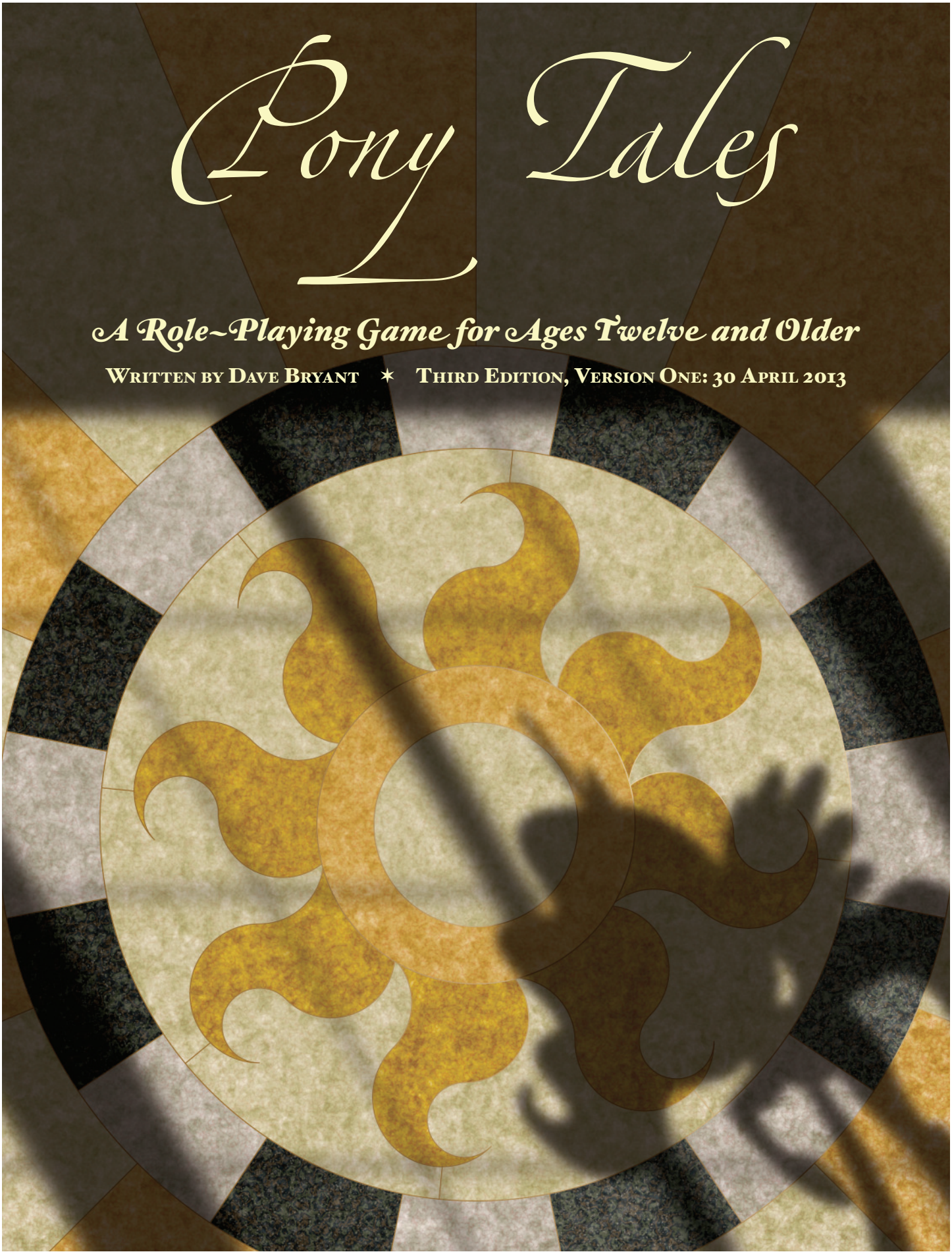
Pony Tales

A Role-Playing Game for Ages Twelve and Older

Written by Dave Bryant ✶ Third Edition, Version One: 30 April 2013



~ *Preface* ~

The first role-playing game appeared in the late 1970s, after the designer of a miniatures wargame about the Middle Ages discovered that his friends were more willing to play if he included fantasy elements, such as magic, mythical creatures, and individual heroes with special abilities and personalities. Through the 1980s and 1990s, hundreds of other role-playing games, or RPGs, were published on all kinds of subjects—science fiction and space opera, pulp adventure and modern-day super-spies, cowboys, superheroes, and just about anything else that would be fun and exciting for a group of friends to pretend to be for an afternoon.

There aren't quite as many RPGs nowadays; like a lot of other activities, they were sort of a fad. A lot of games from small publishers disappeared, and other hobbies, including computer and video games, became the new and exciting things to do. RPGs haven't gone away completely, though, because it's still fun for people to get together and play the old-fashioned way, with a book of rules, a bunch of dice, maybe a few maps, and some time to sit around a table and visit an imaginary world for adventure and entertainment.

About This Rulebook

Pony Tales is based on an open-source set of rules called *Open D6,* but stripped down to the bare essentials in an effort to make it easy to play while still covering as many situations as possible. One reason is to keep the game moving quickly, without bogging down in little details. Another is make the game playable by anyone old enough to understand the rules.

That's also why the rules are written in a conversational style. The simple, informal language also seems to fit the fairy-tale feeling of the magical land and the stories that happen there, which may help the narrator and players get into the right frame of mind for playing the game.

The book is split into parts. *Part one* covers the basic rules of the game. *Part two* adds information and extra rules that are helpful but not absolutely or constantly necessary. *Part three* discusses the setting of the television program, both as the show's creator originally imagined it and as it's ended up in actual episodes. *Part four* offers suggestions and ideas for playing a fun and exciting game. At the end of the book is a *quick reference* of tables to look up things during a game session.

A Group of Friends

Any role-playing game needs one person to "run the show". Other games may call this person the "game-master", "referee", "umpire", or some similar name. In *Pony Tales,* she's called the *narrator.* The narrator controls the world, kind of like a movie or television director—figuring out what happens after players' ponies do things, playing the parts of other ponies or creatures, and keeping the game's story going.

The rest of the group are *players.* Each one controls a *character,* playing the character's part like an actor. If a player's caught up in the excitement, she might act out what her character's doing or saying, but usually it's enough just to describe her character's words and actions. In *Pony Tales,* the players' characters are brightly colored ponies who live in the magical land.

If the group wants, a different person can be the narrator for each story. When her story's finished, she can hand off the narrator's duties to someone else and become a player for the next few stories, until it's her turn to be narrator again.

What Kind of Game?

Before starting, everyone should talk about what kind of game they want to play. There's a lot of room for everyone to be creative, but one question does need to be answered: Will the game be literal or figurative?

- A *literal game* takes the show's episodes at face value—no matter how silly, illogical, or inconsistent they get. The idea is simply to have fun and lots of laughs, paying attention only to what's happening at the moment. This doesn't mean the narrator and players can't be serious, but they shouldn't go overboard about it, or it won't feel like the show does.

- A *figurative game* treats the show's episodes as if they were stories told by, or to, a little sister or brother—mostly right, but with details mixed up, simplified, or exaggerated. It's up to the narrator and players to decide how the details are different. Having fun and laughs still is important, but the narrator and players might be more adventurous and serious. Keep in mind, though, that getting very dark will make the game feel completely different from the show.

Whatever the group decides, it's important to have fun. Some narrators might think they should make things tough for the players, but a lot of players don't like that, and it doesn't fit the tone of the show. The narrator should *cooperate* with the players, and vice versa, in telling the story—that's why she's called a "narrator" and why the rules talk a lot about "story".

How Do the Ponies Know Each Other?

If the players are willing, they can create their ponies in such a way that it makes sense they know each other. If the players want to create ponies that are very different from each other, it might be harder to explain how the group of ponies has gotten together, and the narrator may have to work with the players to come up with ways of doing it. Below are a couple of suggestions; the narrator may use one or both of them, or figure out something else. It's best that the ponies live close together, or the narrator can have a lot of trouble explaining why they all happen to be in one place for the beginning of every story!

- The first story can be all about how the ponies are thrown together, much like the first episodes of the show. It could be that things just happen, or there could be some problem that causes one or more of the ponies to look for others who have useful talents or personalities to help solve it.

- The narrator can tell the players that each pony must be friends with (or a relative of) at least two other ponies before the game begins. The players then talk about which ponies know each other, how, and why. That can help give ideas to players who haven't decided what their ponies are like. ✶

~ Part One of Four ✶ Playing the Game: Basic Rules ~

~ First Things First: Creating a Pony ~

Before the game starts, every player has to create a pony she will play, like an actor plays a character—though it's a good idea to read and understand the rules first. A player can start with a mental picture of a pony and create the pony to match that picture, or can create a pony first, then decide what she looks and acts like. Either way, the player should fill out a *Pony Form* as she goes through the creation steps, to keep track of the pony's information. The narrator can use the same steps to create ponies who are important to the story for any reason.

Every pony has *Aptitudes* and *Talents.* Aptitudes describe what a pony's naturally good at (and not good at) doing. Talents are skills and abilities the pony's learned. Both are given numerical values to use with the rules, expressed in *dice.* The more dice an Aptitude or Talent has, the better the pony is at it.

A whole die's a big jump, though, so to make small adjustments possible, a die is divided into thirds. The first adds one pip to a die roll, the second adds two pips to a die roll, and the third adds a whole die. There's a little arithmetic in creating a pony; since it's easier to do that with whole numbers, the pony's creator may want to think of each die as three "points" while going through the steps. A table of die (and point) values is at the bottom of the page.

An Aptitude's or Talent's value can be written down as the number of whole dice, followed by the letter *d,* and finishing with any added pips. For example, the value of a Talent with three and two-thirds dice in it can be written as 3d+2. During the game, the narrator may ask the player to roll that 3d+2. If the player rolls 11 on the three dice, then after adding the extra +2, the total would be 13.

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?

First, decide whether the pony will be an *earth pony,* a *pegasus pony,* or a *unicorn pony.* Earth ponies have a magical connection to the land and living things. Pegasus ponies can fly, command the winds and weather, and walk on clouds. Unicorn ponies can levitate things, make balls of light, and cast magical spells.

The princesses featured in the program look like unicorns with wings, but they also have earth-pony strength and magical connection to the land. Since they are very rare—and powerful—the rules aren't set up for players to create them.

Second, decide whether the pony will be female or male. An adult female is a *mare* and an adult male is a *stallion.* A young pony is a *foal;* a female foal is a *filly* and a male foal is a *colt.* Most player ponies probably will be adults, even if young adults, but they may have to deal with foals during the course of some stories, just as the characters on the television show often do.

Step 2: Aptitudes

There are eight Aptitudes. The physical Aptitudes are *Muscle* and *Hardiness.* The motor Aptitudes are *Reflexes* and *Coordination.* The mental Aptitudes are *Smarts* and *Senses.* The magic Aptitudes are *Power* and *Finesse;* a pegasus or unicorn pony has both, while an earth pony has Power but not Finesse.

- **Muscle** describes how large and strong a pony is. A pony with a little Muscle is small and delicate. A pony with lots of Muscle is big and brawny.
- **Hardiness** describes how tough and healthy a pony is. A pony with a little Hardiness catches sniffles easily and gets tired quickly. A pony with lots of Hardiness is sturdy and fit.
- **Reflexes** describes how quick and limber a pony is. A pony with a little Reflexes is sluggish and clumsy. A pony with lots of Reflexes is quick and graceful.
- **Coordination** describes a pony's fine motor control. A pony with a little Coordination is awkward and heavy-hoofed. A pony with lots of Coordination is deft and has a light touch.
- **Smarts** describes how good a pony is at thinking, remembering, and planning. A pony with a little Smarts is slow and simple. A pony with lots of Smarts is bright and clever.
- **Senses** describes how well a pony notices things around her. A pony with a little Senses isn't very observant. A pony with lots of Senses is good at spotting details.
- **Power** describes how much magic a pony can work with. A pony with a little Power can't cast big spells, can't work with lots of weather, or doesn't have a strong connection to the land. A pony with lots of Power is very magical indeed.
- **Finesse** describes how well a unicorn or pegasus can work with her tribe's magic. A pony with a little Finesse has trouble casting spells or weatherworking properly. A pony with a lot of Finesse can cast spells or work with weather easily.

Each Aptitude starts with a value of 1d (3 points). The pony's player—or the narrator, if creating a non-player pony—adds 12d (36 points) more to the pony's Aptitudes, splitting them up however she wants. The only limit is that no single Aptitude can end up with a total of more than 5d (15 points) in it. Remember that the creator of an earth pony only has to worry about seven Aptitudes, while the creator of a pegasus or unicorn has to spread those dice (points) over eight Aptitudes.

Player ponies are supposed to be special, so they get more Aptitude dice than "ordinary" ponies. If the narrator wants to create such a pony-on-the-street, she can add 8d (24 points) to that pony's Aptitudes instead. A school-age foal may get only 4d (12 points)—more for an older foal, less for a younger one. Of course, as a foal grows up, he or she gets more dice.

Step 3: Talents

There are two kinds of Talents. A *Mundane* Talent is an ordinary skill or ability that any pony can learn or have. A *Magical* Talent normally can be learned only by a pony of the tribe that is allowed to have that Talent, though there are exceptions.

A list of Talents is in part two of the rulebook, but a player can make up a Talent if the narrator agrees it's a good one. The new Talent should be named with no more than a couple of words, followed by a sentence describing it so everyone has a clear idea what it means. Describing a unicorn spell takes more than a single sentence, so a unicorn's player may need to keep a separate sheet of spell descriptions. The narrator should keep a list of Talents that everyone's come up with. ➧

Dice:	+1	+2	1d	1d+1	1d+2	2d	2d+1	2d+2	3d	3d+1	3d+2	4d	4d+1	4d+2	5d	5d+1	5d+2	6d	*(and so on)*
Points:	1	2	**3**	4	5	**6**	7	8	**9**	10	11	**12**	13	14	**15**	16	17	**18**	*(and so on)*

A Talent's value starts with the dice of the Aptitude it's based on; the player adds Talent dice to it and writes down the total. A pony's player can add 7d (21 points) to the pony's Talents, splitting them up as she wishes—but each Talent must get at least +1 (1 point) and can't get more than 3d (9 points). There's no other limit to how many Talents a pony can have.

For example, a player wants to give her pony *Lifting,* a Mundane Talent based on Muscle. The pony's Muscle is 2d+2 (8 points). The player can't add any less than +1 (1 point) or more than 3d (9 points) of Talent dice to a single Talent. After thinking about the other Talents she wants to give the pony, she decides to use +2 (2 points) of Talent dice for Lifting. Adding that to the pony's Muscle of 2d+2 (8 points) means the pony's Lifting Talent is 3d+1 (2 + 8 = 10 points).

A **Mundane Talent** has one value based on the physical, motor, or mental Aptitude that's most logical for it. For example, Lifting is based on Muscle, not Senses; Navigation is based on Smarts, not Reflexes. If a player isn't sure which Aptitude to use, she should talk it over with the narrator.

The only exception is that an earth pony can base a Mundane Talent on Power, if the Talent deals with caring for the land or for living things and the pony's Power has more dice than the Aptitude the Talent's normally based on. Some examples are Cooking, Farming, Husbandry (rearing and keeping animals), Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine.

A **Magical Talent** has *two* values. In addition to the normal Talent value, which is based on Finesse, a Magical Talent also has an *Effect* value, which is based on Power. The normal Talent value represents how well a unicorn or pegasus can use the Talent; the Effect value represents how much the pony can do with the Talent. The pony's creator can spend Talent points on *either or both* of a Magical Talent's values if she wants.

- A **pegasus pony** can learn Magical Talents that deal with flight, air, and weather. Some examples are Cloudworking, Flying, Boltworking, Rainworking, and Windworking.

- A **unicorn pony** can learn *spells,* Magical Talents that act at a distance. Some examples are Force Bubble (creating a protective sphere), Pyrotechnics (creating a fireworks-like light show), and Wink (moving instantly from place to place).

Style of magic: A unicorn's creator must decide on the unicorn's *Style* of magic. The unicorn can learn and cast spells that fit within her Style, but can't learn or cast spells that don't fit her Style. Some examples of Magical Styles are Pyromancy (fire spells), Thaumaturgy (showy, performance-oriented spells), and Lapidurgy (spells involving gems and jewelry).

There are two exceptions to this restriction. Any unicorn can use Levitation to pick up objects and to carry or manipulate them in mid-air without touching them, and can use Illumination to create glowing balls of light like will-o'-the-wisps.

A player can make up a new Style, as long as the narrator agrees it's a good one and isn't so powerful that it upsets the game. The player should be able to name it with no more than a couple of words, but it's okay to follow that with a short description so everyone has a clear idea what it means.

A unicorn's player may want to make her pony's Style be magic itself, but it probably isn't wise to allow that. The show makes a big deal about how special that Style is; only *one* pony seems to have it. Everyone knows who that pony is, and she isn't the player's pony. Besides, it wouldn't be fair to the other players, especially to players of other unicorn ponies.

Wild Talent: With the narrator's permission, a pony may have *one* Wild Talent—a Talent that normally belongs to one of the other tribes. The narrator probably should require the player to put at least 1d (3 points) of Talent points into the Wild Talent. Examples from the television show include an earth pony who can make vague predictions about what will happen soon, based on her body's twitches and aches, a pegasus who's very good at understanding and taking care of animals, and a unicorn who can create lightning.

Step 4: Personal Weakness

Decide on the pony's personal Weakness—no pony's perfect, after all! A player needs to keep her pony's Weakness in mind when playing, and the narrator should remind the player if she seems to be forgetting about it. A pony can overcome her Weakness temporarily, but she has to have a good reason to try and the narrator may ask for a Smarts roll. Some examples are Brash, Fastidious (overly concerned with keeping clean), Introverted (not very sociable), Random, Stubborn, and Timid.

A player can make up a new one, as long as the narrator agrees it's appropriate. She should be able to name it in a couple of words, but it's okay to follow that with a short description so everyone has a clear idea what it means.

Step 5: Finishing Touches

Describe what the pony looks and acts like and make a list of things the pony owns. Use an extra page if it's needed.

Describe how the pony looks. Here are some suggestions: Is the pony big or small, thin or heavy? What colors are the pony's coat, mane, and tail? What color and shape are the pony's eyes? What is the pony's cutie mark, and what does it have to do with the pony's Aptitudes, Talents, or personality?

Name the pony and describe anything else about the pony that seems important. Here are some suggestions: What does the pony's voice sound like? What kind of personality does the pony have? Where does the pony come from? What was the pony's life like before the game?

The pony's creator may want to note down a few other important numbers for use during play. *Run Move, Swim Move, Climb Move, Jump Move,* and *Flight Move* are explained in "Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement". *Strength Bonus* is explained in "Step 5: Injury or Effect", part of "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat". Short descriptions also are on the Pony Forms.

List the pony's important possessions. The pony may have up to eight. A *major possession* is big, like a farm, a business, a house, or lots of income, and counts as four. A *medium possession* is something like a carriage, a wagon, a book collection, or a good income and counts as two. A *minor possession* is something like a set of tools or cookware, a musical instrument, a paint set and easel, camping gear, or a small income. A player can make up a possession, as long as the narrator agrees it's appropriate. Every pony also owns a pair of *panniers* (saddlebags). ➧

Checklist for Creating a Pony

A narrator or player can use this checklist to keep track of the steps for creating a pony while filling out a Pony Form.

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?

A. Choose the pony's tribe: earth pony, pegasus, or unicorn.
B. Choose whether the pony's a mare (female) or stallion (male).

Step 2: Aptitudes

A. List the starting Aptitudes of the tribe chosen for the pony.
B. Add 12d (36 points) to Aptitudes. They can be split up as desired, but no Aptitude can be more than 5d (15 points).

Step 3: Talents

Choosing Talents and figuring out how many points to put into each one can take some time and effort, so it's okay if these steps get all mixed up. They're listed separately just to make explaining and remembering them easier.

A. Choose the pony's Talents and describe them if necessary.
B. Decide whether each Talent is Mundane or Magical.
C. Decide for each Talent what Aptitude to base it on.
D. Add 7d (21 points) to Talents. They can be split up as desired, but each Talent must have at least +1 (1 point) and no more than 3d (9 points) added to it.

Step 4: Personal Weakness

Decide on the pony's Personal Weakness, name it, and describe it. It can be made up, with the narrator's approval.

Step 5: Finishing Touches

A. Describe how the pony looks. That can include size and build; colors of coat, mane, tail, and eyes; and the cutie mark and its meaning. Use an extra sheet if it's needed.
B. Name the pony and describe what else is important about the pony. Some examples are personality, voice, birthplace, and earlier life. Use an extra sheet if it's needed.
C. Note down the pony's Moves and Strength Bonus.
D. Decide on the pony's important possessions. The pony may have up to eight. A major possession counts as four. A medium possession counts as two. A minor possession counts as one. Every pony also owns a pair of panniers or saddlebags.

How Big Is a Pony?

The height of a pony (or any creature that mostly goes around on all fours) is measured to the *withers*—the top of the back just behind the neck. Since a pony's head can go up and down, measuring to the top of the head doesn't work very well. Some ponies may be a little taller or shorter, but most should be fairly close to the heights listed. A pony's Muscle Aptitude can be used as a guide when deciding how big or small that pony is.

- A young mare is around two and a half feet (75 cm) tall.
- A young stallion is around three feet (90 cm) tall.
- A very old pony may shrink some with age.
- A young foal, at the age he or she usually gets a cutie mark, is about a foot and a half to two feet (45 to 60 cm) tall.
- A baby is much smaller, less than a foot (30 cm) tall.
- The sun princess is about five feet (1.5 m) tall and the moon princess is about half that.

Ponies are surprisingly heavy for their size, because even small ponies have a lot of muscles. That muscle-power is why ponies can kick trees hard enough to make ripe fruit fall out of them (earth magic helps too), pull carts or plows, and push snowplows. Some ponies may be a little lighter or heavier, but most should be fairly close to the weights listed.

- A young stallion is around 150 pounds (a little under 70 kg).
- A young mare is around 75 pounds (a little under 35 kg).
- A very old pony may be heavier if she's run to fat, or lighter if she's gotten skinny.
- A young foal, at the age he or she usually gets a cutie mark, isn't more than about 50 pounds (between 20 and 25 kg), and may be much smaller.
- A baby, especially a newborn, may be only a few pounds or kilograms.
- The sun princess may be 400 to 600 pounds (180 to 270 kg) and the moon princess may be 75 to 100 pounds (35 to 45 kg).

Originally, the show's creator wanted to use a lot of different models for the ponies, with different heights and weights. The show's art staff already was working hard, though, so to save time and the staff's sanity, most ponies at first were based on a few models, with different colors, cutie marks, manes, and tails. New models were added gradually as the show went on.

Creating Other Creatures

Ponies aren't the only creatures, or even the only talking creatures, in the world. There are some examples of both later in the book. A narrator who has other role-playing games might be able to use them for ideas, too.

A powerful and intelligent creature like a full-grown dragon might have a lot of dice in Aptitudes and a lot of Talents. Even a creature much larger or much smaller than a pony should be limited to no more than 5d in each of its Aptitudes, though; "How Big Is a Creature or Object?", part of "Weights & Measures: Special Task Rules", and the Size rules in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat" talk about how to compare larger and smaller creatures. Mostly it will affect the use of Muscle and Hardiness and sometimes certain kinds of magic, such as how much fire a dragon can breathe out.

An animal that isn't intelligent, or at least isn't as intelligent as a pony or other talking creatures, gets 1d of Smarts and is very limited in what Talents it might have.

A creature such as a zebra who can use magic actively has both Power and Finesse. A creature such as a griffin who's magical but can't use magic actively has Power but not Finesse. A creature who has no magic won't have either Aptitude.

Some players may want to play other creatures than ponies. It's up to the narrator whether the players can, but anything she allows probably should get the same number of dice that ponies do. Also remember that the show is mainly about the ponies, so there isn't a lot of information on other creatures That means the narrator may have to do a lot more work in figuring out how she wants to handle those other creatures, such as where they come from and how their societies work. ✶

~ Doing Things: Basic Task Resolution ~

Sooner or later, a pony will have to try doing something hard, or something another pony or creature doesn't want that pony to do. What happens then?

Anyone who played "let's pretend" as a child knows it's easy just to start arguing, because there's no good way to decide fairly who's right. So, to keep the story moving and to make it easy for every pony to have a fair chance, here are rules for finding out whether a pony succeeds at doing something.

Step 1: How Hard Is the Task?

Any one thing a pony tries to do is called a *task*. Most are pretty short and have clear goals. Examples are jumping a fence, lifting a box, throwing an apple, or setting a table properly. Some tasks are harder than others; it's easy to walk on a paved road, but walking up a steep slope covered with rocks is tougher.

The narrator measures how hard a task is by giving it a number, called a *difficulty*. The harder the task is, the greater the difficulty will be. The narrator shouldn't tell the player what the difficulty is, but may give hints. For example, the narrator might say to a player, "That fence looks awfully tall. Jumping over it won't be easy! Are you sure you want to try that?"

If a player is really clever or is doing a very good job of role-playing her pony, the narrator may reward the player by reducing the difficulty a little. If the player tries to use a Talent that only barely covers the task, the narrator may increase the difficulty a little. If the difficulty depends on a measurement, like how heavy or far away something is, round up. For example, a pony may try to carry a load of 50 pounds; that's between 40 pounds (which has a difficulty of 4) and 60 pounds (a difficulty of 5), so round up to 60 pounds.

- A **trivial** task has a difficulty of 0 (or less). A pony can do the task without thinking about it. The player doesn't need to roll any dice, and the narrator goes on with the story.
- A **routine** task has a difficulty of 1 to 5. A pony can do the task without much thought or effort. Make a roll only if the task is very important to the story.
- An **easy** task has a difficulty of 6 to 10. A pony can do the task without much thought or effort unless she doesn't have a good Talent for it.
- A **middling** task has a difficulty of 11 to 15. A pony may have trouble with it, and doing it right takes skill and effort.
- A **hard** task has a difficulty of 16 to 20. A pony should be well-trained in the kind of task being done, or she may not be able to handle it.
- A **very hard** task has a difficulty of 21 to 25. Only the best-trained pony has a good chance at doing the task.
- An **impossible** task has a difficulty of 26 or more. A pony who succeeds at a task this hard can tell her foals about it someday, and other ponies may tell the story for many years.

Difficulty modifiers: The narrator can add to or subtract from the difficulty to allow for things that make the task easier or harder than it normally would be. The narrator may want to keep track of reasons she's added to or subtracted from difficulties, if she thinks she might need them again later.

Also, when planning a story, the narrator can list additions and subtractions that might be needed, to help keep the story moving at a good pace. (It's always smart to be prepared, so the narrator should make a habit of thinking things through in advance. Don't get too attached to a plan, though—players are amazingly good at finding unexpected ways of doing things.)

- A **huge disadvantage** adds 16 or more to the difficulty. An example is trying to repair a complicated machine without any proper tools.
- A **big disadvantage** adds 11 to 15 to the difficulty. An example is trying to find another pony in complete darkness.
- A **fair disadvantage** adds 6 to 10 to the difficulty. An example is trying to track another pony in heavy rain or snow.
- A **small disadvantage** adds 1 to 5 to the difficulty. An example is trying to fix something small and complicated, like a pocket-watch, by candle-light.
- A **small advantage** subtracts 1 to 5 from the difficulty. An example is something handy like a springy board the pony can use to jump farther.
- A **fair advantage** subtracts 6 to 10 from the difficulty. An example is a rough-and-ready tool, such as making the end of a rope into a sling to lift a pony stuck at the bottom of a cliff.
- A **big advantage** subtracts 11 to 15 from the difficulty. An example is having good tools for the job, such as an emergency medical kit to help a pony who's hurt.
- A **huge advantage** subtracts 16 or more from the difficulty. An example is having the best tools for the job, such as a clinic or a hospital to help a pony who's hurt.

Extra care: A pony can spend more time on a task to double-check her work, but she can't do anything else or get distracted, or she doesn't get the bonus.

- A pony who's spending twice as long on the task gets +1d.
- A pony who's spending 4 times as long on the task gets +2d.
- A pony who's spending 8 times as long on the task gets +3d.

Rushing: A pony can spend less time on a task than it normally takes if she's in a hurry, but it'll make the task harder. Not every task can be rushed; if in doubt, the narrator may ask a player to explain how she thinks the task can be rushed, and may not allow it if the player can't come up with a good reason.

- Add 5 to the difficulty for a pony who's spending three-fourths as long on the task.
- Add 10 to the difficulty for a pony who's spending half as long as long on the task.
- Add 20 to the difficulty for a pony who's spending one-fourth as long on the task.

Contest: If another pony or creature works against the pony—for example, in a tug-of-war or arm-wrestling—they have a *contest*. The referee doesn't use a difficulty number; instead, both ponies or creatures roll their dice and the greater number rolled wins the contest. Just as with a normal task, the narrator can add to or subtract from one side or both sides of the contest and can use the contest's result in storytelling. ◗

Project: If a pony needs to do something long and complicated, it may not be a single task—instead, it's probably a *project* made up of a bunch of tasks. The narrator should break a project into a series of tasks for the pony to do. That way, even if the pony doesn't succeed at every task, she still might be able to finish the project. Also, the narrator can use the results as part of the storytelling, or let other ponies help out. Ponies might team up on some tasks, or different ponies might work on different tasks.

Step 2: What Talent Does the Pony Use?
See if the pony doing the task has a Talent that makes her good at that task. For instance, a pony trying to harvest apples from a tree could use Farming or a similar Talent. Any pony can use a Mundane Talent if the narrator agrees that it covers the task. For the right kind of task, a pegasus or unicorn pony might be able to use a Magical Talent instead. If the pony doesn't have a good Talent to use for the task, but can try to do it anyway, skip this step and go on to the next step.

The narrator sometimes may decide a task just can't be done by a pony who doesn't have the right Talent; this is called an *esoteric* task. For example, building a very complicated machine like a water wheel or a windmill, or giving another pony a complicated medical treatment, takes a lot of special knowledge most ponies haven't learned. In such a case, the pony probably knows she can't do it even if she tries.

Step 3: What Aptitude Does the Pony Use?
If the pony doesn't have a good Talent to use for the task, but the narrator thinks she should be able to try anyway, the pony can use an Aptitude instead. Usually it should be pretty obvious which Aptitude fits best, but if it isn't, the narrator may have to decide on which one to use.

Use **Muscle** when a pony needs to be strong. A few examples would be pushing, pulling, lifting, carrying, holding on to something (especially if it's moving), or bucking a tree to get fruit to fall.

Use **Hardiness** when a pony's trying not to get tired, hurt, or sick. A few examples would be galloping or flying a long time, falling, breathing smoke from a fire, or being around creatures who are ill with something the pony might catch.

Use **Reflexes** when a pony needs to be quick or nimble. A few examples would be doing something before another pony or creature can do it (or stop the pony from doing it), galloping or flying quickly, or doing a trick like pulling a tablecloth off without causing the dishes on the table to fall.

Use **Coordination** when a pony is doing something tricky. A few examples would be stacking things that might fall over or using tools or tableware.

Use **Smarts** when a pony is thinking or remembering. A few examples would be solving a puzzle, making a plan, using something taught in school, or remembering something from a long time ago or that the pony only heard once.

Use **Senses** when a pony may notice something unusual, hidden, or not very obvious. This includes all the other senses—hearing, touch, smell, and taste—as well as sight.

Use **Power** instead of another Aptitude for a magical task that needs brute force rather than fine control. An earth pony may be able to use Power for a task involving earth or rock, or creatures or plants, especially if it's about taking care of them in some way. A unicorn pony may be able to use Power instead of Muscle, since she can levitate heavy objects.

Use **Finesse** instead of another Aptitude for a magical task that needs fine control rather than brute force. A pegasus pony may be able to use Finesse for a task that involves or can use flying, or wind or weather. A unicorn pony may be able to use Finesse for a task instead of Coordination, since she can levitate tools or other objects.

Step 4: Roll!
The player whose pony is trying to do the task rolls the dice in the Talent or Aptitude that the pony is using. Total the numbers that are rolled, and if it is equal to or greater than the difficulty, the pony succeeds at the task! Otherwise, the pony fails. The narrator can use the result in storytelling.

Pips per whole die: Some rules only allow a pony "one pip (or yard or other unit) per whole die", or something similar; some examples are *Moves, Strength Bonus,* and *very small spells.* In that case, instead of rolling, drop the +1 or +2 if the pony has that and count the number of dice. For instance, for a pony with 6d+2, drop the +2 and count only the 6 dice, so if the rule says the pony gets "1 pip per whole die", she'd get 6 pips.

- If the die roll equals the difficulty, the pony barely succeeded. The task may take longer or the pony doesn't get as much.
- If the die roll is greater than the difficulty by 1–4, the pony succeeded, but didn't do anything special.
- If the die roll is greater than the difficulty by 5–8, the pony did well and may get something extra out of it. Maybe the task went quickly or the pony got more than she expected.
- If the die roll is greater than the difficulty by 9–12, the pony did very well and should get something extra out of it. The task may have gone quickly and the pony got extra out of it.
- If the die roll is greater than the difficulty by 13–16, the pony did so well that other ponies watching would notice. The pony definitely should be rewarded by the narrator.
- If the die roll is greater than the difficulty by 17 or more, the pony did well enough that other ponies will talk about it; she should get a really good result.

If the pony fails, the narrator likewise can use the result in storytelling and for other things. For instance, if a pony just misses succeeding, the narrator can let her try again, but with a harder difficulty—if the task is something she *can* try again. A pony who misses by a lot might have had a *mishap* and made things worse than before, or done something else that can't be fixed easily or at all. The narrator can use a table of failure results like the one for success, but in reverse, grading down to worse results for every four points by which a pony fails a roll. ✶

~ Good Show: Experience and Rewards ~

As the game goes on, the narrator can reward players with *experience points* or *possession points.* These should be doled out carefully, or ponies will end up super-powered very quickly, but the narrator shouldn't be too stingy, either. A good time to give out points is at the end of a story; a player who role-played really well or was especially clever might deserve a little extra.

Experience points can improve a pony's Talents or add new Talents. A Talent being improved or added should be one the pony's had a chance to practice or learn. Improving a Talent by 1 pip costs as many experience points as the skill has in whole dice. For example, if a Talent has 3d+2, it would cost 3 experience points to add a pip, improving it to 4d. Adding another pip after that would cost 4 experience points. The total number of experience points that have been added to a Talent can be listed on a Pony Form in the column labeled "Exp.", part of the "Talents and Specialties" section of the Form. Aptitudes can't be improved except under special circumstances—usually magical and rare—with the narrator's permission.

Possession points can be *consumable* or *permanent.* A consumable point represents something temporary, and once it's spent, it's gone. A permanent point can be used to improve one of a pony's possessions (making a minor possession into a medium possession, for instance) or to get the pony a new one—or it can be saved for later (maybe to put together several points for a bigger possession).

Be imaginative when using possession points! They can be all sorts of other things besides belongings or money. For instance, a consumable point could mean another pony owes the player's pony a small favor. Permanent points could represent special privileges or legal powers, or friends in high places. ✶

~ Judgment Call: Using the Rules ~

The narrator should use her imagination to think up exactly what happens when a pony succeeds or fails at a task or other die roll. Otherwise a game can turn into a dry, boring series of die rolls and rules references. Of course, the references are needed so everyone understands how the rules handle the results of die rolls, but the narrator and players can and should add colorful storytelling to them.

Fair play's important to make sure players have fun and aren't too disappointed when their ponies can't seem to get something right. Humor's important too, because the game's based on a show with a lot of comedy. Besides, some of the funniest moments in role-playing can happen when a roll fails spectacularly at just the wrong (or right) moment.

The narrator doesn't have to stick to the rules when doing so is more bother than it's worth, seems unfair, or dampens the fun. They're just tools to help decide things fairly. A light comedy game—or any kind of literal game—may not use all the detailed rules, but a figurative game with a more serious tone such as high adventure often can't get along without them. The real goal is to tell a thrilling, or funny, or dramatic story, and if the moment seems right for something to happen in some particular way, the narrator's free to fudge things creatively. ✶

~ Fast and Furious: Rounds and Actions ~

Most of the time, the narrator and players can use the same tricks that writers do when it comes to telling the story. If a pony spends hours doing something tedious like searching through a library, it's enough to spend only a few real minutes covering that. On the other hand, sometimes it's important to keep track of exactly what's happening when, and what order that ponies or creatures are doing things. Fighting's a big reason for that, but it isn't the only one.

To help the narrator and players keep track when things get fast and complicated, time is broken down into five-second periods called *rounds.* Once every pony or creature that's involved has had a turn to do things in the round, it's over, and a new round starts if the narrator thinks it's needed. When the narrator decides the fight, or whatever reason it's important to use rounds, is over, everyone can go back to the normal way of handling time.

Step 1: Initiative

The narrator has a choice of ways to figure out *initiative,* the order that ponies and other creatures take their turns in a round. This doesn't count as an action. Of course, a pony or creature who's unconscious, can't move, or otherwise isn't able to do anything doesn't get a turn in a round, if she hasn't taken it already.

- The narrator and players make rolls for all the ponies and creatures who are involved, using Alertness or Reflexes dice. The highest roll goes first, the next highest roll goes second, and so on, until all the ponies and creatures are listed in order. (The narrator should keep track on scratch paper.) Either everyone rolls once at the start of the first round and acts in the same order until the rounds are over, which is faster and easier, or rolls at the beginning of every round, which is slower but makes things more interesting.

- The pony or creature who does the first thing that matters acts first, and all ponies and creatures act in the same order until the rounds end. An example would be a pony or creature going first because she surprises others in an ambush. The narrator can decide to do this just for the first round, then switch to Alertness and Reflexes rolls.

If the narrator decides not to use die rolls, or if die rolls are tied, the narrator can decide the order of initiative by comparing the number of dice the tied ponies or creatures have in something. The highest number of dice goes first, the next highest goes second, and so on. Once a pony or creature is on the list, the narrator doesn't need to compare her any more. The tie-breaking order is: a Talent that lets a pony or creature go first, Reflexes, Smarts, then special equipment or a situation that lets a pony or creature go first. If the narrator prefers, the tied ponies and creatures instead can roll again to break ties. ⧫

Step 2: Actions

When it's a pony's or creature's turn in a round, the narrator or player controlling that pony or creature decides what she will do. First, the narrator or player must decide how many *full actions* the pony or creature will take in the round. Any pony or creature can take one full action in a round without a problem, but trying to take more than one in a round is harder. For every extra full action, subtract 1d from *all* task rolls (but not rolls for injury, resisting injury, or initiative) the pony or creature makes in that round; this is a *multi-action penalty.*

For example, a pony trying to take three full actions in a round subtracts 2d from all three of them. If the penalty subtracts all the dice a pony or creature can roll for an action, the roll fails automatically. The narrator or player doesn't have to say right away what all the actions will be; instead, each action can be described one at a time, as it happens.

