to follow any path or course of action must be left in their hooves. The GM's role is to present situations and react to the decisions and actions of the characters; not to make those decisions and actions for them.

The Center of Attention



A common mistake many first-time GM's make is that they do not keep in mind that they are not the 'main character,' and that ultimately, their role in the story will take a backseat to the characters. When players discuss the game amongst themselves, and with friends, they will discuss what their characters have done, what situations arose, and what was accomplished—not how well the GM is doing, or how much work the GM must have put into the game. A good GM has fun by helping others have fun, and is willing to give up the spotlight to that end.


The Enemy

As a GM, you will have to present dangers to your players' characters. You will have to present these dangers fairly, and honestly—a GM who never truly puts their characters in danger isn't respected as much in the long run. However, you must walk a fine line between being the person at the table who plays the monster, plays the villain, plays the danger—and not crossing over into the realm of being the enemy the players must 'win' against. Keep in mind that ultimately, a GM wants their players' characters to succeed in their adventure; but that part of the fun is in making sure they earn their success.


What Makes a Good GM

Now that we've covered the basic responsibilities and pitfalls to avoid of being a GM, we'll go into what separates a good GM from others. Each of the following nine aspects help to make a GM into a good GM (even a great GM). While almost no GM starts off with a mastery of all of these, it is important that a GM strive for it; nopony's perfect, but a good GM strives to improve themselves and aims for perfection. The following nine areas are not the full extent of GM'ing; they are simply the areas (once mastered) which will serve to turn an otherwise average GM into a truly good one.

Works Hard, Plays Well with Others



A good GM is dedicated to cooperation, hard work, and friendliness. They do not shy away from working hard for the benefit of their players, they make compromises with their players to help the players' characters become more fun to play, and they always promote and maintain a friendly and pleasant atmosphere at the table. Sitting down to play with a good GM should be something players look forward to just as much as sitting down with each other.



Organized and Prepared

When you sit down with your players to begin a game session, delays are sometimes inevitable. Someone forgot where they put their character sheet, or can't find their book. Someone has to make a phone call, or distribute snacks. There might even be an impromptu conversation on any number of topics. This is all normal, and fine; pen and paper roleplaying games are a social experience. However, the GM being unprepared should not be among these delays. Of all the people at the table, the GM is the one who must always be ready to play, and a good GM always comes to the table prepared.

Able to Develop and Alter Storylines

Any good GM will tell you that invariably, the players will throw a monkey wrench into even the most finely-crafted storyline. Maybe instead of choosing a side in a conflict, the characters decide to form an independent third faction. Maybe they decide that the thief they were supposed to catch isn't such a bad guy after all, and they let him escape. A good GM is able to roll with these punches, and quickly re-develop a storyline to adapt to the monkey wrenches of their players. A good GM doesn't try to force the story to go one direction or another, but rather helps create the story around the characters.

Able to Develop Characters


A good GM should be able to create interesting and memorable characters to function as non-player characters in the group's story; after all, the players' characters are more likely to help the 'likable prince' if he is actually a likable character. But apart from this, a GM should be able to help their players to create and develop interesting characters who are appropriate to the game and story, without outright making the characters for their players.

Not too Generous or Strict; Fair

Sometimes, characters should be rewarded for their actions, or helped along their way. Sometimes, they should be punished for mistakes, or presented with a challenge or difficulty to overcome. A good GM knows when to be generous and when to be harsh with their characters, and when they are being too much of either. A GM who is too generous may end up with characters who take too many risks, or have a sense of entitlement; a GM who is too strict, by contrast, may end up with characters who never take risks, and always prepare for the worst. The mark of a good GM is keeping things fair.

Able to Predict Characters


A good GM should know their players' characters almost as well as the players do; this helps the GM to construct situations which appeal to each character's strengths and weaknesses, and makes the story more personal. Also key to this, however, is that by knowing the players' characters, the GM can predict what those characters may do in a given situation—which can help immensely when developing the plot for an Episode.



Flair for the Dramatic

Every good GM is a little bit of an actor. In the course of fleshing out a character, it is important to develop mannerisms for that character. Perhaps they speak with an accent, or sniffle often. Maybe they have a gruff laugh, or speak with very technical, precise wording. All of these mannerisms should come through the performance of the character, so that the players can learn to differentiate between the many characters the GM may come to play over the course of an Episode. While not every character needs some wacky mannerism or outlandish tendency, some signature elements do help to make a character more memorable to the players.

Good at Setting the Scene



When describing a situation, the ability to convey details and the overall ‘feel’ of the scene is important. A good GM can describe not just the physical components of a scene (rocks, trees, a river) but also the mood and tone of the scene (gloomy, ghosts in the mist, eerie sounds in the darkness), without becoming too overly-wordy. A good GM can describe a scene in such a way that it makes the players ‘see’ the scene in their own mind’s eye, so to speak.

Experienced

A good GM has experience with roleplaying, though this does not necessarily mean that they must have been a GM before; sometimes, experience as a player is the most important component to being a good GM, because it gives unique insight into what players expect out of the GM. Of all the aspects that make a good GM, experience is potentially the least important, as well as potentially the most important. Experience can make up for a lack of inherent talent, but sometimes a good GM is one despite being inexperienced.

Why You Haven't GM'ed This Before

Despite the title of this section, chances are (if you're an experienced GM) you may find this system familiar in a number of ways.

My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is different than most other systems, but also shares similarities with many of them; in essence, it is an amalgamation of many ideas, refined and reworked so as to fit together into a cohesive and unique pen and paper roleplaying game. However, if you have focused primarily on one game system or another, or have played only with one group of players for a long time, some elements of this system—and the experience of GM'ing this system—may be new to you.

In this section, we will explain the core unique elements which set **My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic** apart from other game systems, and help you to understand how your GM'ing experience may differ from what you are used to.

Not a Beginner System

My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is not a system for 'beginners,' or those seeking a regulated gaming experience; it is for experienced roleplayers, writers, or at least those with creative minds. The foundation of the game is in interpretation, story and character development, imagination, and narrative thinking. Often, gamers who come from a background of other pen and paper roleplaying games have been conditioned to think tactically, efficiently, and seek the way to 'win.' This is also often the case with gamers who come from a background of video gaming. This mindset, this 'winner attitude,' is what we consider to be a 'beginner mindset' when it comes to **My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic**.


The mindset which must be cultivated for a game group to thrive while playing this game is one of collaborative storytelling and imaginative, cooperative, creative thinking. Much like the characters themselves, the game group must be a cohesive unit, working together toward the common goal of creating a fun experience and story. Once the game group grasps the concept of collaborating in order to have fun, instead of working efficiently to defeat a challenge, they are ready and are well-suited to playing **My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic**.

Concept Heavy, Rules Light

Players and GM's who are playing **My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic** must be good at conceptual thinking and consideration of the situation at hand. This is because there are no tables or charts with exact difficulty ratings for individual tasks, nor are there many numbers of any kind except those which are necessary to keep track of vital statistics or to aid in the resolution of task attempts. This lack of reference, which we call 'rules light,' produces two main effects on game-play:

First, without a chart of exact numbers for things, the GM must use their best judgement when deciding what those numbers should be.





This leads to a development of reasoned thinking and fairness, a connection between the players and their GM, and gives the GM a comfortable position from which to exercise narrative discretion; that is, if a plot point is important, it might be easier (or harder) to accomplish, and/or have less (or more) dramatic consequences.

Second, it fosters an attitude of narrative responsibility in the players. If players can look at a chart or a table and know that their character has a certain percent chance of success, they will look for a way to increase that chance for the purpose of ‘winning.’ However, without such a binding resource, players are free to play their characters more accurately and honestly; a character who is a hothead and forges ahead through strength, and a character who is more cautious and uses their mind, can both be equally valid.

These aspects, these gameplay effects, are what make pen and paper roleplaying games special in the world of gaming; where video games require hard rules and perpetually consistent numbers to ensure game balance, pen and paper games like *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* are concerned more with narrative balance, and leave considerable leeway for GM’s and players to ‘make the numbers match the story,’ instead of the other way around.