If the narrator wants to keep things moving quickly, she can limit the number of full actions a pony or creature can take in a round. This limit probably should be three to five actions, depending on what kind of game is being played. A serious adventure game with experienced players may call for a higher limit than a lighter, faster-moving game, for instance.

A **full action** is anything a pony or creature does that takes effort or concentration. Most of the time, a full action needs a task roll of some kind. Some full actions do special things, add to or subtract from the difficulties of other rolls, or need the ponies or creatures to do certain things. A pony or creature can use only one full action in a round to move. Here are some examples of full actions; the narrator has to decide if an action that isn't on the list is a full action.

- **Attacking** in any way, as explained in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat". Besides using hooves, head, wings, or teeth, this includes using a weapon or wrestling.
- Using an **active defense** (*full* or *normal defense, blocking,* or *parrying*), also explained in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat".
- **Moving,** in *good* conditions, more than half a *Run, Swim,* or *Climb Move,* more than 1 *Flight Move,* by jumping several times in a row, by jumping over another pony or creature, or by jumping onto a table (or other raised area). Roll only for trying to do something tricky or for trying to flee (run away). Moves are explained in "Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement".
- **Moving,** in *bad* conditions, more than 1 yard (0.9 m) walking, swimming, or climbing, or more than half a Flight Move. A roll probably will be needed. If conditions are *very* bad, the narrator may decide any movement at all is a full action.
- **Taking off or landing** by a flyer.
- **Getting up** again after falling or being knocked or thrown to the ground.
- Trying a **stunt** with a moving vehicle, such as a cart, wagon, or carriage.
- **Throwing** something at or to another pony or creature.
- **Catching** a thrown or dropped object or creature. The catcher can take this action right after the throwing or dropping action. This is one of the few times a pony or creature can take an action before her initiative.
- **Carrying** something heavy and doing anything else at the same time other than walking or talking.
- **Speaking** more than a few words or a sentence, such as explaining a plan or talking about complicated ideas or information, to nearby ponies or creatures.
- **Readying** a weapon or device, including drawing or reloading a bow or firearm, sheathing or unsheathing a blade, or a similar action. Usually a task roll isn't needed, but the narrator may ask for one if there's a lot of stress or confusion.
- Doing a quick **task** that takes a few seconds. The pony or creature may try to rush the task, if she's in a hurry and the task normally takes longer than a round.
- **Starting or continuing** a task that takes longer than a single round to finish.
- **Waiting** before taking more actions, as explained below.

A pony or creature can use a full action to *wait* for something else to happen before taking more actions. (This is why the narrator or player doesn't have to describe all a pony's or creature's actions up front.) The narrator or player can say why the pony or creature is waiting—"I'll wait for him to attack," for example—or say just that the pony or creature is waiting—for instance, "I'm not sure what's going on, so I'll wait to see what happens before I do anything else."

If a pony or creature is waiting for something in particular, the narrator can let her take an action if or when that something happens, after any task roll is made but before the die roll's effect. Using the example of the pony waiting for a creature to attack, when the creature attacks, that pony would be able to take another action after the attack die roll but before anything else happens.

A pony or creature can take a few actions, wait (another action), take some more actions, wait again (another action), and so on, as long as she has enough actions in the round to do everything. If the pony or creature hasn't used up all her actions by the end of the round, she loses any she hasn't taken.

A **free action** is anything a pony or creature can do automatically except under the worst conditions. Free actions don't count when figuring out a multi-action penalty. If the narrator thinks a task needs concentration, and therefore a die roll, to do right, it *usually* isn't a free action. Here are some examples.

- **Speaking** a few words to another pony or creature nearby.
- **Glancing** around a room (maybe with a Senses roll to notice something).
- **Moving** a short distance. Under good conditions, this can be up to half of a walk, swim, or Climb Move, a single jump, or 1 Flight Move. (Round up.) Under bad conditions, this is limited to walking, swimming, or climbing no more than 1 yard (0.9 m) or flying no more than half a Flight Move.
- Dropping **prone** (lying belly-down) on purpose or getting up from doing so.
- Deciding initiative, rolling to resist injury or illness, and rolling to resist shock or surprise count as "free actions".

Step 3: Is It Over?

The narrator decides whether to go on to a new round, or that there's no need to do so. For a new round, go back to step one and start again. ✶

~ Plumb Tuckered: Fatigue and Rest ~

Ponies who exert themselves get tired and must rest. When a pony exerts herself, including using magic, the pony's player makes a *fatigue* roll using the pony's Stamina or Hardiness dice, every so often, depending on how hard the pony is working. If a pony's exertion is shorter than one full time interval, just make one roll. The basic difficulty of the first roll is 0; add 3 to the difficulty for every roll after that. (So the second roll's difficulty is 3, the third one's difficulty is 6, and so on.) An earth pony can add 1 to her roll for each whole die in her Power Aptitude. For example, an earth pony with 3d+1 in Power can add 3 to her fatigue roll.

- A pony doing **light work** rolls every hour. Examples are walking, slow flight, or carrying a light load.

- A pony doing **moderate work** rolls every 10 minutes. Examples are trotting, jumping a few times a minute, hovering or moderate flight, or carrying a medium load.

- A pony doing **heavy work** rolls every minute. Some examples are cantering, swimming, climbing, jumping constantly, fast flight, fighting, or carrying a heavy load.

- A pony making a **maximum effort** rolls every round. Some examples are galloping, very fast (or faster) flight, or carrying a load that is at least very heavy.

Modifiers can be applied in special situations. Here are a few examples, but the narrator can make up more if she thinks they might be needed.

- Add 5 to the difficulty for hot weather; add 10 for very hot weather.

- A pony exerting herself more than one way rolls for the heaviest work and adds 5 to the difficulty for each extra exertion. For example, a pony cantering while carrying a medium load is doing heavy work and adds 5 to the difficulty.

- A pony doing *only* light work, even multiple things, can skip fatigue rolls if the narrator agrees she's pacing herself; treat it as a "routine task". An example would be a pony who's strolling—half walking speed—while carrying a light load.

- Add 5 to difficulty for casting a *ranged* spell at medium range; add 10 to difficulty for casting one at long range.

- Add 5 to difficulty for heroic flight.

Any time a pony fails a fatigue roll, she gets more tired and has a harder time doing things, until she takes a break and gets some rest. Once the pony has rested, the difficulty for her fatigue rolls starts over again at 0.

- A pony who fails one fatigue roll is **winded.** She subtracts 1d from all task rolls and fatigue rolls until she's rested for half as long as the exertion lasted.

- A pony who fails two fatigue rolls is **tired.** She subtracts 2d from all task rolls and fatigue rolls until she's rested for as long as the exertion lasted.

- A pony who fails three fatigue rolls is **exhausted.** She subtracts 3d from all task rolls and can't exert herself any more until she's rested for twice as long as the exertion lasted.

Simplifying Fatigue During Rounds

Normally the narrators and players would keep track of each creature's fatigue as it happens, noting what kind of effort she's exerting and rolling for fatigue when it's time. That can get tedious during rounds, so here's an easier way to do it.

- Fighting or otherwise being active most of the time is *heavy work*; just roll for fatigue once a minute, or every 12 rounds.

- Being less active—such as hiding, thinking, or freeing prisoners—is *medium work*; that means rolling after 10 minutes or 120 rounds, so one roll when rounds are over may be enough.

Anyone in or near a fight probably is under a lot of stress. That's why even a creature who isn't doing much still is considered to be doing "medium work". If nothing else, her heartbeat's racing and her breathing's fast!

Sleeping and Waking

A pony staying up longer than she should makes a fatigue roll every day with a difficulty equal to the total hours of missed sleep. The narrator can modify the difficulty depending on what's going on around the pony. If it's peaceful and quiet, or the pony's really comfortable, that increases the difficulty. If it's loud or uncomfortable, or the pony's trying to stay active (walking around, say), that decreases the difficulty.

This is treated just like a normal fatigue roll. After the third failed sleep-fatigue roll, the pony falls asleep no matter what. Other ponies trying to keep her awake must keep doing it constantly or the sleepy pony will drift off again. A pony stays sleepy, with the penalty for being "winded", "tired", or "exhausted", until she makes up the lost sleep. A pony can be sleepy *and* tired, combining both penalties.

Normally, *trying* to fall asleep is routine, but if conditions are bad, like being cold, wet, hungry, or surrounded by loud noise, the pony makes a Hardiness roll every ten minutes, with a difficulty of 5 for each bad condition. If the pony's awake long enough, the narrator may give the pony a penalty for lost sleep.

A pony who's trying to wake up or who's being waked makes a Hardiness roll each round with a difficulty of 5. If it's too early (less than a full night's sleep), add to the difficulty. Loud noises or other disturbances decrease the difficulty. A big success means the pony wakes up alert. A small success means the pony wakes up groggy and disoriented. A small failure means the pony doesn't quite wake up, but is dozing. A mishap means the pony stays fast asleep. ✶

~ *Icky Stuff: Injury, Illness, and Healing* ~

The show doesn't talk much about them directly, but it's clear that birth and death are part of life for the ponies. Getting hurt, getting sick, and getting better are things any pony will do, especially one who goes on adventures.

Sometimes the show does something pretty terrible to a pony—say, squishing her under a falling piano or smacking her into a cliff—but she's fine later in the episode or even in the next scene! Other times, though, a plot depends on (for example) a pony being rescued from, or trying to avoid, going *splat* after a good long fall. As a result, this is where the difference between a literal game and a figurative game may be most noticeable. Along with the rules are suggestions for handling them depending on which kind of game is being played.

Injury or Illness

The narrator and players need to keep track of how hurt or sick ponies or creatures get when bad things happen to them. It matters more in a figurative game, but even in a literal game they should suffer penalties to their rolls for a while.

When a pony may get hurt or sick, roll dice to see how badly. The worse the injury or illness can be, the more dice are rolled. The pony's player rolls the pony's Hardiness dice plus the dice for any protection (for example, armor); subtract that from the injury or illness roll. An earth pony can add 1 to her Hardiness roll for each whole die in Power. A pegasus can roll Power instead if she's flying. A unicorn can roll Power instead if a spell's causing the injury or illness.

If the result's zero or less, the pony only gets a few bruises or sniffles. If the result is more than zero, the pony gets hurt or sick. The pony's player checks off, on her Pony Form, the level that matches the final result.

- A pony's **bruised** by a result of 0 or less, but there's no effect in the game.
- A pony's **stunned** by a result of 1 to 3. A stunned pony subtracts 1d from all task rolls this round and next round. A pony can be stunned *and* injured or ill at the same time.
- A pony suffers **minor injury or illness** from a result of 4 to 6. A pony with a minor injury or illness subtracts 1d from all task rolls until healed.
- A pony suffers **serious injury or illness** from a result of 7 to 9. A pony with a serious injury or illness subtracts 2d from all task rolls until healed.
- A pony suffers **major injury or illness** from a result of 10 to 12 and must make a Hardiness roll with a difficulty of 15. If the roll is successful, the pony stays conscious. Failure means the pony is unconscious for 10d minutes. (In a literal game, this can be 10d rounds instead.) A pony with a major injury or illness subtracts 3d from all task rolls until healed.
- A pony suffers **mortal injury or illness** from a result of 13 to 15, falls over unconscious, and stays that way until healed. Each minute, make a Hardiness roll for the pony; if the result's less than the number of minutes since the pony suffered mortal injury or illness, the pony dies. (A literal game can ignore the last part.)
- A pony **dies** immediately from a result of 16 or greater.

If the group thinks it's too easy for ponies to get hurt, sick, or worse, the narrator can adjust illness and injury levels. A quick and easy change is to make each level one point bigger, so that *stunned* is 1 to 4 points, *minor* is 5 to 8 points, *serious* is 9 to 12 points, and so on. Another option is to adjust the nastier levels more than the lesser ones—for instance, making *minor* 1 point bigger, *serious* 2 points bigger, *major* 3 points, and so on.

Increasing injury or illness: If a pony gets sick or hurt again, worse than she already is, check off the new level. If the new injury or illness *isn't* worse, increase the pony's injury or illness by one level *unless* the new result is *stunned.* That may sound complicated, but once everyone gets used to it, keeping track should be pretty easy. Here are examples, using a pony with a *serious* injury:

- If the new injury's a *major injury, mortal injury,* or *death,* check off that level of injury, whichever one it is.
- If the new injury's a *minor injury* or *serious injury,* increase the injury by one level, checking off *major injury.*
- If the new injury's *stunned,* don't increase the main injury level.

Healing

Natural healing in a **figurative game** takes rest. After a pony spends enough time resting—not exerting herself—make a Hardiness roll. Subtract 1d from the roll for a pony who *doesn't* rest and instead is active (for instance, working or adventuring). Add 1d to the roll for a pony who rests twice as long as the injury level needs. If the roll's successful, reduce the pony's injury level by one (for instance, from "serious injury" to "minor injury"). If the roll fails, the injury level stays the same.

- A **stunned** pony recovers automatically.
- For **minor or serious,** roll after 3 days with a difficulty of 6.
- For **major** injury or illness, roll after 2 weeks with difficulty 6.
- For **mortal** injury or illness, roll after 5 weeks with difficulty 8.

In a **literal game,** anything short of the biggest threats to life and limb just knocks around a pony for comedic effect; the narrator can ignore injury effects. If she wants to pay *some* attention to boo-boos—especially on ponies who get in trouble when they should know better—she can use minutes instead of days and hours instead of weeks for healing. That lets ponies recover from injuries quickly, but doesn't remove mortal peril, for last-minute rescues and other dramatic moments.

Medical treatment: Only a pony with the Medicine Talent can give a hurt or sick pony medical treatment to speed up healing. The pony giving medical treatment rolls her Talent dice once per day. If the roll's successful, reduce injury level by one—for instance, from "serious injury" to "minor injury". Failure means the injury level stays the same. If the pony in charge of treatment has the right tools, such as medicines, bandages, surgical instruments, healing magic, or whatever the narrator thinks is needed, reduce the difficulty. Treating the patient in a clinic or hospital reduces the difficulty even more.

- For a pony with a **minor** injury or illness, the difficulty is 10.
- For a pony with a **serious** injury or illness, the difficulty is 15.
- For a pony with a **major** injury or illness, the difficulty is 20.
- For a pony with a **mortal** injury or illness, difficulty is 25. ✶

Not only will the players' ponies deal with other ponies or creatures, they also have to face what the world itself might throw at them. A few common and important things that affect adventuring ponies are size, visibility, and weather.

Size: How Big Is a Creature or Object?

Not everything in the world is the same size as a pony, and even ponies can vary in size depending on age. Any time a pony or creature has to deal with someone or something much bigger or smaller, the narrator can use these rules for *Size.*

Subtract the Size of the smaller creature or object from the Size of the larger one. Remember that subtracting a negative number is like adding a positive number; 6 minus –3 is the same as 6 plus 3. The result is the *Size difference.*

If being bigger makes things easier, then the Size difference should be subtracted from the difficulty of the bigger creature's task, added to the difficulty of the smaller creature's task, or both. If being smaller makes things easier, then the modifier should be applied the other way. The same principles can be applied to numbers other than difficulty modifiers, if the narrator thinks the Size difference would matter.

Since a Size number is fairly loose, most adult ponies will be Size 0 (zero). A stallion or mare would have to be especially big or little to have a different Size. If a player wants her pony to have an exceptional Size—probably 1 for a huge stallion or –1 for a tiny mare—she should ask the narrator's permission and write it down as part of the pony's description. The pony's Muscle also should be very large or small, to explain why she (or he) has such an unusual Size.

- A full-grown dragon is Size 40
- An 8-story building is Size 24
- A 4-story building is Size 20
- A 2-story building is Size 14
- A train car is Size 10
- An elephant is Size 8
- A large wagon is Size 6
- A small cart is Size 3
- The sun princess is Size 3
- The moon princess is Size 2
- An adult pony is Size 0
- A foal is Size –3
- A medium dog is Size –3
- A house cat is Size –6
- A breadbox is Size –6
- A rat is Size –9
- A mouse is Size –12
- A coin is Size –15
- An ant is Size –21

Visibility: How Far Can a Pony See?

Visibility is how far and how well a pony or other creature with good eyes can see. The difficulty of a Notice or Senses roll will be higher for looking at, or for, something far away than for looking at, or for, something that's close by. Anything that's beyond the range of visibility can't be seen at all.

- **Ideal** visibility, such as in clear, clean arctic or mountain air, can be as much as 45 to 60 miles. (72–91 km)
- **Typical** visibility, such as in sea-level air near a town or city, may be about half that—20 to 30 miles. (32–48 km)
- Visibility in **haze** is about 1.25 to 3 miles. (2–5 km).
- Visibility in **mist** is about 0.625 (5/8) to 1.2 miles. (1.1–1.9 km).
- Visibility in **fog or clouds** is 0.62 miles. (1 km) or less.
- **"Zero"** visibility often is defined as 110 yards (100 m) or less.

Fog, smoke, clouds, and distance make it harder to see, which in turn makes most things—including working magic—harder to do. The narrator can add to difficulty with a flat number or with a die roll.

- Add 3 (or 1d) for light smoke or fog, or for middle distance.
- Add 6 (or 2d) for thick smoke or fog, or for long distance.
- Add 12 (or 4d) for very thick smoke or fog, very long distance, complete darkness, or not being able to see at all.

After dark: It's harder to see during twilight or at night than during daylight, and a pony can't see as far. Morning twilight is between dawn and sunrise; evening twilight is between sunset and dusk. The definition of dawn and dusk, by the way, is when the center of the sun is six degrees below the horizon.

- During **twilight,** add 5 to the difficulty of spotting something and divide visibility by two.
- At **night,** add 10 to the difficulty of spotting something and divide visibility by four.

Using a light: A match or candle casts light in a circle. A flashlight (electric torch) casts light in a 30° arc in front of the light. A lantern might do either one, depending on how it's designed; if it casts light in an arc instead of all around, double the distances listed for it. A pony can't see at all past the maximum "night" distances listed, because her eyes are adjusted to the light she's using.

The first flashlights, invented in the 1890s, were big and heavy, and batteries lasted only a few minutes. They were used only in short "flashes", then turned off to save power. Treat an early flashlight as if it were a lantern that casts light in an arc.

- **Matchlight** is like twilight at 0 to 1 yard (0.9 m) or hex and night at 2 yards (1.8 m) or hexes. The flame lasts 4 rounds.
- **Candlelight** is like twilight at 0 to 1 yard (0.9 m) and night at 2 to 3 yards (1.8–2.7 m). The flame lasts 1 hour.
- **Lantern-light** is like daylight at 0 to 1 yard (0.9 m) or hex, twilight at 2 yards (1.8 m) or hexes, and night at 3 to 5 yards (2.7–4.5 m) or hexes. The flame lasts about 6 hours.
- A *modern* **flashlight** is like day at 0–5 yards (4.5 m), twilight at 6–10 yards (5.4–9 m), and night at 11–30 yards (11–27 m).

Wind and Weather

Because they're so closely tied to the pegasus tribe, wind and weather are important enough to need more detailed information than most games use. Still, these rules are streamlined to keep things moving, and the narrator's encouraged to find a good introductory book on weather for reference.

Precipitation is water falling from the sky, usually from certain kinds of clouds. Rain and drizzle are liquid or freezing, but snow, hail, sleet, and a few lesser-known kinds are frozen. *Virga* is precipitation that evaporates before it hits the ground.

Raindrops usually are bigger than 0.02 inch (0.5 mm) in diameter, but they may be smaller if they're widely scattered. *Drizzle* drops are smaller and lighter, so they follow air currents more, seem to float, and are more tightly packed. Drizzle is like *very light* or *light* rain, except that visibility is cut in half. ➧

Rain or drizzle is measured, in inches or millimeters, by how deep it fills special cups set out to catch it. How hard it's raining or drizzling is measured by how much falls in an hour, or would fall in an hour if it lasted that long. The record in the real world is 12 inches (305 mm) in 42 minutes (0.7 hour), which works out to about 17 inches (435 mm) per hour.

Snow is white or translucent ice crystals in complicated, branched hexagonal shapes, bunched together into snowflakes. Snowfall is measured by how much it interferes with visibility, because it's harder to measure with instruments: As a rule of thumb, 10 inches or millimeters of snow is equivalent to 1 inch or millimeter of rain—but warm, wet snow is denser and cold, dry snow is lighter, so it can range from 6 to 11 inches or millimeters of snow to 1 of rain. In *really* extreme conditions it can range from 4 to 50 units of snow to 1 unit of rain!

To keep things simple, use the list of rain levels, but divide visibility in half and multiply the amount by 10 (or whatever number seems right for the temperature and humidity). The narrator can treat other frozen precipitation the same way, although strong hail or sleet can hit hard enough to injure creatures or damage things caught out in it.

- **Very light** rain is 0.01 inch (0.25 mm) per hour or less; visibility's about 4 to 8 mi. (6.4–13 km).
- **Light** rain is more than 0.01 inch (0.25 mm) but no more than 0.04 inch (1 mm); visibility's about 2 to 4 mi. (3.2–6.4 km).
- **Moderate** rain is more than 0.04 inch (1 mm) but no more than 0.16 inch (4 mm); visibility's about 1 to 2 mi. (1.6–3.2 km).
- **Heavy** rain is more than 0.16 inch (4 mm) but no more than 0.64 inch (16 mm); visibility's about ½ to 1 mi. (0.8–1.6 km).
- **Very heavy** rain is more than 0.64 inch (16 mm) but no more than 2 inches (50 mm); visibility's ¼ to ½ mi. (0.4–0.8 km).
- **Extreme** rain is more than 2 inches (50 mm) but no more than 8 inches (203 mm); visibility's ⅛ to ¼ mi. (0.2–0.4 km).
- **Maximum** rain is more than 8 inches (203 mm) per hour; visibility's about 1/16 to ⅛ mi. (0.1–0.2 km).

Wind: The *Beaufort scale* was created in the nineteenth century to classify winds, using speed in *knots,* traditional for sailing; 1 knot is about 1.15 mph or 1.85 km/h. Today weather agencies work with different scales, but the Beaufort scale still is useful for the game. Keep in mind that hurricanes and tornadoes may have wind speeds higher than those listed!

- **Calm** is little or no wind, too light to feel on the skin.
- **Light air** is 1–2 knots (1 to 3 mph or 1–5.5 km/h).
- **Light breeze** is 3–6 knots (4 to 7 mph or 5.6–11 km/h).
- **Gentle breeze** is 7–10 knots (8 to 12 mph or 12–19 km/h).
- **Moderate breeze** is 11–15 knots (13–17 mph or 20–28 km/h).
- **Fresh breeze** is 16–20 knots (18 to 24 mph or 29–38 km/h).
- **Strong breeze** is 21–26 knots (25 to 30 mph or 39–49 km/h).
- **Near gale** is 27–33 knots (31 to 38 mph or 50–61 km/h).
- **Fresh gale** is 34–40 knots (39 to 46 mph or 62–74 km/h).
- **Strong gale** is 41–47 knots (47 to 54 mph or 75–88 km/h).
- **Whole gale** is 48–55 knots (55 to 63 mph or 89–102 km/h).
- **Violent storm** is 56–63 knots (64 to 72 mph or 103–117 km/h).
- **Hurricane force** is 64 knots (73 mph or 118 km/h) or more.
- An **EF5 tornado** may exceed 174 knots (200 mph/322 km/h). ✶

— *Doing More Things: Special Task Rules* —

The basic task rules are pretty general. They'll do for simple cases, but a lot of tasks or situations call for more detail or additional information. Some common examples are teamwork, using Magical Talents, and carrying heavy loads.

Teamwork

Some tasks are too big for one pony, such as pulling a canal barge, pushing a rain cloud into place, or levitating a roof onto a house. In that case, several ponies may team up to work on it. One pony should be the team's leader; she first makes a roll using Leadership, Smarts, or (if the narrator thinks it applies) the task Talent. The roll's difficulty depends on what kinds of orders or directions the leader has to give, and can involve role-playing. Raising a barn wall isn't very complex, but medical treatment may need more specific instructions.

- **Simple or general** commands are difficulty 3.
- **Easy or specific** commands are difficulty 7.
- **Difficult or very specific** commands are difficulty 12.
- **Very difficult or precise** commands are difficulty 17.
- **Extremely difficult or very precise** commands are diff. 22.
- **Exacting** commands are difficulty 28.

How well the group works together also affects the difficulty of the leader's roll. This could involve role-playing too.

- If the group's members will follow the group's leader no matter what, subtract 20.
- If group members will sacrifice for each other, subtract 15.
- If the group's trained a lot to work together, subtract 10.
- If the group's trained a little to work together, subtract 5.
- If the group's worked together a lot or is willing to, there's no modifier.
- If the group's worked together several times, add 5.
- If the group's worked together only a few times, add 10.
- If the group's never worked together or most of the group hates each other, add 15.
- If the group isn't interested in working together, all of the group hates each other, or the group's members can't communicate with each other, add 20.

If the leader's doing a good job, subtract from the task's overall difficulty, especially if the leader has a good task Talent *and* Leadership. If the leader *isn't* doing a good job, leave the difficulty as it is or change it a little either way. If there's no leader at all, add to the difficulty of the task.

If the leader's roll succeeds, the group can add together their task dice for one great big roll against the task's total difficulty, and the narrator can give the group any other benefits that seem logical for the situation. If the roll fails, members of the group may have to roll separately against pieces of the task, and the narrator can give the group any other problems that seem logical for the situation. If some ponies succeed but others fail, that could cause even bigger problems. (Imagine what happens to that roof or cloud when only parts of it are moved.) ➧

Using Magical Talents

There's no visible sign when an earth pony's or pegasus pony's magic is working, but when a unicorn casts a spell, a sparkling glow shows up around her *alicorn* (the historical name for a unicorn horn and what it's made of) and anything the spell's used on, and there's a faint sound of chiming and humming. A small spell may glow white, maybe with a little color; a more powerful spell takes on the color of the pony's coat, mark, or eyes. A *very* powerful spell also may radiate a bright white flash.

A pony using a Magical Talent first makes a Talent roll with a difficulty based on how big the weatherworking or spell is; this roll can be skipped if the pony isn't in a hurry or stressed and the difficulty's 5 or less. If the pony succeeds at the Talent roll or is allowed to skip it, she then makes an Effect roll to see how much the magic does, rounding up if needed.

Weatherworking: Weather's created by *humidity* (moisture in the air), air pressure, and temperature. The show hints that pegasus magic controls the first two, but temperature's controlled by the rising and setting of the sun. In ancient times the unicorns controlled the sun and moon, but more recently the sun and moon princesses took over that duty. For the game's purposes, weather magic changes local conditions of humidity or pressure over time.

Weather is very powerful, with lots of energy, so teams of pegasus ponies work together in controlling it over even a small area. Notice that when one pegasus works with a cloud, it usually is only a few times her own size. That may be partly so it fits in the television picture, but it also may be how much a single pegasus can work with comfortably.

A pegasus can stop an active weatherworking she's cast any time she wants, even if she hasn't used up all its Effect. Make a fatigue roll when a weatherworking ends or is stopped.

- A **very small** weatherworking is difficulty 0 and the result is 1 pip for each whole die of Effect.
- A **small** weatherworking is difficulty 5; roll half Effect dice.
- A **moderate** weatherworking is difficulty 10; roll Effect dice.
- A **large** working is difficulty 15; roll half again (1 ½ times as many) Effect dice.
- A **very large** working is difficulty 20; roll double Effect dice.

Casting a spell: A unicorn's spell may last for a period of time, called *duration,* or it may be *instant,* happening in a fraction of a second. A unicorn can stop an active spell she's cast any time she wants, even if she hasn't used up all its duration. For anything other than a very small spell, make a fatigue roll when the spell ends or is stopped.

- A **very small** spell is difficulty 0. No fatigue roll is needed. Effect is 1 pip per whole die. Duration is up to 1 hour.
- A **small** spell is difficulty 5. Roll half Effect dice. Duration is up to 1 hour.
- A **moderate** spell is difficulty 10. Roll Effect dice. Duration is up to 10 minutes.
- A **large** spell is difficulty 15. Roll half again (1 ½ times as many) Effect dice. Duration is up to 1 minute.
- A **very large** spell is difficulty 20. Roll double Effect dice. Duration is 1 round.

Rounding off: The same system of three points per die that's described in "First Things First: Creating a Pony" can be used to figure out how many Effect dice are rolled. For example, a pegasus or unicorn with 3d+1 (10 points) of Effect who's casting a small spell or weatherworking (half Effect dice) would roll 1d+2 (5 points). Round up to the next point if needed.

Since using a Magical Talent means making two die rolls—a Talent roll *and* an Effect roll—instead of just one, it can be a bit of a hassle. To help make up for that, the narrator and players can use the "Too Many Dice!" optional rule or simply use a flat 3 pips per Effect die instead of making Effect rolls.

Casting distance: Most Magical Talents can't reach very far away from a pony using them. When using such a Talent up to 1 yard away, a pegasus or unicorn can roll her full Talent dice. For every yard farther away the pony tries to use the Talent, subtract 1d. A pony can't use the Talent so far away that her Talent roll would be less than 1d. For example, a unicorn with 4d+2 in her Illumination Talent who tries to cast an Illumination spell 3 yards away subtracts 2d, and so would roll 2d+2. She can't cast Illumination 5 (or more) yards away, since 4d would be subtracted, which leaves less than 1d.

Ranged magic: Some Magical Talents can be "thrown" or "fired" at more distant targets. This is similar to the "Range" rule in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat", except there's no *close* range. The narrator can add a *very long* range that's 10 times *long* range (and adds 15 to the Talent roll's difficulty), but she should be cautious about doing so, since that can be very powerful, and *definitely* should include visibility modifiers.

- **Short** range, in yards, is equal to the number of whole Effect dice in the Magical Talent.
- **Medium** range is beyond short range, up to 10 times short range; add 5 to the difficulty of the Talent roll.
- **Long** range is beyond medium range, up to 100 times short range; add 10 to the difficulty of the Talent roll.

A Magic Talent may have a casting distance *and* is ranged, which can seem a bit confusing. An example is Wink—the ability to move creatures or things instantly across distances. Casting distance is how far away the caster can reach a creature or object she wants to Wink; range is how far she Winks it.

Consider a unicorn who tries to Wink away a changeling that's about to attack her. The casting distance from her to the changeling is 2 yards, so she subtracts 1d from her Wink Talent dice. She decides to Wink the changeling away to medium range, which adds 5 to the difficulty of the Wink Talent roll.

Levitation: Make a Talent roll each time a unicorn levitates more objects, manipulates an object, moves an object farther away by at least 1 yard, or sets down an object. No roll's needed if the unicorn just drops things. Add 1 to difficulty for each object after the first the unicorn levitates; a failure means the unicorn drops some or all of the objects. The Effect roll is the equivalent of a Lifting or Muscle roll for carrying.

Bonk! All of a pony's active weatherworkings or spells stop immediately if she's hit on the head, especially on a unicorn's alicorn (horn), hard enough to cause injury—including being *stunned*—or if getting hit takes her by surprise or breaks her concentration. ✶

How Much Can a Pony Lift, Carry, and Pull?

When a pony picks up something, roll the pony's Lifting Talent or Muscle dice; an earth pony can add 1 to her roll for each whole die in her Power Aptitude. The narrator can say it's a "routine task" and skip die rolls if the pony isn't in a hurry or stressed, or if the difficulty equals, or is less than, the number of whole dice that would be rolled. If the weight's between two values, round up to the next value. For example, a load of 50 pounds is between 40 pounds (difficulty 4) and 60 pounds (difficulty 5); round up to 60 pounds.

If it matters to the story, roll every round a pony carries or pulls a big load. If the roll succeeds, the pony keeps carrying it. If the roll fails, the pony has to put it down and take a break for a round before lifting it again. If there's a mishap, the pony drops it or collapses on the ground instead. Lifting, pushing, or pulling a load with only one hoof, two hooves, head, mouth, or a wing adds 5 to the difficulty.

- A **light** load is up to 20 pounds (9 kg); 2 pounds (0.9 kg) has a difficulty of 1, 10 pounds (4.5 kg) has a difficulty of 2, and 20 pounds (9 kg) has a difficulty of 3.

- A **medium** load is 40 to 200 pounds (18–91 kg); add 1 to the difficulty per 20 pounds (9 kg). The difficulty range for a medium load is 4 to 12.

- A **heavy** load is 240 to 400 pounds (109–181 kg); add 1 to the difficulty per 40 pounds (18 kg). The difficulty range for a heavy load is 13 to 17.

- A **very heavy** load is 500 to 2000 pounds or 1 ton (227–907 kg); add 1 to the difficulty per 100 pounds (45 kg). The difficulty range for a very heavy load is 18 to 33.

- An **extra-heavy** load is 1.1 to 2 tons (1.1–1.8 tonnes); add 1 to the difficulty per 0.1 ton (0.1 tonne). The difficulty range for an extra-heavy load is 34 to 43.

- A **super-heavy** load is 2.5 to 10 tons (2.3–9 tonnes); add 1 to the difficulty per 0.5 ton (0.5 tonne). The difficulty range for a super-heavy load is 44 to 59.

- A **gigantic** load is 15 to 100 tons (14–91 tonnes); add 1 to the difficulty per 5 tons (4.5 tonnes). The difficulty range for a gigantic load is 60 to 77.

Pulling a load: Pulling a load on *skids* (ski-like boards) or wheels is easier than carrying it, so the weight of a pulled load is reduced before finding the difficulty. Include the weight of the cart, wagon, or *rolling stock* (railroad cars) the load's on.

- Divide weight by 2 when dragging a load on skids or across a smooth, level surface, or when carrying it in carefully packed panniers that are worn properly.
- Divide by 10 when pulling a load on a primitive cart or wagon.
- Divide by 20 when pulling a load on a modern cart or wagon.
- Divide by 100 when pulling a load on a train or canal barge. ✶

~ *Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement* ~

Movement of ponies, creatures, and vehicles in the game is measured in *yards per round.* Every 5 yards (4.5 m) per round is equal to about 2 miles (3.3 km) per hour.

Running, Swimming, Climbing, and Jumping

How far a pony can run in one round is based on her *Run Move,* which is 5 yards plus 1 for each whole die of Muscle. An earth pony can use Power instead if it's more than her Muscle. That's 6 yards (5.5 m) for 1d of Muscle, 7 yards (6.4 m) for 2d, 8 yards (7.3 m) for 3d, 9 yards (8.2 m) for 4d, and 10 yards (9.1 m) for 5d. A pony's *Swim Move* and *Climb Move* are half of her Run Move, and she can *jump* up or forward one-fourth of her Run Move; round up if needed.

A pony can make up to 8 Run Moves *or* 4 Swim, Climb, or Jump Moves in a round, and she can make partial moves (for example, 3 Run Moves plus a couple of yards). After moving, make a movement roll using a Talent if she has one for the way she's moving or Reflexes if she doesn't; difficulty's based on how many Moves the pony makes. The narrator can skip rolls for a pony who's walking or trotting under good conditions.

- **Walk** as far as 1 Run Move with a difficulty of 0.
- **Trot** (slow run or jog) farther than 1 Run Move but no farther than 2 Run Moves with a difficulty of 5.
- **Canter** (medium run) farther than 2 Run Moves but no farther than 4 Run Moves with a difficulty of 10.
- **Gallop** (fast run or sprint) farther than 4 Run Moves but no farther than 8 Run Moves with a difficulty of 15.
- **Swim** as far as 1 Swim Move with a difficulty of 5; add 5 to difficulty for every extra Swim Move the pony tries to make.
- **Climb** up or down (a cliff, tree, ladder, or anything steep) as far as 1 Climb Move, or 2 Climb Moves if the pony has the Climbing Talent, with a difficulty of 5. Add 10 to difficulty for every extra Climb Move the pony tries to make.
- **Jump** with a difficulty of 5; add 5 to difficulty for every extra yard (0.9 m) the pony tries to jump. A pony can gallop for up to two rounds before jumping to get a running start, but the galloping roll(s) must be successful. Subtract 5 from the jump's difficulty for galloping one round; subtract 10 from the jump's difficulty for galloping two rounds.

Bad conditions: Use normal difficulties for running on a hard, even surface like a road, swimming in still water, or climbing a ladder. Obstacles or problems add to the difficulty.

- An uneven surface, small obstacles, choppy water, or climbing a tree adds 5.
- Big obstacles, strong current, or climbing a rough wall adds 10.
- Lots of big, close obstacles or stormy weather adds 15.
- A narrow or shaky path (such as a cliff trail or a rope bridge), big waves, or climbing a smooth wall adds 20.
- A collapsing hall or swimming in a hurricane adds 25 or more.

A pony who fails a movement roll automatically slows down in her next round by 2 moves. If she slows down to zero yards, she stops. If it would make her movement less than zero, if she fails a jump roll, *or* if a mishap is rolled, she stumbles. ➧

- A **running or jumping** pony falls and may be hurt.
- A **swimming** pony may start to drown.
- A **climbing** pony falls and may be hurt; how far she falls depends on how steep the climb is and how high up she is.

A pony can *maneuver,* or change movement, several ways.

- **Speed up *or* slow down** by as much as 2 Run Moves or 1 Swim or Climb Move.
- **Walk backward** (but not run) with a difficulty of 5.
- **Turn *or* sidle** (move 1 yard sideways instead of forward); a turn doesn't count as movement, but a sidle does. A pony or creature can turn or sidle more than once in a round.

Flying

Flying speed also is measured in yards per round. How far a pegasus pony can fly in one round is based on her *Flight Move,* which is 5 yards plus 1 for each whole die of Power. That's 6 yards (5.5 m) for 1d of Power, 7 yards (6.4 m) for 2d, 8 yards (7.3 m) for 3d, 9 yards (8.2 m) for 4d, and 10 yards (9.1 m) for 5d.

After moving, make a movement roll using the flyer's Flying Talent or Finesse. The roll's difficulty is based on how many Flight Moves the flyer makes. The narrator can skip rolls for a flyer who's in slow or moderate flight under good conditions.

- **Hover** (stay in the same place) with a difficulty of 3.
- **Slow** flight is as far as 1 Flight Move and has a difficulty of 0.
- **Moderate** flight is farther than 1 Flight Move but no farther than 2 Flight Moves and has a difficulty of 5.
- **Fast** flight is farther than 2 Flight Moves but no farther than 4 Flight Moves and has a difficulty of 10.
- **Very fast** flight is farther than 4 Flight Moves but no farther than 8 Flight Moves and has a difficulty of 15.
- **Heroic** flight is farther than 8 Flight Moves; add 5 to difficulty for each doubling of Moves. (Up to 16 Moves, difficulty is 20; up to 32 Moves, difficulty is 25; and so on.) A pegasus *must* have the Flying Talent to fly this fast.

Bad conditions: Use normal difficulties for flying in calm air. Obstacles or problems add to the difficulty.

- Add 5 for strong winds.
- Add 10 for big obstacles or rough air.
- Add 15 for stormy weather or a few hazards in the air.
- Add 20 for lots of hazards in the air.
- Add 25 or more for flying in a hurricane.

A flyer who fails a roll automatically slows down in the next round by 8 Flight Moves. If she slows down to zero yards, she hovers. If it would make her movement less than zero yards *or* a mishap is rolled, she loses control.

- If she's **flying low,** she crashes and may get hurt.
- If she's **flying high,** she falls; next round she can try to regain control with a difficulty of 15, if she hasn't hit the ground yet.

Since a flyer moves in all three dimensions and has to deal with ærodynamics and winds, her ability to *maneuver* is a lot more complicated than other kinds of movement. There are two types of flying maneuvers. *Basic* maneuvers are simple enough that most flyers can master them fairly easily. *Advanced* maneuvers are difficult *ærobatic* (ærial acrobatic) stunts.

Basic maneuvers are similar to running maneuvers, with the addition of *altitude* (height above ground or sea level).

- **Speed up *or* slow down** by no more than 8 Flight Moves.
- **Fly low** enough, during part or all of a round, that it's possible to crash into an obstacle; add 5 to flying difficulty.
- **Gain *or* lose altitude** by no more than 4 Flight Moves. (Be sure to keep track of the flyer's altitude.)
- **Glide** instead of fly to save energy. Add 5 to difficulty, but reduce the level of exertion for the number of Flight Moves by one (for example, from *heavy work* to *moderate work*).
- **Turn *or* slip** (move sideways instead of forward); a turn doesn't count as movement, but a slip does. A flyer can turn or slip more than once in a round. How far she slips depends on how many Flight Moves she makes.

- A flyer making 3 or 4 Flight Moves slips 1 yard.
- A flyer making 5 or 6 Flight Moves slips half a Flight Move.
- A flyer making 7 or 8 Flight Moves slips 1 Flight Move.
- Heroic flight allows only *one* turn or slip, at the end of movement; a slip is one-fourth of the Flight Moves being made.

Advanced maneuvers can be tricky or even dangerous.

- **Fly backward** (in slow flight only); add 5 to flying difficulty.
- **Rotate** from right-side up to upside-down or *vice versa;* add 1 to flying difficulty.
- Add 5 to flying difficulty for each **half-loop *or* half-roll.**
- A **power-dive *or* zoom-climb** turns horizontal movement into vertical movement; difficulty is based on how much altitude is lost or gained.
- A flyer in heroic flight who reaches 1877 yards (1716 m) per round adds 10 to flying difficulty for that round; if the roll's successful, she will **break the sound barrier.**

A *half-loop* is a vertical half-circle that ends with the flyer heading the opposite way (180°) from her direction before the half-loop. How much altitude she gains (in a climbing half-loop) or loses (in a diving half-loop) depends on how many Flight Moves she's making. Since it's a half-circle, she also goes half as far over the ground during the first part of the half-loop, then comes back the same distance during the last part of the half-loop. A flyer can, but doesn't have to, make *one* more half-loop right after the first, to make a full loop *or* a big S-shape.

A *half-roll* is a helical (spiraling in three dimensions) half-circle that ends with the flyer heading the same direction, but some distance sideways, in the same manner as a slip. How far sideways a half-roll goes depends on how many Flight Moves the flyer's making; she also goes up half as far, then down again, or *vice versa.* A flyer can, but doesn't have to, make *one* more half-roll in the opposite direction right after the first. (This is called a *barrel roll.*) For example, an upward right half-roll can be followed by a downward left half-roll.

- If making 2 Flight Moves, a half-loop or half-roll is 1 yard.
- If making 3 or 4 Moves, a half-loop or half-roll is half a Move.
- If making 5 or 6 Moves, a half-loop or half-roll is 1 Move.
- If making 7 or 8 Moves, a half-loop or half-roll is 2 Moves. ➧

Half-loops and half-rolls count as movement and aren't allowed in hovering, slow, or heroic flight. If a flyer starts a half-loop or half-roll right-side up, she ends it upside-down, or *vice versa.*

A *power-dive* turns forward movement into lost altitude. (For example, a flyer who moved 100 yards in the last round now moves zero yards and loses 100 yards of altitude instead.) The only other maneuver allowed is *gain or lose altitude.*

A *zoom-climb* is the opposite; the flyer turns forward speed into *gained* altitude. The only other maneuver allowed is *gain or lose altitude.* A zoom-climb ends when the flyer stops it or gains zero or less altitude. A flyer can't zoom-climb right after a power-dive—she has to fly level at least 1 round first—but she *can* power-dive right after a zoom-climb.

Gravity and falling: The real reason for power-diving or zoom-climbing is to take advantage of gravity, letting it help pull the flyer downward—speeding up a power-dive or slowing down a zoom-climb. In the first round of a power-dive or zoom-climb, gravity subtracts 140 yards (123 m) from altitude. Every round after that, it subtracts 500 yards (457 m), because at that point air resistance stops the process of speeding up from gravity. A flyer (or anyone else) who's falling out of control or just wants to fall as slowly as possible—and so is spread out like a skydiver—instead subtracts 300 yards (274 m) every round after the first.

Taking off or landing is a separate *full action* from flying. A flyer can take off *and* fly, or fly *and* land, in a round, but that would be two full actions.

- **Take off** with a jump of up to 2 yards (1.8 m). A flyer who wants an easier take-off can try a galloping start to the jump.

- **Land** with a jump from the flyer's height above the landing spot. Add 5 to landing difficulty for flying at trotting speed (relative to the landing spot) before landing. Add 10 for flying at cantering speed. Add 15 for flying at galloping speed. Add 20 for flying faster than a gallop. The flyer runs at the same speed and direction she was flying until she's able to slow down; she may have to make a running roll for that.

Keeping Track of Everything

Moving around doesn't mean much if no one can visualize what the area looks like or where ponies, creatures, and obstacles are. For a simple situation—say, one pony chasing another on a road, or some flyers high in the air— the narrator can keep track of basic information like how far apart they are, and take care of the rest with normal role-playing. For something more complicated, such as ponies running or flying around in a town or forest, the narrator may want to use a map.

Many games use maps overlaid with grids of hexagons (or *hexes*) to help everyone understand the lay of the land and how characters or creatures are moving. Blank sheets printed with hex-grids are available for drawing on, both paper and bigger plastic "mats" for use with wet-erase markers. A narrator who has drawing or painting software may be able to make her own maps and hex-grids, and some Web-searching should turn up downloadable tools, grids, symbols, and images.

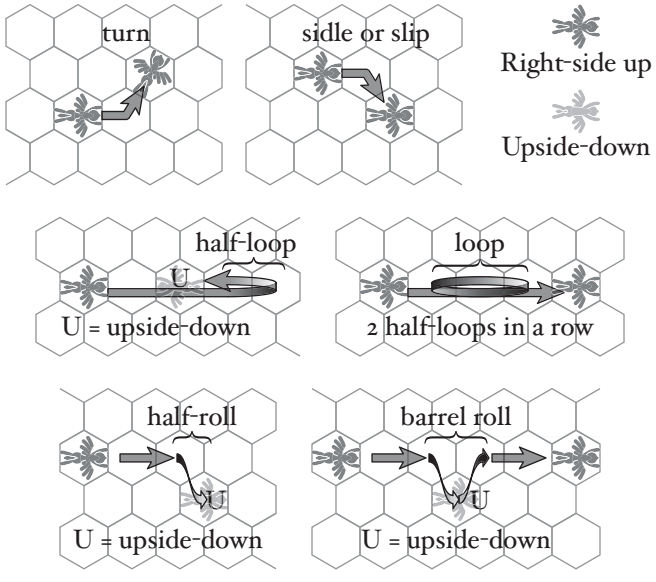
Small pewter figures, often painted, are popular for marking where characters and creatures are on a map—but there aren't any for magical cartoon ponies. Cardboard stand-ups with art are one solution. A group who's willing to use maps with big (1 ¼-inch or 32-mm) hexes can try molded pony toys. Otherwise, the narrator and players may have to use any pieces they can find, as long as everyone can tell which way they're facing, so it's easy to figure out what direction each pony's going.

Below are some diagrams of maneuvers to help visualize how they can work on hex-grids. Maneuvering can get a bit trickier if a pony or creature isn't going straight down a row of hexes, but the narrator and players should be able to use common sense to figure out where a figure should end up.

Scale is the other problem to solve. When the narrator needs fine detail and doesn't expect movement to be very fast, she can use a *small* scale of 1 yard per hex. A full-grown pony fits, nose to tail, in one hex, though the sun princess or other large creature may need two hexes (or even more, if very large).

Galloping or very fast flying can cover a lot of territory in a hurry, though. For that the narrator may want to move up to a *medium* scale of 4 yards per hex and divide all distances given in the movement rules by 4, rounding up where needed. Much of the time this should be open or mostly open ground or sky; zipping around where there are lots of buildings, trees, rocks, or other solid objects to smack into often doesn't end well.

If a daring—or crazy—pegasus tries heroic flight, and the narrator decides to use a map for it (which isn't recommended), she can use a *large* scale. It can vary, depending on just how fast the pegasus wants to go, but a good rule of thumb is to start at a scale of 16 yards per hex and keep doubling from there until the narrator reaches a scale that can manage the movement conveniently. That means only the biggest objects will take up much space on the map, but if a pegasus pulls a stunt like this at low altitude, she's likely to learn a very painful lesson. ✶



~ Two Bits: Buying Things ~

The show's writers are vague about how much a *bit,* or coin, is worth. It's not important to the story; what matters is the buying, not the amount. These rules let the narrator and players take a similar approach using task rolls and difficulties.

How Much Money?

The more money a pony has, the more dice her player can roll when making a purchase. If the roll succeeds, the pony buys the item. If the roll fails, the pony doesn't have enough money for some reason, such as leaving her cash or checkbook at home, or forgetting to put money in the right account. Unless there's a mishap, she can roll again after fixing the problem.

- A pony with a **major possession** of money rolls 6d.
- A pony with a **medium possession** of money rolls 4d.
- A pony with a **minor possession** of money rolls 2d.
- A pony with **no possession** of money rolls 1d.

How Much Does Something Cost?

The difficulty of a purchase roll is based on how expensive the item is. The list of difficulties only goes so far, but the narrator can add to it for even higher prices. That probably won't happen often, though, unless something *really* big is involved—such as a steamship or airship, a big farm or noble's manor, or a public works project.

- No more than 20 bits is **cheap;** the difficulty is 1 to 5, or multiply 3d by 1 bit.
- More than 20 bits, but no more than 200 bits, is **inexpensive;** the difficulty is 6 to 10, or multiply 3d by 10 bits.
- Hundreds of bits is **a little expensive;** the difficulty is 11 to 15, or multiply 3d by 100 bits.
- A few thousand bits is **kind of expensive;** the difficulty is 16 to 20, or multiply 3d by 500 bits.
- Several thousand bits is **expensive;** the difficulty is 21 to 25, or multiply 3d by 1000 bits.
- Tens of thousands of bits is **very expensive;** the difficulty' is 26 to 30, or multiply 3d by 10,000 bits.
- Hundreds of thousands of bits is **costly;** the difficulty is 31 to 35, or multiply 3d by 100,000 bits.

A lot of different things can affect the price of an item; difficulty modifiers for some of them are listed below. The narrator also may want to think about how hard it is to get the item, how hard it is to ship that item to where the buyer is, and other things that can make something more or less expensive. Sometimes a buyer can try to reduce the price, such as haggling, in a contest with the seller, using Smarts or an appropriate Talent.

How well-made is the item? (No modifier if it's average quality.)

- If it's of low quality, –5 or less
- If it's of high quality, +5 or more

What shape is the item in? (No modifier if it's in good shape but not special.)

- If it's damaged, –5 or less
- If it's in very good shape or heavily decorated, +5 or more

How common is the item? (No modifier for a common, easily available item.)

- If it's very common or the local market's flooded, –5 or less
- If it's uncommon or not readily available, or is in big demand, +5 or more
- If it's not available to the public, out of season, or from far away, +15 or more

How advanced is the item's technology? (No modifier for commonly available technology.)

- If it's simpler than what's commonly available, –5 or less
- If it's a little more advanced than what's commonly available, +5 or more
- If it's a lot more advanced than what's commonly available, +15 or more

How well does the seller know the customer? (No modifier if the customer's new or almost new to the seller.)

- If customer pays on time, shops there a lot, or seller has no complaints, –1 or less
- If the customer doesn't pay on time or is a problem to the seller, +1 or more

Spending Limits

The narrator can limit purchases, based on how much a pony's can spend, to keep shopping sprees from going too far.

- The difficulty of a **casual purchase** is equal to or less than the number of dice the buyer rolls; she can make several casual purchases a day.
- The difficulty of a **normal purchase** is greater than the number of dice, but no greater than 3 times the number of dice, the buyer rolls; she can make 1 normal purchase a day.
- The difficulty of a **luxury purchase** is greater than 3 times the number of dice the buyer rolls; she can make 1 luxury purchase every 7 days.

For example, a pony with a medium possession of money rolls 4 dice. For her, a casual purchase would be difficulty 4 or less, a normal purchase would be difficulty 5 to 12, and a luxury purchase would be difficulty 13 or greater. If a pony wants to buy something *really* big for the kind of money she has, the narrator can decide she has to give up some or all of her money possession to get it. For instance, a pony with a major possession of money who buys a big farm might have to reduce her money to a medium or even a minor possession. As a rough guide, most minor possessions are "a little expensive", most medium possessions are "kind of expensive" or "expensive", and most major possessions are "very expensive" or "costly".

Prices in bits: If everyone's willing to keep track of bits they're spending, the narrator can use the level of cost for a purchase to help decide on a price, or she can roll 3d and multiply by the bits listed. For example, if a pony wants to buy something that's "kind of expensive", the narrator can roll 3d and multiply by 500 to find the price in bits. *Open D6* rulebooks list prices for things in dollars, gold coins, or other units; the narrator may have to decide how much that is in bits, but these rules assume the prices can be translated one-for-one. ✶

~ Them's Fightin' Words: Combat ~

There *is* a little fighting on the show—usually when the main characters are on an adventure. Besides, fighting's a staple of adventure stories in general, so if the narrator and players want to play that kind of game, it probably is going to be very important. Most fighting will happen during rounds.

Step 1: Defense

The difficulty of an attack depends on what the defender, or target of the attack, is doing. A defender who isn't doing anything to avoid attacks is using a *passive defense,* which gives the attack a difficulty of 10 and doesn't count as an action. A defender who *is* trying to stop or avoid attacks is using an *active defense,* which *does* count as an action, so the penalty for multiple actions may apply! There are four kinds of active defense.

- **All-out defense** means the defender isn't doing *anything* except avoiding attacks. The defender can't take any other actions, but gets to roll her dice for Dodge, or Reflexes if she doesn't have that Talent, plus 10.
- **Normal defense** means the defender's avoiding attacks *and* trying to do other things at the same time. The defender rolls her dice for Dodge, or Reflexes if she doesn't have that Talent. The narrator may let a pony or creature who has some idea an attack's coming, but can't do much about it, to roll a normal defense as a free action.
- **Block** means the defender's trying to *stop* attacks. The defender rolls her dice for Brawling (if she doesn't have a weapon to block with), Mêlée (if she does), or Reflexes if she doesn't have the fighting Talent. If the defender uses any part of the body to block a bladed weapon (instead of a weapon or object), the weapon automatically injures the defender, unless she's wearing armor or has a Talent that covers blocking. Don't add the attacker's *Strength Bonus* (explained later) if the block is successful; do add it if the block fails.
- **Parry** means the defender's trying to *deflect,* or push aside, attacks. The defender rolls her dice for Brawling (if she doesn't have a weapon to block with), Mêlée (if she does), or Reflexes if she doesn't have the fighting Talent. A defender who succeeds with a parry using a sharp weapon injures the attacker, but doesn't add her Strength Bonus.

A pony or creature can choose an active defense only on her turn during a round, and that choice of defense lasts until the pony's or creature's turn in the next round. As the narrator calls for each player's turn in a round, she may want to ask that player right away what defense she's choosing and how many actions she'll take. That'll help keep everyone on track and get the players used to thinking about their defense and actions.

The player only needs to roll for defense once; the result is used against all attacks on the pony or creature that it can be. If the pony or creature is attacked in a round before her turn, she can't change her defense against it, because she can't react quickly enough. If an active defense roll is lower than a passive defense of 10, the pony or creature just isn't doing a good job of defending—misjudging attacks, dodging the wrong way, not keeping good track of attackers, and so on.

Step 2: Attack

What kind of attack a pony or creature makes may add to or subtract from the difficulty of the attack. The attacker can use either a flat number or a die value for the modifier, or the narrator may decide that only one or the other can be used in all cases; both are listed in each attack description. An attack also may have some sort of extra effect, which also is described. A pony without the appropriate fighting Talent attacks with Reflexes (if fighting without weapons or with close-up weapons) or Coordination (if shooting a distance weapon) instead.

Strike: The attacker tries to hit the target and cause injury. An attacker using her own body or a weapon powered by her own muscles adds her Strength Bonus to the body part's or weapon's injury dice. An attacker using a weapon like a firearm that isn't powered by her own muscles *doesn't* add her Strength Bonus. A pony can attack only in the direction the part of her body she's attacking with is facing.

- **Punching** with a front hoof or **butting** with the head doesn't add to difficulty, but is worth +1 injury. A unicorn's alicorn (horn) is worth +2 injury instead.
- **Boxing** with both front hooves or **clipping** with a wing adds 3 (or 1d) to difficulty and is worth +2 injury. A wing clips outward from a pegasus pony's side.
- **Kicking** with a rear hoof adds 6 (or 2d) to difficulty and is worth 1d injury.
- **Bucking** with both rear hooves adds 9 (or 3d) to difficulty and is worth 2d injury.
- **Biting** doesn't add to injury, but adds 3 (or 1d) to difficulty unless attacker and target are very close, such as in a grab or tackle; then, *subtract* 3 (or 1d) instead.

Grab: The attacker gets a grip on some part of the target. Different kinds of grab have different effects. Add 6 (or 2d) to the attack's difficulty. Trying to escape from a grab is an action; to succeed, the grabbed target must win a Muscle dice contest against the attacker. Every round that a target stays grabbed, the attacker can use her Strength Bonus to injure the target.

- **Choke:** The attacker cuts off the target's air by pressing a limb, rope, or some kind of rod or pole against the target's windpipe. On the first round, use the attacker's Strength Bonus for injury dice; after that, use the general Grab rules.

- **Flip:** The attacker grabs one of the target's limbs and yanks her over to fall on the ground. A flipped target suffers 3d of injury from hitting the ground and must spend the next round getting back up, if she can.

- **Hold:** The attacker gets hold of a target with a successful attack and does less injury, subtracting 3d or more from the injury roll—however much the attacker decides.

- **Slam** or **throw:** The attacker picks up and throws the target at the ground, a wall, or anything solid nearby. Picking up the target with a Lifting, Muscle, or Levitation roll is an action. Slamming or throwing the target with a second, similar roll is another action. ➧

The injury suffered by a slammed or thrown target is equal to the *toughness* dice of the object she was slammed or thrown against plus the attacker's Strength Bonus. The attacker's Strength Bonus also is rolled against the object to see if it's damaged; it can resist the damage with its toughness dice. To save time, the narrator can use the same toughness roll for injuring the thrown target and for resisting damage. If the target's thrown at other creatures, roll 3d injury for each, but subtract 1 pip for each creature more than two.

- Something **flimsy** like a plywood door has 1d of toughness.
- Something **tough** like a hardwood door or a weapon has 2d.
- Something **sturdy** like a bolted steel door or floor safe has 3d.
- Something **very sturdy** like a few layers of steel has 4d.
- Something **reinforced** like many layers of steel has 6d.

Tackle: What makes this different from grabbing is that the attacker's trying to hang on to the target's whole body. Add 3 (or 1d) to the difficulty of the attack. If the tackle succeeds or the target isn't struggling, the attacker captures the target and can do normal injury dice if she wants. Each round the attacker keeps the target tackled, she can use (only) her Strength Bonus to injure the target. The target can't take any actions except trying to escape, using the rule under Grab.

Trip, knockdown, or **push:** The attacker forces the target to stumble; the target isn't injured, but she subtracts 2d from her next Coordination roll. An attacker can knock down or push a target if her Muscle or fighting Talent roll is greater than the target's Muscle or Talent roll.

- For a **push,** add 3 (or 1d) to the difficulty of the attack.
- For a **knockdown** or **trip,** add 6 (or 2d) to the difficulty of the attack. A knocked-down or tripped target falls to the ground; standing up takes an action.

Magic: The attacker uses a Magical Talent against a target, usually Boltworking or a spell. The difficulty of a magical attack is based on the size of the weatherworking or spell *or* the target's defense, whichever is *greater.*

Step 3: Range

It's easier to hit a target that's nearby than a target that's far away. There are four basic ranges: *close, short, medium,* and *long.*

- For an attack at **close** range, ***subtract 5 from difficulty.*** A target no more than 3 yards (2.7 m) away is at close range.
- For an attack at **short** range, there's no difficulty modifier. An example is shooting a rifle across a big ballroom.
- For an attack at **medium** range, add 5 to difficulty. Examples are shooting a pistol across the ballroom or shooting a rifle across a small farm field. (Rifles shoot farther than pistols.)
- For an attack at **long** range, add 10 to difficulty. Examples are shooting a handgun across the farm field or shooting a rifle the long way across a sports field (or farther).

Attacking without a weapon, using a part of the body such as hooves or teeth, is limited to the attacker's reach—which is in close range—so it *always* gets the –5 difficulty modifier.

A weapon for fighting close up—for instance, a sword or club—usually is limited to close range. A *very* long weapon may reach to short range, but it would be harder to use; an example would be a really big polearm such as a pike.

A weapon that shoots has short, medium, and long ranges listed for it. Short range is farther than 3 yards (2.7 m) but no farther than the weapon's first range listing. Medium range is farther than the first range listing but no farther than the second range listing. Long range is farther than the second range listing but no farther than the third range listing. A narrator who doesn't want to count out distances in hexes all the time can estimate what modifier to use.

Magic, like a shooting weapon, uses short, medium, and long ranges—but it *doesn't* use close range. Mostly that's because short range for a "thrown" magical spell generally isn't much farther than close range would be—and may be shorter!

Step 4: Special Conditions

A lot of other choices or circumstances can affect the difficulty of an attack. The attacker can use either a flat number or a die value for the modifier, or the narrator may decide that only one or the other can be used in all cases; both are listed in each of the descriptions. In a lot of cases, a special condition also may have some sort of extra effect, which also is described.

All-out attack: The attacker puts *everything* into hitting the target, and can't take any other actions at all, including using an active defense. Subtract 6 (or 2d) from the difficulty of the attack, and if it hits, add 1d to injury.

Body position: Attacking a target that's *crouched* on the ground adds 3 (or 1d) to the difficulty of the attack. If the target's moving as well, add another 3 (or 1d); a crouching target can move only half as far as normal, rounding up.

Attacking a *prone* target (lying face-down) subtracts 6 (or 2d) from the difficulty of the attack at point-blank or short range but adds 6 (or 2d) at medium or long range.

Cover is anything in the way that prevents a pony or creature from attacking a target. Smoke, fog, dim light, obstacles, or an attacker who can't see make an attack harder; a target who can't see makes an attack easier.

- Subtract 12 (or 4d) from difficulty if the target can't see at all.
- Add 3 (or 1d) to difficulty for light smoke or fog, dim light, twilight, or cover that hides about a quarter of the target.
- Add 6 (or 2d) to the difficulty for thick smoke or fog, a moonlit night, or cover that hides about half the target.
- Add 12 (or 4d) for very thick smoke or fog, complete darkness, cover that hides about three-quarters of the target, or an attacking or acting pony or creature who can't see at all.
- If cover completely hides the target, the attacker can't hit the target directly, but if an attack does more damage than the amount of armor the cover is worth, what's left may hit the target. Most of the time, the cover will have to be destroyed before the attacker can hit the target. ◗

Ready a weapon: Doing something like drawing or reloading a weapon normally takes one action. This doesn't need a task roll unless things are unusually stressful or confusing for the pony or creature doing it. The narrator may add to the difficulty if there isn't much room to move or the weapon is unwieldy. Drawing or reloading and attacking in the same round causes a multi-action penalty, since they're two actions.

Size: Sometimes creatures of different Sizes may fight. Bigger creatures or things are easier to hit, and usually can take more punishment, than smaller creatures or things. The list of examples in "How Big Is a Creature or Object?", part of "Weights & Measures: Special Task Rules", can guide a narrator who needs a Size number for a creature or object. The narrator can apply Size to a weapon if the attacker using it is bigger or smaller than the target. If an attacker wants to hit an object being held or carried, use the Size of the object.

An attacker who's bigger than the target would add the Size difference to the difficulty for attacking and to the injury; an attacker who's smaller than the target would subtract the Size difference from the difficulty for attacking and from the injury. Sometimes a big object might not be very sturdy or heavy for its Size — for instance, a hot-air balloon or a cloud. In that case, don't add the Size modifier to the injury from such an object or attacker.

For example: A pony farmer finds a rat in her grain silo. The pony is size 0; the rat is size –9; 0 minus –9 is 9. The pony adds 9 to the difficulty of attacking the rat and adds 9 to injury if she does hit it. The rat subtracts 9 from the difficulty of attacking the pony and subtracts 9 from the injury if it succeeds.

Surprise: An attacker who gets the drop on others acts before them in the first round or, if the narrator prefers, can add 1d (or more) to her actions in the first round. Examples include attacking from behind, ambushes, or unexpected attacks, such as from a hypnotized friend or companion.

Step 5: Roll!
An attack's difficulty can't be less than 3, no matter how much was subtracted because of the kind of attack or special conditions. Once the final difficulty's been figured out, the attacker makes the attack roll. If the die roll's equal to or greater than the difficulty, the attack hits the target; if it's less than the difficulty, the attack misses. A successful attack may injure the target or have whatever effect the attacker was trying to pull off.

Step 6: Injury or Effect
An attack that hits a target may injure that target. Use the injury rules to find out whether or how much the target's hurt, rolling the injury dice for the weapon, plus the attacker's Strength Bonus if that applies, and the target gets to make a roll to resist the injury dice, of course. If the narrator wants them, there are lists of example weapons later in the book.

A pony's or creature's **Strength Bonus** is based on her Lifting Talent or Muscle. Drop the +1 or +2, if the creature has that, and divide whole dice in half, rounding up. For example, a pony with 3d in Muscle (who doesn't have the Lifting Talent) has a Strength Bonus of 2d; half of 3 is 1 ½, which rounds up to 2. A pony with 6d+2 in Lifting has a Strength Bonus of 3d; drop the +2, leaving 6d, and half of 6 is 3. An earth pony doesn't add to her Strength Bounus for Power.

Protective Armor: *Barding* (equine armor) adds dice to a pony's Hardiness roll to resist injury from attacks. A pony can wear only one kind of barding at a time. It's heavy and clumsy; for each die of protection, add 1 to the difficulty of any task that uses Reflexes, Coordination, or a Talent based on them. Wearing barding can get hot even in mild weather, but metal armor isn't much protection against cold either. Barding won't protect against certain other things, such as falls, poisons, and diseases. If there's any doubt, the narrator has to decide.

- **Leather** barding adds 1d to the Hardiness roll.
- **Mail** (chainmail) barding adds 2d to the Hardiness roll.
- **Plate** barding adds 3d to the Hardiness roll. ✶

~ Earth Pony Form ~

Player's name	
Pony's name	
This earth pony is a:	◯ Mare ◯ Stallion ◯ Filly ◯ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	**Dice**
Muscle	3 + =	**d**
Hardiness	3 + =	**d**
Reflexes	3 + =	**d**
Coordination	3 + =	**d**
Smarts	3 + =	**d**
Senses	3 + =	**d**
Power	3 + =	**d**
Total points:		

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle or Power)*	yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	**d**

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Personal Weakness
Cutie mark (sketch or description)

Talents and Specialties	**Based on**	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	**Dice**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
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		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯

Size & build
Coat
Mane
Tail
Eyes
Experience points: *Unused* *Spent*

Luck points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Harmony points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Fatigue (Tiredness)

- ◯ Winded: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

- ◯ Sleepy: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Illness or Injury

- ◯ Bruised ≤ 0
- ◯ Stunned 1−
- ◯ Minor −
- ◯ Serious −
- ◯ Major −
- ◯ Mortal −
- ◯ Death ≥

~ *Pegasus Pony Form* ~

Player's name	
Pony's name	
This pegasus pony is a:	◯ Mare ◯ Stallion ◯ Filly ◯ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	**Dice**
Muscle	3 + =	**d**
Hardiness	3 + =	**d**
Reflexes	3 + =	**d**
Coordination	3 + =	**d**
Smarts	3 + =	**d**
Senses	3 + =	**d**
Power	3 + =	**d**
Finesse	3 + =	**d**
Total points:		

Talents and Specialties	**Based on**	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	**Dice**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
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		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle)*	yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	yards
Flight Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Power)*	yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	**d**

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯

Personal Weakness
Cutie mark (sketch or description)

Size & build
Coat
Mane
Tail
Eyes
Experience points: *Unused* *Spent*

Luck points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Harmony points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Fatigue (Tiredness)

◯ Winded: −1d
◯ Tired: −2d
◯ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

◯ Sleepy: −1d
◯ Tired: −2d
◯ Exhausted: −3d

Illness or Injury

◯ Bruised ≤ 0
◯ Stunned 1−
◯ Minor −
◯ Serious −
◯ Major −
◯ Mortal −
◯ Death ≥

~ Unicorn Pony Form ~

Player's name	
Pony's name	
This unicorn pony is a:	◯ Mare ◯ Stallion ◯ Filly ◯ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	**Dice**
Muscle	3 + =	**d**
Hardiness	3 + =	**d**
Reflexes	3 + =	**d**
Coordination	3 + =	**d**
Smarts	3 + =	**d**
Senses	3 + =	**d**
Power	3 + =	**d**
Finesse	3 + =	**d**
Total points:		

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle)*	yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	**d**

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Personal Weakness
Cutie mark (sketch or description)
Magical Style

Talents and Specialties	**Based on**	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	**Dice**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
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		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯
	◯	◯	◯

Size & build
Coat
Mane
Tail
Eyes
Experience points: *Unused* *Spent*

Luck points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Harmony points

◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯
◯◯◯◯◯

Fatigue (Tiredness)

- ◯ Winded: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

- ◯ Sleepy: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Illness or Injury

- ◯ Bruised ≤ 0
- ◯ Stunned 1−
- ◯ Minor −
- ◯ Serious −
- ◯ Major −
- ◯ Mortal −
- ◯ Death ≥

Player's name
Pony's name

Detailed description of pony
Size and build
Coat
Mane
Tail
Eyes
Voice
Other information

More Talents and Specialties	Based on	*Add Up Points*		*Exp.*	Dice
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**
		+	=		**d**

Talent descriptions

More possessions	Major	Med.	Minor
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○

~ Part Two of Four ✶ Gussy It Up: Lists and Extra Rules ~

To make the rules section small and friendly, a lot was left out. Rules from *Open D6* that don't apply to a game like this were removed. Other rules that may be useful, but aren't absolutely necessary, can make the game more complicated. Long, dull lists in the middle of the rules break the flow of reading. Those extra rules and lists are gathered in this part, where they're out of the way when they're not needed, but are easy to find when someone needs to look them up.

The **list of Talents** covers skills and abilities for both adventurers and more ordinary folks and shows by example how new Talents created by the narrator and players should look.

Experienced groups playing serious high-adventure games can add **optional rules** for more detail or spectacle.

Pony-creation checklists and filled-out Pony Forms are provided for three **example ponies,** one from each tribe, to show how the process works.

The lists of **equipment and weapons** are based on what shows up in other *Open D6* rulebooks, so they mostly are about what adventurers are likely to use. Other good sources are vintage mail-order catalogs, illustrated books, or magazines.

A lot of **creatures** shown in episodes are unique or treated differently from similar ones in the real world or legends. Most only show up once each! As a result, they aren't easy to nail down in nice, neat numbers, but best guesses are listed. Of course, a narrator's free to come up with her own ideas of how to make them work, or even to invent new ones.

"Should Something Like That Be in This Game?"
Parents might be a little uneasy with some of the material in this rulebook. After all, it's based on a television program for little girls about brightly colored magical ponies!

True, the stories are funny and charming, and avoid getting deeply into things that younger viewers might have a hard time with. Part of what made the show such a surprise hit with all sorts of people, though, is that it *isn't* all sweetness and light.

The show's creator and writers have gone out of their way to treat the audience with respect. Bullies, conflicts with family or friends, even bigger issues such as starting a family or settling matters with neighbors—whether they live next door or across a border—are treated in ways that people really can, or do, see in their lives. The lessons aren't pasted on as afterthoughts; they grow out of the stories, following the adage that an author should *show* what's happening, not just tell about it.

An older viewer may notice little background details of the ponies' world, things that say "this is a real world, with real joys and real problems." The depth and unspoken acknowledgement of these elements make it ring true.

The game is meant to be playable by both teens and adults, and it needs to treat them all with the same respect the show does. Besides, the show originally was supposed to be one-third adventure and two-thirds slice of life. The game wouldn't be complete if it couldn't handle both, and it's intended to allow narrators and players the same kind of flexibility. ✶

~ Talents ~

Dozens of Talents are described on the next couple of pages, but they certainly don't cover every possible skill or ability. The narrator and players can add more as they're needed, especially for a literal game or for a figurative game that includes modern technology, outside the nineteenth-century time frame the show's creator used as inspiration for the ponies' world. Every new Talent should be given a name, probably no more than a couple of words, and a short description.

Other *Open D6* rulebooks are good sources for additional Talents, which generally are called "skills" or "abilities" depending on whether they can be learned by any character or are inherent traits. Since most other games don't handle magic the same way *Pony Tales* does, however, their spells and magical abilities may not be as useful. A *really* adventurous group can look into the *Open D6* rules for *disadvantages,* which are weaknesses that compensate a character with bonus creation dice.

Some of the listed Talents are unsavory or even unpleasant, but many are staples of adventure fiction and, for the same reasons, adventure games. A narrator and players who want that kind of game will need those Talents along with the more everyday ones. Also, even if the players don't use them when creating ponies, the narrator may need them when creating villains or minions that the players' ponies may have to face.

Any Mundane Talent marked with an * (asterisk) can be a Magical Talent for an earth pony. Generally these are Talents that are all about taking care of the land or of living things.

Magical talents: The program's writers often change how magic (and anything else about the ponies' world) seems to work in order to fit the scripts they're working on. A role-playing game, though, needs fair and consistent rules so players know what their characters can and can't do and to be sure those characters are at least roughly equal in overall ability.

Because of that need, the example Magical Talents may not look exactly the way they are on the show. Instead, they're written to match the *spirit* of the series and to be useful and balanced for the game. New Magical Talents created by the narrator or players should follow the same guidelines.

Pegasus cloudwalking: Any pegasus can stand on clouds as if they were solid, or fly through them, without a die roll except under very stressful conditions. If a pegasus is greatly distracted or otherwise not thinking straight, the narrator may require a Cloudworking (or Finesse) roll; failure means the pegasus forgets to switch her cloudwalking "on" or "off". Forgetting to turn it "on" before landing on a cloud is awkward enough, but forgetting to turn it "off" before flying into a cloud could be painful as well as embarrassing.

Look, Ma, no hands: One thing even the show's animators have trouble with is how earth and pegasus ponies use tools or carry things without levitation magic or hands. They can use their mouths—which real horses do—for fine tasks. They seem to be able to make things magically stick to hooves, *frogs* and *soles* (on the undersides of hooves), and other parts of their bodies, including putting things on their backs or heads. Sometimes careful camera angles hide the fact that there's no good solution. The narrator and players can use similar kinds of tricks during play, and shouldn't worry about the details.

Muscle Talents

Blacksmithing Working iron into useful artifacts or devices.
Lifting Used instead of Muscle for hefting and carrying.
Lumbering Harvesting wood from trees with minimal waste.
Move Increase This is an ability instead of a skill. Add to Muscle for the purpose of figuring out what the pony's Run Move is; the greatest Run Move a pony can have is 10. Swim, climb, and Jump Moves are based on the increased Run Move.
*Plowing** Pulling, steering, and operating a plow or harvester.
Teamster Loading, pulling, and unloading a van, wagon, or cart efficiently.

Hardiness Talents

Stamina Replaces Hardiness to resist fatigue, poison, illness.

Reflexes Talents

Acrobatics Performing gymnastics and breaking falls.
Alertness Replaces Reflexes for rolling initiative; see the rules in "Fast and Furious: Rounds and Actions" for details.
Brawling Fighting without weapons (using hooves, teeth, or other parts of the body).
Climbing Scaling steep surfaces to move upward or downward.
Contortion The ability to wiggle out of bonds or restrictions.
Dodge Avoiding attacks or obstacles; see the rules in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat" for details.
Jumping Leaping, including over obstacles, without falling.
Mêlée Fighting with close-up weapons (clubs, blades, *et cetera*).
Running Moving on one's hooves (or paws or feet).
Sneaking Moving silently, using cover and misdirection.
Swimming Moving through the water and breathing properly.

Coordination Talents

Firearms Shooting pistols, rifles, shotguns, and cannon.
Legerdemain Fancy manipulation and misdirection, including picking pockets, hiding small objects quickly, or stage magic.
Lockpicking Opening mechanical locks without proper keys or combinations and disarming simple mechanical traps.
Masonry Building sturdy and useful brick and stone structures.
Missile Weapons Shooting bows, crossbows, and slings.
Performing This is a group of Talents. Any single kind of performance is a Talent, such as singing, playing a musical instrument, or a style of dance.
Piloting Steering or guiding mechanical vehicles.
Throwing Flinging or catching objects accurately.
Tinker Building, repairing small or simple mechanical devices.

Smarts Talents

Business Running an enterprise successfully and profitably.
Charm Influencing other ponies or creatures with charisma.
Confidence Using bluffs, lies, and trickery on others. ("Con", as in "con man" or "con game", is short for "confidence"; this is an old meaning of the word related to "confidential".)
Cosmopolitan General but not very detailed knowledge of cultures other than the pony's or creature's native one.
Demolitions Using force to destroy structures or objects.
Engineering Designing and building big, complicated devices.
*Farriery** Hoof care—trimming, balancing, rasping, shoeing.
*Farming** Planting, maintaining, harvesting, and processing. ⏵

*Forestry** Caring for forests and the lands where they grow.
Forgery Creating or spotting fake documents, artworks, or currency. Other Talents may be needed to help in making or spotting a big or complicated fake such as a painting.
*Husbandry** Breeding, rearing, and caring for animals, especially domestic ones.
Intimidation Influencing others through threats and fear.
Languages This is a group of Talents. Each language is a Talent; every talking creature knows one language for free.
Leadership Directing groups of other ponies or creatures in working or fighting.
*Medicine** Treating sick or injured ponies.
Navigation Using instruments, maps, stars, or landmarks to avoid getting lost.
*Preserving** Using canning or any other method to prevent food from spoiling.
Repair Returning damaged or worn devices to good condition.
Science This is a group of Talents. Any single science can be a Talent, such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, meteorology, even magic theory or alchemy.
Telegraphy Operating and maintaining telegraph equipment.
*Veterinary Medicine** Treating sick or injured animals.
Willpower Resisting stress or pain, or attempts to influence.