Improvisation: Your Best Skill

In most pen and paper roleplaying games, preparation is the key to being a good GM. From having references to the stats of a particular adversary, to knowing the difficulty of opening locks or evading traps, to having prepared encounters written out in advance, traditionally, preparation has always been the most important skill for a GM to develop.

Not so in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*.

In this game, the most important skill for a GM to develop is improvisation. Improvisation takes two abilities and merges them into a single skill: First, the ability to identify what element is lacking or could improve a given situation, and second, the ability to decide on what and how to alter a situation to make it more fun, dynamic, and interesting. Improvisation allows a good GM to turn a boring or otherwise not fun scene into a memorable story chapter.

Everything on the GM’s side of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* is designed to facilitate improvisation. While a GM should prepare their Episode in terms of situations and plot points, they must be free to change anything at any time. This is one reason why the system is so rules light; without needing to memorize or continuously consult rules, a GM is free to interpret situations and improvise elements, using and adapting basic guidelines.

Players, Trust Thy GM

All of this power to change things on the fly which the GM has, has the risk of fostering distrust between the players and the GM. If the players feel like the GM is ‘cheating,’ or is working against them unfairly, or is trying to force them to do something or have their characters punished, the necessary trust to play the game itself is shattered. For this reason, establishing—and not betraying—the trust of the players is of paramount importance for a GM running a game of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. Be honorable and fair, trust your players to make their own choices, and they will trust you.



Assembling a Group


Understanding what qualities make a good GM, and what responsibilities a GM should be willing to take on (as well as what a GM should not), is only the beginning of GM'ing a game of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. The next step is to gather together a group of players; a GM can't play an Episode by themselves, after all. In many cases, it's easy to find a group of players; your friends, family, or other loved ones probably already want to play, and that's why you're reading this book in the first place.

However, sometimes you'll need to put together a group of players from groups of friends at school, or at a convention or other social gathering. Sometimes, you'll need to restrict the size of your group, or ensure it has the right balance of player types for the style of game you want to play and the players involved. You may even have a few new players who want to join an existing game, or you may need to recruit players to fill the gaps left by absent ones.

In any of these cases, this section can help to guide you in ensuring that you get the right number and mix of players, and help you understand each type of player—what they may be looking to achieve by playing in your game, what situations interest them the most, and what aspects of gameplay are more fun to them than others.

Getting the Right Players


Although—of course—it is ideal to let everyone play who wants to play, the reality of GM'ing is that sometimes it is just not possible. The first thing to remember as a GM is that there is a limit to how much you can handle, and that if you're getting bogged down by having too many players, everyone's level of fun will decrease; in a very real way, the enjoyment of the game hinges on the stress level of the GM. Because of this, the GM also needs to be able to collaborate in a friendly way with the players, and depend on them for certain responsibilities; just as important as having the right number of players, is having the right type of players.



Over time, and with experience, all GM's eventually learn what to look for in a potential player, and how many players they can reasonably handle. This section is designed to help newer GM's, giving them a head-start on this process and explaining a few of the more widely-accepted standards GM's use to make sure they have the right group of players.

Who's Best for the Litter

Every pen and paper roleplaying game is designed with an ideal player group size in mind; many mechanics are designed around this group size, and the play balance may change if more or less players are involved. For example, Dungeons & Dragons is designed for a group of four to five players; too many more and challenges may become too easy, too few and challenges may become too hard. However, the more malleable and versatile the rules become, the more variation in group size can be accommodated; for example, World of Darkness can handle group sizes from three to six—or even seven—due to the more narrative focus of the ruleset.



My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is no exception to this rule, though it is designed to follow the cartoon as much as possible—and from time to time, there are episodes which focus on only one singular character, as well as episodes which feature the entire mane six at once. For this reason, My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is designed to handle group sizes from one to six players; this allows for 'solo' Episodes, as well as large ensemble adventures, though many adventures will feature a number of players somewhere in between these extremes.


Bright Eyed and Scaly Tailed

Something that many GM's struggle with is ensuring their players are on-time, ready to play, and remain focused. Of course, it is the nature of a social gaming experience to include getting sidetracked and going off on tangents of conversation; some of the most entertaining play sessions are made fun by the discussions and jokes of players surrounding the game and story itself. These elements are important to the experience, and should not be stifled.

However, it is equally important that when the focus needs to shift back to the story, it does. Interruptions and lack of punctuality can ruin the pacing and flow of an Episode. The key is to strike a balance between game focus and tangents. First, look for players who have a natural inclination to stay on-track; players who can carry on a conversation while playing a video game, for example. But it is also your duty as a GM to come up with a 'focus device,' or some signal to the players that it is time to get focused on the game and story again.


Chances are that you already know some examples of 'focus devices;' they are regularly employed by many teachers and educators of young children. Some examples of a 'focus device' include: When you raise your hand, everyone else should raise theirs and stop talking. Having an auditory signal such as a gavel or a chime, or even a whistle. Using a phrase, such as 'Attention, everypony!' Among others. Whatever it is, your group's 'focus device' should be known and agreed to by everyone at the table.

Tied for Last Place



The group dynamic in pen and paper roleplaying games can be different from system to system. Sometimes, a group is designed to be competitive with each other, or even designed to encourage players to struggle for power and control, or leadership, or limited resources. In My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, the group dynamic is designed to be cooperative and friendly, with allowances for competition.

When recruiting players for your game, it is important to look for these tendencies in them. Do they



tend to be highly competitive, or try to dominate the other group members? Or do they set aside their own advantage in order to work as a group? The latter is the kind of player you want, as a GM—though, depending on the theme and style of your Episode, other group dynamics might be more appropriate.

Newbies Beware!

When recruiting players, GM's often must struggle with the question of whether or not to recruit players who are new to pen and paper roleplaying games. This is a matter of personal taste, as 'newbies' require more help, coaching, and assistance than most veteran players do. However, newbies can also bring a fresh perspective to the group, and often have an eagerness that some veteran players lack. Ultimately, this is a decision you will need to make for yourself; if you are a new GM, it may be best to keep the number of newbies low—though it may be fun to learn the game side-by-side with fellow newbies. If you are a veteran GM, it may be best to encourage newbies to play, and teach them—though you don't want to get too bogged-down with it, unless teaching gameplay is the point of the Episode itself.

With Friends Like You...

Another decision GM's are faced with from time to time is whether to play with their current group of friends, or to branch out and play with strangers and players they haven't met yet. Both have advantages and drawbacks; playing with friends, you know them well already—but they also know you, and may predict the story of your Episode. Playing with strangers, you have more freedom, but also must learn their tendencies and interests. Ultimately, there are pros and cons to both, and many GM's find it best to play with a mixed group; a few friends for familiarity and a few strangers for freshness. In this case, however, it is important to make the new players feel welcome.

Knowing Your Mane Cast

Knowing what to look for in a player, and knowing the player themselves, are two different things. The aspects which make a good player help you as a GM ensure that the game and story can progress smoothly, and limit disruptions and negative elements. However, the knowledge of a player helps you as a GM to ensure that everyone at the table has the opportunity to have fun and contribute.


Generally speaking, there are seven 'archetypes' most players fall into. For the sake of ease of explanation (as well as because it's fun), they are categorized according to which of the main characters from the cartoon they most resemble.

Rainbow Dash, The Go-Getter

The Go-Getter is a player who tackles situations head-on, disregarding nuance and danger in favor of forging ahead with boldness and courage. This can be an admirable quality, as it means that the Go-

Missing Players and 'Fading Out'

Every player and GM is familiar with the challenges presented by a player or players being absent from a game session; what should be done about the character who suddenly is not being controlled? In *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, the best method for handling this situation is by 'fading out' the character for that session; the character is present for plot purposes, but has no impact on gameplay and takes no actions unless absolutely necessary—at which time the GM should control them as a narrative character.