Senses Talents
Acting Playing a fictitious role, on the stage or anywhere else.
*Animal Training** Teaching animals to perform tasks and follow commands.
Art This is a group of Talents. Any single form of art is a Talent, such as drawing, painting, photography, sculpting, scrimshaw, or woodcarving.
*Cooking** Preparing foods that are safe, nutritious, and tasty.
Craft This is a group of Talents. Any single craft is a Talent, such as basket-weaving, carpentry, glass-blowing, pottery-throwing, or sewing.
Disguise Changing appearance with make-up, costume, posture.
Familiarity Knowledge of a specific geographical area—a neighborhood, a city, a region, or a country. The bigger the area, the less detailed the knowledge is.
Gambling Playing games of chance or skill, including cheating or spotting cheats.
Hiding Keeping still and avoiding notice, concealing objects.
Investigation Gathering clues to solve puzzles or mysteries.
Journalism Gathering and presenting information about newsworthy events.
Notice Observing things or details with sight and other senses.
Oratory Public speaking to influence large audiences.
Persuasion Influencing small audiences with talk, gifts, or other methods.
Searching Canvassing an area systematically for hidden objects.
Streetwise Finding information, goods, and contacts in an urban environment.
*Survival** Techniques for living in wild conditions.
Tracking Following a creature's trail without being noticed.
Writing Communicating effectively using text rather than spoken language; it can be used for speeches, poetry, or stories to be read aloud, but success also depends on how well the speaker does with the material.

Pegasus Magical Talents
Any pegasus can weatherwork or Windwork, even if she hasn't spent points on the Talent she's using—just roll her basic Finesse for the Talent roll and basic Power for Effect. See "Wind and Weather" for details on precipitation and wind speeds. All weather Talents are limited by casting distances. Boltworking also is a *ranged* Talent, for how far a lightning bolt is thrown.

Bump of Direction keeps a pegasus oriented even when she can't see. A successful roll means the pegasus knows roughly which way is up (or down) and where the cardinal directions (north, south, east, west) are. The better the roll's success, the more exactly the pegasus knows where those directions are. This works like a Mundane Talent; no Effect roll's needed.

Flying is moving through the air without losing control and falling; see "Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement".

Flight Increase adds to Power for the purpose of figuring out what the pegasus pony's Flight Move is; the greatest Flight Move a pegasus can have is 10.

Weatherworking is a group of Talents that control and manipulate clouds. If there aren't any clouds, especially rain clouds, or the air's very dry, the Talents may not work.

The *Boltworking* Talent controls lightning. Effect is the injury or damage dice a lightning bolt does; each bolt the pegasus prevents, causes, or directs "uses up" dice of Effect. Once the Effect dice are used up, that weatherworking ends, and the pegasus must start another weatherworking if she wants to control more lightning. A tiny cloud's bolt may be 1d to 2d; a huge storm cloud's bolt may be 5d to 10d or more.

The *Cloudworking* Talent controls clouds. Subtract the Size of each cloud the pegasus works on from the Effect rolled by the pegasus. If a cloud is smaller than Size 1 (which is very rare), count it as Size 1. Once the Effect is "used up", that weatherworking ends, and the pegasus must start another weatherworking if she wants to control more clouds. Note that creating a cloud is harder in dry air; dissipating one is harder in humid air. Moving or shaping a cloud in windy air is harder, and so are complicated movements or shapes.

The *Rainworking* Talent controls precipitation. Effect is the cloud Size the pegasus can work with; she can change the precipitation falling from a cloud by one level for each Size interval. (*No rain* is one level less than *very light rain*.) The change takes 1 round per Size-level, and can be rushed or take extra time. If she's working on a Size 20 cloud, she could change the rain by one level for 20 pips of Effect (taking 20 rounds), by two levels for 40 pips of Effect (taking 40 rounds), by three levels for 60 pips of Effect (taking 60 rounds), and so on. A cloud smaller than Size 1 is counted as Size 1. The pegasus can work on more than one cloud, but once the Effect's "used up", that weatherworking ends, and she must start another weatherworking if she wants to control more precipitation. Precipitation can't be thawed or frozen, but a pegasus can change it from one kind of precipitation to another in the *same* state, such as turning snow to hail or *vice versa,* with 1 cloud-Size interval of Effect per level of precipitation.

Windworking is the controlling and directing of winds. Each 5 pips of Effect can increase or decrease, by one level, the wind speed of the air around the pegasus. To change wind direction by 30° takes 5 pips of Effect per level of wind. ➧

Unicorn Magical (Spell) Talents

The narrator and players probably will have to make up more Spell Talents than any other kind of Talent. These examples, based on spells in several episodes, only scratch the surface.

Don't be afraid to adjust a Spell Talent that, at first, is too powerful—or not powerful enough. The narrator also should be cautious about Spell Talents that allow players to gather and study information more easily than normal senses and thinking. Nothing spoils a story's surprises like using divination magic to figure out too easily where ambushes or clues are!

Force Blast shoots a beam of raw magical force at a target—it isn't fancy, but it packs a lot of punch. *Casting distance:* none; the beam shoots from the alicorn (horn). *Ranged spell:* use the range modifier for how far away the beam's target is and apply any other appropriate modifiers from the fighting rules. *Failure:* the beam misses the intended target and may hit something or someone else instead. *Mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Duration:* instant. *Effect:* dice of injury or damage; may knock target away as if slammed or thrown.

Force Bubble creates a protective sphere of magical force. *Casting distance:* measure from the caster to the bubble's center. *Ranged spell:* use the range modifier for the bubble's radius (the distance from the bubble's center to its edge). *Failure or mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Duration:* how long the bubble lasts. *Effect:* dice of armor/toughness; the bubble shatters if an injury/damage roll's greater than its armor/toughness roll. See the rules on protective armor and on toughness in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat". *Special rule:* Creating a temporary opening in the bubble for 1 round is a full action of difficulty 5.

Illumination creates a glow like a will-o'-the-wisp—see "Visibility: How Far Can a Pony See?" for details. *Casting distance:* the spell can light up the caster's alicorn (horn) or can be cast nearby as a ball of light. *Ranged spell:* this is *not* a ranged spell. *Failure or mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Duration:* how long the glow lasts. *Effect:* the lit area's radius in yards. The light is similar to day out to one-fourth of the radius and similar to twilight beyond that to half the radius. Round to the nearest yard—that is, round down for a fourth of a yard and round up for half or three-fourths of a yard. The light's similar to night beyond that out to the radius.

Levitation lifts, carries, and manipulates objects using magic. *Casting distance:* subtract the dice for the farthest object. *Ranged spell:* This is *not* a ranged spell. *Failure or mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Effect:* dice of "Lifting" or "Muscle". *Duration:* how long objects can be carried or manipulated.

Prime Mover powers a mechanical device that's designed for it, just as Muscle can be used to crank, turn, or move a windlass, winch, or capstan. *Casting distance:* the spell can power a device that's nearby. *Ranged spell:* this is *not* a ranged spell. *Failure:* misses the intended target and randomly goes somewhere else, but no farther than it was supposed to go. *Mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Duration:* how long the spell powers the device. *Effect:* how much energy is put into the device, but be careful; too much energy might damage the device. *Special rule:* It's not quite the same as Levitation, since the magical force is used more directly—like electricity, or heat in a steam engine—but the narrator may decide to allow any unicorn to use it rather than requiring it to be part of the unicorn's Style.

Pyrotechnics creates a fireworks-like display of flashes, starbursts, or simple images. *Casting distance:* none; pyrotechnics shoot from the alicorn (horn). *Ranged spell:* use the range modifier for how far away the caster wants the display to be. *Failure:* misses the intended target and ends up somewhere random, but no farther away than it was supposed to go. *Mishap:* the spell fizzles. *Duration:* how long the light show lasts. *Effect:* how complex or impressive the light show is; if it matters, a watcher can roll Senses to resist being amazed or convinced. *Special rule:* The spell can be used to attack instead. Duration of an attack is instant. Potential victims of a pyrotechnics attack can try to get away using the "Explosives" rules later in part two of the book.

A *dazzle* attack creates a blinding flash. Anyone at the target spot or up to 2 yards away rolls Senses against the Effect roll, everyone 3 to 4 yards away rolls against half the Effect roll, and everyone 5 to 8 yards away rolls against one-fourth the Effect roll. *This includes the caster's friends!* If the Effect roll's greater, the victim's dazzled and treated as being *stunned*.

An *explosion* attack adds 10 to spell-casting difficulty. Effect is real injury or damage, and it sets things on fire like a torch. Roll Hardiness (instead of Senses) to resist being injured at the same distances as for a dazzle attack. This also includes any of the caster's friends who are close enough to the explosion.

Transformation is a class of Talents rather than a single Talent. The Talent must specify, with the narrator's approval, what can be transformed, and what it can be transformed into. (A good example from the show would be changing fabric directly into clothing.) *Casting distance:* the caster can tranform something nearby. *Ranged spell:* this is *not* a ranged spell. *Failure:* the spell fizzles. *Mishap:* the spell ruins whatever is being transformed. *Duration:* how long the transformation lasts before the object or material changes back to its original form. *Effect:* how much toughness, complexity, Size, and/or other appropriate attributes (as decided by the narrator) can be transformed.

The show's writers are free to use Transformation spells as a shortcut to keep a scene from running too long, but the narrator should keep in mind that this can be a *very* powerful Talent. The duration limit is partly to keep the Talent from being totally unreasonable, and partly to explain why unicorns don't use Transformation to create everything. On the other hand (hoof?), it can be combined with more ordinary ways of doing things—for example, when making a dress, Transformation may change the fabric to the final shape, but sewing's needed to make sure it stays that way once the spell wears off.

Wink moves creatures or things across distances "in the wink of an eye". *Casting distance:* the caster can move anything nearby, including herself; subtract the dice for the farthest object the caster tries to move. *Ranged spell:* use the range modifier for how far the caster wants to wink, and use difficulty modifiers for visibility; also, if the caster's very familiar with where she's winking to, the narrator can subtract 5 to 10 from casting difficulty. *Failure:* the spell fizzles. *Mishap:* the wink ends up somewhere random (possibly including upward), but no farther away than it was supposed to go. *Effect:* how much mass can be teleported, similar to Levitation. *Duration:* instant. ✶

~ *Optional Rules* ~

These aren't included with the normal *Pony Tales* rules because they add complexity. A narrator and group of players who feel they've mastered the game and would like to add some interesting effects can include some or all of these optional rules. In particular, the wild die, luck points, and harmony points are ways of getting spectacular results that wouldn't be possible otherwise; a good example is the flying stunt that breaks the sound barrier.

The Wild Die

When rolling dice for any reason, a narrator or player should make sure one of them is a different color than the others. The differently-colored one is called the *wild die.* (If rolling only one die, it is the wild die.) The wild die represents spectacular results that sometimes happen.

If a six is rolled on the wild die, the six is counted into the total, and the wild die can be rolled again. If another six is rolled, the wild die can be rolled still again, and so on, as many times as six is rolled on the wild die. Once anything other than six is rolled on the wild die, the narrator or player stops rolling. The wild die doesn't *have* to be rolled again after a six, if the person rolling doesn't want to.

If a one is rolled on the wild die—but only on the *first* roll, not when re-rolling the wild die after a six—some kind of *mishap,* or problem, may have turned up. The narrator can, but doesn't have to, *subtract* the highest-value die that's been rolled, or decide some kind of accident has happened along the way. It should fit the situation and the die roll: for a low die-roll total, it could be fairly serious; for a high total, it could be a funny "whoops, nearly missed!" moment.

If the wild die is too much hassle, here's a different approach that isn't in *Open D6*. Instead of rolling the wild die, just roll dice normally. If a six is rolled on *every die,* roll another die; if the extra die is another six, keep rolling as long as more sixes are rolled. If a *one* is rolled on every die, the narrator can say there was a mishap.

Luck Points

A luck point (or "character point" as *Open D6* calls it) allows a player to add an extra wild die to her dice for one roll. Once the luck point is used, it's gone; the narrator can use new luck points as a reward, just like experience or possession points.

A pony starts the game with five luck points; if harmony points aren't used, each pony may start with six to eight. The narrator can and should limit how many luck points a player can spend at a time. In an easy adventure, the limit may be two, but a bigger, splashier, more movie-like adventure may go as high as five.

A player can spend luck points before or after rolling, or even both, but not after the narrator decides what the result of the roll is. The narrator doesn't have to tell the player whether she needs to spend luck points to get a better result.

Rolling a one on these extra wild dice doesn't cause a mishap; it's just a one. Because of that, the player may want to roll them separately, or use differently colored dice, from the normal dice and wild die.

Harmony Points

A harmony point (or "fate point" as *Open D6* calls it) allows a player to double the dice she normally would roll for an Aptitude or Talent. For example, if the player normally would roll 3d, she rolls 6d instead after spending the harmony point; a player who normally would roll 3d+2 (11 points) instead rolls 7d+1 (22 points).

One harmony point may be spent only *before* rolling the dice, not after, and the doubling of dice is counted before adding or subtracting any modifiers. The player still rolls only one wild die, and any dice that aren't part of an Aptitude or Talent aren't doubled. A harmony point normally affects only one die roll, but the narrator can allow a player to use it on all her rolls in a round, if it's at the adventure's climax, when things are at their most exciting and important. That probably shouldn't happen more often than once per game meeting or session.

A pony starts the game with one harmony point; if luck points aren't being used, each pony may start with two or three. Once a harmony point's used, it's gone. The narrator can reward a player with another harmony point if she does a good job of playing her pony according to the pony's *code of conduct*—the rules the pony tries to live by. (That's why, in *Pony Tales,* they're called harmony points; most ponies try to live in harmony.) The narrator also can take away harmony points from a pony who does things that are against the pony's code.

Another creature who lives by very different rules, such as a changeling, might get *dis*harmony points, or other kinds of fate points, instead. However, the narrator should stick to the same idea of rewarding the creature for living up to her code and taking away points for doing things that are against it.

Too Many Dice!

Rolling a lot of dice can get annoying—it may not be easy for smaller hands to do, and sometimes the results are really high or really low. When someone has to roll more than ten dice, the narrator can deal with it in a couple of ways.

One method is to roll 5d (one of them a wild die), then add 3 ½ to the total for every extra whole die, rounding up. For example, for 12d, the player could roll 5d and add 25; if the player rolls 18, after adding 25, the total would be 18 + 25 = 43.

The other is to roll only the wild die and add 3 ½ for every extra whole die. Rolling a one on the wild die means a mishap; don't subtract from the roll.

Either way, don't forget the +1 or +2 if the Aptitude or Talent has it!

Whole Dice	5d	Wild Die
11d	+21	+35
12d	+25	+39
13d	+28	+42
14d	+32	+46
15d	+35	+49
16d	+39	+53
17d	+42	+56
18d	+46	+60

Whole Dice	5d	Wild Die
19d	+49	+63
20d	+53	+67
21d	+56	+70
22d	+60	+74
23d	+63	+77
24d	+67	+81
25d	+70	+84
26d	+74	+88

Specialties

Most Talents are pretty general. For instance, the Piloting Talent allows a pony or creature to operate any kind of large mechanical vehicle. That's easy to understand and play, especially in a *cinematic* (movie-like) game of adventure, but anyone who's piloted a sailboat, an airship, or a steamship will point out that each of them needs different skills to guide properly!

A *Specialty* is narrower than a Talent—to use the same example, a pony can have a Specialty in Airship Piloting—but it doesn't cost as much. One Talent or experience point is worth *three* Specialty points. A player can't spend a fraction of a Talent or experience point, but once she's spent a whole Talent or experience point, she can do what she wants with the three Specialty points she gets. She can spend them on Specialties her pony already has, add new Specialties, or any combination.

Adding to an existing Talent: A pony or creature who already has a Talent related to the Specialty starts with the value for that Talent, then adds the Specialty to it. For example, if a pony has 2d+2 in the Piloting Talent, and adds another +2 for a Specialty in Airship Piloting, she would roll 3d+1 when piloting an airship, and would roll 2d+2 when piloting any other kind of vehicle. She also has one point (+1) left over to add to another Specialty, since she only put +2 into Airship Piloting.

Adding experience points to a Talent also improves all the Specialties related to it. If a pony's Piloting Talent of 2d+2 is improved by +1 to 3d and she has the Airship Piloting Specialty at 3d+1, it also improves by +1 and becomes 3d+2.

Without an existing Talent: A pony or creature who *doesn't* have a Talent related to the Specialty just adds the Specialty to the base Aptitude. For instance, a pony without the Piloting Talent who has a Coordination of 2d and adds +2 for a Specialty in Airship Piloting would roll 2d+2 when piloting an airship. She also has one point (+1) left over to add to another Specialty, since she only put +2 into Airship Piloting.

Using Specialties: In other ways Specialties follow the same rules as Talents. New Specialties should be things the pony's had a chance to learn or practice. A narrator or player can roll the dice for a Specialty only when a task falls within it; a pony can't use Airship Piloting to pilot a steamship on the water, for instance. Also, a pony can't start with more than 3d in any single Specialty added to a Talent or Aptitude.

The narrator should keep an eye on Specialties to make sure they don't get too powerful for what players are "paying" in Talent or experience points. If a player tries to cram a lot into a Specialty, it probably should be a Talent instead. A Specialty shouldn't be too narrow, either. An example would be a Specialty for piloting a specific model of railroad locomotive.

Specialties can be complicated, which is why they're an optional rule. Still, if a narrator and group of players are willing to put up with that, they can do some clever things. A unicorn could have Magical Stamina—a Specialty of Stamina—which gives her a better roll to resist getting tired, but only when casting a spell. A pony who has a Familiarity Talent for a region could have a Specialty for part of the region; she would have some knowledge of the whole area, but would know more about, say, her home town in the middle of that area. A Cosmopolitan Specialty in a specific culture, for instance buffalo or griffins, would be more detailed, but only about that culture.

Extra Effort

During a round, a creature may exert *maximum effort*—and roll for fatigue immediately after—instead of *hard* or *medium work,* for those dramatic moments that demand just a little bit more. This *extra effort* gives the creature +1d to *all* rolls for her actions for the round, including attacking and causing injury. A creature doing something that normally is maximum effort, or using luck or harmony points, can't use extra effort.

When a creature uses maximum effort in a round, but does heavy work the rest of the time, the narrator can have her roll for the heavy work with everyone else (after every 12 rounds). Of course, because of the extra roll for the round of maximum effort, her fatigue difficulty will be greater.

Natural Hazards

Accidents, horseplay (ahem!), and bad luck can happen even to a pony who doesn't go on adventures. The narrator can use these rules to handle the dangers of the everyday world.

Asphyxiation: Roll as long as a pony can't breathe, starting with 1d and adding 1 "point" each round. (Roll 1d on the first round, 1d+1 on the second, 1d+2 on the third, and so on.)

Breath-holding: A pony who's underwater or high in the air may try to hold her breath. Roll the pony's Hardiness dice; the result is how many rounds she can hold her breath. If the pony can take some deep breaths first, the narrator should give the pony a bonus. A pony with the Stamina Talent can use it instead, and the number of rounds is twice the total of the die roll. Once the pony runs out of breath, she starts to asphyxiate.

Cold: Roll after every hour of exposure to low temperatures. If it's chilly, in the forties Fahrenheit (4.4 to 9.4° C), roll 1d; add 1 "point" for each 10° F (5.6° C) or so colder. (Roll 1d+1 for the thirties, 1d+2 for the twenties, 2d for the teens, and so on.) Wearing warm clothing subtracts up to 1d from this roll, depending on how good it is. Exercising to stay warm adds 1d for each level of exertion to a Hardiness roll resisting cold injury, if the pony or creature can keep it up for most of the hour.

Collision: If a pony smashes into something or *vice versa,* roll 1d of injury at 26 to 30 yards (24–27 m) per round and add 1 "point" for each 5 yards (4.5 m) per round faster. For example, roll 1d+1 for 31 to 35 yards (28–32 m) per round, 2d for 36 to 40 yards (33–37 m) per round, 2d+1 for 41 to 45 yards (37–41 m) per round, and so on.

Dehydration: Roll 1d injury after 24 hours that a pony can't get any water, adding 1 "point" each 12 hours after that. (Roll 1d+1 after 36 hours, 1d+2 after 48 hours, 2d after 60 hours, and so on.) If the temperature's warm, in the eighties Fahrenheit (27–32° C), double the water needed and roll every 6 hours. If it's hot, in the nineties Fahrenheit (33–38° C), roll every 3 hours, and the pony needs 4 times as much water. If it's very hot, more than 100° F (38° C), roll every hour, and the pony needs 8 times as much water. A pony recovers from dehydration using normal healing rules, as long as there's enough water for the pony to drink.

Drowning: When a pony fails a roll for swimming, roll 1d injury; add 1 "point" for each failed swimming roll after that. (Roll 1d+1 after the second failed roll, 1d+2 after the third, and so on.) The failed swimming rolls don't have to be in a row, but they must be during the same time the pony's in the water. ◗

Falling: Roll 1d injury for a fall of 6 to 10 feet (1.8–3 m); add 1 "point" for every 5 feet (1.5 m) more. (Roll 1d+1 for 11 to 15 feet, 1d+2 for 16 to 20 feet, 2d for 21 to 25 feet, and so on.)

Sleet or hail can be dangerous as well as cold. Roll for injury each round a pony's caught out in it.

- **Moderate** sleet or hail causes 1d injury each round.
- **Heavy** sleet or hail causes 1d+1 injury each round.
- **Very heavy** sleet or hail causes 1d+2 injury each round.
- **Extreme** sleet or hail causes 2d injury each round.
- **Maximum** sleet or hail causes 3d injury each round.

Starvation: Roll 1d injury after the second day that a pony can't get any food, adding 1 "point" each day after that. (Roll 1d+1 injury on the third day, 1d+2 on the fourth, 2d on the fifth, and so on.) A pony that eats a little food stretches out the time. For example, a pony who eats half the food she needs rolls every two days instead of every day. A pony recovers from starvation using the normal healing rules, as long as there's enough food for the pony to eat.

Strange stuff: A pony may come across something that doesn't hurt her, but might do something weird to her instead. The narrator can use level of illness to judge how weird it gets. An example is the blue plant that plays pranks on creatures who touch it; a "major illness" could be a bigger prank than a "minor illness".

First Aid

The Medicine Talent can be used on a mortally ill or injured pony to remove the danger of death; a pony can't give first aid unless she has Medicine. The difficulty is equal to the number of minutes that the patient has been mortally injured. If the roll succeeds, the patient no longer is in danger of dying. Failure means the mortally injured pony still is in danger of dying. If an attempt at first aid fails, the first-aid pony can try again, making a new roll after another five minutes have passed.

Narrators and players who want some added realism also can use this extra rule on giving first aid quickly. If first aid is successful within 5 minutes of the patient suffering mortal injury, the patient will recover completely, with no permanent damage. For every 5 minutes longer that it takes first aid to be successful, the patient permanently loses 1d from every Talent. (A Talent can't be less than zero dice, though.) After 30 minutes, first aid no longer does any good.

It may be possible to revive a pony who died in the last few minutes, as long as the pony's body is still in good shape and not horribly mangled. If a unicorn can use a spell for first aid, treat the dead pony as if she's mortally injured. If normal first aid is used, a new roll must be made every five minutes until the pony can be hospitalized; if any of the rolls fails, the pony is really dead and can't be revived. At the hospital, the dead pony is treated as if she's mortally injured.

This rule's useful mostly for figurative games of high adventure that include lots of fighting or combat. Occasionally it might be needed after a disaster or other situation, maybe set up as part of a story plot. One possibility is finding a mysterious victim lying somewhere who needs saving . . . and as a result leads the heroes into trouble—that is, the next story

Movement Details

These rules add flavor and realism to movement, but they also can add a lot of complications, so they're recommended only for serious and detailed figurative games. A narrator and group of players can pick and choose which of these rules to use.

Sliding and rolling: A pony who hits the ground after falling while running or flying (unless she's going straight or almost straight down) slides or rolls along the ground half as many yards, rounding down, as she was moving. On a slick surface she may go farther, but on a rough surface she may go a shorter distance. A pony can slide or roll on purpose, but she still can get hurt doing that. In a literal game, an out-of-control flyer suddenly may fall straight down, but in a figurative game she'll go *ballistic,* curving down like a cannonball from the direction she was going when she lost control. If she's in formation, as part of a flying team, she may crash into a teammate!

Running momentum: A walking pony can turn or sidle as much as she wants, just as in the basic rules. A pony who's running or swimming, though, builds up momentum and has to move in a straight line for a distance before turning or sidling. If the pony tries to turn or sidle too soon, add 1 to movement difficulty for every yard less than the full distance.

A trotting or swimming pony has to go straight at least 1 yard before turning or sidling. How far a cantering or galloping pony has to go before turning or sidling depends on the number of Moves she's making; round up to the next whole Move.

- A pony making 3 Run Moves must go straight at least 2 yards.
- A pony making 4 Run Moves must go straight at least 4 yards.
- A pony making 5 Run Moves must go straight at least 6 yards.
- A pony making 6 Run Moves must go straight at least 8 yards.
- A pony making 7 Run Moves must go straight at least 12 yards.
- A pony making 8 Run Moves must go straight at least 16 yards.

If the narrator likes the general idea of this rule, but doesn't want to make everyone count hexes all the time, she simply can add 5 to 10 (or even more) to the movement difficulty for a pony who obviously is trying to maneuver too tightly.

Gliding: A gliding flyer can't land or hover, and must go faster than 2 Flight Moves. She can slow down, but can't speed up, and can make basic maneuvers but not advanced maneuvers.

Trading speed and altitude: A flyer who gains altitude slows down by as many yards as she gains in altitude; a flyer who loses altitude speeds up by as many yards as she loses in altitude. This is automatic and doesn't count as a *speed up or slow down* maneuver, but a flyer can use a *speed up or slow down* maneuver to cancel out the speed change that gaining or losing altitude would cause—or to change her speed even more.

Inside and outside loops: For an upward half-loop, a flyer usually starts right-side up and, at the end when she's upside-down, rotates back to right-side up. For a downward half-loop, she usually rotates to upside-down, goes through the half-loop, and ends right-side up. These are *inside* half-loops because the flyer's head is toward the inside of the loop's curve. An *outside* half-loop, with the flyer's head toward the outside of the loop's curve, is harder and makes the blood rush to the head. That's uncomfortable and it's tougher to see, hear, and think; the narrator can add 5 to 10 to the difficulty of the flyer's rolls in the round, depending on how fast she's flying.

Speed is energy: Turning, slipping, half-looping, or half-rolling tends to slow down a flyer—these maneuvers take energy, which comes out of speed. Each turn or slip subtracts half a Flight Move, and each half-loop or half-roll subtracts 1 Flight Move, from the flyer's movement in her next round.

Flying momentum: A flyer who's hovering or in slow flight can turn as much as she wants, but she can't slip. A flyer who's moving faster builds up momentum and has to go in a straight line for a distance before making a turn or a slip. If a flyer tries to turn or slip too soon, add 1 to flying difficulty for every yard less than the full distance.

A flyer in moderate flight has to go straight at least 1 yard before turning or slipping 1 yard. How far a flyer in fast or very fast flight has to go before turning or slipping, and how far she can slip, depends on the number of Flight Moves she's making. At the end of a slip, a flyer can, but doesn't have to, make up to two 60° turns in the opposite direction (turn left after a right slip or *vice versa*); she doesn't need to go straight first.

- A flyer making 3 Flight Moves must go straight at least 2 yards before turning or slipping 1 yard.
- A flyer making 4 Flight Moves must go straight at least 4 yards before turning or slipping 1 yard.
- A flyer making 5 Flight Moves must go straight at least 6 yards before turning or slipping half a Flight Move.
- A flyer making 6 Flight Moves must go straight at least 8 yards before turning or slipping half a Flight Move.
- A flyer making 7 Flight Moves must go straight at least 12 yards before turning or slipping 1 Flight Move.
- A flyer making 8 Flight Moves must go straight at least 16 yards before turning or slipping 1 Flight Move.
- A flyer in heroic flight can turn or slip *once,* at the end of her moves; she slips one-fourth of the Flight Moves she's making and can't make any turns after slipping.

A flyer also has to go straight some distance before a half-loop or half-roll; if she tries to loop or roll too soon, add 1 to flying difficulty for every yard less than the full distance.

- A flyer making 2 Flight Moves must go straight at least 2 yards before half-looping or half-rolling 1 yard.
- A flyer making 3 Flight Moves must go straight at least 4 yards before half-looping or half-rolling half a Flight Move.
- A flyer making 4 Flight Moves must go straight at least 8 yards before half-looping or half-rolling half a Flight Move.
- A flyer making 5 Flight Moves must go straight at least 12 yards before half-looping or half-rolling 1 Flight Move.
- A flyer making 6 Flight Moves must go straight at least 16 yards before half-looping or half-rolling 1 Flight Move.
- A flyer making 7 Flight Moves must go straight at least 24 yards before half-looping or half-rolling 2 Flight Moves.
- A flyer making 8 Flight Moves must go straight at least 32 yards before half-looping or half-rolling 2 Flight Moves.

If the narrator likes the general idea of this rule, but doesn't want to make everyone count hexes all the time, she simply can add 5 to 10 (or even more) to the flying difficulty for a flyer who obviously is trying to maneuver too tightly.

Additional Attacks

Fighting can get a lot fancier than just smacking, tripping, or shooting at the other fellow. Here are some other possibilities to go in step two of the fighting rules for a narrator or player who wants to try doing something out of the ordinary.

Disarm: The attacker tries to knock a weapon or object out of the target's grip. If the attack succeeds and the target hasn't taken any actions yet, she can use an action to try to keep her grip on the weapon or object, even if it's before her initiative. The target makes a Muscle (or Levitation) roll against the attacker's injury roll. If the target's roll is greater than the injury roll, the target keeps hold of the weapon or object; if it's less than or equal, she drops the weapon or object.

Entangle: The attacker uses a lasso, net, whip, or other flexible weapon to tangle up the target. If the attack succeeds, the end of the lasso or whip or the weave of the net wraps around the target. Unless it's spiky or otherwise special, it doesn't hurt the target, but she can't take any actions other than trying to break free, which is a contest against the weapon's "injury" roll and counts as an action, or talking. To slip out of the weapon, the target uses a Coordination roll in the contest. To snap the weapon, the target uses a Muscle roll instead.

Lunge: The attacker rushes suddenly at a target, maybe with an edged weapon. Lunging adds about half a yard (45 cm) to the range of an attack, but adds 3 (or 1d) to the difficulty of the attack and subtracts 1d from injury.

Sweep: The attacker uses a roundhouse blow or a leg sweep. Subtract 6 (or 2d) from the difficulty of the attack, but subtract 3d from injury. ⧫

Additional Special Fighting Conditions
These aren't attacks in themselves, but they can have a big effect on attacks and can give the narrator and players more choices as part of step 3 in the fighting rules.

Aiming: An attacker using a weapon that shoots projectiles can track a target. Each round that an attacker takes no other actions but aiming at a target, she can add 1d to the attack roll when she shoots at that target, but she can't add more than 3d. A moving target may add to the difficulty of the shot.

Called shot: An attacker can try to attack a specific part of a target's body. Trying to hit an arm (front limb) or leg (back limb) causes less injury because the attacker took extra care to hit an area that's "less vital." Trying to hit the chest or abdomen doesn't add to or subtract from the difficulty or injury.

- Trying for the **head** adds 3 (or 1d) to difficulty and 12 (or 4d) to injury; if that seems too drastic, make it +6 or +2d injury.
- Trying for the **heart** adds 12 (or 4d) to difficulty and 12 (or 4d) to injury; if that seems too drastic, make it +6 or +2d injury.
- Trying for an **arm** adds 3 (or 1d) to difficulty and subtracts 2 points from injury.
- Trying for a **leg** or **wing** adds 3 (or 1d) to the difficulty and subtracts 1 point from injury.

If a body part's injured enough, the narrator may decide the injury affects how well the pony or creature can use it. Except for chest injuries, the penalty listed lasts until that part of the body heals, which probably takes a few days. Medical treatment (including magic) can be applied to an injured location.

- A **head** injury subtracts an extra point from Smarts, Senses, and initiative rolls.
- A **chest** injury means the target can't take any actions in the next round.
- An **arm** injury subtracts an extra point from any rolls involving that arm.
- A **leg** injury subtracts an extra point from all Coordination, Reflexes, and initiative rolls.

An attacker can use a called shot to *knock out* a target. The attacker must succeed at hitting the target's head and getting at least a *stunned* result on the injury. Subtract the difficulty of the attack from the successful attack roll; that's the number of hours the target's unconscious, unless something or someone else wakes her up before she regains consciousness on her own. Divide the level of injury in half, rounding down, before checking it off on the target. For example, reduce a *mortal injury* to a *minor injury;* reduce a *major injury* to *stunned.*

Group attack: A group of attackers like a gang or a unit of the royal guard can combine attacks, similar to "Teamwork", part of "Doing More Things: Special Task Rules"—the narrator can use those modifiers. One attacker is the leader and makes a Leadership or Smarts roll. If the roll succeeds, all the attackers use the leader's initiative and attack at once; they use the hit-location modifier, and all the successful attacks add their injury dice together. If the roll fails, the attackers use their own initiatives and take their own actions as usual.

Multiple weapons: A pony or creature using more than one weapon can attack with each of them in a round, but remember to apply the multi-action penalty to all the attacks.

Quick draw: Instead of taking a separate action to ready a weapon, an attacker can try to ready the weapon and attack with it as one action. It must be a weapon that can be quick-drawn, such as a bow and arrow, a loaded pistol, or a dagger, and the narrator or player must say, before initiative is figured out for the round, that the attacker will try a quick draw. The attacker can add some of the dice she normally would use for her attack to her initiative dice for that round, but she must leave at least 1d in her attack. If she wants to attack more than once with the quick-drawn weapon, she subtracts 1d for each attack after the first *before* adding dice to initiative.

For example, a unicorn royal guard wants to shoot a crossbow at a manticore before it can pounce. He's got a total of 6d in his Missile Weapons Talent; normally he could add up to 5d to his initiative, but he wants to shoot twice. After subtracting 1d for the extra attack, he's got 5d left, so now he can add up to 4d to his initiative. He decides instead to add only 1d to his initiative, which leaves him with 3d for each of his attacks.

Unwieldy weapons or objects are longer than 2 feet (60 cm), hard to grip or throw, or use technology or magic the user doesn't understand. Add 5 or more to attack difficulty for an unwieldy object. If the narrator thinks other things make it easier to use, such as experience, strength, or good design (say, a well-balanced sword), she might add less to the difficulty. ✶

~ Romany: Example Earth Pony ~

Chris is part of a group who's new to role-playing games; they've decided not to use most of the optional rules, at least until they're used to the basic rules. Chris wants to create a character who isn't complicated to set up or play, and decides on a young "road pony", loosely based on gypsies and other traveling social groups, out on her own for the first time.

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?

A. Choose the pony's tribe. This'll be an earth pony.

B. Choose whether the pony's a mare or stallion. She'll be a mare.

Step 2: Aptitudes

A. List the starting Aptitudes of the pony's tribe. An earth pony starts with 1d (3 points) each in Muscle, Hardiness, Reflexes, Coordination, Smarts, Senses, and Power.

B. Add 12d (36 points) to the pony's Aptitudes. Second column shows added dice/points; third column shows Aptitude totals.

Muscle:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Hardiness:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Reflexes:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Coordination:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Smarts:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Senses:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Power:	add 0d (0 points) to get	1d (3 points)

Step 3: Talents

A. Choose the pony's Talents. The pony's Talents are listed below.

Familiarity, Medicine, Running, and *Teamster* are from the standard Talents list.

Carpentry is a Craft Talent: the construction and repair of wooden items, including furniture and small buildings

Tinker is a Craft Talent: the creation, repair, and maintenance of common items such as tools, simple mechanisms, and household goods.

B. Decide whether each Talent is Mundane or Magical. They're all Mundane Talents.

C. Decide for each Talent what Aptitude to base it on. Teamster is based on Muscle. Running is based on Reflexes. Familiarity and Medicine are based on Smarts. Carpentry and Tinker are based on Senses.

D. Add 7d (21 points) to the Talents. Talent dice/points are added in the third column; final totals are in the last column.

Tinker:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 2d (6 pts.)	= 5d (15 pts.)
Carpentry:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Teamster:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Running:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Familiarity:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Medicine:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)

Step 4: Personal Weakness

A. Name and describe the pony's Personal Weakness. Wary—she doesn't warm to strangers easily, especially "townies" (city or town ponies), and tends to be a bit suspicious of them.

Step 5: Finishing Touches

A. Describe how the pony looks. She's compact but blocky and well-muscled from hauling her caravan around. Her somewhat rough coat is red-brown like road dust. Her mane and tail are straight but cropped close to make them easier to keep clean. Their salt-and-pepper look averages out to an ash gray from a distance. Her eyes are hazel. Her cutie mark is a section of macadam road curving into the distance, disappearing between a pair of hills.

B. Name the pony and describe what else is important about her. Romany is touring the country, learning its highways and byways and getting a feel for how different areas vary. Like many nomads and wanderers in the real world, she tends to distrust townies and regards them as a bit crazy; often the townies in question feel the same way about road ponies, viewing them as odd or possibly criminal. Still, she's a good friend once someone has won her over, even if she can be a bit sharp-tempered, and she's good at what she does for a living. By necessity she's learned a bit about being an *apothecary* (an old term similar to the more modern "pharmacist" or "druggist") and dealing with aches, sprains, and other injuries from an active life on the road. She may rejoin her family and clan sometime in the future, but for now she's enjoying her independence and the area where she's stopped to rest and make some bits.

C. Note down the pony's Moves and Strength Bonus. Her Run Move is 8 yards, her Swim and Climb Move are 4 yards, and her Jump is 2 yards. Her Strength Bonus is 2d.

D. Choose the pony's important possessions. She has three medium possessions: a colorfully painted road-pony caravan that she pulls and lives in (the sides open up to form counters and awnings for doing business), money from tinkering and carpentry work, and an inventory of spare parts and small finished goods. She has two minor possessions: a toolkit of tinker's tools and highway maps of the pony nation. ⏵

~ Earth Pony Form ~

Player's name	Chris
Pony's name	Romany
This earth pony is a:	● Mare ○ Stallion ○ Filly ○ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	Dice
Muscle	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Hardiness	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Reflexes	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Coordination	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Smarts	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Senses	3 + 6 = 9	3 d
Power	3 + 0 = 3	1 d
Total points: 36		

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle)*	8	yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	4	yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	4	yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	2	yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	2	d

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Personal Weakness

Wary: she doesn't warm to strangers easily, especially townies, and tends to be a bit suspicious of them

Cutie mark (sketch or description)

A section of macadam road curving into the distance and disappearing between a pair of hills

Talents and Specialties	Based on	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	Dice
Teamster	Muscle	9 + 3 = 12	4	d
Running	Reflexes	9 + 3 = 12	4	d
Familiarity with pony nation's highways	Smarts	9 + 3 = 12	4	d
		+ =		d
Medicine	Smarts	9 + 3 = 12	4	d
Carpentry (craft): construction and repair of wood items	Senses	9 + 3 = 12	4	d
		+ =		d
Tinker (craft): creation, repair, & maintenance of common household items (e.g., tools)	Senses	9 + 6 = 15	5	d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d
		+ =		d

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
Dwelling: colorful road-pony caravan she pulls and lives in; sides open up to form counters and awnings for business	○	●	○
	○	○	○
	○	○	○
Money: income from tinkering/carpentry	○	●	○
Inventory: spare parts, small finished goods	○	●	○
Toolkit: tinker's tools	○	○	●
Maps: highway maps of pony nation	○	○	●
	○	○	○

Size & build	Compact but blocky & well-muscled from hauling her caravan
Coat	Somewhat rough, road-dust red-brown
Mane	Straight and close-cropped; salt-and-pepper averaging out to ash gray
Tail	
Eyes	Hazel
Experience points:	*Unused* *Spent*

Luck points

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Harmony points

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Fatigue (Tiredness)

○ Winded: −1d
○ Tired: −2d
○ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

○ Sleepy: −1d
○ Tired: −2d
○ Exhausted: −3d

Injury or illness

○ Bruised ≤ 0
○ Stunned 1−
○ Minor −
○ Serious −
○ Major −
○ Mortal −
○ Death ≥

~ *Scirocco: Example Pegasus Pony* ~

Alex is part of a group looking for high adventure with lots of action—but not too heavy, so the game's tone isn't much darker than the show is. Alex likes playing bold warriors and decides a typically feisty, assertive pegasus with some weather and fighting skills is just the pony to be part of a group of adventurers righting wrongs and seeking treasures.

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?

A. Choose the pony's tribe. This'll be a pegasus pony.

B. Choose whether the pony's a mare or stallion. She'll be a mare.

Step 2: Aptitudes

A. List the starting Aptitudes of the pony's tribe. A pegasus pony starts with 1d each in Muscle, Hardiness, Reflexes, Coordination, Smarts, Senses, Power, and Finesse.

B. Add 12d (36 points) to the pony's Aptitudes. Second column shows added dice/points; third column shows Aptitude totals.

Muscle:	add 1d (3 points) to get	2d (6 points)
Hardiness:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Reflexes:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Coordination:	add +2 (2 points) to get	1d+2 (5 points)
Smarts:	add 1d+1 (4 points) to get	2d+1 (7 points)
Senses:	add 1d+2 (5 points) to get	2d+2 (8 points)
Power:	add 1d+1 (4 points) to get	2d+1 (7 points)
Finesse:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)

Step 3: Talents

A. Choose the pony's Talents. The pony's Talents are listed below.

Brawling, Dodge, Firearms, Notice, Boltworking, Windworking, and *Flight Increase* are from the standard Talents list.

Hoofblade is a Specialty of Mêlée for attacking with war boots fitted with short blades similar to daggers or knives.

Rifle is a Specialty of Firearms for attacking with rifled longarms.

Sharp Vision is a Specialty of Notice for using one's eyes.

B. Decide whether each Talent is Mundane or Magical. Brawling, Dodge, Hoofblade, Firearms, Rifle, Gunsmithing, Notice, and Sharp Vision are Mundane Talents or Specialties. Boltworking, Windworking, and Flight Increase are Magical Talents.

C. Decide for each Talent what Aptitude to base it on. Brawling, Dodge, and Hoofblade are based on Reflexes. Firearms is based on Coordination and Rifle is a Specialty of Firearms. Gunsmithing and Notice are based on Senses, and Sharp Vision is a Specialty of Notice. Boltworking and Windworking Talents are based on Finesse; Boltworking and Windworking Effects and Flight Increase are based on Power.

D. Add 7d (21 points) to the Talents. Talent dice/points are added in the third column; final totals are in the last column. An asterisk (*) indicates a Specialty

Brawling:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Dodge:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Hoofblade:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (1 pt.*)	= 4d (10 pts.)
Firearms:	1d+2 (5 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 2d (6 pts.)
Rifle:	2d (6 pts.)	plus 1d (1 pt.*)	= 3d (7 pts.)
Gunsmithing:	2d+2 (8 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 3d (9 pts.)
Notice:	2d+2 (8 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 3d (9 pts.)
Sharp Vision:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (1 pt.*)	= 4d (10 pts.)
Boltworking T.:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 0 (0 pts.)	= 3d (9 pts.)
Boltworking Ef.:	2d+1 (7 pts.)	plus +2 (2 pts.)	= 3d (9 pts.)
Windworking T.:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Windworking E.:	2d+1 (7 pts.)	plus +2 (2 pts.)	= 3d (9 pts.)
Flight Increase:	2d+1 (7 pts.)	plus +2 (2 pts.)	= 3d (9 pts.)

Step 4: Personal Weakness

A. Name and describe the pony's Personal Weakness. Impetuous: She tends to rush into a situation without thinking about it first, which can get her into a lot of trouble.

Step 5: Finishing Touches

A. Describe how the pony looks. She's sleek and sturdy rather than big and muscular, and cuts an imposing figure in her barding and hoofblades. Her dark-red coat, and curly dark-gold mane and tail, are surprisingly fine, but they can get pretty nussed after a long, hard day of traveling. Her dark eyes usually are watchful and hard to read. Her cutie mark is a gray-brown dust cloud with wind "speed lines" behind it.

B. Name the pony and describe what else is important about her. Scirocco always has been a rough-and-tumble sort, so falling in with a band of roaming adventurers came naturally to her. She doesn't always look before she leaps, but she does try to do the right thing, even if it means she and her friends don't always get all the treasure they're looking for. She's a decent shot, especially with a rifle, but it's getting up close and personal in a fight that she's really good at.

C. Note down the pony's Moves and Strength Bonus. Her Run Move is 7 yards, Swim and Climb Move are 4 yards, Jump is 2 yards, and Flight Move is 8 yards. Her Strength Bonus is 1d.

D. Choose the pony's important possessions. She has two medium possessions: a set of plate barding with helm and a pack containing camping and survival gear, including a small tent. She has four minor possessions: a small amount of money, a pair of bladed war boots (light sharp weapons: 1d+1 injury each, short length), a medium bolt-action metallic-cartridge rifle (6d injury, capacity 6 rounds, ranges 25/50/100 yards) with ammunition, bandolier, bag, and stripper clips, and a toolkit to clean and maintain her weapons and armor. ➧

~ *Pegasus Pony Form* ~

Player's name	Alex
Pony's name	Scirocco
This pegasus pony is a:	● Mare ○ Stallion ○ Filly ○ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	**Dice**
Muscle	3 + 3 = 6	2 **d**
Hardiness	3 + 6 = 9	3 **d**
Reflexes	3 + 6 = 9	3 **d**
Coordination	3 + 2 = 5	1 **d** +2
Smarts	3 + 4 = 7	2 **d** +1
Senses	3 + 5 = 8	2 **d** +2
Power	3 + 4 = 7	2 **d** +1
Finesse	3 + 6 = 9	3 **d**
Total points:	36	

Talents and Specialties	**Based on**	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	**Dice**
Brawling	Reflexes	9 + 3 = 12		4 **d**
Dodge	Reflexes	9 + 3 = 12		4 **d**
Hoofblade (Mêlée Specialty)	Reflexes	9 + 1 = 10		4 **d**
Firearms	Coord.	5 + 1 = 6		2 **d**
Rifle (Firearms Specialty)	Firearms	6 + 1 = 7		3 **d**
Gunsmithing (Craft Talent)	Senses	8 + 1 = 9		3 **d**
Notice	Senses	8 + 1 = 9		3 **d**
Sharp Vision (Notice Spec.)	Notice	9 + 1 = 10		4 **d**
Boltworking (Talent)	Finesse	9 + 0 = 9		3 **d**
Boltworking (Effect)	Power	7 + 2 = 9		3 **d**
Windworking (Talent)	Finesse	9 + 3 = 12		4 **d**
Windworking (Effect)	Power	7 + 2 = 9		3 **d**
Flight Increase	Power	7 + 2 = 9		3 **d**
	Total	+21 =		**d**
		+ =		**d**
		+ =		**d**

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle)*	7 yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	4 yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	4 yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	2 yards
Flight Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Power)*	8 yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	1 **d**

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
Pack containing camping and survival gear	○	●	○
Armor: Plate barding (add 3d to Hardiness)	○	●	○
Money	○	○	●
Weapon: bladed war boots (1d+1 injury, short)	○	○	●
Weapon: bolt-action rifle (6d, 6 rounds)	○	○	●
plus ammo, bandolier, bag, stripper clips	○	○	○
Toolkit: clean & maintain armor & weapons	○	○	●
	○	○	○

Personal Weakness

Impetuous—she tends to rush into a situation without thinking about it first

Cutie mark (sketch or description)

A gray-brown dust cloud with wind "speed lines" behind it

Size & build	Sleek and sturdy rather than big and muscular
Coat	Dark red and fine
Mane	Dark gold and curly
Tail	Dark gold and curly
Eyes	Dark and watchful
Experience points:	*Unused* *Spent*

Luck points

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Harmony points

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Fatigue (Tiredness)

- ○ Winded: −1d
- ○ Tired: −2d
- ○ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

- ○ Sleepy: −1d
- ○ Tired: −2d
- ○ Exhausted: −3d

Injury or illness

- ○ Bruised ≤ 0
- ○ Stunned 1−
- ○ Minor −
- ○ Serious −
- ○ Major −
- ○ Mortal −
- ○ Death ≥

~ *Glitch: Example Unicorn Pony (guest contrib.)* ~

Pat will be playing in a literal game that's all about the comedy, set in a small town not far from a big city. The narrator's willing to let this group of experienced players have a lot of leeway, since the game will be fast and loose, with lots of silliness and pratfalls. Pat decides to create a mad scientist, just the sort of character who fits well in madcap adventure.

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?

A. Choose the pony's tribe. This'll be a unicorn pony.

B. Choose whether the pony's a mare or stallion. He'll be a stallion.

Step 2: Aptitudes

A. List the starting Aptitudes of the pony's tribe. A unicorn pony starts with 1d (3 points) each in Muscle, Hardiness, Reflexes, Coordination, Smarts, Senses, Power, and Finesse.

B. Add 12d (36 points) to the pony's Aptitudes. Second column shows added dice/points; third column shows Aptitude totals.

Muscle:	add +2 (2 points) to get	1d+2 (5 points)
Hardiness:	add 1d (3 points) to get	2d (6 points)
Reflexes:	add +2 (2 points) to get	1d+2 (5 points)
Coordination:	add 1d (3 points) to get	2d (6 points)
Smarts:	add 2d (6 points) to get	3d (9 points)
Senses:	add 1d (3 points) to get	2d (6 points)
Power:	add 2d+2 (8 points) to get	3d+2 (11 points)
Finesse:	add 3d (9 points) to get	4d (12 points)

Step 3: Talents

A. Choose the pony's Magical Style. Mechanical magic is the ability to motivate and operate machinery.

B. Choose the pony's Talents. The pony's Talents are listed below.

Piloting, Repair, Engineering, Levitation, and *Prime Mover* are from the standard Talents list.

Magical Stamina Specialty of Stamina for resisting fatigue from using Magical Talents.

Resist Mechanical Injury Specialty of Hardiness for resisting injury from mechanical devices when things go horribly wrong. (This is an example of a Talent or Specialty that a narrator might permit in a comedic literal game, but may be more reluctant to allow in a more serious figurative game.)

Mechanical Control Powering and operating mechanical devices that aren't intended to be powered by Prime Mover.

Gremlins Specialty of Mechanical Control for taking control of a mechanical device away from someone who's operating it.

C. Decide whether each Talent is Mundane or Magical. Magical Stamina, Resist Mechanical Injury, Piloting, Repair, and Engineering are Mundane Talents. Levitation, Prime Mover, Mechanical Control, and Gremlins are Magical Talents.

D. Decide for each Talent what Aptitude to base it on. Magical Stamina and Resist Mechanical Injury are based on Hardiness. Piloting is based on Coordination. Repair and Engineering are based on Smarts. Levitation Effect, Prime Mover Effect, and Mechanical Control Effect are based on Power; Gremlins Effect is a Specialty based on Mechanical Control Effect.

E. Add 7d (21 points) to Talents. Talent dice/points are added in third column; totals are in last column. Points noted with * (asterisk) are Specialty points. Pat decides to list rolls for spell Talents, even if no points were added, for reference.

Magic. Stamina:	2d (6 pts.)	plus 3d (3 pts.*)	= 5d (9 pts.)
Resist Mech. Inj.:	2d (6 pts.)	plus 2d (2 pts.*)	= 4d (8 pts.)
Piloting:	2d (6 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 2d+1 (7 pts.)
Repair:	3d (9 pts.)	plus 1d (3 pts.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Engineering:	3d (9 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 3d+1 (10 pts.)
Levitation (Eff):	3d+2 (11 pts.)	plus 1d+1 (4 pts.)	= 5d (15 pts.)
Prime M. (Eff):	3d+2 (11 pts.)	plus 1d+1 (4 pts.)	= 5d (15 pts.)
Mech. C. (Eff):	3d+2 (11 pts.)	plus +1 (1 pt.)	= 4d (12 pts.)
Gremlins (Tal.):	4d (12 pts.)	plus 2d (2 pts.*)	= 6d (14 pts.)

Step 4: Personal Weakness

A. Name and describe the pony's Personal Weakness. He's a mad scientist: "Bwahahahahaha! Now the world will see my genius!"

Step 5: Finishing Touches

A. Describe how the pony looks. He's scrawny and long-legged. His color scheme defies any attempt to color-coordinate, with a fire-engine-red coat, a lime-green mane and tail that usually are somewhat unkempt, and blaze-orange eyes. From time to time he will don the "clock . . . is . . . ticking!" expression; at that point, those who know him well will run. His cutie mark is a set of interlaced gears with broken teeth.

B. Name the pony and describe what else is important about him. Through his own luck, as well as inheritance, Glitch is a wealthy unicorn. This allows him to pursue his "destiny"—if one means "tinkering with devices only slightly more dangerous than a wood-chipper"—free of such minor considerations as "safety". He has a reputation as an usually incompetent inventor and often is seen flopping about the skies in his home-made ornithopter. He is indeed the terror of the local pegasus ponies.

C. Note down the pony's Moves and Strength Bonus. His Run Move is 6 yards, his Swim and Climb Move are 3 yards, and his Jump is 2 yards. His Strength Bonus is 1d.

D. Choose the pony's important possessions. He has one major possession: money! Lots and lots of it! He has one medium possession: some kind of vehicle—for instance, an ornithopter, autogyro, steam-car, or giant vinegar-and-baking-soda jet boat—but only one at a time; switching vehicles usually follows the destruction of the previous vehicle. He has two minor possessions: an inventory of parts from broken gadgets, and a contact among fellow mad-scientist ponies. ➧

~ Unicorn Pony Form ~

Player's name	PAT
Pony's name	GLITCH
This unicorn pony is a:	◯ Mare ● Stallion ◯ Filly ◯ Colt

Aptitude	*Add up points*	Dice
Muscle	3 + 2 = 5	1d+2
Hardiness	3 + 3 = 6	2d
Reflexes	3 + 2 = 5	1d+2
Coordination	3 + 3 = 6	2d
Smarts	3 + 6 = 9	3d
Senses	3 + 3 = 6	2d
Power	3 + 8 = 11	3d+2
Finesse	3 + 9 = 12	4d
Total points:	36	

Run Move *(5 yards + 1 per whole die in Muscle)*	6	yards
Swim Move *(½ Run Move*)*	3	yards
Climb Move *(½ Run Move*)*	3	yards
Jump *(¼ of Run Move*)*	2	yards
Strength Bonus *(½ of whole dice in Lifting or Muscle*)*	1	d

* Round up to next yard or die if needed

Personal Weakness

MAD SCIENTIST: "BWAHAHAHAHAHA! NOW THE WORLD WILL SEE MY GENIUS!"

Cutie mark (sketch or description)

INTERLACED GEARS WITH BROKEN TEETH

Magical Style

MECHANICAL MAGIC: MOTIVATING & OPERATING MACHINES

Talents and Specialties	Based on	*Add Up Points*	*Exp.*	Dice
MAGICAL STAMINA (SPEC.)	HARDi.	6 + 3* = 9		5d
RESIST MECH. INJURY (SPEC.)	HARDi.	6 + 2* = 8		4d
PILOTING	COORDiN.	6 + 1 = 7		2d+1
REPAIR	SMARTS	9 + 3 = 12		4d
ENGINEERING	SMARTS	9 + 1 = 10		3d+1
ILLUMINATION (TALENT)	FINESSE	12 + 0 = 12		4d
ILLUMINATION (EFFECT)	POWER	11 + 0 = 11		3d+2
LEVITATION (TALENT)	FINESSE	12 + 0 = 12		4d
LEVITATION (EFFECT)	POWER	11 + 4 = 15		5d
PRIME MOVER (TALENT)	FINESSE	12 + 0 = 12		4d
PRIME MOVER (EFFECT)	POWER	11 + 4 = 15		5d
MECH. CONTROL (TALENT)	FINESSE	12 + 0 = 12		4d
MECH. CONTROL (EFFECT)	POWER	11 + 1 = 12		4d
GREMLINS (SPEC., TALENT)	MECH. C.	12 + 2* = 14		6d
	TOTAL	+ 21 =		d
* SPECIALTY POINTS (3 FOR 1)		+ =		d

Important possessions *(every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)*	**Major**	**Med.**	**Minor**
MONEY! LOTS AND LOTS OF IT!	●	◯	◯
SOME KIND OF VEHICLE — FOR INSTANCE, AN	◯	●	◯
ORNITHOPTER, AUTOGYRO, STEAM-CAR, OR	◯	◯	◯
GIANT VINEGAR-&-BAKING-SODA JET BOAT —	◯	◯	◯
BUT ONLY 1 AT A TIME; SWITCHING USUALLY	◯	◯	◯
FOLLOWS PREVIOUS VEHICLE'S DESTRUCTION	◯	◯	◯
INVENTORY: PARTS FROM BROKEN GADGETS	◯	◯	●
CONTACT: FELLOW MAD-SCIENTIST PONIES	◯	◯	●

Size & build	SCRAWNY AND LONG-LEGGED
Coat	FIRE-ENGINE RED
Mane	LIME GREEN AND USUALLY SOMEWHAT UNKEMPT
Tail	SIMILAR TO MANE
Eyes	BLAZE ORANGE
Experience points:	*Unused* / *Spent*

Luck points

◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯

Harmony points

◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯ ◯◯◯◯◯

Fatigue (Tiredness)

- ◯ Winded: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Fatigue (Sleepiness)

- ◯ Sleepy: −1d
- ◯ Tired: −2d
- ◯ Exhausted: −3d

Injury or illness

- ◯ Bruised ≤ 0
- ◯ Stunned 1−
- ◯ Minor −
- ◯ Serious −
- ◯ Major −
- ◯ Mortal −
- ◯ Death ≥

~ *Equipment and Belongings* ~

Narrators and players who want some help in coming up with their ponies' possessions can use these lists of items and rules to go with them. Narrators especially are encouraged to look up more information if they want to add more items. Other game books also based on the *Open D6* rules would be a good place to start.

Historically, most of the items listed were available through much of the nineteenth century. A few were invented during the nineteenth century; those items include rough dates in parentheses. Keep in mind that, over time, the same kind of item may get smaller, lighter, cheaper, more effective, or some combination—compare a sewing machine or a wind-up alarm clock made in 1900 to one made in 1850.

Available Almost Anywhere

These can be found wherever there are shops or stores—even in small towns, though the supply might be limited.

Cheap *(buying difficulty 1–5)*
Alarm clock (1840s)
Backpack
Basic rations (a few days)
Blanket
Crowbar
Duffel bag
Eating utensils
Lantern
Lighter (Döbereiner's lamp)
Marbles

Cheap
Newspaper, magazine
Personal hygiene kit
Pocket-watch (basic)
Rope, cotton, 50 yards (45 m)
Rope, hemp, 50 yards (45 m)
Sewing machine, portable (1840s)
Shovel
Steamer trunk
Tent, 1-pony
Torch

Inexpensive *(buying difficulty 6–10)*
Basic clothing
Carpenter or construction toolkit
Iron spikes (8) and piton
Pocket-watch (high-quality)

Inexpensive
Sleeping bag or bedroll
Tent, 3-pony
Wood stove

Available in Cities or by Mail-Order

These items are sold in department stores and other large retailers, which mostly are in big cities. Most department stores mail out catalogs, so faraway customers can mail-order stuff they can't get in local shops—but shipping a mail order can take a few days to a few weeks, so it'd better not be urgent!

Cheap *(buying difficulty 1–5)*
Camera film (1830s)
Compass
Flashlight, large (1890s)

Cheap
Flashlight batteries (1890s)
Holster
Kerosene heater (1850s)

Inexpensive *(buying diff. 6–10)*
Art supplies
Binoculars
Camera (1830s)
Disguise kit
Electrician's tool kit (1880s)
Emergency medical kit (1880s)

Inexpensive
Gas stove (1850s)
Mechanic's tool kit
Rifle scope (1830s)
Telescope, small
Typewriter (1870s)

Unusual or Rare

Most ponies wouldn't have much interest in buying these items, so they generally wouldn't be found in ordinary shops or stores. Instead, they'd be offered by businesses that sell supplies to professionals, such as a restaurant-supply company selling to chefs and restaurant owners. In some cases, a customer might have to provide proof she *is* a professional before the company will sell to her—the company wouldn't want to sell to a pony who doesn't know what she's doing and could hurt herself or others, or there may be a law for the same reason.

The cost difficulties for weapons are listed with the rest of the information on them. A weapon that's really good-quality (and of course more expensive) doesn't cause more injury—instead, it's tougher, and less likely to break or not work.

Cheap *(buying difficulty 1–5)*
Lockpicking tools

Inexpensive *(buying diff. 6–10)*
Archæologist's tool kit (1880s)
Gas mask (1840s)
Hobble
Jungle explorer's kit
Parachute

A Little Expensive *(buying difficulty 11–15)*
Evidence kit (1880s)

Useful Information

Certain items do specific things under the rules. Here's how to handle them during play.

Binoculars: Add 1d to rolls for looking at, or for, things more than 2 yards (1.8 m) away, but only in daylight.

Crowbar: Add 1d to Muscle rolls when prying something.

Flashlight: See the rules under "Weather and Visibility".

Gas mask: Wearing a gas mask adds 2d to the wearer's Hardiness roll against a gas attack or cancels out 1d of subtraction from the roll, whichever is more appropriate.

Hobble: Cuffs together front or rear hooves and comes with a key; the difficulty of picking the lock is 15, and the toughness of the hobble is 15.

Jungle explorer's pack: Add 2 to rolls for surviving in jungle or heavy forest; has pith helmet, insect repellent, and mosquito netting in a small knapsack.

Iron spikes and piton: Add 1d to climbing rolls; must be used with a rope.

Lockpicking tools: Add 1d to rolls for picking locks, but only if the user has the Lockpicking Talent.

Marbles: A pony who steps on marbles scattered on the ground makes a Running or Reflexes roll each step until she can move away from them. Difficulty is 15; each step is an action.

Rifle Scope: Add 2 to rolls for shooting at medium or long range, but only if the shooter spent the previous round aiming. Also works as a small telescope.

Rope, hemp: Hemp rope is heavy-duty, able to support a lot of weight; its toughness is 5.

Rope, cotton: Cotton rope is medium-duty, able to support some weight, but not as much as hemp; its toughness is 3.

Shovel: Add 1d to rolls for digging.

Telescope: Add 2d to rolls for looking at, or, for faraway things, but the user must spend a round to focus the telescope.

Toolkits: Every toolkit includes a container and all the tools and parts needed for working on normal tasks; it adds 1d to rolls for that kind of work. ❧

The Best Things in Life Are Free

Not every possession a player pony may have is something that can be bought in a store—possession points can be used to represents all sorts of other things too. Some are physical objects, but others could be more abstract. Part three of the rulebook, "The Magical Land", contains background information that can help explain some of the suggestions below.

Such a "possession" can give a pony more history and depth, making her more interesting to play. The narrator may be able to use it as a way to get the pony and her friends involved in stories. A new one can be a reward for good role-playing or solving problems. Players may come up with new and interesting possessions, but the narrator should keep an eye on them to make sure they're appropriate and not too powerful.

The pony's **social rank** can be elevated, but a player pony has to pay for lands or money with other possession points. A *patent of nobility* is a major possession and makes the pony a member of the *peerage* (nobility) with a title such as baron(ess) or count(ess)—most likely a *life title,* one that isn't inherited. A *knighthood* is a medium possession and makes the pony a member of a *chivalric order* (association of knights). The player should explain how the pony got the rank and, for a knighthood, what order the pony was *dubbed* (inducted) into. The narrator probably shouldn't allow a player pony to be a royal, though, except under the most extraordinary circumstances.

The pony may have a **contact** with an individual or group who can do favors or get information for the pony—but sometimes may ask for favors or information in return. A *major contact* represents an important individual or large group who can and will do big favors. A *medium contact* represents an individual or group who can do a few big favors or more small favors. A *minor contact* represents an individual or group who can do small favors, but not big ones.

A **toolkit** doesn't have to contain hammers, wrenches, or screwdrivers. Any set of devices that can help a pony use a Talent can be thought of as a toolkit—for example, navigation instruments, a vest containing basic survival gear, an accountant's portfolio, or a wet bar containing a coffee and tea set. A *major toolkit* comes in a set of cabinets that must be installed in a workroom. A *medium toolkit* fills a single cabinet that can be on casters so it can be rolled around a workroom. A *minor toolkit* fills a portable container that can be carried easily.

An **inventory** of parts or other items can be used to build or repair things, or to use in other tasks. An example is a selection of hardware, such as nails, screws, fasteners, hinges, and knobs. The pony can replace items she uses from her inventory, but not too quickly, and she may run out temporarily if a project or task is big enough. A pony who has a business such as a store, but no separate inventory, can't use things from her business; there may be laws or regulations that make it hard or impossible, or she sells big things like furniture that can't be moved easily, or she may not have anything left over from what she has to sell in order to make a living. A *major inventory* is enough large items to fill a small warehouse or enough small items to fill a room. A *medium inventory* is enough large items to fill a room or enough small items to fill a good-size cabinet. A *minor inventory* is a few large items or enough small items to fill a portable container that can be carried easily. ✶

~ *Muscle-Powered Weapons* ~

A muscle-powered weapon depends on the user swinging, thrusting, or otherwise moving it with her own body to attack. That's why a muscle-powered weapon adds the user's Strength Bonus to the weapon's injury dice (or points), listed in the "Injury" or "Inj." columns of the tables. How a pony—or any four-legged creature—uses a weapon, especially a long one, is left to the imaginations of the narrator and players.

Keep in mind that attacking without weapons or with mêlée weapons is *always* at close range and therefore subtracts 5 from the difficulty of attacking. That's an easy thing to overlook, but it can have a big impact on how a fight plays out!

Attacking Without Weapons

Any pony or creature can attack even if she doesn't have a weapon to do it with; she just uses part of her own body and the Brawling Talent (or Reflexes). The list below covers the attacks a pony can make. Other creatures may have different attacks, or may use different values for similar attacks.

Attack	With . . .	Injury	Difficulty
Bite	Teeth	*	+3 (or +1d)†
Punch, butt	One front hoof or head	+1‡	No modif.
Box or clip	Both front hooves or wing	+2	+3 (or +1d)
Kick	One rear hoof	1d	+6 (or +2d)
Buck	Both rear hooves	2d	+9 (or +3d)

* Strength Bonus only.
† *Subtract* 3 (or 1d) if attacker and target are very close.
‡ For a unicorn using her alicorn (horn), use +2 instead.

Mêlée Weapons

Most muscle-powered weapons are used for close-up fighting. They may be blunt, sharp (bladed or pointed), or flexible. A sharp weapon can be used as a blunt weapon, if a player says her pony's doing that: cut the injury roll in half before subtracting the target's roll to resist injury. "Long" weapons are longer than 24 inches (60 cm)—see the rule for "unwieldy weapons". A length of "either" means some weapons are short and others are long. The cost difficulty of blunt weapons is "cheap" (1–5) except for *very large,* which is "inexpensive" (6–10); the cost difficulty of sharp and flexible weapons is "inexpensive".

Attacking with mêlée weapons uses the Mêlée Talent (or Reflexes), with a few exceptions. A spike imitating or fitting over an alicorn (horn) is a *very light* sharp weapon. A unicorn attacking with one uses the Brawling Talent; other ponies use Mêlée. A "war boot" like the royal guards wear is a *light* blunt weapon. Any pony attacking with war boots uses Brawling. ⧫

Blunt	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Extra-light	+2	Short	Blackjack
Very light	1d	Short	Sap
Light	1d+1	Either	Brass knuckles (short), mace (long)
Medium	1d+2	Either	*Tonfa* (short), quarterstaff (long)

Sharp	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	Short	Dagger, bayonet, survival knife
Light	1d+1	Either	
Medium	1d+2	Either	Shortsword
Heavy	2d	Long	Rapier
Very heavy	2d+1	Long	
Extra-heavy	2d+2	Long	Broadsword
Huge	3d	Long	Large axe

Flexible	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	Long	Bullwhip
Light	1d+1	Long	
Medium	1d+2	Long	*Kusari-fundo* (chain with heavy ends)
Heavy	2d	Long	Ball and chain

Missile and Thrown Weapons

A muscle-powered weapon that shoots a missile or projectile takes one action to reload. Examples would be an archer nocking a new arrow on her bow or a slinger putting a new stone in her sling's pouch. A shooter can load and shoot in the same round, if she takes multiple actions in the round to do it.

The cost difficulty of a missile weapon is "inexpensive" (6–10) except for a large one, which is "a little expensive" (11–15). The cost difficulty of a small batch of arrows or bolts is "cheap" (1–5). The cost difficulty of a small thrown weapon is "cheap"; the cost difficulty of a medium or large one is "inexpensive".

The effects of short, medium, and long ranges are in the fighting rules. For the ranges of a small thrown weapon, the thrower makes a Muscle roll. The result is short range; add 1 yard to this for medium range and 2 yards for long range.

Missile Wpns.	Inj.	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	15 yards (14 m)	Sling and stone
Heavy	2d	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	250 yards (229 m)	Shortbow and arrow
Huge	3d	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	250 yards (229 m)	Longbow and arrow

Thrown Wpns.	Inj.	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Muscle roll	Muscle + 1 yard	Muscle + 2 yards	Dart
Very light	1d	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	15 yards (14 m)	Throwing dagger
Heavy	2d	5 yards (4.5 m)	25 yards (23 m)	40 yards (37 m)	Javelin (unwieldy weapon)

Improvised Weapons

If a pony wants a weapon but doesn't have a real one, she may try to improvise, using anything that's around. In general, an improvised weapon isn't as effective as a real one; it doesn't cause as much injury and adds 5 (or more) to attack difficulty. If an attack roll results in a mishap, it breaks, the user hurts herself, or both. If the user hurts herself, don't add her Strength Bonus to the injury dice. An improvised weapon doesn't last very long—unless it's something tough like a thick metal pipe or a screwdriver—even if the user doesn't break it in a mishap.

For the ranges of a thrown object, the thrower makes a Muscle roll and adds to or subtracts from it to find short, medium, and long ranges. If the total is zero or less, the thrower can't get the object to that range or farther.

Torch: A lit torch causes 3d of injury (or damage) per round after the first that the flame's touching something; if it's flammable, it could catch fire.

Blunt	Injury	Length	Real-World Examples
Extra-light	+2	Short	Crowbar, shovel
Very light	1d	Short	Hammer
Light	1d+1	Long	Baseball bat, large stick

Sharp	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Short	Arrow, bolt, dart, iron spike
Extra-light	+2	Short	Awl, ice pick, household scissors, pen knife, screwdriver, stake
Very light	1d	Short	Hedge clippers, shears, chef's knife
Light	1d+1	Short	Hatchet
Medium	1d+2	Long	Machete

Flexible	Injury	Length	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Long	Cotton rope
Extra-light	+2	Long	Hemp rope

Throw	Inj.	Diff.	Short	Med.	Long	Examples
Small	+1	+5	Muscle roll	Muscle + 1 yd.	Muscle + 2 yd.	Apple thrown by front hoof
Extra-light	+2	+10	Double result of Muscle roll plus modifier, if any			Apple kicked by back hoof
Extra-light	+2	+5	Muscle − 2 yd.	Muscle − 1 yd.	Muscle roll	Rock thrown by front hoof
Very light	1d	+10	Double result of Muscle roll minus modif., if any			Rock kicked by back hoof

Adjusting weapons: In all the weapons tables, including those on the next few pages, the weapons shown are typical examples. The narrator and players should keep in mind that, especially before mass production became common in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, there can be a *lot* of variation even among items that are supposed to be very similar. There's room to change the values of many weapons a little, especially for unusual conditions. ✶

A mechanical weapon uses tension or a *moment arm* to throw a projectile at higher speed than most muscles can match. A firearm (or a bigger gun like a cannon) uses the pressure of expanding gas from a very rapid *combustion* (burning) of gunpowder, black powder, or cordite to do the same thing, but even faster. Explosives release a lot of energy very quickly, also from chemical reactions. The user's Strength Bonus is *not* added to the injury (or damage) dice of these weapons.

Mechanical Weapons

The most common mechanical weapon small enough for someone to carry and use is the *crossbow.* Reloading and cranking one to build up tension takes a round, and the pony doing the cranking can't take any other actions. A small crossbow shoots *darts* and is "inexpensive" (6–10); the others shoot *bolts* and are "a little expensive" (11–15).

If it's too big for one pony, it's probably a *siege engine;* the best-known is the *catapult,* but there are others as well. A catapult flings a large object—usually a rock or metal ball—at a target. Reloading it after shooting takes a round, and the reloaders can't take any other actions. It's hard to aim, so add 5 to the difficulty of attacking with it. A catapult is at least size 12; see "How Big Is a Creature or Object?" in "Weights and Measures: The Physical World" and the Size rules in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat".

Crossb.	Inj.	Short R.	Medium R.	Long Range
Small	4d	10 yd. (9 m)	25 yd. (23 m)	50 yd. (46 m)
Medium	4d	10 yd. (9 m)	100 yd. (91 m)	200 yd. (183 m)
Large	4d+1	10 yd. (9 m)	100 yd. (91 m)	300 yd. (274 m)
Cataplt.	3d+2	50 yd. (45 m)	100 yd. (91 m)	200 yd. (183 m)

Firearms

The history of firearms is complicated, so to keep things simple only four kinds of weapons are covered here. The *matchlock* had its heyday during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (but a few antiques still might be around later). The *flintlock* took over in the late seventeenth century and lingered into the early nineteenth century. *Percussion* weapons only lasted from the 1820s to the 1880s, because *cartridge* weapons appeared in the 1850s and gradually swept away everything else.

A **matchlock firearm,** also called a *musket* or *arquebus,* is a *muzzle-loader;* the shooter puts a powder charge, wadding, and a round lead bullet down the barrel, then uses a *ramrod* to tamp them into place at the back. A burning *match* (a length of thin cord treated to make it burn better) is clamped in the lock. When the trigger or lever is pulled, the lock swings the match onto the *touch-hole,* where the flame sets off the powder charge. If the attack roll results in a mishap, it could mean the match went out and doesn't light the charge—especially if it's raining or even very humid. The cost difficulty of a matchlock is "kind of expensive" (16–20), and the cost difficulty of each powder charge, wadding, and bullet is "cheap" (1–5).

A typical musket is four to six feet long (1.2 to 1.8 m) and can weigh 20 pounds (9 kg)! It's so heavy a wooden *rest* (like a monopod) is needed to support it. If a rest isn't available, using a musket takes 2 actions: the first action is lifting the weapon with a difficulty of 3, and the second action is shooting it. Reloading after shooting takes 12 rounds, unless the shooter succeeds at a roll with a difficulty of 10, using the same dice as for shooting—then it takes only 1 round.

A **flintlock firearm** also uses a lock, but instead of a match, a flint and iron pyrite are scraped together, which throws sparks onto a small *pan* holding a little powder to light the charge. If an attack roll results in a mishap, it may mean the sparks don't reach the powder or there's a *flash in the pan* that doesn't light the charge. A flintlock musket is about the same size as a matchlock musket, and also needs a rest for support; use the same rule as for a matchlock if there isn't a rest.

The first pistols were flintlocks. A typical example is about a foot (30 cm) long and weighs 8 pounds (3.5 kg). Since these pistols aren't reliable and take a long time to reload, a shooter often carried a *brace* (pair). A flintlock takes 8 rounds to reload, unless the shooter succeeds at a roll with a difficulty of 8, using the same dice as for shooting—then it takes only 1 round. The cost difficulty of a flintlock is "kind of expensive" (16–20, though a musket costs more than a pistol), and the cost difficulty of a powder charge, wadding, and bullet is "cheap" (1–5).

A **cannon** uses gunpowder to throw large stone or metal balls. A small (bronze or iron) cannon needs a crew of two to load and fire it; a large (iron) cannon needs a crew of four. Loading a cannon takes 1 round, and the crew can't do anything else. It takes 1 round for the *gun captain* (crew leader) to aim and fire the cannon. If an attack roll results in a mishap, the cannon wasn't loaded right, and it may not fire at all—or too much powder was loaded and the cannon barrel fails. A bronze cannon bulges and is ruined, but an iron cannon blows up like a bomb, which can anyone nearby.

A typical cannon is Size 15; see "How Big Is a Creature or Object?" and the Size rules in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat". A small cannon's cost difficulty is "expensive" (21–25) and a large cannon's cost difficulty is "very expensive" (26–30). A set of one powder charge, wadding, and ball is "inexpensive" (6–10).

An early **percussion firearm** is a lot like a flintlock, but it uses a *percussion cap* instead of a flint. A new cap, holding a small amount of chemical that ignites when struck, is put on the lock before each shot. This makes loading and firing the weapon faster, safer, and more reliable. For a percussion pistol or musket, use the statistics and rules for a flintlock, with a couple of exceptions. Reloading takes 6 rounds instead of 8, but the difficulty of reloading in 1 round is the same as for a flintlock. A percussion weapon is more resistant to bad weather, so it takes a worse roll, or a mishap, to get a malfunction than for a flintlock or (especially!) a matchlock.