Getter is less likely to shy away from difficulty or try to find a more efficient (but maybe less interesting) way to solve a problem. However, it can also get them into trouble, putting them in harm's way more than is strictly necessary.

Fluttershy, The Reactionary

The Reactionary is, put simply, often the last player to act. This may be for any number of reasons, including timidity to lead for fear of making the wrong decision, or a cautious desire to see what everyone else is doing before making a decision. This makes the Reactionary a player who considers carefully their actions before taking them, but this may also cripple them when an important decision falls solely on them.

Rarity, The Rules Lawyer



The Rules Lawyer, earlier in this book, was stated as someone to avoid. However, there is a potentially invaluable place for a Rules Lawyer in a group; the Rules Lawyer seeks to do things in their own way, in their own time, and has a strong sense of what is proper and correct to do; they are often orderly, if not necessarily organized. However, a Rules Lawyer may be contentious, and quick to call something unfair or cheating.

Twilight Sparkle, The Power Gamer

The Power Gamer is the player who looks through every rule and book in a game system, does the math to figure out the most effective way to do something, and then does it. They can be vital to a group facing a daunting challenge, as they often are the one who finds the way to accomplish what seemed impossible before. However, they also often have the most trouble setting aside efficiency for the sake of story or plot.


Pinkie Pie, The Prankster

The Prankster is all about having fun, and making sure everyone else has fun, too. From silly interactions with their character, to humorous table commentary, the Prankster makes things lighthearted, and is always fun to have around. However, the Prankster also has a tendency to change the tone of the story for the sake of humor or silly fun, even when it isn't appropriate to do so; they must be kept on track from time to time.

Applejack, The Anchor

The Anchor is, more often than not, the one who becomes the unofficial group leader. They have an innate sense of what makes a good story, and what their character should do in a given situation to add dynamic weight and make things interesting for everyone else, without drawing attention to themselves in the process. However, the Anchor sometimes has problems letting others make bad decisions; they may adopt a 'my way or the highway' mentality.

Spike, The Assistant



The Assistant is the one who helps the other players learn the game, make their characters, remember what numbers go where, and helps the GM share the load they bear. The Assistant can be a great boon to a group of players, as they are naturally inclined and eager to help out with anything the players or GM may need. The problem is that sometimes, this takes the focus away from them as a player, and their own gameplay suffers.



Writing an Episode


Once you have a group together, the next step is to write an Episode to be played. In other pen and paper roleplaying games, an Episode might be called a ‘campaign,’ or a ‘chronicle.’ An Episode is a single storyline, possibly spanning multiple game sessions. More than likely, if you’re interested in GM’ing a game of My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic, you already have the seed of a story you’d like to play out with a game group in mind. This section will help to teach you the basics of how to write a good Episode based on just such an idea.

Basic Story Structure

The first thing to understand is the basic structure all stories follow. Anyone who has had a creative writing class knows this structure well: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution. These five plot points govern almost every area of every story ever written, and your Episode is likely to be no exception. First we’ll explain and summarize each of these plot points, before getting into more advanced narrative concepts.

Exposition

The exposition is the set-up, the introduction, the story ‘hook.’ The exposition establishes how things are at the beginning of the story, and sets the stage for the initial conflicts which will begin the next section. For example: “It is a bright and sunny day, but there is a strange chill in the air, as if winter is coming—except that it is currently the middle of spring. Everypony in Ponyville has bundled up in their beds, and the streets are all but empty.” This is an example of an expository statement (a piece of narration within the exposition).



The exposition ends with the ‘inciting incident,’ or the initial jumping-off point for the conflict(s) of the story. For example: “All of the sudden, a donkey comes galloping up the main street, calling for help—a pack of Tundra Wolves are approaching the town, threatening to freeze everything with their icy breath!”

Rising Action

The rising action is the growth of the story toward its climax; all of the challenges, information, and plot which leads up to the central conflict of the story falls into this category. Often, the rising action is the largest section of a story. For example, the characters’ battle with the Tundra Wolves, then tracking them back into the Everfree Forest, then finding out that they came down from the north because a dragon had driven them out of their home, then the trek into the frozen north to confront the dragon; these are all plot points which fall into the rising action of the example story.

Climax

The climax is the point when the central conflict of the story is confronted. It is typically the crux of the story itself, and its outcome determines the rest of the story; resolving the climax is the point at which the story begins its steep downward slope toward its conclusion. For example, confronting the dragon in the north and convincing it to return to its desert home, is the climax of the example story.

Falling Action

The falling action is the section of the story dealing with the consequences of the climax, and tying up loose ends; it is the ‘clean up’ phase of the story. For example, bringing the Tundra Wolves back to their home in the north, but giving the dragon a big block of ice to make a lake out of in its desert home, is a plot point which falls into the falling action of the example story.

Resolution

The resolution is the ending scene of the story; it concludes the plotline. For example, returning to Ponyville and having a parade through the now sunny and warm streets, is the conclusion of the example story. Sometimes, the resolution also includes an epilogue; a short plot point dealing with the long-term effects of the story, or dealing with its morals.

Advanced Concepts

Understanding the basic structure of a story is all that is strictly needed to turn an idea for an Episode into an Episode to be played, for many GM’s; My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic is designed to facilitate improvisation for storytelling, and thus the only thing strictly needed for preparation is an outline of the story the Episode should cover. However, there are some more advanced concepts which can help to make sure an Episode is the best it can be.

Talkin’ in Fancy

The advanced concepts presented here are good to keep in mind for any GM, not just advanced or veteran ones. While some of them deal with concepts which may require a basis in creative writing and/or collaborative storytelling to fully explore and understand, we have done our best to present enough of an overview of each one to impart the basic gist of it, regardless of experience level.

Tone

Consider the tone (or 'feel') of the story you want to run, and design the plot accordingly. If the tone of the story is frightening and spooky, make sure to note and take advantage of opportunities to play up the elements of situations which can enhance the scariness or tension of the story. Tone is best conveyed with small details and in describing in detail what characters experience with their senses.

Theme

Identify the narrative themes (or messages) behind the story you want to run, and follow them consistently. For example, if one of the themes of your story is that integrity should always be rewarded, then ensure that, as the characters progress through the Episode, the instances in which they show integrity are always rewarded. Often, the themes of a story end up being Lessons at the end of an Episode.

The Hook

It is important to grab the attention of your players right from the beginning; many stories have failed to be as fun and interesting as they could have been simply because the audience wasn't immediately hooked, and thus couldn't sustain their interest long enough to get to the 'good part.' Develop a good hook, or attention-grabbing element, right at the beginning of the story, and it will connect your players to the story.

No Railroading

With all the preparation and development you are doing for your story, it may be tempting to write it out beforehand, and try to guide (or 'railroad') the players down that specific plot path. This is a bad idea, as it limits player freedom to make their characters act however they wish, and makes the players feel as if they do not actually have any control over the story. In general, it is better to build situations instead of conclusions, and adapt them as the Episode progresses.





Know Your Audience

Your story should cater somewhat to your players, taking into account their player archetypes and what they enjoy; while you should not do only what they like, it is a good idea to include elements and aspects which they enjoy into the story and how it progresses.

Battles to Fight

Unlike many pen and paper roleplaying games, *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic* focuses on story development and narrative preparation more than mechanical preparation, and relies on a GM's ability to improvise instead. For this reason, it is important to develop what challenges you know the characters will face ahead of time as much as is possible. While this does not mean making character sheets for every enemy, it does mean knowing how many there will be, how they will challenge the characters, and what weaknesses they may have, for example. Developing challenges beforehand will allow you to improvise more consistently, having a clear vision of the scene in mind.



Have a Way Out

Never develop a challenge without developing a solution to that challenge. While the players may not use the solution you developed, they should always have the option to find it. Likewise, do not force players to use your solution; it is better overall for the group to come up with a solution on their own, working together.