The **cartridge** appeared in the early part of the nineteenth century. It packages the powder and bullet together and is made of special paper or rubber. New designs became possible, such as the *revolver,* which can hold multiple rounds in a *cylinder* that rotates, each time the weapon's fired, to bring up a new round. Many weapons used in the Old West were percussion cartridge weapons. ➧

The **metallic cartridge,** usually made of brass, includes a *primer* to take the place of the percussion cap; this made ammunition completely self-contained for the first time. It was introduced in the 1840s and worked so well that the idea's lasted right to the present, more than a century and a half later.

Percussion cartridge firearms and metallic-cartridge firearms use the same rules and statistics, with two exceptions. The first is that a percussion cartridge weapon must be loaded and fired in two different rounds, but a metallic-cartridge weapon can be loaded and fired in the same round, as two full actions.

The second is how many rounds of ammunition a weapon can hold. A percussion cartridge carbine or rifle can hold only one round. The number, or *capacity,* of rounds any other cartridge firearm can hold is listed in the "Cap." column; when that many rounds have been fired, the weapon is empty and must be reloaded before it can be fired again.

The cost difficulty of a cartridge weapon is "inexpensive" (6–10) for a basic model or "a little expensive" (11–15) or more for a fancier model. The cost difficulty for 50 rounds of ammunition is "cheap" to "inexpensive" (1–10), depending on how powerful it is. Of course, a bigger, more powerful weapon or its ammunition will cost more than a smaller, lighter weapon or its ammunition.

Early Guns	Injury	Short R.	Medium R.	Long R.
Matchlock musket	3d+2	10 yards (9 m)	20 yards (18 m)	40 yards (37 m)
Flintlock pistol	3d+1	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	25 yards (23 m)
Flintlock musket	4d	25 yards (23 m)	40 yards (37 m)	100 yards (91 m)
Sm. cannon (Size 15)	4d	50 yards (45 m)	200 yards (183 m)	800 yards (732 m)
Lg. cannon (Size 15)	5d	50 yards (45 m)	150 yards (137 m)	500 yards (457 m)

Sidearms	Inj.	Cap.	Short	Med.	Long	Examples
Low-power	3d+2	8	10 yd. (9 m)	20 yd. (18 m)	30 yd. (27 m)	Early 9-mm auto. pistols
Medium-power	4d	6	12 yd. (11 m)	25 yd. (23 m)	40 yd. (37 m)	Colt .38 snub revolv.
High-power	4d+1	6	15 yd. (14 m)	30 yd. (27 m)	45 yd. (41 m)	Colt .45 Peacemaker

Carbines	Inj.	Cap.*	Short	Med.	Long	Example
Low-power	4d+2	10	10 yd. (9 m)	20 yd. (18 m)	40 yd. (37 m)	
Medium-power	5d	10	12 yd. (11 m)	25 yd. (23 m)	50 yd. (46 m)	
High-power	5d+1	8	15 yd. (14 m)	30 yd. (27 m)	60 yd. (55 m)	.30-cal. M-1 Carbine

* Ammunition capacity is 1 for any percussion cartridge carbine or rifle.

Rifles	Inj.	Cap.*	Short	Med.	Long	Examples
Low-power	5d+2	8	20 yd. (18 m)	40 yd. (37 m)	80 yd. (73 m)	
Med.-power	6d	6	25 yd. (23 m)	50 yd. (46 m)	100 yd. (91 m)	
High-power	6d+1	6	30 yd. (27 m)	60 yd. (55 m)	120 yd. (110 m)	Winchester 94 (.30-30)
V. hi.-power	6d+2	5	35 yd. (32 m)	70 yd. (64 m)	140 yd. (128 m)	
Heavy	7d	5	40 yd. (37 m)	80 yd. (73 m)	160 yd. (146 m)	Springfield M-1903

Shotgun	Inj.	Cap.	Short	Med.	Long	Examples
Double-barrel	6d	2	20 yd. (18 m)	40 yd. (37 m)	60 yd. (55 m)	Remington 30 (12 gauge)
Sawed-off	6d	2	15 yd. (14 m)	20 yd. (18 m)	30 yd. (27 m)	*(Barrels cut to make it smaller)*

Someone who knows firearms well may notice that these rules and statistics are *very* simplified. If the narrator and players are interested enough to want more detailed firearms, they probably have, or can get, enough information to create specific models and additional rules. The statistics here and, if available, in some *Open D6* books can be used as guidelines.

Rather than reinvent real-world firearms, try to think of firearms the ponies (or other creatures) might build. This idea applies to other inventions as well. The program might show scissors with *bows* (finger-loops) so a young television audience will recognize them—but a "real" pony inventor probably wouldn't bother with bows because ponies don't have fingers. Consider instead how she might design them for pony use.

Explosives

Cannon have been mentioned and there are fireworks shows on a few episodes. Modern mining and construction methods also depend a lot on the creative (and careful) use of explosives. The ponies might not have to use them as much, thanks to spell, levitation, and earth magic, but sometimes a big job probably just can't be done without blowing something up.

Low explosives such as black powder *deflagrate,* or burn very quickly, but still at less than the speed of sound. They're useful for propelling things, like bullets or rockets, but not as good at blowing up things, because they don't pack all their force into a very brief instant of time. Low explosives have been around a long time; China had simple fireworks in the seventh century.

High explosives such as dynamite *detonate;* the reaction *propagates* (moves through the chemical) faster than the speed of sound, creating a short, sudden shock-wave that carries a lot of force. It's a good way to blow up things, but it doesn't propel things very well—they tend to get blown up too. The earliest high explosive, nitroglycerin, was discovered in the 1840s. It was horribly unstable, but various ways to make it safer to handle, including dynamite and gelignite, were invented during the 1860s and 1870s. In the twentieth century, other substances were developed to take its place. The cost difficulty for a stick of dynamite is "cheap" (1–5). ➧

A **gunpowder bomb** is a pottery ball about the size of a melon, filled with black powder; a length of fuse is stuck into it before the ball is sealed up. When it goes off, it scatters jagged bits of pottery, a little fire, and a small shock-wave. The cost difficulty of a black-powder bomb is "a little expensive" (11–15), but it's a much older invention than the others described.

A **fragmentation grenade** is similar, but smaller and metal instead of pottery. It may be packed with shot as well as high explosive. The explosion throws out bits of metal, which can be almost as deadly as bullets over short distances; most don't go more than about 50 yards (45 m), but a few may zip out as far as 200 yards (183 m). The cost difficulty of a fragmentation grenade is "inexpensive" (6–10).

A **smoke grenade** is full of chemicals that burn and produce a lot of smoke when it goes off. The cloud of smoke will fill an area about 4 yards (3.7 m) in diameter and will be carried by the wind; anyone inside the smoke subtracts 1d from rolls for Reflexes, Coordination, Senses, and Talents based on them. Anyone or anything within a yard or so of a smoke grenade when it explodes may get hit with some of the burning chemical, which will cause 3d injury (or damage) like a torch until it burns out or is wiped off. The cost difficulty of a smoke grenade is "inexpensive" (6–10).

Any of these devices must be set off with a **fuse,** which is lit before the explosive is thrown or placed. When it burns down, the explosive goes off. The maker or user of the explosive device can cut the length of the fuse to match the amount of time she wants it to burn, but it's not completely reliable.

The narrator should roll, secretly, 2d and subtract 7, which means the result will range from –5 to 5. Add this to the number of seconds that the fuse will burn; remember that adding a negative number is like subtracting a positive number. If the result is 0 or less, the explosive goes off right away. (Ouch.) On the other hand, if a fuse burns too *long,* someone might be quick enough to throw the bomb or grenade back!

The farther away someone is from an explosion, the less injury she's likely to suffer from it. Someone who's a short distance away, shown in the column labeled "Full", gets the whole injury roll. Someone who's a little farther away, shown in the column labeled "½", gets only half the injury roll, rounded up. Someone who's even farther away, shown in the column labeled "¼", gets only one-fourth of the injury roll, rounded up. Anyone farther away is fairly safe, though it's possible a few fragments might hit unlucky bystanders.

For example, someone no more than 2 yards from a gunpowder bomb going off gets the full injury roll; someone 3 to 4 yards from the bomb gets half the injury roll, and someone 5 to 8 yards away gets one-fourth of the injury roll.

For the ranges of a thrown explosive device, the thrower makes a Muscle roll and adds to or subtracts from it to find short, medium, and long ranges. If the total is zero or less, the thrower can't get the object to that range or farther.

Anyone near the place where the explosive lands compares her defense to the throwing roll. If the defense total's greater than the throwing roll, the pony or creature managed to dive for cover or find some other way to protect herself from the explosion. If the throwing roll's greater than or equal to the defense total, the pony or creature is hit by the explosion.

A pony or creature who hasn't taken her turn yet in the round can abandon whatever she was going to do and try to get away from the blast. She makes a Dodge or Reflexes roll with a difficulty of 15. If the roll's less than 15, the pony fails to dodge and stays in the same place. If the roll is 15 to 18, the pony's able to get one "zone" farther away—for example, from the "full injury" distance to the "half injury" distance. If the roll's 19 to 22, the pony's able to get two zones farther away. If the roll's 23 or greater, the pony's able to get three zones farther away.

Device	Inj.	Full	½	¼	Short	Med.	Long
Gunpowder bomb	6d	0–2 yd.	3–4 yd.	5–8 yd.	Muscle – 2 yd.	Muscle – 1 yard	Muscle roll
Stick of dynamite	5d	0–2 yd.	3–5 yd.	6–10 yd.	Muscle – 3 yd.	Muscle – 2 yd.	Muscle + 1 yd.
Fragmen. grenade	6d	0–3 yd.	4–8 yd.	9–16 yd.	Muscle – 4 yd.	Muscle – 3 yd.	Muscle + 3 yd.
Smoke grenade	(3d)	0–1 yard	—	—	Muscle – 4 yd.	Muscle – 3 yd.	Muscle + 3 yd.

Throwing a bomb or grenade: The thrower aims at a place (a map hex, in game terms) rather than a living target and relies on the explosion to injure everyone nearby. The difficulty of hitting the right spot depends on how far away it is. If the thrower misses, the narrator decides how far and which way.

Rng.	Diff.	Condition	Mod.
Close	0	Thrower can't see target area directly	+6
Short	10	Target area is not "even ground"	+4
Med.	15	Target area is very hard (bomb bounces)	+4
Long	20	Target area is very soft (bomb sinks)	–4

A Last Word

Weapons and explosives are included for narrators and players who want a lot of high adventure, especially groups playing figurative games. They certainly *aren't* required, and the narrator is free to exclude them if she wishes!

A bullet (or arrow or bolt) doesn't just stop and fall when it reaches the end of long range. Beyond that, though, it starts slowing down; hitting a target (on purpose, at least) gets a lot tougher, and the projectile won't hit as hard. As it runs out of energy, it does curve down gradually and eventually hits the ground—but that could be a long way off, so it's possible to hit something by accident. A good rule of thumb for the possible danger zone is about ten times the weapon's long range.

The narrator may want to keep this in mind, especially if a player's careless about what might happen if she misses her target, and roll to see whether stray rounds hit something important, like bystanders. If it's far enough away, where the projectiles have lost most of their energy, the chances of hitting something and the injury dice should be pretty low, but this can help make the point that weapons are *dangerous* and shouldn't be used without considering the consequences. ✶

~ *Creatures* ~

Creatures living in the world of the ponies are much more intelligent than in the real world. This is one place where using other *Open D6* rulebooks can cause a narrator a bit of trouble unless she thinks about how to adapt them.

For *Pony Tales,* it's more useful to divide creatures into *talking* and *dumb.* (Originally, "dumb" just meant "unable to talk" rather than "stupid", and it's still used that way in some old sayings and proverbs.) A talking creature can think about and communicate complex ideas, and therefore is intelligent enough to build, or at least to participate in, societies and cultures. A dumb creature may be able to communicate simple ideas, but generally can't build complex societies or cultures.

Cattle and sheep can talk, but mostly they seem to live under the care and protection of the ponies rather than on their own, maybe because the ponies are able to think about the future and plan more effectively. Still, they do talk, are somewhat intelligent, and live in pony society, so they're grouped with the talking creatures.

Why not call talking creatures "civilized"? The world *civilization* actually means "the art of living in cities". In the first season, for instance, bison are shown to live in small nomadic camps, but not cities, so technically they aren't civilized.

What ponies seem to have that most other creatures don't have is *magic*—at least, magic beyond the most basic kind, such as the world-magic that makes even dumb creatures smarter than animals in the real world. That's probably why the ponies have such a thriving society and nation.

The only zebra shown on the program seems to be an *alchemist,* working with mineral and vegetable matter to create magical potions, ointments, and other substances that can accomplish sometimes amazing things. Whether that ability is unique to her or is common among zebras isn't known for certain, but the game assumes it's common, different from pony magic but just as capable.

Talking Creatures

The show doesn't go into much detail about talking creatures other than the ponies. As a result, the listings in this section often rely on guesswork, based on brief glimpses in a few episodes and on similar real creatures or creatures from myths and legends in real history. If the narrator disagrees with those guesses, she's free to change the numbers to suit her own ideas of how the creatures work.

These listings mostly are for minions or others who aren't major story characters. "Injury levels" are simplifications of the injury table, so that fighting lots of minions doesn't take up too much time in the game. A player pony has 4 injury levels. A creature with 1 injury level suffers "major injury" from a result of 1 to 12. A creature with 2 injury levels is "stunned" by a result of 1 to 6 and suffers "major injury" from a result of 7 to 12.

The narrator should create *important* characters with the same care that players use in creating their ponies. Powerful ones might have more dice (points) in Aptitudes and Talents, but the narrator should be careful about that, or they might end up being too much for the player ponies to cope with, and that isn't much fun.

Bison (buffalo), adult
Injury levels: 2 Size 4 to 6 Run Move similar to pony
Muscle/Hardiness 3d Reflexes/Coord. 1d Smarts/Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Dodge 2d Jumping 4d Running 4d
Search 3d Sneak 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, otherwise similar to ponies

Bison (buffalo), young
Injury levels: 2 Size 0 to 1 Run Move similar to pony
Muscle/Hardiness 2d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 2d
Brawling 3d Climbing 4d Dodge 4d Jumping 4d
Running 4d Search 3d Sneak 3d Tracking 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, otherwise similar to ponies

Bull
Injury levels: 2 Size 3 to 4 Run Move 10*
Muscle/Hardiness 3d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 1d
Brawling 4d Dodge 3d Jumping 4d Lifting 4d Running 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, otherwise similar to ponies

Cow
Injury levels: 2 Size 3 to 4 Run Move 10*
Muscle/Hardiness 3d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 1d
Dodge 3d Jumping 4d Running 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, otherwise similar to ponies

Changeling
Injury levels: 2 Size 0 Move similar to pegasus
Muscle 2d Hardiness 2d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 2d
Brawling 4d Climbing 3d Dodge 4d Flying 4d Jumping 4d
Running 4d Search 3d Sneak 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, teeth +1; others similar to ponies
Abilities: can imitate the appearance, but not the special abilities, of another creature that's about the same size

Diamond dog
Injury levels: 2 Size 1 to 2 Run Move 10*
Muscle 3d Hardi. 2d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Climbing 4d Dodge 4d Intimidation 3d
Jumping 5d Running 5d Search 3d Sneak 4d Tracking 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1, claws +1

Donkey or mule
Injury levels: 2 Size 0 to 1 Run Move 10*
Muscle/Hardiness 2d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Dodge 5d Jumping 5d Running 5d Search 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, otherwise similar to ponies

Draconequus
Injury levels: 4 Size 4 Move similar to pegasus
Muscle 2d Hardiness 2d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 5d Finesse 5d
Brawling 4d Dodge 5d Flying 5d Intimidation 5d Jumping 5d
Running 4d Search 5d Sneak 5d Tracking 3d Willpower 7d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, otherwise similar to ponies
Abilities: the only draconequus shown was a master of chaos and transformation; what others may be like is unknown ➧

Dragon, adult
Injury levels: 4 Size 40 Run Move 25, Flight Move 32*
Muscle 5d Hardiness 5d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 4d
Brawling 4d Dodge 4d Intimidation 6d Flying 6d
Running 6d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 5d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 3d, teeth +1d, claws +1d; fire-breathing 3d (do not add Strength Bonus) Armor: +2 thick hide

Dragon, young
Injury levels: 2 Size 1 to 5 Move similar to pegasus
Muscle 3d Hardiness 2d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 3d
Brawling 3d Dodge 3d Intimidation 4d Flying 4d
Running 4d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +2, claws +1; fire-breathing 3d

Griffin
Injury levels: 2 Size 1 to 2 Move similar to pegasus
Muscle 2d Hardiness 2d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 2d
Brawling 4d Climbing 4d Dodge 3d Flying 4d Jumping 4d
Running 3d Search 3d Sneak 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, beak +2, talons +1d

Minotaur
Injury levels: 2 Size 2 Run Move 10*
Muscle 3d Hardi. 2d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Climbing 4d Dodge 2d Jumping 4d
Running 5d Search 3d Sneak 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, similar to unicorn (including horn)

Sea (river?) serpent
Injury levels: 2 Size 10 Swim Move 16*
Muscle/Hardiness 4d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 2d
Brawling 3d Dodge 4d Search 3d Swimming 6d Willpower 3d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +2

Sheep
Injury levels: 1 Size −1 Run Move 10*
Muscle/Hardiness 2d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 1d
Climbing 3d Dodge 3d Jumping 4d Running 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, otherwise similar to ponies

Zebra
Injury levels: 2 Size 0 Run Move similar to pony
Muscle 2d Hardiness 2d Reflexes 2d Coordination 2d
Smarts 2d Senses 2d Power 2d Finesse 2d
Alchemy 3d Brawling 3d Climbing 3d Dodge 3d Jumping 4d
Running 4d Search 3d Sneak 4d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, otherwise similar to ponies
Abilities: zebra magic seems to be alchemical—mixing potions, elixirs, and such from plant and mineral substances

* This creature adds 5 to movement difficulty for each move after the first and is limited to no more than 4 moves. For example, a diamond dog running 30 yards or an adult dragon flying 96 yards would have a movement difficulty of 10.

Dumb Creatures
Along with animals similar to those in the real world, the world of the ponies has magical animals based on myths and legends from many ancient cultures in real history; others are based on terrible puns in English. A flyer with no Finesse or Power bases its Flying Talent on Reflexes and its Flight Move on Muscle. All dumb creatures are limited to no more than 4 Moves, and add 5 to movement difficulty for each Move after the first.

Cerberus (or Kerberos)
Injury levels: 4 Size 12 Run Move 30
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Dodge 5d Intimidation 5d
Running 4d Search 3d Tracking 4d Willpower 4d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1d

Cockatrice
Injury levels: 1 Size −5 Flight Move 15
Muscle/Hardi. 1d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Flying 3d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, beak +0, talons +1; petrification, "injury" 3d (no Strength Bonus)—injury level is how much of target is turned to stone, but can be reversed by cockatrice

Hydra
Injury levels: 2 Size 15 Run Move 15
Muscle/Hardiness 5d Reflexes/Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 1d
Brawling 3d Dodge 3d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 3d, teeth +2, stomp +1d
Armor: +2 thick hide
Abilities: up to 7 heads, each able to attack individually, but it may have trouble making up its mind about what to do (use "Teamwork" rule in "Doing More Things: Special Task Rules")

Manticore
Injury levels: 2 Size 6 Run Move 35, flight Move 15
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Climbing 5d Dodge 4d Flying 5d Jumping 5d
Running 5d Search 3d Sneak 4d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, claws +2, teeth +2, tail strike, +1
Armor: +2 thick fur
Abilities: tail sting may inject venom (see cobra); up to narrator

Parasprite
Injury levels: 1 Size −13 Flight Move 15
Muscle/Hardiness 1d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts/Senses 1d
Flying 4d Dodge 4d Search 2d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, bite +0; swarm attack*

Phoenix
Injury levels: 1 Size −8 Move: Flight 32, glide 15
Muscle/Hardi. 2d Reflexes/Coord. 4d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Flying 5d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, beak +2; talons +1d; flash 3d (no Strength Bonus) dazzles (stuns) anyone nearby who fails to resist
Abilities: can fly or glide for several hundred miles or as long as thermals (air rising from warm ground) can keep them aloft ➧

Quarray eel
Injury levels: 2 Size 10 Run (slither) Move 30
Muscle/Hardiness 4d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts/Senses 1d
Brawling 5d Dodge 4d Intimidation 5d Running 4d
Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus, 2d, teeth +1d
Armor: +2 thick hide

Timberwolf
Injury levels: 2 Size 1 to 2 Run Move 25
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Dodge 5d Intimidation 5d
Running 4d Search 3d Tracking 4d Willpower 4d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1d

Ursa major
Injury levels: 4 Size 24 Run Move 30
Muscle/Hardi. 5d Reflexes 3d Coord. 2d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Dodge 4d Intimidation 5d Jumping 6d
Running 6d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 5d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 3d, claws +1d, teeth +1d
Armor: +2 astral hide

Ursa minor
Injury levels: 2 Size 12 Run Move 25
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes 3d Coord. 2d Smarts/Senses 1d
Brawling 3d Dodge 4d Intimidation 4d Jumping 5d
Running 5d Search 2d Tracking 2d Willpower 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, claws +1d, teeth +1d
Armor: +2 astral hide

Even ordinary animals in the ponies' world seem to be much more intelligent than in the real world. Still, in the wild they probably live much the same ways as their real counterparts do. These are based on listings in *Open D6* rulebooks.

* For a "swarm attack", make one Brawling roll for the whole group of creatures and add 5 to the die roll for every 10 creatures involved in the attack.

Bat, brown or red
Injury levels: 1 Size –10 Flight Move 15
Muscle/Hardiness 1d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts/Senses 1d
Brawling 4d Flying 4d Search 2d (Hearing +1d)
Tracking 2d (Sonar +1d) Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, claws +0; swarm attack*
Abilities: can fly up to a few hundred miles

Bird of prey (falcon or hawk)
Injury levels: 1 Size –9 Flight Move 32, glide 15
Muscle/Hardi. 2d Reflexes/Coord. 4d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Flying 5d Search 3d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, beak +2, talons +1d
Abilities: can fly or glide for several hundred miles or as long as thermals (air rising from warm ground) can keep them aloft

Cat, domestic
Injury levels: 1 Size –6 Run Move 20
Muscle/Hardi. 1d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Climbing 4d Dodge 4d Jumping 4d
Running 3d Search 3d Sneak 4d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, claws +2, teeth +2

Cat, large (lion, tiger, puma)
Injury levels: 2 Size 3 to 4 Run Move 30
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes 4d Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Climbing 5d Dodge 5d Jumping 5d
Running 5d Search 3d Sneak 5d Tracking 3d Willpower 3d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 2d, claws +2; teeth +2
Armor: thick fur, +2
Ability: Can leap 10 yards horizontally or 2 yards vertically

Cobra
Injury levels: 1 Size –9 Run (slither) Move 15
Muscle/Hardi. 1d Reflexes/Coord. 4d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Dodge 5d Intimidation 4d Running 5d Search 3d
Sneak 5d Tracking 3d Venom-Spitting 4d Willpower 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, fangs +1d; venom injected if Brawling roll succeeds by 5 or more (venom can cause 1 injury level every 10 minutes until victim dies or is treated—roll Hardiness or Stamina dice against poison difficulty 25 to resist)
Ability: can use "called shot" rule to spit venom into target's eyes or mouth

Dog, domestic
Injury levels: 1 Size: –5 Run Move 25
Muscle/Hardi. 3d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Dodge 4d Intimidation 3d
Running 4d Search 3d Tracking 4d Willpower 4d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1d

Dog, guard
Injury levels: 2 Size: –4 Run Move 25
Muscle/Hardi. 4d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 5d Dodge 6d Intimidation 5d
Running 4d Search 3d Tracking 4d Willpower 4d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1d

Rat
Injury levels: 1 Size: –9 Run Move 3
Muscle/Hardi. 1d Reflexes/Coord. 3d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Acrobatics 3d+1 Brawling 5d Climbing 3d+2 Dodge 3d+1
Hide (self only) 4d Jumping 4d Running 3d
Search 3d Swimming 1d+2 Willpower 4d
Attacks: Strength Bonus 1d, teeth +0; swarm attack*

Shark
Injury levels: 2 Size: 3 to 4 Swim Move 16
Muscle/Hardi. 3d Reflexes 3d Coord. 2d Smarts 1d Senses 2d
Brawling 4d Intimidation 6d Search 3d
Swimming 5d Tracking 3d Willpower 7d
Attack: Strength Bonus 2d, teeth +1d
Armor: +2 thick hide ✶

~ Part Three of Four ✶ The Magical Land: Game Setting ~

The rules deliver a way to handle, fairly and consistently, what happens in a role-playing game, but that's only half the job. The other half is the *setting*—the universe in which the game takes place. In the case of *Pony Tales,* that setting is the country, and the world, where the magical ponies live.

A **timetable** of discoveries and inventions lists a sampling of important developments in several fields from the 1820s through the 1920s to provide historical context. The dates listed are very rough and the entries are just examples; the word "modern" is used loosely to mean that a discovery or invention is *starting* to look like it does today.

Background on the ponies' technology and culture, and speculation about it, covers eight broad topics: agriculture, power sources, materials and metallurgy, transportation, information, medicine, military affairs, and society in general.

Mini-essays examine those and other relevant subjects, looking under the surface, making connections that may not be obvious, and offering suggestions to narrator and players alike for using the background information in a game.

Repeating History

This part was written to provide as much information as possible without going overboard. The idea is that it's better to give a narrator more than she might need, so she can pick and choose what elements to keep and which to throw out, than it is to provide only a little information and force a narrator who wants more detail to go through a bunch of tedious research.

It's important to remember, though, that history is complicated and full of surprises. Cramming big chunks of it into a few pages means that lots of details get tossed out, and what's left over only scratches the surface. A lot of discoveries and inventions happened earlier or later than many people think, and there are endless arguments over who discovered or invented what and whether he or she was first at it.

Still, a narrator and group of players should be able to get a basic understanding of the nineteenth-century time period the show's creator tried to capture, when society was in the midst of leaving behind centuries-old rural and agrarian ways of life as urbanization and industrialization took hold. ✶

	Power, Light, Heat	Materials	Transportation	Information	Health and Safety
Before 1820s	Windmill, steam power, water wheel, limited gas lighting, early wet cell (battery)	Steel, synthetic pigments, sewing machine, platinum discovered, flintlock	Macadam, velocipede bicycle, hot-air/gas balloon, sailing ship, paddlewheel	Steam printing press, mechanical paper-making, acoustic megaphone	Germ theory, surgery, stethoscope, pill, early anæsthesia, icebox, inoculation, canning
1820s	Portable steam engine, early internal combustion engine, friction match	Portland cement, rubber balloon, thermocouple, bolt action, percussion cap	***Steam locomotive,*** marine propellor	Large-circulation newspapers, Fresnel lens	Modern dental braces, first modern city fire brigade (Edinburgh)
1830s	Widespread steam power, gas oven, Daniel cell (battery)	Steel plow, mechanical lawnmower	Combine harvester, modern "caterpillar" tracks	Telegraphy, Morse code, plate photography, Babbage engines (never finished)	Gel capsule (for medications), first modern police force (London)
1840s	Corliss steam engine, early arc lighting, Grove cell (battery)	Vulcanized rubber, rubber band, nitroglycerine, guncotton, squeeze tube	Early ocean liner, railway semaphore signal	High-speed printing, wood-pulp paper, wind-up alarm clock, postage stamp	Modern anæsthesia, pressure-sensitive adhesive tape (first used in surgery)
1850s	Heat radiator, gas heater, widespread gas/kerosene lighting, lead-acid battery	Mass-produced steel, petroleum cracking, first synthetic dyes, metallic cartridge	Steam tractor, steel railroad rail, safety elevator, steam-powered fire engine	Modern fountain pen, mass-produced watch, "absolute zero" discovered	Commercial refrigeration
1860s	Practical internal combustion engine, fluorescent lighting, gravity cell (battery)	Many synthetic pigments, helium discovered, cranked automatic action	Early glider, early (gas) traffic light, railway air brake	Typewriter, wristwatch, first color photography, periodic table of the elements	Sterilization and pasteurization, Mendelian inheritance
1870s	Hydroelectric power, practical carbon arc lighting, supercharger	Celluloid plastic, gelignite, gem-quality synthetic rubies, lawn sprinkler	Larger ocean liner, reefer (refrigerated) ship, windjammer, penny-farthing bicycle	Telephone, cylinder phonograph, cheap pocket watch, carbon microphone	Modern sutures and germ theory, widespread commercial refrigeration
1880s	Limited electricity, dry cell (battery), early incandescent lighting, steam & wind turbines	Mass-produced aluminum, cordite, self-loading and fully automatic actions	Nonrigid airship using hydrogen, pneumatic tire, modern (safety) bicycle	Cash register, early film photography, linotype machine	Vaccinations for more diseases, silk dental floss on the market, pasteurized milk
1890s	Subatomic particles and radioactivity discovered, gas water heater with tank	Spray painting, noble gases discovered, glass-blowing machine (mass-produce bottles)	Automobile, motorcycle, steam-turbine ship, escalator	Early radio, silent movies, high-accuracy pocket watch	X-ray photography, aspirin, antitoxins, "crown cork" bottle cap
1900s	Einsteinian physics, diesel engine, turbocharger, nicad and nickel-iron batteries	Bakelite, cellophane, synthetic pigments, improved vulcanization, synthetic rubber	Airplane, rigid airship, military armored car, railway light signal, gasoline fire engine	Modern photography, early color film, disk phonograph, early ball-point pen	Blood types, modern blood transfusions, vitamins discovered, chromosome theory
1910s	Superconductivity discovered, Bohr atomic model, neon lighting	Early artificial fibers, helium production, stainless steel, growing metal crystals	Gasoline tractor, tank (armored fighting vehicle), electric traffic light	Radio broadcasting, condenser microphone, sonar, high-accuracy wristwatch	Laporoscopic surgery, antibiotics, genetic map of chromosome, self-serve supermarket
1920s	Large electrical grids, modern incandescent lighting, early quantum physics	Polymer plastics, zipper, Pyrex glass, ærosol spray, consumer adhesive tape	***Diesel locomotive,*** autogyro aircraft, use of helium in airships, parking meter	Movie sound, electric guitar, self-winding watch, photo booth, electric bullhorn	Vaccinations for many diseases, household refrigeration, modern genetic research

The show presents the ponies' country as a picturesque, fantastical land of magic. However, instead of a storybook rendition of the Middle Ages, with knights in shining armor, castles, and wizards in towers, the ponies seem to be in the middle of their version of the Industrial Revolution—which in real history took place mostly during the nineteenth century. How can one tell, though? The program isn't very consistent about the kinds of technology it shows, after all.

There are lots of examples throughout this part of the rulebook, but one technology in particular pins down the time period pretty well: The steam locomotive entered commercial service in the 1820s, and diesel locomotives started to replace steam in the 1920s. To narrow things even more, the style of locomotive shown in the program is similar to designs used in the United States during the 1860s to the 1880s. So the focus will be on the century of the steam locomotive, with special attention to the middle three decades. This should provide some historical context as well as specific information to help the narrator decide just what she may want to include or leave out.

As much as possible, information about the show's setting is based on the episodes, but some came out of comments by, interviews of, or question-and-answer sessions with people working on the show. That includes the show's creator, who's warned that since she isn't with the show any more, things may have changed. Still, it's useful to know what she was thinking when she did the original creative work.

Why Is the Show's Technology So Inconsistent?

The show's supervising director has commented that technology looks so strange because the show's staff try to write about and show things that are familiar to a modern audience—especially younger viewers—even if some of them otherwise might look out of place. Moreover, the show's mostly a comedy, and the writers seem willing to stretch things for a good laugh.

The staff is trying for a fairy-tale feel, but it's possible that, even if or when they want to stay "in period", there's not much time for research or double-checking things they put in the scripts. A narrator may be able to explain some of the gaps by assuming the ponies are better at, say, entertainment technology, because they don't spend as much time and energy on other things like war. (Of course, they obviously know what war is, since the main character asks if her future self has come back in time from an "epic pony war in the distant future", a joke based on many science-fiction movies and video games.)

Even leaving aside the most obvious *anachronisms*—things that are out of place for a given time period—it can be tough to nail down a specific date. There aren't any telephones, which showed up in the 1870s, but there *are* cash registers and linotype machines, which came later, in the 1880s. Color photographs and disk phonographs are products of the 1900s, yet everyone uses quill pens instead of the fountain pens that began to replace them even before the 1850s.The toys based on the show especially can be way out of the time period, since they include things like pick-up trucks and microwave ovens!

Still and all, it's a show for children about brightly colored magical ponies, so it shouldn't be taken *too* seriously. This information is presented simply to get people to ask questions and look up answers as far as they're comfortable doing. ✶

~ *Agriculture* ~

Farming and keeping livestock are well developed on the show. Family farms raise a wide variety of crops and other plants, including apples, carrots, celery, corn, and many different kinds of flowers. Farmers' markets and neighborhood stores sell the produce of the country's farms and orchards. It seems safe to guess that the ponies raise just about any food crop there is, no matter where in the world it comes from, as long as there's someplace with the right climate and soil for it.

Tea and chocolate seem to be popular, and one episode showed coffee (in *cappucino*). All three are from the tropics, but it isn't clear whether the ponies have to import them from other lands or they can be grown somewhere in the country.

The apple cider shown in one episode had foam "heads" when poured; that only happens if there's alcohol in it. Alcohol is a preservative and antiseptic, which is necessary where water may not be safe to drink without treatment. Beer, cider, and wine also contain some vitamins and other nutrients. If the narrator and players want to include alcohol, that means vinyards and wine casks, beer breweries, cider mills, and distilleries—as well as pubs and taverns. Incidentally, the idea of a "drinking age" is very recent, arising during the twentieth century where safe drinking water had become commonplace.

Most natural fabrics seem to be available for clothes, banners, and flags. There probably are cotton plantations and sheep ranches, sheep-shears and shearing sheds, cotton gins, spinning jennies and Jacquard looms, and other machines and industries needed to turn fibers into thread and cloth.

The ponies keep other animals too: cattle for milk, chickens for eggs, and pigs for less obvious reasons. The show's creator, when asked why ponies kept pigs (raised for meat in the real world), answered that the ponies really like truffles—certain kinds of mushrooms—which pigs can be trained to sniff out. Boar hair also was used to make paintbrushes, toothbrushes, and hairbrushes, though modern plastics mostly took their place in the mid-twentieth century. Manure from animals might be used in fertilizers.

Earth ponies have a magical connection to the land and to living things, but they also seem to understand scientific methods and techniques. Crop rotation, including letting land lie *fallow* (temporarily unplanted) to "rest" and renew its ability to grow plants, is the most important. Absolute control over the seasons and weather, thanks to the pegasus ponies, would make crop failures and bad harvests rare. Ponies probably don't go hungry much, and even the poorest ones can afford a decent diet. Only the holiday pageants retelling the story of the country's founding would remind ponies what could happen if things went badly wrong.

Tools used on the farm include pony-drawn plows and other devices, as well as hoes, shovels and spades, rakes, and bare hooves. Heavier equipment hasn't been shown, but portable steam engines came around in the 1820s. They were powerful, but big and expensive, so *granges* (organizations of local farmers) would get together to buy or lease them, and move them from farm to farm as they were needed. Steam tractors appeared in the 1850s, but the ponies can do their own pulling, so they may not be very interested in that kind of invention. ✶

~ *Power* ~

Windmills and water wheels dot the landscape, particularly in the small town where most of the show takes place. The ponies probably have been building them for centuries—but what about more advanced sources of power?

Muscle, Water, and Wind

Thanks to powerful muscles, the ponies themselves are a reliable source of energy. They probably are masters of building and using mechanisms to turn their own efforts into power for threshing, winnowing, grinding, hauling, and a lot of other agricultural and industrial tasks.

Windmills and water wheels have been around for some two thousand years, so these too probably are things the ponies understand very well. They're limited to providing mechanical power right next door, though, which means they have to be built where there's good water or wind power, not where it would be most convenient for whatever industries are using them.

Steam

The first high-pressure steam engines were invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Much more powerful than earlier designs, they helped to make the Industrial Revolution possible, and led directly to the world we know today.

Early steam engines were fueled with wood or coal; the classic steam locomotive with its coal car is well-known even now. For most of the nineteenth century, the mechanism used by a steam engine was *reciprocating,* using back-and-forth motions, which usually meant big pistons and cylinders. Oil-fired steam turbines arrived in the 1880s, and saw their first widespread use in steamships; they mostly replaced reciprocating steam engines in the early part of the twentieth century.

A big problem with burning wood or especially coal is air pollution. The infamous "London fog" of the nineteenth century killed untold numbers of people and made noon as gloomy as night. The ponies probably wouldn't put up with that kind of problem getting out of hand (or hoof). Pegasus ponies may use their flight and cloud-working to deal with smoke, earth ponies may create new inventions to filter and trap it, and unicorn ponies may contribute magical solutions.

Other Power Sources

The earliest internal-combustion engines showed up in the 1820s, with improved versions coming around in the 1860s. However, they weren't reliable enough or powerful enough for use in motor vehicles until the 1890s, which is a big reason why automobiles appeared at that time. For a while steam competed with gasoline, but it lost out because there isn't much else that packs as much energy into a pound of fuel as gasoline does—and is as easy to burn and use.

Most other power sources familiar to people today were introduced during the twentieth century, especially after the Second World War, so it's almost certain that they wouldn't be available to the ponies at all.

Electricity

The show's creator has said that the ponies don't have—or at least aren't *supposed* to have—electricity. That means their technology probably isn't much more advanced than the 1880s, when electricity started to be more than just a novelty.

Hydroelectric and wind turbines were early sources of electric power starting in the 1870s, but until big electrical grids developed in the early and mid-twentieth century, they were limited to supplying nearby buildings or towns. Most hydroelectric power comes from big dams and reservoirs; a dam with hydro plant has shown up, only to burst and threaten the town with flooding. That episode was full of funny movie clichés, though, so taking it with a grain of salt may be wise.

Cooking, Lighting, and Heating

A traditional wood- or charcoal-burning brick bakery oven might be so large that the whole building would be constructed around it. Nineteenth-century ovens and stoves were made of iron, and most of them burned wood. Gas-burning appliances went on the market in the 1830s. The electric gadgets that fill kitchen counters today didn't exist; everything was done with muscle-power, and it was hard work.

Gas lighting started to replace oil lamps early in the nineteenth century, but during the 1850s it got to be pretty widespread. Several episodes use the sound effect of a light switch being flipped, probably so a modern audience would recognize it, but a gas light going on makes a *whoosh* sound (kind of like a gas stove burner being lit) and wouldn't light up a room as suddenly or as brightly as an electric light.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, heat came mostly from fireplaces and wood-burning stoves. Radiators, first using hot water and later steam, were invented in the 1850s. Gas heaters were invented at about the same time, and improved versions came out in the 1880s.

Magic

As part of the comment mentioned earlier, the creator added that she consoled herself with the idea that unicon inventors might make enchanted appliances, explaining the existence of "electrical" devices. At least one episode has taken this idea and run with it. Still, being cautious about using it probably is a good idea.