Side Quests

It is a good idea to have optional content, or 'shave,' in mind for your Episode. While this doesn't necessarily need to pertain to the main plot of the story, it will give players something to do if they don't feel like focusing on the main plot—and it could be tied back into the main plot later. For example, while investigating strange claw marks on the side of a building, some of the characters might wander off and find a missing foal, returning it to its mother and father. Later, that mother and father might provide a clue to the beast which made the claw marks the characters are investigating.

Action, Reaction

Keep consequences and rewards always in mind. This will help to add a sense of verisimilitude and reciprocity to the world the Episode is set in. A character who saves someone might be recognized for it later—whereas if they had not saved them, it might impede their progress later. Regardless of exactly how this rule is applied or interpreted, it is vital that for every important action, there is some manner of reaction.



To Be Continued...

Consider whether or not the Episode would work as part of a larger storyline; it is easy to find ways to leave loose ends at the resolution of a story, or to extend certain plot threads, in order to connect an Episode to a subsequent one; finding ways of doing so may provide a sense of continuity which many players enjoy.



Playing an Episode

So, you've assembled a group of the right players, and you've created an outstanding Episode for them to enjoy; it's time to sit down and play. By now, you've read through the rest of this book and understand the basics (if not every detail) of the rules as they pertain to players. You know how players create their characters, make task attempts, resist and recover from harm, and grow and develop. But what about the other side of gameplay?

This section will explain the GM side of gameplay in *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, from character creation through to awarding experience points. This section should serve as a reference for GM's and their players, to answer questions concerning the rules of gameplay from the GM's side, but it is important to keep in mind that a GM is granted considerable freedom to amend these rules to serve the purpose of making the story better.

So, saddle up and let's dive right in!

Character Creation

The precise mechanical rules and numerical values pertaining to character creation are covered in great detail earlier in this book, but there are a few concepts it is important for a GM to keep in mind. These concepts should inform the process by which a GM handles running character creation.

First, that they are a part of character creation just as much as the players are; the GM should be involved in each character's genesis, if for no other reason than to ensure that the rules are being followed and that the GM knows the character's strengths and weaknesses.

Second, that the focus of character creation is on the narrative inception of a character within the mind of the player; this forming of a concept in the mind of the player is more important than the mechanics of their abilities, as it is this concept which will inform those choices.

Third and finally, that the GM's role is not to dictate, but to assist, explore, and suggest. For example, instead of saying something like "Your character is physically strong and athletic; (s)he should be an ex-Canterlot Royal Guard," it is better to ask questions which will lead your players to explore their own characters' concepts; in this situation, it would be better to ask "Your character is physically strong and athletic; how did they get that way?"


Asking exploratory questions such as these is the key to running character creation well. While every session of character creation will be different, and thus different questions should be posed to the players, there is a small set of exploratory question 'tracks' which can form a somewhat universal basis. These are listed below:

Why is your character named the way they are named? What is the meaning of their name?

Who are your character's parents? Are they around? Does your character have any siblings or relatives?

What is your character like, in conversation? Why are they the way they are?

What has your character been doing up until the Episode begins? How do they feel about their past?



How did your character meet the others (or have they yet)? Have they met before then?

What are your character's goals and ambitions? What are they willing to do to accomplish them?

What emotion is your character primarily motivated by? What do they ask themselves first in every situation?

What does your character fear? Is there anything they are sensitive about or ashamed of?

What is your character proud of themselves for? What do they like about themselves?

What would your character change, if they could change one thing about the world?

Getting the Heck Out of Dodge (Junction)

Ideally, character creation should be done in-person, with the entire group working together and with their GM. In reality, this is sometimes not practical or possible; a group may live at an inconvenient driving distance from each other, or may be an internet-based play group. In the case where character creation cannot be done in-person, it is a good idea for the GM to create a basic set-up of the Episode's setting, and a small list of exploratory questions like the ones listed above, to help players make informed decisions during character creation.



Getting Started

In each episode of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, there is a 'pre-opening credits scene,' which serves to introduce (or re-introduce) the show to the viewer, as well as establish a few baselines for the episode itself, creating a frame of reference for the viewer to know what is coming. For example, from an episode's opening, the viewer might come to understand that an episode is going to be a Fluttershy-focused episode, and that it will deal with her timidity (in the case of "Putting Your Hoof Down").

It is a good idea to mirror this kind of approach to the beginning of running an Episode of *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*. The opening of an Episode should serve not as a sudden jump into the story, but rather a lighthearted easing-in for the players. The point is to 'break the ice' for the group.


Establishing Tone

The opening scene should first set the tone of the Episode; almost certainly the game will begin with the GM establishing the basics of the setting and world, and the tone of the Episode should be made clear from the very first line. It is as simple as any old storybook opening to do; for a scary Episode, you might go with the good old-fashioned, "It is a dark and stormy night..." whereas for something more lighthearted you might use, "It's a beautiful day; the perfect day for the annual Running of the Leaves..."



Getting to Know You

Right from the start, the players should understand where their characters are and what they are doing—and more importantly, why they are doing what they are doing. It is important that players have the chance to begin defining their characters' roles within the group. For example, a character might be pulling a wagon-load of wooden planks to a friend's farm to help rebuild the barn—but are they bring-



ing the materials because they are affluent enough to donate the wood, or are they pulling the wagon because they're the strongest one in the group?

A Scheduled Sprinkle

It is a good idea to present some kind of small but personally important task for the group to complete, during the opening scene. This provides a low-stress situation in which the players can get their first taste of how their characters will work together to solve problems and overcome challenges. This preview of the group dynamic is important, because it is better for the group to know each other somewhat, instead of discovering how they work together during a critical event—unless that is the point of the story or scene.

Once this 'scheduled sprinkle' is complete, and the group is going to proceed from the opening scene into the main plot of the Episode itself, it is a good idea to take a short break. Have everyone get a snack, or lounge for a few minutes, and see how they react to each other. If they have started to talk about how their characters work together, or about the group in general, things are going well and you've accomplished the goal of the opening scene: breaking the ice.

Picking Up Steam

Now that the ice has been broken and the group is starting to come together, the next step is to set up the central conflict of the Episode, and build momentum into action toward confronting and solving it. The point of this section of gameplay is—now that the players have taken their first steps toward coming together as a group—to give the group direction, and a goal to work toward.

The Hook


A good central conflict hooks the players into not only needing to solve it, but also wanting to solve it. To this end, it is important to design the 'hook' for the conflict in such a way as to make it personal or personally impact the group of characters; a distant or disconnected conflict will quickly fade in importance for players. For example, instead of a burglar stealing valuables from some of the residents of the characters' town, the burglar should steal from the characters' house directly. This makes the conflict—the existence of a burglar—personally important, and hooks the characters in.

To Do List

You should have a list of the objectives of the Episode, both in terms of plot and narrative, and incorporate some of them into the initial conflict to establish them in the minds of the players. For example, if one of the objectives is to unmask the burglar, you might have the characters get a glimpse of the burglar before they vanish, but they can't recognize them because of a mask or disguise they are wearing. As another example, if one of the objectives is to recover the stolen items, make it clear what the burglar has stolen so far, so the players know what to have their characters look for.

The Mysterious Mare-Do-Well


Mystery can be an important and effective tool for presenting a conflict and a group's objectives, but it should not be taken too far; there is such a thing as 'too mysterious.' The key to using mystery is to give enough clues to solve the mystery, but not frame the clues in the right context to make it too easy. In general, be careful with using mystery too often.



By the End of the Day

Part of establishing the objectives of the Episode, however, is identifying and presenting any limitations which affect the accomplishment of those objectives. That is, completing an objective may be more involved than simply going out and doing it. For example, to find and unmask the burglar, the characters can't simply go around and barge into every home until they find the stolen items—there is a social restriction in that that is not how pony society functions. The characters will have to devise a different way to accomplish their goal.

All Over Equestria



The final part of setting up the central conflict is framing it within the scope of the world. Is this a global conflict, or specific to one character or town? For example, is the burglar the characters are trying to find and unmask a lone thief, or part of a larger network of larceny? Having a pre-decided knowledge of the scope of the conflict allows you to convey a sense of importance to the players, and potentially even surprise them; the scope of a conflict could be much greater than it seems.


Keep on Trottin’

Following the establishment of the central conflict (or the “inciting incident”) is the Rising Action, where most of the group’s gameplay will take place. Because it is the portion of the story in which they will spend the most time, players primarily run the risk of becoming idle or losing focus or energy while approaching the Episode’s Climax. There are a number of ways to combat this as the GM, explained in this section.

The Carrot

Positive reinforcement is the first tool in the GM’s toolbox for keeping things moving. Incentives and rewards can be a powerful motivating force for those who have some ambition or whose goals involve advancement. The most basic incentive is experience points; by accomplishing the goal of the Episode, the characters may gain experience. However, there are other, more creative ways to give positive reinforcement. For example, the prospect of seeing the Wonderbolts’ live show in the town the characters are headed to; or the possibility of meeting a big-wig fashion mogul while taking care of business in Canterlot.

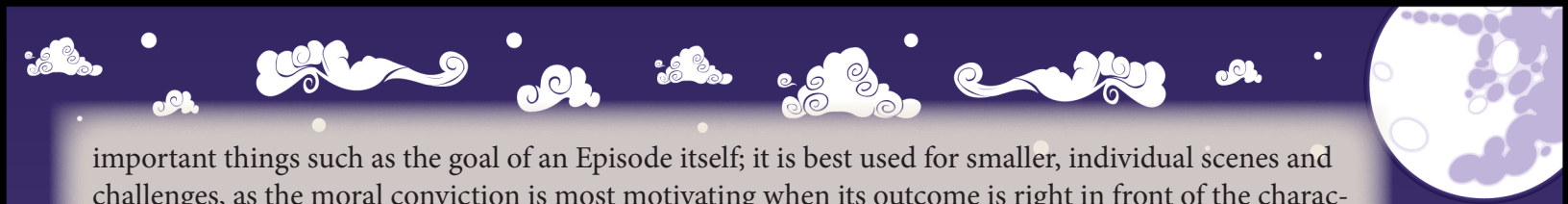
The Stick



Danger, and negative consequences, is another major tool in the GM’s toolbox for motivation. Consequences can motivate those who seek to avoid misfortune, for themselves or for others. For example, if the characters can’t figure out how to stop the seemingly unending winter, the town will be buried and everyone will have to leave. Or, if the characters can’t stop the crops from being stolen, they and others will be forced to go hungry.

The Right Thing to do

Appealing to a character’s morality and desire to do the right thing can be a strong motivator, but only if the character’s desire to do good is strong enough. Be wary of making this kind of moral appeal for



important things such as the goal of an Episode itself; it is best used for smaller, individual scenes and challenges, as the moral conviction is most motivating when its outcome is right in front of the character.

Just Over This Hill

Perhaps the most powerful motivating force to keep players interested, however, is the consistent affirmation that they are getting steadily closer to accomplishing their goal and confronting the central conflict of the Episode. Perhaps you can give them glimpses of their goal 'on the horizon' so to speak, when the group overcomes a challenge or completes an objective. Maybe the goal is to accumulate a set number of things, giving reinforcement of the goal with each step of progress. However it is done, motivation through showing progress is extremely important.

Tasks and Challenges


Motivation is the key to keeping the characters moving and keeping the players interested, but motivation must be matched with challenge and fulfilment to be meaningful and memorable to players. In simple terms, the forward momentum and enjoyment of a game or story is based on "setup and payoff." Players must feel that there is a good reason to do something, they must encounter some kind of challenge accomplishing it, and they must derive satisfaction from its completion. As the GM, this is primarily your job; players will provide much of their own direction, but it is up to the GM to think about the "setup and payoff" of a story and/or situation.

Challenges and tasks are the most common and most reliable way to do this. Tasks and challenges provide a hurdle to overcome, which serves to build up satisfaction upon 'earning' the completion of a goal. Players can look back and say, "Look what we did to get here; look what we overcame." Ask any veteran gamer, and more often than not, they remember the challenges they overcame to get to a goal, more than the goal itself. It is important to remember, however, that while presenting the challenge is the GM's responsibility, it is not the GM's job to dictate how the challenge is to be solved. Hints are okay, but if the characters are presented with a river they need to cross, how to get across it is up to them. The GM sets up the situation and reacts to how the characters act within it.

The Difficulty Scale

Anything a character does can be classified according to its difficulty with regard to the situation they are in. This difficulty can be translated into a number which the character must meet or exceed with a check. This does not mean, however, that characters must make checks for everything they do; in fact, most things a character does will not require a check; a check is only needed when the task the character is attempting is risky or otherwise has a reasonable chance of failure. In this case, it is important for the GM to be able to quickly and relatively accurately decide upon the difficulty of the check, and thus what number the character must meet or exceed with their check. Unlike many pen and paper roleplaying games, which use calculations of various factors to decide on the difficulty of a check, this system uses context and interpretation to let the GM decide quickly and keep the game moving.

This is reflected by the Difficulty Scale. On the scale below, choose the statement which best fits how difficult the task is. Which statement is chosen corresponds to a difficulty number (or the lack of need for one), which can reasonably serve as the difficulty for the check a character is attempting. With each statement are examples of what tasks might fall under the statement. The Difficulty Scale, at lower



levels, is uniform. However, at higher levels, it is further broken up into three categories in how it gives difficulty numbers, based on the kind of game being played and/or the kind of situation the characters are in.

These categories should be kept in mind as gameplay progresses, to make the decision of difficulty easier. First is *Casual*, for games or situations where fun is more important than challenge. Second is *Standard*, for games or situations where challenge is meant to be mixed in with fun, but not downplayed. And third is *Hardcore*, for games or situations meant to be very challenging and serious.

If using the statements on the Difficulty Scale is not natural or comfortable, you may find it easier to read through the statements and familiarize yourself with them, then during gameplay, simply rate tasks on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of their difficulty and select the corresponding statement. The Difficulty Scale is designed to accommodate either method of on-the-fly decision making when it comes to task difficulty.



10. Beyond Even Legendary Ponies; Discord Only.

No Check Required; Impossible (Or 20 Only)

Complete control over the environment, global manipulation, random day/night changes

9. Even Legendary Ponies Would Have Difficulty.

Difficulty: Casual 40 / Standard 70 / Hardcore 85

Turning Discord to stone, banishing Nightmare Moon to the moon for a thousand years

8. Probably Only Legendary Ponies Could Do This.

Difficulty: Casual 35 / Standard 50 / Hardcore 65

Raising and lowering the sun and moon, teleporting across a continent, instantly healing a plague

7. Normal For Legendary Ponies, Hard For Anypony Else.

Difficulty: Casual 30 / Standard 40 / Hardcore 45

Dispelling a mass enchantment, conjuring an unbreakable ward, creating a sonic rainboom

6. Even Special Ponies Would Have Difficulty.

Difficulty: Casual 25 / Standard 30 / Hardcore 35

Talking down a dragon, complex aerial acrobatics, casting a difficult spell, hatching a dragon egg

5. Probably Only Special Ponies Could Do This.

Difficulty: Casual 20 / Standard 20 / Hardcore 25

Inspiring a crowd with a speech, casting a new spell, out-flying a bird, painting a good portrait.

4. Normal For Special Ponies, Hard For Everyday Ponies.

Difficulty: 15

Making a pretty dress, casting an easy spell, bucking a tree, doing a complex dance move

3. This Is A Pretty Basic Challenge For An Everyday Pony.

Difficulty: 10

Moving a cloud, caring for a pet, baking a cake, building a barn, drawing a horse-drawn carriage

2. This Might Challenge A Young Foal, But No pony Else.

Difficulty: 5 (Or No Check Required; Too Easy)

Painting a wall, gathering flowers, making a sandwich, walking a pet, ironing clothes correctly

1. Anypony, Anywhere, Could Do This With Ease.

No Check Required; Too Easy

Walking, eating, looking at something, getting a book from a bookshelf, putting on clothes

That's Impossible!