Unicorn magic mostly seems to be limited to a scale not far from what an individual pony can do by more ordinary means. (Remember that the main character of the show is considered to be unusually strong magically!) That limited scale may be to keep the unicorn ponies from being more powerful than the other kinds of ponies and to prevent the earth ponies in particular from being overshadowed. Think about this: if enchanting things is easy, why bother using technology at all?

That said, it may be possible for clever ponies to come up with inventions that can make use of unicorn magic. It's easy to imagine, for instance, a smithy or machine shop run by a partnership of earth ponies for most of the inventing, designing, and heavy labor, and unicorn ponies for fine work using levitation and spell-casting for tricky or troublesome tasks. ✶

~ *Materials* ~

All the classical substances seem to be available to the ponies—wood, stone, brick, glass, metals known since ancient times, and natural fibers such as cotton, wool, and silk. Whether the ponies use animal products such as leather and ivory is an open question; as herbivores, they may not like the idea, and such things are controversial even in the real world, so the writers may not want to bring it up.

Construction

The town where most of the show takes place is built mostly of thatched half-timbered buildings, like old European villages; a lot of Europe's forests disappeared gradually during the Middle Ages, so wood wasn't available for roofing. Much of the capital city is built of stone, like larger European towns and cities that have been around a long time. The country's biggest city uses lots of brick, and houses, streets, and stores look like photos of New York in the late nineteenth century.

Not only does that show what the ponies use to build things with, it also shows that different towns or neighborhoods are built from different materials. A narrator can use that when describing places, to help give players a vivid mental picture, and a narrator who's really interested can decide what's used in a town or city by figuring out what's available because of trade or local mines and industries.

Glass

The ponies make telescopes, eyeglasses, and even sunglasses, and every window is *glazed* (covered with glass). Most of these uses were well-developed during the nineteenth century. Sunglasses using smoky quartz for the lenses were known even to the ancient Chinese, but it wasn't until the early twentieth century that they became widely popular. The "designer shades" on some episodes are very modern-looking, possibly so the audience would recognize them as being trendy and up-to-date, rather than see them as old-fashioned.

Metals

Along with precious metals like gold and silver, metals known since the ancient world include copper, iron, and their alloys. In the case of copper, those alloys are brass—copper and zinc—and bronze—copper and (usually) tin. In the case of iron, those alloys are steel, using different additives to get different kinds. Large-scale production of high-quality steel came along in the 1850s with the Bessemer process.

Other metals such as aluminum were being discovered, but were very hard to get, because ways of separating the pure metals from raw ores hadn't been developed yet. Aluminum was as valuable as silver! It was only in the 1880s that the Hall-Héroult process began producing aluminum in quanitity, making it much cheaper.

The ponies probably make much use of brass, bronze, and iron, and probably steel, as well as gold and silver for jewelry and other specialized purposes. They may have aluminum, but not titanium or other exotic metals.

Rubber and Plastics

Rubber in its natural state is sticky, brittle when cold, and doesn't keep its shape when warm. *Vulcanization* solved those problems in the 1850s and made rubber practical for all sorts of uses. In the twentieth century, especially since the Second World War, plastics replaced vulcanized rubber for many of those uses. It's *very* likely the ponies don't have those plastics at all. The only plastic they may have is celluloid, which in real history came out in the 1870s; it was used in movie film and as a substitute for ivory, horn, and other animal products, which were much more expensive. However, it's also kind of fragile and very flammable, which is why in the early twentieth century other materials like Bakelite replaced it.

Fabrics

Natural fibers include cotton, flax, hemp, linen, jute, sisal, wool, and silk, among others. Most have been known since ancient times, and as noted in the section on agriculture, the ponies probably are able to produce most of them, and may trade for the rest. Silk comes from butterfly cocoons and wool comes from sheep; the rest are plant products.

There may be thriving industries for spinning raw fibers into thread, weaving thread into cloth, and coloring thread and cloth with dyes. All of them are hard work, and unless there are strict work-safety laws, they can do pretty nasty things to the people working in them. It's probably safe to assume the ponies have such laws!

Artificial fibers didn't appear until the twentieth century. A few of them were invented in the early part of the century, but most were invented in the 1940s and later. The ponies probably don't have any of them.

Pigments and Dyes

The stuff that gives paint its color is called *pigment.* Most natural pigments are mineral—ground-up soil or rock. It's not hard to guess that many are poisonous and expensive. A few natural pigments did come from plants or animals, often from distant lands. *Synthetic* (man-made) pigments began to appear in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. As chemistry advanced in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, most of the old pigments were replaced with cheaper and safer synthetics, and many can't be found today.

The show features very bright colors, even (or especially) on buildings and in art painted by ponies. Part of that is artistic license, to make the animation pretty and appealing, of course. Some of it may be that mineral pigments are unusually easy for the ponies to find or to get. Magic may play a role in prospecting, among other things; one episode featured a spell to detect gemstones, for instance.

Before the twentieth century, most *dyes* came from plants, and many weren't very vivid; the few that could make bright colors were rare and valuable. The dyes weren't *color-fast,* meaning they didn't stick well to the fibers, so washing tended to rinse dyes right out of fabric. (Underwear was invented to keep sweat from getting into clothing, so it didn't need to be washed as much.) Even today, a lot of washing can make dyes fade, which is why so many advertisements for laundry detergents make a big deal about how bright colors are after using them. ✶

~ Transportation ~

Carts, wagons, and carriages are the most common vehicles shown in the first season's episodes, all of them pulled by ponies. The only mechanical vehicles seen so far, both in an episode of the first season and especially throughout the second season, are steam-powered railroad locomotives.

Railroads

The earliest known railroad dates back to ancient Greece, and they began to reappear in medieval Europe. Through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they gradually improved and by 1800 they were pretty well-developed. Trains really were drawn by horses until steam locomotives started appearing in the 1820s. Steel rails started to replace iron in the 1850s. Electrified trains arrived in the 1880s and diesel locomotives began to displace steam in the 1920s.

The steam locomotives shown on the program are typical of the United States in the 1860s. The *rolling stock* (train cars, as a group) is smaller than most US designs, and looks more like what was seen in Britain, where railways often use tighter curves and smaller tunnels. That's probably for good cartoon (and toy) appeal.

Oddly, one first-season episode shows a team of ponies hauling what seems to be a perfectly functional locomotive for no apparent reason, before a herd of bison try to stop the train. Nobody's given an official explanation, but it may have been a last-minute script change to make the scene seem less violent. Bumping shoulders with a pony teamster is one thing; derailing a locomotive is a lot more serious!

What the episode calls a "private sleeper car" actually is a *caboose,* a car used as an office and sleeping space for the train's crew, as well as a place to keep a look-out for hazards and problems with the train or tracks. Modern trains don't use them because technology reduced crew sizes and made it easier to watch for problems.

An episode in the second season shows a simplified caboose, and calls one of the crew a *conductor,* but that actually was the *engineer.* A conductor deals with the passengers, taking tickets, answering questions, and so on. An engineer keeps the engine running and controls the train's operations.

Railroads have been around in the real world for centuries. In the show they run from the capital through the small town where the main cast live, and even out to a small frontier town. Railroads seem to serve much of the country—but not all of it. Roads and waterways probably make up the rest of the network.

Roads

In major cities, cobblestone streets are common. Highways may be built like Roman roads—some of which still are used today, centuries after they were built—or macadam roads, which arose in the 1770s and 1780s and were the first designed using modern scientific methods. Concrete also would be available, but it's more likely to be used on bridges and city streets than on country roads; large blocks of concrete are hard to maintain or repair if they crack or crumble.

Tarmac and asphalt roads historically showed up in the 1920s, when automobile traffic got heavy enough to cause problems on macadam roads. Since pony technology mostly seems to predate the twentieth century, they probably aren't able to build, and (without automobiles) really don't need, roads of this kind.

Carts, wagons, and carriages seem to be well-designed and well-built. Leaf-spring suspensions, iron-strapped spoke wheels, full collars and breastcollars, and whippletrees all date back to the Middle Ages. The ponies plainly have developed all these devices to as near perfection as their technology allows.

Seafaring

Believe it or not, the most energy-efficient form of transportation ever invented is the mule-drawn canal barge! Canals and rivers even today remain important "roads", and before good roads and good railroads became common in the nineteenth century, they often were the *only* way to get large cargoes around. Since ponies usually provide their own power, it's easy to imagine single ponies or teams towing barges the same way they do trains and wagons.

The show hasn't touched on the ocean, so the narrator who wants to do so has to rely on real-world history as a guide. In the 1850s, iron started to replace wood for building hulls, at first in warships, then gradually in other kinds of ships. (War is, perhaps lamentably, the real world's biggest source of invention.) Steel started to replace iron in the 1870s.

The first paddlewheel steamboats and steamships appeared in the late eighteenth century, primarily for river and canal use. Screw propulsion appeared in the 1840s, mostly on ocean-going ships—especially warships. Screws are more powerful than paddlewheels, but paddlewheels can work in much shallower water.

The age of sail wasn't over quite yet, though. Clipper ships and full-rigged ships served at least from the late eighteenth century through most of the nineteenth. The windjammer with its iron (or, later, steel) hull and scientific design started to take over from them in the 1870s; it could compete with early steamships, and the last windjammers didn't retire from commercial service until after the Second World War!

Aviation

The ponies apparently use hot-air balloons and airships a lot, and one episode shows an early form of glider; both look like designs dating to the late nineteenth century. A late-twentieth-century hang-glider is shown once, mostly as a sight gag. Powered aircraft are completely absent, other than a very cartoony pedal-driven gyrocopter-like gadget, which may have been put in the script when the character using it was changed from a pegasus pony to an earth pony during the show's development.

Airplanes probably aren't a priority for ponies, since pegasus ponies already can fly and can draw chariots and wagons through the air. The ponies seem to understand the science of flying, which is why they can build gliders, but they don't have the powerful engines needed for aviation—steam plants aren't very efficient for use on aircraft. ✶

~ *Information* ~

Probably the wildest variations on the show are in information technology. Books and phonograph recordings are important media, as they really were in the later part of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, a brainwave monitor, a dual-turntable DJ deck, and a heart-monitor cutie mark have been shown, all based on electronic technology that didn't exist before the 1970s.

Print

The oldest mass medium got its start with movable lead type and the printing press in the fifteenth century. It revolutionized how information was stored and moved and made education and literacy enormously easier to get. Still, aside from minor improvements, it didn't change much over the next three hundred years.

In the nineteenth century printing was getting faster and more effective thanks to steam power, but it wasn't keeping up with growing demand. New high-speed rotary presses came out in the 1840s, giving print houses the ability to churn out mountains of books, newspapers, and magazines. The existence of a large library owned by or at least available to a young student, and of a public library in a small town, argue that books are common and inexpensive for the ponies.

Newspapers probably are the main source of news. Every large or important city would have at least one daily paper. Most large towns may have dailies and certainly would have weekly papers. Smaller towns and villages may have weeklies or may depend on nearby larger urban centers for newspapers.

The episode about a school newpaper showed a couple of cartoony *linotype machines,* which appeared in the 1880s. These made it possible for newspapers to expand beyond eight pages and sparked an explosion in magazine publishing. There probably are scores or hundreds of magazines across the country, on every subject under the sun (or moon, if one prefers).

Photography

Both a bellows camera and single-lens reflex (SLR) cameras are shown on the same episode. Bellows cameras have existed since the 1850s, but SLR cameras came out in the 1950s—another case of the artists using a familiar device for the audience's benefit. Practical color film started to appear at the beginning of the twentieth century, and digital cameras started to appear at the end of the twentieth century. Silent movies started showing in the 1890s and sound was added in the 1920s.

Sound

Wind-up phonographs invented in the 1870s played scratchy, tinny *monaural* (not stereo) sound recordings on waxed cylinders. In the early twentieth century, new models played recordings on flat shellac disks; vinyl came later, in the 1950s. Compact discs appeared in the 1980s, but records still are made because some people like their sound better. The only other audio equipment shown are the previously mentioned DJ deck and some microphones, which are obvious examples of the animators using devices familiar to a modern audience in order to set the right kind of tone for a specific scene.

Computing Devices

Various forms of abacus have been around for thousands of years. Adding machines first appeared in the 1640s and became widespread in the mid-nineteenth century. Charles Babbage in the 1830s designed and tried to build giant mechanical calculating machines, but never got enough money or cooperation to finish any. Even if he had, the industry of the time might not have been quite up to the task. Electronic computers weren't invented until the middle of the twentieth century.

Writing and Signage

In early episodes the ponies' written language was shown as pictographic, using symbols from their everyday lives and possibly influenced by cutie marks. Later it's shown as vaguely like the Latin alphabet used by English and other European languages, but smudged so it doesn't look exactly like any real language. The narrator's probably free to decide what she wants it to look like. Signs hanging outside shops are pictorial, without any writing, which is how almost all signs looked before literacy became common in the nineteenth century.

Mail and Telecommunications

The electric telegraph made its commercial debut in the 1830s; telegraph lines often were laid alongside the railroads that were expanding rapidly during the same time period. People experimented with telephones all through the nineteenth century, but practical devices didn't appear until the 1870s. Radio began to appear in the 1890s and television is a product of the mid-twentieth century.

The second season's shown telegrams, so there probably is a telegraph network, but there are no telephones, much less radio or television. It's easy to understand why—calling up the princess for a quick friendship report, rather than using magical parchments and dragon-breath, wouldn't be nearly as much fun for viewers.

Instead, they probably use a really good postal service, just as people used before all that newfangled stuff came along. For packages and cheap postage, earth ponies probably haul large *vans* (enclosed wagons) from town to town. For faster but still inexpensive rates, earth ponies and some unicorn ponies may gallop with saddlebags. More expensive express mail could be sent by pegasus pony. (The obvious puns about "pony express" and "air mail" come to mind.) Deliveries might come twice a day—morning and afternoon—seven days a week, and city ponies might even send letters or postcards across town. They probably don't use postal or ZIP (Zone Improvement Program) codes, however; those were introduced after the Second World War in the middle of the twentieth century.

Sending mail by magic probably would be rarest, fastest, and of course most expensive, unless a pony happens to have an advantage like a live-in dragon. Speaking of said live-in dragon, the show's creator has said she figured, after he was hatched by the show's main character, that the older princess reared him and taught him the spells for sending and receiving letters. Later he was reunited with the show's main character because the princess thought the pony who hatched him should be a part of his life. ✶

~ *Medicine* ~

In the eighteenth century, medicine was turning from an art into a science. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, this medical revolution was well under way. The "wild card" for pony medicine is magic, which may affect it more than anything else except possibly agriculture.

General Health Care

Medical care probably isn't hard for ponies to get, since they live in a wealthy, peaceful country, and many of them may be diligent about getting check-ups and preventive care, a good example to follow. Still, they apparently don't have universal health care; a goal mentioned by one of the show's main characters is saving up to get a replacement hip joint for her grandmother. Of course, joint replacements didn't come around in the real world until after the Second World War, so this may be another case of the writers stretching things for the sake of a good joke.

It's sad but true that infant mortality was the biggest reason populations didn't grow quickly before modern medicine—too many children didn't make it past their first couple of birthdays. Since the ponies live in a fairy-tale land, they may not have had as much trouble with that in their history. Besides, they probably consider prenatal and postnatal care of both *dam* (mother) and foal to be really important. In another century the land may be covered with ponies!

Pharmaceuticals

Germ theory evolved through the early part of the nineteenth century, and in the 1870s and later matured into its modern form. Inoculation against disease was introduced to the West in the eighteenth century, but in the 1880s and after vaccinations improved in effectiveness, technique, and the number of diseases covered.

In the 1890s, aspirin was derived from willow bark, a traditional painkiller sometimes applied by brewing it into tea. Antibiotics and other antibacterial drugs started to show up in the early twentieth century. It's possible, though, that the magical nature of the ponies' world may give them some advantages in discovering and making pharmaceutical remedies sooner than in the real world.

Not only do the ponies have all the plants of the real world, grown by them or imported from other lands, but there seem to be lots of magical plants, such as the blue plant that plays pranks on unlucky creatures who touch it. The narrator's as free as the writers to think up new ones, especially ones important to the story.

Alert viewers may wonder how the ponies can dismiss curses and ghosts as superstition, yet accept magic as a fact of their lives. How can a cure for the blue plant's pranks be "natural"? In the ponies' world, that plant *is* natural. The cure for it would be natural too. Magic works by laws that can be discovered and written down. Curses, ghosts, and other products of superstition can't be explained the same way; there's no way for them to work under the laws of science—and to the ponies, magic is a science too. It's as natural as physics, chemistry, or biology.

Surgery and Dental Care

Surgery, including dental surgery, is very old; there's evidence of it happening even in prehistoric times. Still, it wasn't until the nineteenth century that surgery started getting less horrible and more reliable. A big reason was a better understanding of the body and how it's put together, but a lot of other factors contributed too.

Early anæsthetics were around in the early nineteenth century, and better ones, along with better ways of using them, began to show up in the 1840s. Sterilization started preventing infection in the 1860s. Primitive blood transfusions appeared in the 1810s, with improvements like blood typing in the 1900s.

Toothbrushes also are ancient, but by the nineteenth century they were starting to look like modern ones, and early in the century the first toothpastes were showing up. Dental floss made of silk was invented at about the same time, but didn't go on the market until the 1880s. (Today it's made of nylon, which was invented in the 1930s.)

Food Safety and Preservation

Canning was invented in the 1810s, but older ways to preserve foods, including salting, drying, pickling, and candying, have been around for centuries or millennia. Pasteurization, a product of the 1860s, cut down on food poisoning.

The icebox, invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century, kept food cool— but a block of ice had to be put in it to do the job. The ice gradually melted, of course, and had to be replaced every so often; the meltwater had to be drained, too. A whole industry grew up around collecting, storing, and delivering ice.

Large-scale refrigeration came about in the 1850s, at first for use in warehouses by brewers, butchers, and other businesses, including ice houses, which supplied ice for iceboxes. Refrigeration wasn't scaled down for household use until the 1920s, after electrification became common across the industrialized world.

Magic

Earth-pony magic is centered on the land, living things, and the arts (both creative and mechanical). Medicine, both for ponies and for other creatures, clearly is a part of that. Consider that the nurses shown on several episodes are earth ponies. Some unicorns apparently have spell talents related to medicine, too.

Earth magic probably allows a pony to sense where an injury or illness is in a patient, and may guide the pony in choosing a treatment. It might be a subtle thing: something "feels right" to do. Even so, it's likely the ponies study medicine as a science; if nothing else, they probably want to learn why and how their magic guides them, to double-check what they do and to avoid making mistakes.

Spell magic is more spectacular and obvious, but it can't work miracles. A unicorn pony almost certainly can't heal a patient all at once. Instead, what a spell can do probably is similar to a physical exam or a surgical operation, or a treatment of about that level of effort. If it were able to do much more than that, it wouldn't be a spell, it would be a super-power. ✶

~ *Military* ~

The existence of a Royal Guard and of *barding*—armor worn by equines—are signs of a military tradition that may come originally from the ancient pegasus tribe. The show called the tribe's leader a *commander,* but that's a modern navy rank equal to the army rank of *lieutenant colonel.* This is a common mix-up because a similar term, *commanding officer,* means an officer of any rank in charge of a military unit. A more fitting one-word rank for a military dictator would be *general.*

The Royal Guard

The modern soldiery seen most often is the Royal Guard. Its primary role appears to be guarding the royal family and the capital. It also carries out important royal errands, such as conveying the protégé of the sun princess, and her dragon sidekick, in a sky chariot to the small town that would become their new home.

Unicorn ponies have been shown providing security at festivals or other public gatherings. Pegasus ponies often fly escort for the princesses and act as bodyguards during their visits. A few earth-pony guards also have been shown, starting with the last episodes of the second season.

Guardsponies' barding looks to be gold-plated and decorative but functional. Its design is fanciful, borrowing from *lorica segmentata*—the style of armor historically worn by Roman legionaries—and from real barding worn by *destriers,* the warhorses of medieval European knights. The *helm* (helmet) is modeled loosely on the Roman *galea* (gay-lee-ah), complete with ceremonial crest. The design may have come down from the ancient pegasus tribe, which apparently used similar armor.

Oddly, the guards' uniform appearance isn't limited to their barding; most of the guards are shown in the episodes with gray coats and white tails or white coats with blue tails. The real reason probably is to make life easier for the animators, who can duplicate one ready-made model as many times as they need for a scene. Maybe the armor is enchanted to change the way its wearer looks, and when a guard takes it off, he changes back to his normal appearance.

This enchantment would help fulfill the role of a uniform, which is to reinforce a sense of group identity and belonging for every member of a military force. Note that the barding covers a guard's cutie mark; perhaps the magic of a cutie mark is strong enough to overcome such an enchantment!

The show's creator has said that guardsponies are paid for their service and hinted that the guard is a volunteer force. Certainly they seem to be well-trained and well-disciplined, which is easier to achieve for an all-volunteer service than for a *conscripted* (drafted) force. Beyond this, however, little is known of the guard; from here, the blanks must be filled in with guesswork based on real military history.

The Roman influence in the Guard's barding has led to speculation that the guard is organized, like the Roman army, into *centuries, maniples* or *cohorts,* and *legions,* with officer ranks like *centurion, prefect, tribune,* and *legate.* Another possibility is to use British or European army organization and ranks of the nineteenth century, in keeping with the era the show's creator seemed to have in mind.

The Guard seems to be the closest thing to an army the ponies have, and even if it isn't very big, there's probably more of it than is shown on any of the episodes. There must be room for all three tribes of ponies, but whatever organization is used probably makes each unit all one kind of pony. A flying unit wouldn't be much good if it isn't made up completely of pegasus ponies, after all.

In the nineteenth century, armies had three basic branches: the infantry, the cavalry, and the artillery. The infantry was an army's main strength. The cavalry was fast and mobile. The artillery was hard-hitting at a distance, but if an enemy got close, it was very vulnerable. The three kinds of ponies are sort of the same way, if one thinks of tough, strong earth ponies as infantry, fast-flying pegasus ponies as (air) cavalry, and spell-casting but less rugged unicorn ponies as artillery.

A pet tortoise is named "Tank", after the heaviest type of armored fighting vehicle—but tanks were invented, in Britain, during the First World War in the 1910s! (To keep the real goal secret, the government said they were going to be "mobile water tanks" to carry water for the troops, and the name stuck.)

The ponies have fireworks, and bullets and cannon are mentioned, but spears are the only personal weapons shown, as part of the Royal Guard's equipment. That makes sense for a children's program, and it's tough to figure out how ponies would use the spears, or any other weapons, for that matter. Still, it's possible they can make and use firearms or other weapons that were around in the nineteenth century.

The Pegasus Flying Service

In the first season, the pegasus military flying service was presented as being sort of like the US Navy's Blue Angels ærobatic team—right down to a similar *livery,* or color and design scheme, of blue trimmed with gold. The third season made it clear that the organization is much larger, possibly a full arm of the nation's military in its own right.

One episode took place at the academy where *cadets* (officer candidates) are trained, though the script probably was influenced more by Hollywood movies than real officer training schools. Also, the major character starring in the episode seems very young to be a cadet, since the show's creator has said that she and her friends probably are in their teens.

A possible explanation is that she and her group are going through a junior training course, kind of like the US military's JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) for high-school students. In that case, young ponies who pass the junior course would be on a "fast track" to promotion when they become officers after graduating from the real training program.

The Citizenry

On some episodes the main characters, and others in town, get together to solve a problem—at least once because of a royal summons. Before the twentieth century, many countries kept small armies (because armies are expensive) and called up citizens in time of trouble, and the ponies seem to have a similar *militia* tradition. An *unorganized* militia is made up of anyone who responds to the call. An *organized* militia, like a volunteer fire department, has official members and support from the government, but it's not a full-time organization. ➧

Military Ranks and Organization

During the nineteenth century, many people knew something about the army and navy. Over the course of the twentieth century, especially the second half, that became much less true—especially as technology and organization got more complicated and attitudes about war changed. Today most people outside the military know very little about it.

To provide a little guidance, here are some generic tables based on a mix of how Britain and the United States handled military affairs during the late nineteenth century. Military ranks and organization evolved over time as traditions, technology, and force sizes changed and developed. Marine corps ranks and organization tend to be similar to army ranks and organization, but may be slightly different here and there.

Army	Commissioned officer ranks	*Navy*
Field Marshal* [UK] *or* General of the Army* [US]	Admiral of the Fleet* [UK] *or* Fleet Admiral* [US]	
General	Admiral	
Lieutenant general	Vice admiral	
Major general	Rear admiral	
Brigadier general	Commodore	
Colonel	Captain	
Lieutenant colonel	Commander	
Major	Lieutenant commander	
Captain	Lieutenant	
Lieutenant [UK] *or* first lieutenant [US]	Sublieutenant [UK] *or* lieutenant (junior grade) [US]	
Ensign/cornet† [UK] *or* second lieutenant [US]	Midshipman [UK] *or* ensign [US]	

* Used only in wartime † Ensign in infantry, cornet in cavalry

General ranks as a group don't have a special name. Colonel, lieutenant colonel, and major are *field ranks* because they usually are in the field (while generals may be at headquarters planning strategy). Captain and lieutenant ranks are *company ranks* because they are in company-size units or smaller.

Commodores and admirals used special flags to show which ships they were on, so these ranks are called *flag ranks* (and the ships are called *flagships*). Captain, commander, and lieutenant commander are *senior ranks.* Sublieutenant/lieutenant (junior grade) and midshipman/ensign are *junior ranks.*

General and flag officers tend to be at least in their forties, and usually are older. Field and senior officers tend to be at least in their twenties, and usually thirties or forties. Company and junior officers tend to be in their thirties or younger.

Army grades	—Enlisted ranks—	*Navy rates*
Sergeant major	Chief petty officer	
First sergeant	Petty officer first class	
Staff sergeant	Petty officer second class	
Sergeant	Petty officer third class	
Corporal	Leading seaman	
Private	Able seaman	

Corporals, sergeants, and petty officers are *noncommissioned officer* (NCO) grades or rates. NCOs assist officers, help teach new officers and privates or seamen, and generally act as the "glue" holding together a military force. In Britain enlisted ranks used to be called "other ranks".

The terms *grade* (army) or *rate* (navy) may be used in place of "rank" for enlisted personnel. Navies use another word, *rating,* for an NCO's job specialty; example ratings are boatswain's mate or *bos'n,* quartermaster, gunner's mate, master at arms, cook, armorer, and *coxswain* (senior NCO in charge of a boat).

Army organization: A unit contains two to eight—or sometimes more—units of the next smaller level, depending on what kind of organization's used. A large unit, usually company or bigger, also may have a small "headquarters" unit made up of the commanding officer, his staff, some guards, and others such as couriers and clerks. Units may be lettered, numbered, or (regiments or larger) named. Confusingly, a big enough national army may contain several units called "armies"!

Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Personnel	Led by
Army (contains all branches)			80,000–200,000	General
Corps (contains all branches)			20,000–45,000	Lt. gen.
Division	Division	Division	10,000–15,000	Mjr. gen.
Brigade	Brigade	Brigade	3000–5000	Brig. gen.
Regiment	Regiment	Regiment	1500–3000	Colonel
Battalion	Squadron	Battalion	300–1300	Lt. col.
Company	Troop	Battery	80–255 (4–8 guns)	Cap./mjr.
Platoon	Platoon	—	26–55	Lieut.
Section	Section	Section	8–13 (2–4 guns)	Cpl./sgt.
Squad	Squad	—	8–13	Cpl./sgt.

Navy organization: A sailing warship was a *man-of-war;* a commercial ship was a *merchantman.* The British Royal Navy classified men-of-war by *rates*—first to third rate for *ships* (larger men-of-war) and fourth to sixth rate for *frigates* (smaller men-of-war)—based on how many cannon they carried. Men-of-war that didn't fit neatly were *unrated,* with names depending on their designs: brig, sloop, corvette, cutter, and so on.

Usually, the most powerful men-of-war were organized into *squadrons,* but smaller men-of-war were organized into *flotillas* instead. Any man-of-war cruising independently, not assigned to a squadron or flotilla, was called a *cruiser.* As sails and wooden hulls gave way to steam and iron hulls during the late nineteenth century, everything changed. New types of warships needed new names and new organizations, and things didn't settle down again until the early twentieth century. ✶

Navy unit	Men-of-war	Led by
Fleet	Several sqdns./flots.	Admiral
Sqdrn./flotilla	4–8	Commodore/r. adm.
Division	2–4	Sr. capt./commodore
Half-division	1–2	Senior captain

What makes the show so attractive to so many people is the obvious effort the creator and the staff put into inventing lovable, believable characters and building an interesting world for them to live in. The company that owns the show had their own ideas, but they had the wisdom to take the best parts from both and, with a few exceptions, the courage to give the writers a surprisingly free hand in telling the stories.

Because the ponies' country is a land of magic, a lot of fairy-tale ideas are used. The country is ruled by a pair of princesses (royalty) and, at least as originally written, it had a *peerage* (nobility). More recent ideas from fantasy fiction also were adopted, such as moving the background from the Middle Ages to around the Industrial Revolution.

The show rightly focuses closely on the seven main characters and the princesses. This does mean that unless some piece of information is important to one of the episodes, it usually doesn't get mentioned and may not even be developed. Sometimes one episode might contradict another, possibly because of tight timing in the scriptwriting or because a script just can't work with what another episode established. The narrator will have to decide whether to worry about contradictions and, if she does take them into account, how to resolve them.

The Royalty

In the original planning for the show, the country was going to be ruled by a queen. The title was changed to "princess" out of a belief expressed by company executives that animated movies over the last few decades have associated queens with villains, and princesses with heroines, in people's minds. (Note that the changelings are ruled by a queen, which only reinforces this odd idea!) After her return, the moon princess became co-ruler, working at night while her sister works during the day.

Technically, only members of a country's ruling family are royalty. The royal sisters don't have any other siblings. They do, or did, have parents, but nothing much has been said about those parents. The bride in the royal wedding is a niece of the ruling princesses, and also is a princess herself, possibly descended from the old rulers of the crystal ponies.

The show's creator has mentioned a *very* distant nephew of the princesses' mother, who was going to be a duke (a noble), but ended up being a prince (a royal). This was changed because of a concern that, in places where people aren't familiar with European titles of nobility, nobody would know what a duke is. It's a good point—after all, explaining those titles is part of why this section was written!

The Nobility

Below the royalty are the *nobility,* families who—usually but not always—have their own *fiefs* (lands they hold). A noble might owe allegiance, called *fealty,* to a higher-ranking noble, and so on, up to a noble who would be directly under the crown. A *vassal* is anyone who owes fealty to someone else, who in turn is called the vassal's *lord.* Relationships among noble families, and between noble and royal families, got pretty confusing between the end of the Western Roman Empire and the start of the modern world in the seventeenth century.

Titles of nobility (and royalty) usually are *hereditary,* passed down from parent to child, except for so-called *life titles.* Life titles might be granted as rewards or, historically, sold to raise funds for the royal government, though polite people didn't say that in so many words. Such titles might or might not have lands attached to them, but the bearers generally weren't eligible for membership in the upper house of parliament or other legislative body, as hereditary nobles would be.

The show hasn't mentioned nobility or a parliament, but judging from the creator's comments, she obviously meant for the ponies to have the former if not the latter. How much of a role the nobility has in the governing and day-to-day life of the country is an open question. Are the princesses absolute rulers, or does the country have a parliament that makes laws? Fan-written stories have come up with a whole variety of guesses, and the narrator, too, may have to figure out answers that suit her and the players.

Styles, Dignities, and Territories

To keep things simple, the table of ranks lists only the most common verbal *style,* or form of address; different styles might be used in letters or on envelopes, among other places. A *dignity* is the title itself, separate from properties or territories that may go with the title; both of those are listed too. There are many other ranks that aren't listed because they were rare or used only in small areas. Most titles are pronounced in English as one might expect—but *viscount* is pronounced *vye-count.*

Originally, the word "gentle" literally meant "noble". That's why today the polite way to address a crowd of people is as "ladies and gentlemen"; once upon a time, that phrase actually meant "noblewomen and noblemen". Calling a commoner a "lady" or "gentleman" wasn't a good idea, and even worse was failing to pay proper respect to a noble or royal, which often was a crime and still is considered terribly rude.

Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, society got more relaxed about styles and *obeisances* (gestures of respect such as bows or curtseys). It may be enough to call a noble or royal "sir" or "ma'am" after using the proper style at least once when meeting that person during an event.

A pony might address one of the sisters first as "Your Royal Highness" and after that as "Ma'am". Addressing her first as "Princess" or "Your Highness" would be quite informal, though a student or close friend might be allowed to do it. For the new princesses, who might not rank quite as high, one idea is to use old European styles of "Serene Highness" and "Illlustrious Highness", with just plain "Highness" being lower still.

A prince/princess or duke/duchess may or may not rule a *sovereign* (independent) country. A sovereign prince or princess rules a *principality;* a sovereign duke or duchess rules a *duchy.* A non-sovereign prince or princess usually is the son or daughter of a king or queen, and a non-sovereign duke or duchess is a noble. The pony princesses, of course, are sovereign and technically rule a principality.

If a country has one ruler, which usually was the case in real history, that ruler is a *monarch,* from Greek *monos* (one) and *archon* (ruler), ruling a monarchy. There are a few historical cases, though, of two rulers, like the royal sisters; each of the rulers would be a *diarch,* ruling a diarchy, instead. ➧

Knighthoods
A knight or dame belongs to a *chivalric order* (association of knights). A country may have several different orders, each with centuries of history behind it. Some orders may have special privileges or duties, handed down over generations from times gone by. They might be open only to certain kinds of people—maybe only women can be *dubbed* (inducted) into one of them, and only people who've distinguished themselves in battle can be dubbed into another. Often there are ranks within an order; a new knight may start at the lowest and may be rewarded later with higher rank if he or she has done something new that deserves recognition. Knighthoods aren't hereditary, though, and knights technically are high-ranking commoners.

A narrator can use her imagination to create orders and invent their histories, ranks, privileges, and duties. A flowing title like "Dame Commander of the Order of the Golden Sun" or "Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Harmony" can add a lot of color to a character, especially if there's a story behind it. Knighthoods also are a possible reward for player ponies who do something *really* spectacular.

The Commons
Anyone who isn't royalty or nobility is a *commoner.* In a modern society like the ponies have, this includes the poor and the working class, rich merchants and landowners, and the middle class in between. As in Britain during the late nineteenth century, some ponies apparently are interested in finding ways into the nobility (or the royalty). Most ponies seem happy with the way things are, though, and they show a reverence and genuine affection for the princesses, who clearly love their little ponies in return. They've built a wealthy, peaceful country, and the princesses help make sure it stays that way.

Cutie Marks
This unique aspect of the ponies has been a great way for the writers to talk about growing up. It's central to pony society, and the narrator and players should keep that in mind. Much is made on the show of how a mark's supposed to reflect a pony's talents, but a look at various marks shows that some are kind of abstract, and for others it's a stretch to make the connection. The narrator and players probably don't have to be too fussy about a pony's mark, and a mark that isn't obvious can be something to build a story around: "But . . . what does it *mean*?"

Money
The ponies have a *cash economy,* using money rather than barter for most business. Their currency's called the *bit,* likely based on "two bits", a nickname for the US quarter: In the eighteenth century, a popular Spanish coin called the *real* could be broken into eight parts, so two bits were a quarter of a coin; that's also the source of the phrase "pieces of eight". The bit seems to be a small, thick gold coin, and there's been no sign of paper bills. "Cents", from Latin *centum* meaning "hundred", are mentioned on one episode, so there probably are 100 cents in a bit.

They may have checks (or cheques) and letters of credit, banks, and perhaps even stock markets. They probably don't have credit cards, charge cards, or other forms of cards; those were invented in the mid-twentieth century and later.

They *do* have income tax. In an early episode, a pony offers to "do" the main character's taxes for one of her ball tickets!

Cuisine
Since the ponies are *herbivores,* eating mostly plant materials, their foods don't include any meats, though they do use dairy products and eggs. They cook some dishes, such as soups, but others are eaten raw, such as salads. Sandwiches seem to be popular. More than anything else, though, baking seems to be the central pillar of pony cuisine. Not all baking is sweet—calzones, for instance, are savory—so whole meals might be baked goods. As with building materials, a good narrator can make a place come alive partly by describing local differences in foods and cooking.

Preserving foods by pickling and salting have been around thousands of years. Canning was invented in the early nineteenth century; iceboxes and large refrigerators were invented mid-century, but household refrigerators came in the 1920s.

Music
The nineteenth century was a period of transition. The formal kinds of music that people today lump together as "classical" gradually gave way to popular music such as ragtime and jazz, which arose from minstrel music and other sources as sheet music became widely available and audio recording became possible. Rock and roll developed out of jazz in the 1950s. Popular music existed before the nineteenth century, and "classical" music still is written today; it's just that they switched places in terms of how well-known they are. ◗

Rank *(male* or *female)*	**Class**	**Most Common Verbal Style**	**Dignity**	**Territory**
Emperor *or* empress	Imperial	His/Her/Your Imperial Majesty (HIM)	—	Empire
King *or* queen	Royalty	His/Her/Your Majesty (HM)	Kingdom *or* queendom	Kingdom
Prince *or* princess	Royalty	His/Her/Your Royal Highness (HRH)	Princedom	(Principality)
Duke *or* duchess	Nobility	His/Her/Your Grace	Dukedom	Duchy
Marquess *or* marchioness	Nobility	My Lord/Lady, Your Lordship/Ladyship	Marquessate *or* marquisate	March
Earl/count *or* countess	Nobility	My Lord/Lady, Your Lordship/Ladyship	Earldom	Earldom *or* county
Viscount *or* viscountess	Nobility	My Lord/Lady, Your Lordship/Ladyship	Viscountship	Viscountcy
Baron *or* baroness	Nobility	My Lord/Lady, Your Lordship/Ladyship	Barony	Barony
Baronet *or* baronetess	Gentry	Sir *or* Dame [First or Full Name]	—	—
Knight *or* dame	Gentry	Sir *or* Dame [First or Full Name]	—	—

Education and Apprenticeship

Foals go to school. That might seem trivial, but it's important. A government-supported universal education system was rare before the eighteenth century. Even in the nineteenth century many children only got a few years of schooling, especially those who helped out on family farms (which was most of them). It's no coincidence the growth of such schools happened during and after the Industrial Revolution.

Before industrialization, societies depended mostly on agriculture and on "cottage industries"—small businesses such as smithies, shops, and other establishments run by individuals or families. Many boys (and even some girls) learned by doing, through *apprenticeships,* helping out and being taught by the masters of the businesses. Once they were ready they became *journeymen,* wandering, working, and learning more about their trades from other masters. Eventually, if they were able, they would try to pass exams before committees of local masters to become masters themselves, and set up their own workshops and businesses.