The Difficulty Scale includes options for making some tasks simply 'Impossible.' This gives you as the GM the option to call a halt to a particular course of action; however, it should be done sparingly. Using Impossible tasks is a narrative decision which imposes GM control over the actions of characters. If using an Impossible task, never declare it as such; simply inform the player that their character failed in their task attempt. Excessive use of Impossible tasks can erode player trust in their GM, which is the foundation of roleplaying.

Consider, when using an Impossible task, instead making it "20 Only." This means that the character will fail the task unless they roll a 20 on the d20 roll when making their check. This allows for characters to succeed on 'impossible' tasks through sheer luck on occasion.



Life Lessons and Dragons' Hoards

Once you have a handle on motivating and challenging players, it is important to understand how to reward them for accomplishing their goals; how to give them “payoff” for doing something important. There is no set formula for rewarding players, and each GM will find their own methods and style. Some GM's use material rewards, such as gold and gems, or powerful artifacts. Some use narrative rewards, such as a grateful family being reunited, or a friend's farm being saved. Still others use experience rewards, giving a bonus experience point or two for characters who went out of their way to do something truly extraordinary.




In time, you will find your own style of rewarding players. However, a good thing to keep in mind as a guideline is that a reward is most valuable when it is connected to the events which earned it. For example, a grateful family's thanks is meaningful when their child is returned to them; if suddenly the characters were given a sack of gold and gems, it would feel disjointed and disconnected from the story, and would be less meaningful. Try to ensure that the reward is in line with the events which earned it in the first place.

Consequences

New GM's, and some experienced ones, have trouble imposing negative consequences for failure. It is natural, especially in a game such as *My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic*, to forgive mistakes and failure. However, as a GM, it is your job to ensure that failure has consequences; this ensures that players take challenges seriously, and that danger has its proper narrative impact. If players stop fearing that the scary dragon will actually destroy Ponyville, for example, then the ‘scary dragon’ ceases to be scary. Don't go overboard; give players and their characters a break when they truly need and deserve them, but don't be too lenient either. After all, Equestria is not simply a land of peace and tranquility where nothing goes wrong; it has its share of very real dangers.

The Climax

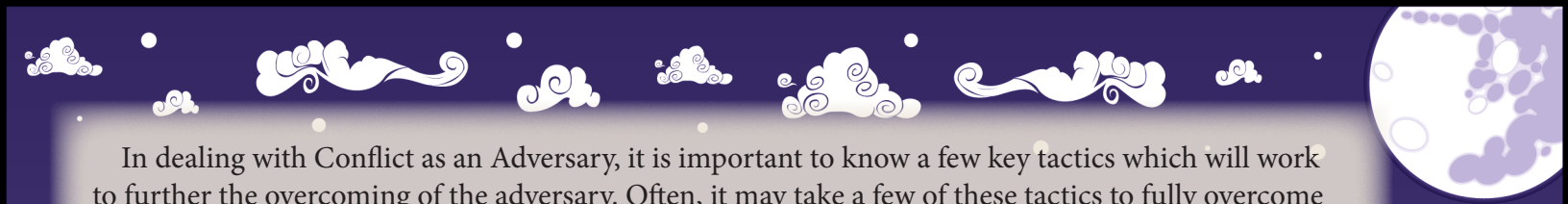
At the end of all of the challenges of the Rising Action is the Climax, where the characters confront the core conflict of the story. Ultimately, the story hinges on its Climax; it is the best example of the “setup and payoff” model for storytelling. The players have guided their characters on an enjoyable journey, and the Climax is what will make it all memorable--that is, the Climax is the “payoff” for all of the plot leading up to it. For this reason, it is important to spend time and effort making the Climax the best it can be, while matching it to the Rising Action. If it is too different, it will feel disjointed; if it is too subdued, it will feel anticlimactic. This section will explain a few key concepts for constructing and running a successful Climax.



Conflict as an Adversary

Returning home after finding the ancient scroll with the secret to defeating them, the characters prepare to stop the swarm of parasprites ransacking Ponyville. Everypony has a job to do, and they have to get it just right; the fate of the town is in their hooves.

This is an example of “Conflict as an Adversary,” wherein the Climax of the story hinges on the defeat or otherwise overcoming of a personified central conflict. In general terms, this ‘adversary’ does not need to be a singular ‘boss’ or ‘nemesis,’ but can be a group, whether defined well or poorly. The ‘adversary’ can even be something as amorphous as “the gathered crowd of high-society ponies.”



In dealing with Conflict as an Adversary, it is important to know a few key tactics which will work to further the overcoming of the adversary. Often, it may take a few of these tactics to fully overcome them, but it is best to have a short list--and to be prepared to judge whether or not character actions match up, or could be reasonably added to this list. 'Defeating' an adversary often has a few stages to it, and a progression in one way or another which leads to victory.

Facing Off

After a long and arduous search, the characters finally brave the scary cave and find the den of the panthers who kidnapped Ponyville's missing cows. Before them, the leader of the den steps forward and refuses to give the cows back; he bares his claws and sharp teeth and prepares to fight.

This is an example of a specific subset of Conflict as an Adversary called "Facing Off." In this variant, the 'adversary' is a single, well-defined character or small group of characters. While the standard Conflict as an Adversary scenario can lend itself to being impersonal with the adversary it- or themselves, Facing Off is very specific. The adversary must be established well and developed well, and must carry an air of uniqueness.

The guidelines for succeeding in a Facing Off scenario are typically similar to the standard Conflict as an Adversary situation, though the adversary is more specific and well-developed, with intelligent motives and believable reactions. More so than overcoming a herd or a swarm, overcoming a personified adversary gives players a memorable focus.

Conflict as a Situation

Upon finding the source of the earthquakes under Ponyville, the characters discover that their small town sits atop an active volcano preparing to erupt! With only minutes before it blows, the characters must find a way to save the town and everypony in it.

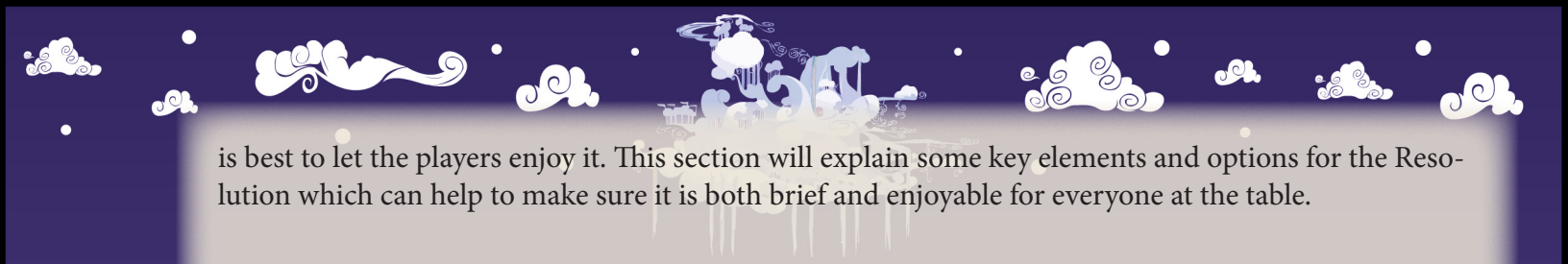
This is an example of "Conflict as a Situation," wherein the Climax of the story hinges on the overcoming of a non-personified situation such as a natural disaster or an impending difficulty. The situation typically has no controlling entity to defeat, but rather is a 'force of nature' the characters must decide how to handle.

In dealing with Conflict as a Situation, it is important to emphasize character choice and consequence; in this type of Climax, what players do and how they handle the situation at hand will have very real repercussions. Indeed, while the situation is often (but not always) presented with a condition to prevent, the outcome is ultimately determined by the characters' actions and how they deal with it.

Cue Theme Song, Roll Credits

Once the Climax has been resolved one way or another, it is time for the Falling Action/Resolution. The Resolution is mostly the 'bow on top' or the 'icing on the cake' of the story; it is the part of the Episode when consequences are described, and the result of the Episode's action comes to light. Often, the Resolution becomes a sort of question-and-answer phase, where players and their characters can find out information that they may not have had time to discover during the action of the Episode.


Typically, the Resolution is the shortest sequence of the story, as the Episode has already peaked and player attention and interest will soon be waning; once they have completed the 'quest' (so to speak), it



is best to let the players enjoy it. This section will explain some key elements and options for the Resolution which can help to make sure it is both brief and enjoyable for everyone at the table.

Everything Worked Out Just Fine

Commonly, stories will end ‘all wrapped up.’ Essentially, this means that all of the important plot threads have been resolved at the conclusion of the Episode. This is the type of Resolution which the cartoon episodes typically employ, as it brings a sense of closure to the Resolution and allows players to relax and enjoy their victory. Generally, this type of Resolution is short and sweet; without many plot threads to resolve, it means that the Episode can come to a swift and satisfying conclusion. However, it also presents the opportunity for reflection. What were the morals of the Episode? What challenges were overcome? What did the characters learn? All of these are typical questions players may ask themselves as part of an ‘all wrapped up’ Resolution.



Too Early for a Group Hug

Sometimes, stories will end ‘to be continued.’ This is when there are a few important plot threads left unresolved at the conclusion of the Episode, and is typically employed when the overarching story being told is meant to take up more time than a single Episode. Ongoing stories which require a firm continuity benefit from this kind of Resolution, but it takes more finesse to handle than an ‘all wrapped up’ Resolution; it must feel like the end of an Episode, without feeling like the end of a story. Rather than reflective questions, a ‘to be continued’ Resolution tends to inspire players to ask speculative questions. What’s coming up next? What is going to happen? What should we do now? Because of this, a ‘to be continued’ Resolution is always left on a kind of cliffhanger.

The Aesop


It is important to remember to somehow bring up the moral(s) your Episode seeks to get across during the Resolution, especially if it seems as though those morals were lost along the way over the course of the Episode itself. However, rather than stating the morals outright, it is better to present them through situations and to ask the players questions about what impact (if any) the Episode had on their characters. Characters gain experience points for lessons learned and challenges overcome, and ultimately the accumulation of experience points will make the game more fun for everyone in the group, but it is important not to overstep; it is primarily the players’ responsibility to discern what lessons their characters learned, if they learned any.



Spike, take a Letter

The final phase of running an Episode with your players is the ‘letter to the princess’ phase. In many episodes of the cartoon, one or more of the characters writes a letter to Princess Celestia, explaining what lessons they learned and what challenges they overcame over the course of the episode. To mirror this, My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic uses a ‘letter to the princess’ type discussion phase to decide how many experience points are awarded to the characters for completing an Episode.

The players come up with the lessons their characters learned and the challenges they overcame, and discuss them; afterward, you decide how many experience points to award to the characters because



of this discussion. This is a reversal on the standard experience point system found in most pen and paper roleplaying games, and may take some getting used to. While the mechanics of this phase are explained earlier in this book, this section will explore the GM side of things to help you run it.

What We Learned this Week

It is important to remember that the players drive the phase forward; while you are encouraged to help them develop their ideas and lessons, it is best not to suggest them. You are there to assist them, but not to help them maximize their experience point gain; ultimately, the maximum number of experience points the characters have the potential to gain is up to the players. A guideline to keep in mind is the phrase “Be Spike.” Take notes on the lessons the players present, and help them if they are having trouble explaining themselves, but let them ‘write the letter,’ so to speak.

An Important Lesson

Something to keep in mind is that players have a natural tendency to want to gain power for their characters as quickly as possible; every player has a vision in mind for what they want their character to become, and naturally they will want to get there as quickly as possible. To this end, it is not uncommon for players to sometimes try to ‘push’ the letter system to gain extra experience points.

This can take many forms, such as splitting one lesson into several, and trying to gain points off of each; most commonly, however, it is in the form of making ‘mountains out of molehills.’ There are a few ways to watch for this, the best being to trust your instincts. If it seems like a lesson isn’t genuine, don’t accept it--unless every player (or most of them) has it listed; it may simply be that the situation had more of an impact on the players than it did on you.

Keeping notes and having a list of challenges the characters overcame in a meaningful way, serves to make the ‘letter to the princess’ phase into a fun experience for you as well as the players. Remember that it’s not a debate; if you aren’t convinced of a character’s growth through a lesson learned, you have the final say. However, also remember that because of the structure of the My Little Pony: Roleplaying is Magic system, experience points aren’t exceedingly powerful; it’s not much of an issue if extras are awarded from time to time.

Awarding Experience

Having made your own notes, as well as having your players’ list of lessons learned, deciding on an amount of experience points may seem like a difficult task. However, it is easy to do once you understand the basic guidelines for how to come up with the experience award for the Episode. With practice, or even simply a solid understanding of the process, you will be able to decide on an experience award quickly and easily.

First, total the number of challenges overcome from your own notes, total the number of unique (not repeated) lessons submitted by the players, and total the number of play sessions it has taken to complete the Episode. These three totals will form the basis for your decision.

Second, order the totals from highest to lowest. If some of them are identical, stop, and award that many experience points as the award for the Episode. This represents consistency. If you come up with three different totals, however, add them all together and divide the total by three (round up). This ‘av-

erage' is the total you will award for the Episode. Remember that experience points awarded this way are given to each character; if the experience award is four points, for example, then each character gets four points.

Third and finally, award bonus experience to characters who are entitled to it, such as Earth Ponies, and those characters with a flaw which had a meaningful impact on the story of the Episode.





Next Week

Now that the session or Episode is complete, it is time to look back on it, and to look ahead to the next one. A very important aspect of story development as it pertains to pen and paper roleplaying is considering what has happened, and what will happen next. This section provides and explains four key questions to ask yourself between sessions or Episodes.

Was it Fair?

Consider the challenges faced by the characters. Were they too difficult, too easy, or just challenging enough to be worthwhile? Did you favor one character over another unfairly? It is a natural tendency of many GM's to lean one way or another, but it is also vital to keeping the trust of the players that the GM remain as neutral as possible when it comes to game balance.

Was it on Rails?

Consider the direction the plot took. Was it the result of the characters' actions, or was it forced on them? Were the players free to make their characters do what they wished, as much as possible? GM's who have a good story often tend to 'guide' their players down the course of action they themselves know to be the right one (or the wrong one). But this is an example of railroading, which ultimately erodes the players' trust in their GM.

What Happens Now?

Consider what happened over the course of the story. What are the consequences of these events? Will they affect the characters somewhere down the line, and if so, how? No group of characters exists

entirely in a vacuum; it is important to think about how events get set into motion, and to reflect the consequences of the characters' actions (positive or negative) within the future events of the story.

What do I do next?

Consider what needs to be done in preparation for the next session or Episode. Do you need to rewrite parts of the plot to accommodate what the players and their characters have done? Do you need to alter upcoming events to ensure the players have as much fun as possible? While some GM's can do their preparation before the next session, for most, it is a good idea to do it as soon after a session as possible, while the story is still fresh in their mind.





Thanks for Reading!

Hi there.

Tall Tail here.

If you'll bear with me for this final bit, I'd like to take a moment to personally give thanks and credit, as well as make an appeal to the community, and I'll even get a little poetic and sappy at the end.

First, my most sincere thanks to everyone on the MLP:RiM team. When this began, it was just a lone brony with an idea for a game system—but each of you brought something special to the project and truly brought it to life. From Know-It-All, my longtime design and development partner who helped set me straight on a few of the wild ideas which (thankfully) never made it into the final system, to Artsy Heartsy, whose surprise design of the Season One Edition book blew me away and who continues to impress with his wicked awesome designs and dedication, to Pixel and Sketchbook, whose artistic genius and creative insight have produced the quality of work I could never have imagined we'd have. Each of you have really poured your heart into this project since Day One, and it is because of you that it is as good as it is.

Also, thanks for putting up with the silly names. You're my team and I love every one of you.

Second, I'd like to thank Equestria Daily for giving us our first bit of publicity with the Nightly Roundup, and Equestria Gaming, among others, for helping to keep that publicity alive. In addition, I treasure every single email from a player, GM, or just an interested brony, that brings words of encouragement, or praise, or sometimes just a brohoof. I can't thank the community enough for the support you've given us from our rough first document up to now; every conversation, every inquiry, every game group who kept in touch.

This is for each and every one of you, and on behalf of all of us, I truly hope you enjoy it.

Third, I'd like to put out a call to the brony community's vast congregation of gamers, GM's, and fan-fiction writers. We tried to design MLP:RiM to be very easy to create pre-made Episodes for; you don't even need to set the numerical difficulty of tasks or create stats for NPC's, just construct the Episode scene-by-scene with its various elements, much like writing a story or fanfic! One of the biggest questions we've gotten during development is whether or not there will be pre-made Episodes for game groups to take advantage of. While we've been immersed in creating the system and this rulebook, there hasn't been time to make any of these pre-made Episodes. My call is for you, the talented and dedicated writers in our great fandom, to try your hoof at creating a pre-made Episode or two.

I firmly believe that this community can create much better content than we ever could ourselves.

Finally, thank you to Lauren Faust and the entire crew over at Studio B for creating something truly magical, and thank you to Hasbro for letting it fly free. My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic has changed my life profoundly for the better, teaching me things I knew but had forgotten somewhere along the way; and I know from personal experience as well as from observing the brony community that I am far from the only one. I may be Tall Tail, but there are thousands of uplifting and amazing pony-tales to be told from this community. From charitable work to creative endeavors to even just bringing the spark of hope to a heart in need, something truly incredible has happened, and is still happening, here.

My favorite author, Robert A. Heinlein, wrote an essay in 1952 for Edward R. Murrow's radio program "This I Believe," in which he espoused with conviction the decency, the morality, and the fundamental goodness of humanity. It's been a hard world to live in and keep faith in the goodness of humanity, but this show, and this community, has rejuvenated that faith. It is because of all of you that I wake up hopeful in the morning, approach the day with enthusiasm, and go to bed dreaming of a better tomorrow. It is because of all of you that I have re-learned how to approach hardship with tolerance, counter hate with love, and defeat adversity with friendship. It is because of all of you that I have hope again.

To quote the final words from Heinlein's essay:

..."And finally, I believe in my whole race. Yellow, white, black, red, brown—in the honesty, courage, intelligence, durability... and goodness... of the overwhelming majority of my brothers and sisters everywhere on this planet. I am proud to be a human being. I believe that we have come this far by the skin of our teeth, that we always make it just by the skin of our teeth—but that we will always make it... survive... endure. I believe that this hairless embryo with the aching, oversized brain case and the opposable thumb, this animal barely up from the apes, will endure—will endure longer than his home planet, will spread out to the other planets, to the stars and beyond, carrying with him his honesty, his insatiable curiosity, his unlimited courage—and his noble essential decency.

This I believe with all my heart."

~ Robert A. Heinlein, 1952

You're all my very best friends.

~ Tall Tail





Name: _____ Race: *Earth Pony*

Circle one!

Age: *Foal Filly/Colt Mare/Stallion* XP: _____

Guiding Element: _____ Bits: _____

Special Purpose: _____

Cutie Mark: _____

Description/Background: _____

Attributes

Mind
+1 _____

Body

Heart
+2 _____

Energy
M+B _____

Courage
M+H _____

Fortitude
B+H _____

Willpower
M+B+H _____

Skills

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Talents

- Strong
- Tough
- Fast
- Agile
- Smart
- Wary

- Adaptable
- Creative
- Charismatic
- Sensitive
- Willful
- Tireless

Jobs

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Flaws

Advancements



Racial Abilities

Quick Learners: Char. Creation Bonus, 1 extra xp when xp is awarded
Hard Workers: 1 xp discount per xp purchase
Down to Earth: May 'bank' a critical success, can use to offset critical failure

Ages

Foal: 1 Attribute Point, 10 xp, Tireless (See Text)
Filly/Colt: 2 Attribute Points, 35 xp
Mare/Stallion: 3 Attribute Points, 60 xp

Points

2 Talents
2 Job Points
(1.5 x Mind) Skill Points



Name: _____ Race: *Pegasus Pony*

Circle one!

Age: *Foal Filly/Colt Mare/Stallion* XP: _____

Guiding Element: _____ Bits: _____

Special Purpose: _____

Cutie Mark: _____

Description/Background: _____

Attributes

Mind _____ Energy _{M+B} _____
 Body ₊₂ _____ Courage _{M+H} _____
 Heart ₊₁ _____ Fortitude _{B+H} _____
 Willpower _{M+B+H} _____

Aerobatics _____
 Weathercraft _____

Talents

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strong | <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tough | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Charismatic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agile | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smart | <input type="checkbox"/> Willful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wary | <input type="checkbox"/> Tireless |

Flaws

Skills

_____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____

Jobs

_____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____
 _____ lvl _____

Advancements



Racial Abilities

Weather Patrol: Can create/manipulate the weather
 Cloudwalking: Interact with clouds as if solid
 Flight Attributes: Gain two Flight Attributes

Ages

Foal: 1 Attribute Point, Foal Restrictions & Tireless (See Text)
 Filly/Colt: 2 Attribute Points, 25 xp
 Mare/Stallion: 3 Attribute Points, 50 xp

Points

1 Talent
 1 Job Point
 (Mind) Skill Points

Aerobatics = Body
 Weathercraft = Mind
 Then spend (Heart) points



Name: _____ Race: *Unicorn Pony*

Circle one!

Age: *Foal Filly/Colt Mare/Stallion* XP: _____

Guiding Element: _____ Bits: _____

Special Purpose: _____

Cutie Mark: _____

Description/Background: _____

Attributes

Mind
+2 _____

Body
+1 _____

Heart

Energy
M+B _____

Courage
M+H _____

Fortitude
B+H _____

Willpower
M+B+H _____

Skills

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Talents

Strong

Tough

Fast

Agile

Smart

Wary

Adaptable

Creative

Charismatic

Sensitive

Willful

Tireless

Jobs

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Flaws

Advancements



Racial Abilities

Spellcasting: Create and improve spells
Magical Improv: Improvise spells with Aspects
Arcane Research: Learn new Aspects

Ages

Foal: 1 Attribute Point, Foal Restrictions & Tireless (See Text)
Filly/Colt: 2 Attribute Points, 25 xp
Mare/Stallion: 3 Attribute Points, 50 xp

Points

1 Talent
1 Job Point
(Mind) Skill Points

Magic

(Mind) Magic Aspect, +Telekinesis
(2 x Mind) Spell Points



Name: _____ Race: *Dragon*

Circle one!

Age: *Hatchling Drake* Element: _____

Heritage: _____ Tail Type: _____

Dragonheart: _____ XP: _____ Bits: _____

Description/Background: _____

Attributes

Mind
+1 _____

Body
+1 _____

Heart
+1 _____

Energy
M+B _____

Courage
M+H _____

Fortitude
B+H _____

Willpower
M+B+H _____

Skills

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Talents

- Strong
- Tough
- Fast
- Agile
- Smart
- Wary

- Adaptable
- Creative
- Charismatic
- Sensitive
- Willful
- Tireless

Jobs

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

_____ lvl _____

Flaws

Advancements



Racial Abilities

Dragonheart: Gain and use Dragonheart Points
 Dragon Traits: Traits/Abilities based on age
 Dragon Magic: Limited spellcasting through fire

Ages

Hatchling: 2 Attribute Points, 15 xp
 Drake: 3 Attribute Points, 35 xp, Wings, +1 Body, 1 bonus Talent (See Text)

Points

1 Talent
 1 Job Point
 (Mind) Skill Points

Character Creation

Heritage: Equestrian or Draconic
 Tail Type: Club, Spade, or Spiked
 Thick Scales and Fire Breath