There were universities, but they mostly taught things like law, theology, and other esoteric subjects, and mostly were attended by the wealthy. In a lot of fantasy fiction, magic usually qualifies as an esoteric subject, with its own special schools or *colleges,* either independent or as part of universities. The princess's school for gifted unicorns follows that tradition. Universities started taking their current form during the early modern period in the seventeenth century.

As the Industrial Revolution went on, the need to educate people beyond what they could learn in apprenticeships got more and more urgent, especially the need to teach basic literacy, the ability to read and write. Finally the apprenticeship system as the primary way to educate young people collapsed, and only traces of it remain. An organized system of formal education in schools developed to take its place, and that's what most people go through today.

One of the main characters helps run a family farm. Another is a clothing designer who seems to have earned her mastery and runs a boutique. (One episode shows her as a filly sewing in the same boutique, so maybe she was an apprentice there.) Yet another works at a bakery. Two others may be in public service. The show's central character is a student, possibly on a royal stipend, and may be the town librarian. That much responsibility suggests the characters are in their early twenties, but the show's creator described their maturity as being in the range of twelve to eighteen: young enough to learn the show's lessons, but old enough to do adult things, so writers wouldn't be limited to stories about school or family.

All this indicates a society in the midst of changing from *agrarian* (mostly agricultural) to industrial, which fits the nineteenth-century feel the writers seem to want. Teens were viewed as junior adults rather than as "senior children", the way they often are regarded today. They had more freedom of movement—and a lot more responsibility to go along with it. Important themes of the show, besides the value of friendship, seem to be that being able to stand on one's own feet (hooves) is something to strive for and that healthy ambition is a good thing for anyone to have. ✶

~ Mini-Essays ~

These short commentaries, some by other writers, are intended to inform and inspire the narrator and players. Some of them take closer looks at the subjects outlined in the previous sections, both to bring up points that may not be obvious at first glance and to suggest ways the information can be used by a narrator or player. Others discuss topics that might not show up in any episodes, but still could be useful.

The Grapes of Bein' Kinda Upset *(guest contribution)*

The ponies' nation is, at its heart, an agricultural land. Thanks to pegasus weather control and the ability of earth ponies to coax the best possible crop yields from the ground, only a relatively small part of the population needs to be involved in food production. This leaves the rest of the population free to pursue other things, to urbanize, and to have plenty of leisure time. Excess food production is the basis of trade with the outside world. The backbone of the realm is its farmers.

But this means that when trouble *does* strike the fields, it's serious business. Even a minor failure in the managed ecology looms large and warrants high-level attention. The famine that led to the Great Migration of the three tribes, and the very founding of the nation they joined together to create, is one of the most important stories the ponies pass down through the generations. The system is more fragile than most think, subject to interference in many different ways.

Shady characters are attracted to wealth, and the wealth of this land is in its homesteads and plantations. And what of the other lands that aren't so lucky as to have fully controlled skies and magically enhanced farms? When the ponies have plenty but neighboring countries do not . . . morality and treaties mean nothing to parents watching their children grow thin. Prosperity brings burdens and tensions that must be solved, and the infrastructure—transportation, magical support, education of young farmers—requires constant vigilance lest disasters both natural and intentional lay bare the fields.

What's This Thing Made of? *(guest contribution)*

Materials science is one of the most important aspects of a culture and its technology. It's also one of the greatest hazards to the culture's well-being.

History shows that when a new technology starts making heavy use of a natural resource, a crisis follows. The great shipbuilding boom of the seventeenth century that created the British Empire cost England nearly all of her old-growth oaks. The advent of glassmaking in Scotland demanded huge amounts of fuel, which denuded the northern forests. Cheap coal led to pollution. And this is just a single island.

Taking an invention from a curiosity to the mass market often comes at a huge price, and in a carefully managed nation like the ponies', this causes tensions between those who want the item and those who don't want to exhaust the resources needed for it. That can lead to bootlegging, poaching, and buying materials from other nations—"let *them* suffer the consequences while *we* keep our land pristine!" ➧

Complex chemistry is just starting to operate at a large scale. Individual laboratories and alchemists still mostly would ply their trades in small amounts, making reagents rare, prized, and costly. (Pegasus smugglers, anyone?) As well, a lot of materials taken for granted in the modern world won't exist among the ponies, or will be much more expensive. Consider also toxic by-products and what to do about them; the princesses will have little sympathy for a polluter, even on a modest scale.

So far, there's been no sign on the show of mass production, which has a certain charm—but also means that anything complex will be expensive and hoof-built. Maintenance requires artisans and craftsponies, not mere "parts changers", as spare parts may not fit without individual modification. Construction may be as much art as science, and anything that needs to last will be extremely overbuilt.

Imagine the turmoil when a factory brings in a new technology that promises to improve efficiency. In fairness, historically such a factory owner usually increased production (to try making more money) rather than cut down on work force, but the workers didn't know that or didn't want to believe it if they were told, since they had families to support!

The ponies are working their way through an Industrial Revolution, but while their path is markedly different than the real world's, it'll no less chaotic.

Turn Your Head and Cough *(guest contribution)*

Medicine's a tricky subject; historically it's been surrounded by superstition, taboo, and outright quackery. The sad truth is, it also tends to be driven by terrible things: war and epidemics.

Through the nineteenth century, several important factors were coming together in Western medicine. Most clustered around germ theory, including pasteurization, antiseptics, and vaccination. Other discoveries, such as anæsthetics, made surgery much less brutal, and X-rays allowed diagnosis of internal injuries. Treatment of traumatic injuries advanced dramatically, though unfortunately it took the carnage of the American Civil War for that to happen.

By its nature, the ponies' country is a much cleaner place to live than the real world, and its populace isn't subject to warfare. It also doesn't have cultural habits that interfere with medicine and science. Most ponies aren't geniuses—but they also aren't resistant to accepting ideas from those who are. Once a discovery's made, it often seems to be adopted amazingly quickly, especially if the word of royalty backs it up.

All that being said, medicine still would have its adventures. Dealing with an epidemic outbreak requires learning how it spreads; that in turn leads to the desperate search for "patient zero", the first case from which the epidemic springs. Quacks, charlatans, and snake-oil sellers prey on the gullible, and ponies can be pretty gullible.

A small group of ponies might find itself dispatched to locations in remote corners of the nation, or beyond, to offer relief in time of trouble. Disasters, natural or otherwise, leave in their wake hard decisions in *triage* (pronounced *tree*-ahzh), the process of choosing whom to treat and in what order, with limited time and resources—and who has to be left untreated because they can't be saved. Such decisions could be very rough on the ponies, who are compassionate and empathic by nature.

And there is always Mad Science! *"It's alive!"* invariably is gleefully proclaimed by someone with the title of "Doctor". . . . There may be no zombie ponies, but are there Frankenfoals?

Back in the Old Days . . .

Everything can and probably will change in a thousand years. When the moon princess was banished, most ponies apparently lived in thatched huts and fenced yards, according to the book illustrations on the first episode. The population may have been one-third or one-fourth as large back then. There might not have been many cities or large towns, and most would be small by modern standards. Most ponies might have lived in the countryside or in small villages and hamlets every few miles along the few dirt roads winding across the land.

Now she's back, using a "Hollywood" version of medieval speech. English itself isn't a thousand years old, so that's the only way the writers can get across the idea of old-fashioned talk. But it also could mean that pony society doesn't move as fast as real history did; there aren't as many wars, famines, or plagues to push things along. The princess's style of talking is associated with the High Middle Ages, so it's a reasonable rule of thumb to double the amount of time for historical things, like inventions and fashions, to happen. What was going on, say, five hundred years before the nineteenth century? That could be what the magical land looked like when the royal sisters battled and, presumably, destroyed their castle-palace.

Earthshaking Changes

Today we're used to society and technology changing constantly, yet it's easy to forget that, not so long ago, people just didn't have some device or process we take for granted now. In the nineteenth century, though, people struggled with the notion that, fairly suddenly, ideas and ways of doing things that had been around for hundreds or even *thousands* of years weren't working any more. In the Middle Ages a man or woman might do things much the same way as an ancestor of a century before; during the Industrial Revolution a living grandparent might be able to remember a completely different world.

Train locomotives started moving people and cargoes faster than horses. Telegraphy began to move information faster than letters. Huge new factories used mass production and interchangeable parts to churn out consumer goods. Cities became even more important, drawing in ever larger numbers of people seeking work. Big new machines needed far more energy than muscles, water wheels, or windmills could provide.

All of this was happening at once, and nothing like it *ever* had happened before in history, so there wasn't any kind of guide to figure out what to do about it. The social upheavals were gigantic, and it's almost impossible to describe easily how big an effect they had on people at the time—much greater than we see today, even with all the advances in electronics.

There seems to be less uncertainty and bafflement in the ways ponies are coping with these changes. Of course, those wouldn't be the best things to put into a children's television show, for a lot of reasons, but this also could be seen as more evidence that pony society isn't moving at the same meteoric speed that real history has. Ponies, being herd creatures, also may be more cooperative and may find it easier to get along. ◗

City-State, Principality, Empire

An *empire* is a diverse collection of countries or peoples joined together under an overall monarchy or *oligarchy* (small ruling group). Since it seems to include exactly the sort of varied lands and tribes that an empire should have, the pony principality seems to be more of a true empire than the land of the crystal ponies that actually is called an empire in the program.

If the crystal ponies' country isn't really an empire, then, what is it? It doesn't seem to be very big and, probably to be more familiar to a young television audience, it looks more like a twentieth-century suburb than an medieval city that disappeared a thousand years ago. More than anything else, then, it appears to be a *city-state,* a tiny country consisting mostly of a central city with maybe a small amount of land around it, possibly including some farmland, villages, or both. Perhaps it should be called the Crystal City instead—but trademarking that name to use on toys and other products might have turned out to be too difficult or even impossible.

Going farther back, one might ask how the ancient pony tribes were governed. The unicorns plainly had a *feudal monarchy,* with a king who ruled directly and maybe a nobility. Equally clearly, the pegasus tribe was a *military dictatorship* ruled by a high-ranking officer, set up as if the whole society were one big army. It isn't as clear how the earth tribe was governed, though. Perhaps it was a sort of early *republic,* either democratic (in which individuals vote on everything) or representative (in which officials are elected to act on behalf of the citizens).

Consorting With Rulers

An empire is ruled by an emperor (if male) or empress (if female)—yet the ponies are ruled by princesses. The real reasons that was done for the show already have been explained, but how can a narrator justify it for the players?

Perhaps the sun and moon princesses aren't comfortable with the title of empress and avoid using it in favor of "princess". It could be the pony population or other nations who don't care for the idea of "empresses", so the princesses are being tactful. More simple still, maybe the ponies just don't think of it as an empire, and so don't call it one even if it *technically* is.

The title of prince (or princess) originally just meant "ruler" in general, and could be applied to an emperor, king, duke, or any other monarch; plenty of old phrases and sayings still use that meaning. Possibly by accident, that also is kind of how the show uses the word to describe the special ponies who include all three tribes. Five have been shown so far: the sun and moon princesses who rule over all the ponies, the ruler of the crystal ponies, the main character of the show—and the princess in the storybook who took the "love poison".

Marrying into royalty can create confusion, since the royal spouse would gain a "courtesy" title but wouldn't be a ruler. If it's necessary to tell them apart, the word *regnant* (from the same root as the word *reign*) is added to a ruling royal's title, while the word *consort* is added to the title of a ruling royal's spouse. For example, the ruler of the crystal ponies is a *princess regnant,* while her husband, the main character's brother, is a *prince consort.* The husband of a ruling queen or empress also is called a prince consort, an old custom dating from the days when prince was a more general term.

About (Non-Magical) Ponies

For the first time in history, more human beings around the world live in cities than in the country. Because of that, fewer and fewer of them get to meet many animals face-to-face, other than dogs, cats, a few other kinds kept as pets, zoo exhibits, and—if they keep their eyes open—some wild animals that make their homes in human neighborhoods. Since motor vehicles replaced most horses, ponies, and other draft animals in the middle of the twentieth century, fewer and fewer people get to meet them at all. For folks who might not have had much chance to learn about the animals on which the magical ponies are based, here's a little background on them.

The difference between a horse and a pony is supposed to be size. An adult horse stands more than fourteen hands, two inches tall at the shoulder. (A hand is four inches, so that would be fifty-eight inches, or about 147 centimeters.) In theory, a full-grown pony is no taller than 14.2 hh (14 hands 2 inches). Of course, in reality it's more complicated than that. Stocky body shape and proportions often are considered part of what makes a pony different from a horse, but sometimes it depends more on who's talking, what part of the horse world they're interested in, and a lot of other sometimes confusing things like tradition or occupation.

Ponies are very strong for their size, which makes them surprisingly heavy, thanks to all those muscles, and they're very smart and friendly, if they're trained properly to deal with people. They developed in out-of-the-way places with harsh climates, where being small but strong, and being able to live on food of less than ideal quality, were real advantages to the people who used them as draft animals. Even today in a few places they still are used for work on farms, to pull carts or wagons on roads, and for riding. Pony sports are as popular as events for larger horses, and in some cases horses and ponies might compete in the same events.

The lips of ponies and horses are very mobile, able to do amazingly delicate things like pick up and handle objects. There is one case known to the author of a bored horse using his lips to help unfasten the door of his trailer so he could go wandering around a local park. Even human lips, which are mobile enough to help make the complex sounds of language, aren't as good at manipulating things. Since the magical ponies combine the two abilities, using their lips to do things like write with pencils is quite plausible, and of course teeth and tongue could be used to help in some cases. (Keeping things clean would be a big priority, since a magical pony never knows when she might have to put something in her mouth.)

Ponies don't have fur, exactly. Like cattle, deer, and other related animals, ponies and horses have *hides* of *hair* rather than pelts of fur. Furred skin grows two or three different kinds of hairs. *Ground* hairs are short and frizzy to insulate an animal against cold. *Guard* hairs are longer, straighter, and sturdier, to protect the other hairs from damage. *Awn* hairs, if an animal has them, are in between the other two kinds. Hide, on the other hand, has only one kind of hair—and sweat glands, which help cool down an animal after exercise. (That usually means running away from predators.) The ponies in the show sometimes are shown to sweat, and occasionally mention it in dialog, which means they probably have hides. ✶

~ *Archaic Units of Measure* ~

In 1824, the United Kingdom passed the Weights and Measures Act to regularize a hodgepodge of ancient English measurement units; the new technologies coming out of the Industrial Revolution demanded standardization and precision. Earlier, in 1799, a movement to create a whole new "metric system" got its start in France, for similar social and industrial reasons. In the middle of the twentieth century, both systems were overhauled again, and it's those, or related systems, that are used today.

The tables on this page show many, but not all, of the obsolete English units. They didn't disappear overnight—older people still tended to use them for many years after 1824, lots of records and objects were based on them, and some stuck around in the United States, which was already independent. The ponies may be going through a similar transition, and farmers especially may use old units. Some of the units listed were based on the human body; the ponies may use units based on their own bodies or on the body of the immortal sun princess. ✶

Length	Equal to
Poppyseed	about ¼ barleycorn
Line	¼ barleycorn
Barleycorn	⅓ inch
Digit	¾ inch
Finger	⅞ inch
Inch	3 barleycorns
Nail	3 digits
Palm	3 inches
Hand	4 inches
Shaftment	6 inches
Link	7.92 in. (1/100 chain)
Span	3 palms (9"; oustretched hand)
Foot	modern US foot; 30.48 cm
Cubit	18 inches (fingertips to elbow)
Yard	modern US yard; 0.9144 m
Ell	45 inches (mostly for cloth)
Fathom	6 feet (outstretched arms)
Rod	5 ½ yards (for surveying)
Chain	4 rods; about 20.12 m
Furlong	40 rods (one plow-*furrow long*)
Mile	modern US mile; about 1.6 km
League	3 miles (one hour's walk)

Area	Equal to
Perch	1 square rod; 272 ¼ square feet or about 25.3 square meters
Rood	¼ acre; width of 1 rod by length of 1 furlong
Acre	1 chain by 1 furlong (can be plowed in 1 day); about 0.4 hectare
Bovate	about 15 acres/6 hectares (can be plowed with 1 ox in 1 year)
Virgate	about 30 acres (can be plowed with 2-oxen team in 1 year)
Hide	4 to 8 bovates (land able to support 1 household for food/taxes)
Carucate	about 120 acres (can be plowed with 8-oxen team in 1 year)
Knight's fee	5 hides (fee was enough money to produce 1 equipped soldier)
Hundred/ wapentake	100 hides, grouped for administrative purposes (census, taxes, ownership records, and so on)

Volume	Equal to
Mouthful	about ½ fluid ounce
Pony	2 mouthfuls
Jack(pot)	2 ponies (2 ½ fl. oz.)
Gill	2 jacks (5 fl. oz.)
Cup	2 gills (10 fl. oz.)
Pint	2 cups (20 fl. oz.)
Quart	2 pints (40 fl. oz.)
Pottle	2 quarts (80 fl. oz.)

Volume	Equal to *(US gal. = about 3.8 l)*
Gallon	2 pottles (1.25 US gallons)
Peck	2 gallons (2.5 US gallons)
Kenning	2 pecks (4 gallons)
Bushel	2 kennings (8 gallons)
Strike	2 bushels (16 gallons)
Coomb	2 strikes (32 gallons)
Hogshead	2 coombs (64 gallons)
Butt/pipe	2 hogsheads (128 gallons)

Volume	Equal to
Tun	2 butts or pipes (256 gallons; see next page)
Jigger	1 ½ fluid ounces (still used in recipes for mixed drinks)
Perch	24 ¾ cubic feet of dry stone (a pile 16 ½ feet by 1 ½ feet by 1 foot)
Cord	128 cubic feet of firewood (a stack 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, 4 feet high)

Avoirdupois		Weight equal to
Grain	gr	1/7000 US pound; about 64.8 milligrams
Dram/Drachm	dr	1/16 oz. (possibly from ancient Greek silver *drachma* coin)
Ounce	oz	1/16 US pound; about 28 grams
Pound	lb	US pound; about 454 g (*lb* short for *libra,* "scales" in Latin)
Nail		1/16 long hundredweight; 7 pounds
Clove		7 pounds (wool) or 8 pounds (cheese)
Stone	st	2 cloves; 14 pounds
Quarter or tod		¼ hundredweight; tod is 2 stones or ¼ long hundredwt.
Hundredweight	cwt	112 pounds (long) or 100 pounds (short)
Ton	t	20 hundredweights; long or short tons

Troy weight (coins, precious metal)			Apothecary (used in medicine)		
Grain	gr	1/7000 US pound; about 64.8 milligrams (both troy & apoth.)			
Pennyweight	dwt	24 grains	Scruple	s ap	20 grains
Ounce	oz t	20 pennyweights	Dram	dr ap	3 scruples
Mark		8 troy ounces	Ounce	oz ap	8 apothecary drams
Pound	lb t	12 ounces troy or apoth.; about 0.823 avoirdupois/US pound			

~ Part Four of Four ✶ Once Upon a Time: Storytelling ~

Everyone has read up on the rules, talked over their ponies, and decided whether they want to play a literal game or a figurative game and how much comedy or drama they want in it. Now what? For any narrator, especially one who hasn't run a role-playing game before, that can be a pretty daunting question. Most RPG rulebooks try to answer it at least to some extent, and *Pony Tales* is no exception.

A **setting** is the first thing the narrator needs. An example, the Valley of Heart's Delight, can be used as-is, or can serve as a source of ideas for the narrator's own work. Some suggestions and guidelines also are provided to help the narrator consider how to approach the project.

Story seeds are short descriptions of adventure ideas, which a narrator can use directly, change around to suit her own ideas of how to do things, or use as reference when developing completely new ideas.

Sample ponies can be borrowed and used directly, or can serve as inspiration for players creating their own ponies or a narrator creating background characters for stories.

Showing by Example

Mostly this part presents actual samples that can be used or modified directly. In some cases there also is some examination and explanation of why and how those samples are set up in particular ways—usually when it may not be obvious just from looking at them.

The word "setting" is used a bit differently in this part than in part three. There, it's more general, used to mean the whole country and world shown in the series. Here, it's more specific, used to mean a particular region where the game may spend much or most of its time. In the series, the equivalent would be the town where the main characters live, the nearby national capital, and the surrounding areas, including the two forests where some episodes take place.

Following this part of the rulebook is a twelve-page *quick reference* of tables containing summaries of important rules. It's not intended to replace the rules; instead, it's designed to make looking them up faster and more convenient, so the narrator and players can keep the story moving. ✶

— The Valley of Heart's Delight: A Sample Setting —

The Valley of Heart's Delight was settled by ponies a few centuries ago. The pleasant, fertile valley is nourished by forty feet of topsoil, laid down year after patient year by the broad shallow river that wanders along its length to a small delta where the valley opens on the ocean. The surrounding hills are less than four thousand feet high—but they are unusually rugged and densely carpeted with redwoods, oaks, and a wild variety of other trees and scrub.

After passing over these difficult hills from the growing pony principality to the north, the would-be settlers felt they'd found a land worthy of the ordeal. It wouldn't be theirs without a struggle, though. Besides the effort of turning the land itself to their purposes, they faced the hostility of a griffon tribe living in the hills to the south. Raiding and occasional skirmishes heated up tensions between the two peoples. Neither was willing to give up the rich land, and as the more organized and numerous ponies gradually pushed back the griffons, the latter in turn became more desperate.

A border war loomed on the horizon, underscoring the immediate need for a workable lasting solution. Should the situation get bad enough, the sun princess herself might intervene. Even the pony settlers didn't like that possibility, for her sense of justice and fairness might not favor them so much as they would wish.

A shrewd, charismatic earth stallion conceived an answer. Though complex in detail, its essence was simple: a series of agreements and arrangements that ensured each side was better off having the other around than it would have been alone. He worked tirelessly and sometimes bravely to convince others of his vision, and did not emerge entirely unscathed. But emerge he did, triumphant if exhausted and wounded.

His reward from the princess for a job well done was, of course, another job. She ennobled him, giving him the title of marquess and a fief, the March of the Valley of Heart's Delight—including the nearest ridgelines of the bordering ranges of hills. The title has descended in direct line over the generations to the present day, and the march has grown and prospered under the leadership and guidance of its marquesses and marchionesses.

Geography

The valley is shaped roughly like a pie wedge about forty miles (64 km) long by twenty miles (32 km) wide at the coast. From its point at the crotch of the surrounding ranges, its axis runs west-southwestward to the ocean. The valley floor is nice and flat aside from occasional hummocks and hillocks around the rim, in sharp contrast to the craggy hillsides making up that rim. Its name, landforms, and climate are inspired by the Santa Clara Valley (today better known by its modern nickname of Silicon Valley), at the south end of San Francisco Bay.

In more than one sense, the valley's heart is the Honey River, which flows more or less along the valley's centerline from the hills to a small delta at the ocean. The Honey is about the size of California's Russian River and meanders from year to year, though rarely any great distance. Various creeks cross the valley to join it, none of them wider than a stone's throw.

Twenty-five miles (40 km) off the valley's coast are the Carillon Islands, an arc of intimidatingly rocky islets rising sharply from the sea. They, and the bank on which they rest, provide some shelter against storm surges and surf—and, it was discovered in recent years, are near the edge of the continental shelf. Beyond, a cold ocean current runs southward.

The coast extends north-northwest and south-southeast from the valley; the ranges of hills end abruptly in steep sandstone cliffs overlooking narrow rocky beaches. Beyond the hills to the south are open rolling plains and a large unsheltered bay. These wild lands remain a thinly populated frontier beyond the pony land's borders and unclaimed by any organized polity. The bay has no notable harbor sites and the plains are marginal by pony standards, which explains why they aren't settled.

Development

Before the arrival of the pony settlers, grasses and scrub dominated the valley itself, while the hills above were thickly forested, all thanks to a Mediterranean climate. Since then most of the valley has been covered with orchards and fields, and the nearest hillsides support vinyards and small ranches; among the farms is a sizable spread belonging to a branch of the Apple clan. Throughout the nearby hills there is judicious logging, especially of oak and redwood. Kelp beds lie off the coast, and a combination lighthouse and weather station stands sentinel on the tallest of the Carillons.

Processing and preserving raw produce forms much of the valley's industry. There are packing, canning, salting, pickling, and candying houses. There are wineries, breweries, cider mills, and distilleries; most are of at least decent quality, but best-known and most celebrated are some of the wineries and cider mills. Even a little spinning and weaving goes on, though it is strictly minor by comparison. The valley can feed itself, and exports some of the raw and processed foodstuffs, textiles, and other products, but must import most raw materials and industrial goods other than what the modest local cottage industries can produce.

Making this export trade possible is a superb transportation network of canals, Roman-style highways, and macadam secondary roads. Barges from tiny to medium-size ply the waterways, and a steady traffic of small riverboats, including a few steam paddle-wheelers, navigates the Honey up to the base of the hills. The valley's only rail corridor, recently expanded to two lines, follows the river through the hills to the head of the valley, steers wider of it to avoid floodwaters, runs to the delta, and continues along the coast, skirting the hills to run north, back to the interior of the pony nation.

The valley's only (medium-size) city, Gallopston, lies at the mouth of the river; it is a good river port, an adequate seaport, and the valley's biggest railway station and terminal. Towns and villages dot the valley, along with windmills and water wheels. Not far from the head of the valley, a rocky promontory among the straggling foothills forces the river to bend around it to the south. Atop the promontory is . . . a castle. It's not very big, and it's rather timeworn, but it's still occupied by the marquess and his family. Nestled at the base of the promontory beside the river is the *seat* (capital), Bitburg, a large town where a lot of the march's main government offices are located. ➧

The Marquess and His Family

The marquess is effectively a crown governor. In theory, it is an autocratic position, but in practice even the most dictatorial lord or lady is forced to rely on a cabinet of appointed experts and to hear what amount to elected lobbyists sent by various districts or occupations. The princess likely had just this outcome in mind, but if so has never admitted it.

The current marquess has inherited his line's leadership and imagination, but also is quite eccentric. Schmiedeeisen (German for Wrought Iron; *schmieden* means "to forge" and *Eisen* means "iron") is in late middle age. His coat is steel-gray and his mane and tail are a deep bronze; his eyes are a bright green and his cutie mark is an iron-strapped water wheel.

He is fascinated with gadgets and artifacts of all sorts, both ancient and modern. (King Christian IV, who ruled Denmark during part of the seventeenth century, is a loose model for this mild obsession.) The march's inhabitants regard him with a sort of affectionate exasperation, and accept his vagaries the way real-world farmers deal with the weather: it does what it does, and there ain't much to do about it.

His wife Weinstock (Grapevine), though long-suffering, genuinely seems to love him, and has much practice managing and directing his occasional enthusiasms. The mare is about the same age as her husband, but still handsome with her rosy-violet coat, leaf-green mane and tail, and pale eyes. Her cutie mark is, in fact, a length of grapevine, befitting a scion of the valley's most important vintners. She has borne five foals: a daughter, three sons, and a second daugther.

The eldest daughter and heir, Morgenstern (Morning Star), is a robust mare in her mid-twenties. Her coat is alabaster, her mane and tail seafoam gray; her cutie mark is a rising sun. She is married, though there are no foals as yet, and lives with her husband in Bitburg, near—but not in—the castle. She has inherited both her paternal line's formidable intellect and her mother's practicality, and promises to be a capable marchioness when the time comes.

The eldest son and second child, in his early twenties, is Herbsthimmel (Autumn Sky, from *Herbst* and *Himmel*). His cyan coat is set off by white mane and tail, and his cutie mark is an inkpot and quill. The second son, about twenty, is Goldensonne (Golden Sun). He is butter yellow with pale orange mane and tail; his cutie mark is a sloop in full sail. The youngest son, in his late teens, is Dämmerung (a word that can mean Dawn, Dusk, or Twilight). He has a magenta coat, deep red mane and tail, and a cutie mark of a wine press. All three spend as much time away from the castle as they can manage.

The youngest child is Abendstern (Evenstar), a delicate filly of fourteen. Her coat is glossy black and her mane and tail are mint-gold; her cutie mark is a constellation of stars. She is the only one of the five to live in the castle, though she ventures out routinely, especially to visit her mother's family's holdings on the northern slopes of the valley.

Technology

Pony society appears to advance at a leisurely pace, perhaps half the rate of real history. This places the moon princess's banishment in the equivalent of the late fourteenth century, which fits with her "forsoothly" style of speech and manner.

Science and engineering are assumed to be roughly equivalent to the late nineteenth century in the real world, specifically the 1860s to the 1880s. It's an exciting time, when a lot of new discoveries and inventions are appearing.

The marquess's love of machines and inventions fits this era of progress and industry, but it can be very hit or miss. In some cases, such as the excellent road system and the dual-line railway, it has been of great benefit to the valley's economy. Others have been outright failures. And in the middle are some dubious-seeming schemes.

Chief among the last is an experimental sidewheeler tugboat based in Gallopston harbor and, rather incongruously, named after the sun princess. A locomotive boiler and drive system powers each of the wheels, and can be reversed at need. Unfortunately these power trains are separate, with no provision for one boiler to drive both wheels. The tug's dumpy hull is double-ended, with a rudder at each end that can be fixed in place when that end of the tug is serving as the bow.

The merchant shipping served by the tug (an honor most of their captains can do without) includes paddle and screw steamers, barques and full-rigged ships, the earliest windjammers, and a last few clippers. Most of these ships carry on the domestic trade, running among ports within the pony nation, but some may run to foreign ports as well.

An airship terminal also was added recently on the northeast edge of Gallopston to serve the growing air traffic.

The Neighbors

In the southern hills lives a sizable population of griffons in scattered villages. Before the ponies arrived, the griffons lived a more-or-less tribal lifestyle, hunting and gathering from the bounty of a mild, friendly land.

After the first marquess established the accords that ended the potentially deadly rivalry, the griffons supplemented their traditional ways first by trading with the ponies and eventually by working in seasonal or peripheral occupations among or near the pony population.

Late September through October is called "griffon summer". Originally the time of year when their raids and depredations were most frequent, it evolved after the two peoples came to terms. It still is the season when they have the most contact with the ponies, but the activities are very different.

Some come to trade. Others renew old contracts or negotiate new ones. There is seasonal employment, whether for themselves or for pony employers. Traditional fishing rights, both offshore and along the Honey River, are very important.

Toward the end of October there is a combination fair and festival celebrating the season and the comity. That the spooky holiday inspired by the moon princess forms a sort of cap to it is a coincidence of timing, but perhaps inevitably there has been some mixing of the two. Some griffons participate with gusto, especially younger ones, while their elders simply treat it as another autumn festivity.

Though amity is the overall consensus on both sides, it is not universal. Some friction remains among inherently unpleasant personalities and those who bear ancestral grudges more readily than others. Generally such individuals are regarded as soreheads and given little heed. ✶

~ *Creating and Using a Setting* ~

Perhaps the most important single idea a narrator should keep in mind when creating a setting for her game is *variety.* There should be a lot of different places, and kinds of places, in easy reach of the player ponies. That gives the narrator a wide range of choices for story locations and the players a lot of alternatives for their ponies' backgrounds.

The example setting, the Valley of Heart's Delight, is a well-settled coastal region on the edge of the pony nation. A network of roads, waterways, and rails makes it easy to get around the valley in a few hours.

For adventures in untamed or exotic places, there's wilderness just over the border to the south and in the hills to the east. An ocean right next door is useful for journeys by ship or airship, perhaps to remote islands or distant foreign countries.

For stories that take place in civilized places, there's a medium-size city and many smaller towns and villages. The griffon settlements in the southern hills are a bit out of the way, but just different enough to be an interesting change of pace.

If a *major* city is needed, the story probably is big enough to justify the player ponies traveling to it by land, sea, or air. For that matter, a story can be set *on* a passenger train, ship, or airship, especially if it's a long trip; within the valley, barges and paddlewheel riverboats are other colorful possibilities.

There aren't many big factories in the valley, but smaller industries do exist, so if the narrator wants, say, a handy mill, smithy, or weaving shed for a story, it shouldn't be hard to put one where it's needed. The countryside surrounding the valley's settlements is filled with farms, orchards, vinyards, ranches, forests, and all sorts of other rural or open spaces.

There's one other important fact about the valley: It's as far away as possible from where the television series mostly takes place, so the episodes and the characters in them don't overshadow or distract from the game's characters and stories.

The Valley of Heart's Delight is just one way to provide variety, and the narrator's free to come up with her own methods of doing that. It isn't necessary to use the same answers—but it's a good idea to start by asking some of the same questions. Some questions can be figured out by looking at how the Valley is put together, and others are explored in this section.

Scale and Scope

Will the player ponies live in one place, as the television characters do, or will they be a traveling band of adventurers or other wanderers, like so many characters in fantasy fiction and role-playing games? The answer will affect how big an area, and what kinds of details, the narrator should think about as she works on her game's setting.

The narrator doesn't need to figure out where every house is and who every pony is, of course. To start with, it's enough just to give the players a good sense of place—what and where the most important features (both natural and pony-made) are, a brief history, and prominent individuals. Here and there the narrator may want to go into detail, such as the town where the player ponies live or meet, or other places of unusual interest, but the rest can be described in more general terms to give the players an introduction to the setting.

The players should get some input too. Their ponies need to be fitted into the setting, after all, and they may have good ideas to add. If everyone knows each other well enough, the narrator may be able to sketch out a setting she's pretty sure the players will like and can use, then adjust it to accommodate their contributions and characters. Newer acquaintances, or a group that hasn't played role-playing games before, may need to talk over what they want from the setting (and the game) before the narrator starts to work on it.

If the player ponies are settled, the area within about a day's travel of where they live needs to be fairly detailed. Outside of that, rough notes should be enough at first. When a story takes the players to a faraway place, the narrator can fill in details on it as she's getting ready for that story. (In the section on the Valley of Heart's Delight, for instance, there's only the most basic information on the lands outside the valley.) This method's harder at first, since the narrator has to do a lot of work up front, but as long as the players don't decide suddenly to take a long-distance trip, she usually won't have to make up whole new places on the spot during a game session.

If the player ponies are nomadic, the narrator has to cover a much bigger area, but probably doesn't have to be really detailed about any single part of it. As the players travel, the narrator may need to think about places they might go and make some notes on those places between game sessions. This method is easier at first, since the narrator doesn't have to lay down a lot of groundwork before starting, but it does mean the narrator may have to do a lot of improvising when the players go off in an unexpected direction. (Sooner or later they will!)

There and Back Again

In a traditional fantasy setting, long-distance travel mostly is limited to walking speed, either of the characters themselves or of horses. There may be sailing ships or flying creatures that can be ridden, but those may be rare or not very much faster. The ponies, though, have an industrial-age society, and that increases travel speeds greatly.

The speed of a steam locomotive depended on a lot of different things—for example, how big and powerful it was, how heavy a train it pulled, and how many hills, bridges, and curves slowed it down on its route. A fast passenger train might average 45 to 50 miles per hour (72–80 km/h), while a slower train might run 30 to 45 mph (48–72 km/h). Faster speeds did happen, but those usually tended to be exceptional.

A typical steam ocean liner of the late nineteenth century could maintain speeds of 15 to 20 knots (17–23 mph or 28–37 km/h) for most or all of a trip, though it might be capable of slightly faster speeds for short periods. Cargo steamships generally were slower, many of them only half as fast. A windjammer could reach an ocean liner's speed with favorable winds, and even if winds weren't ideal it could match a cargo steamer.

An airship wasn't fast at all, especially the early ones that flew before the twentieth century. The ponies might be able to do a little better, but probably not by very much. One advantage a pony airship captain could have is that, with pegasus control of the weather, airship travel may not face as many unexpected storms or unfavorable winds. ➧

Making Connections

In a **figurative game** that pays attention to details of *world-building*—the design and creation of a logical, self-consistent fictional setting—technology can be a pretty central element. Part three covers a lot of ground, but there are a few other points a narrator should keep in mind when building a setting.

The biggest two are in communication and transportation. A major reason there doesn't seem to be as much room for adventure in today's world is that it's a snap to send lots of information almost anywhere, almost instantly. It isn't a whole lot more difficult to send people or goods around the world. That means there aren't many frontiers left that are beyond the easy reach of civilization—but consider how much adventure fiction depends on wilderness and distant, exotic places.

Being lost, making rescues, discovering new places, finding primitive tribes, questing for ancient artifacts: all of them, and more, depend on the unknown or little-known. Rumors, legends, delayed letters, and long-lost expeditions are staples of pulp and classic tales of mystery and derring-do. During the time period the show's creator had in mind, this already was starting to break down, thanks to the spread of telegraphy and steam propulsion, but that process hadn't gone very far yet.

The next step away from a romantic world of adventure came at the end of the nineteenth century. Broadcasting by wireless (radio) could send information long distances in any direction, without wires, as long as there was a receiver at the other end. Petroleum-feuled internal-combustion engines freed fast, reliable ground transportation from rails, improved shipping, and made widespread aviation possible.

At the end of the Second World War in the mid-twentieth century, that process of mechanization was nearly complete across the industrialized world. Jet aircraft, electronics, and rockets led in turn to mass air travel, television, and satellites.

Another important aspect of technology is that one area often influences another, sometimes in surprising ways. It can be tricky, when world-building, to give a society one technology but not another that existed in real history. There might be developments in one technology that depend on, or result in, the technology that's supposed to be "missing".

The invention of celluloid in the 1870s made all sorts of products cheaper and easier to make, especially items previously made from ivory: billiard balls, photographic film, jewelry boxes, parts of musical instruments, and hair accessories. Unfortunately, it also was brittle and, more importantly, one of its components, nitrocellulose, is terribly unstable. Celluloid was known to explode occasionally during production, and several movie theaters full of people burned down during the early twentieth century when nitrate film—which was made from nitrocellulose—caught fire. (Different kinds of "safety" film were developed in the 1900s and 1940s.) What made it dangerous for consumer goods and the movie industry, though, turned out to be perfect for firearms. Guncotton, which was based on nitrocellulose, replaced older forms of gunpowder because it was more powerful and produced much less smoke.

A **literal game** is less concerned about the fine points and is more about what's happening at the moment. The narrator and players are much more free to ignore inconsistencies in favor of whatever keeps the story going in lively fashion.

Here Be Dragons

In addition to written notes, a narrator may want to make and keep maps. A role-playing game tends to use two kinds of maps: *area maps* and *local maps.*

An **area map** displays an overview of a region—where cities and natural features are, what roads, railroads, or other transportation routes exist, and any additional information the narrator or players might find important. It could show a small section of countryside or a large nation, depending on how much detail is needed and how important the area is.

A poster of the whole pony nation came out a while back, but it's anyone's guess how accurate the map on it may be, since it wasn't created by the folks who actually work on the program. The show's supervising director has commented that the production crew's never made any maps, instead creating new places as needed for scripts. A narrator probably is free to go either way, using the poster-map or not as she wishes.

A **local map** shows a small area, usually of someplace where a story is happening. There's more detail on this kind of map in "Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement". It can be, and probably should be, printed with a grid of hexagons to make keeping track of moving and fighting easier. It also can make visualizing the place easier for players, on the principle that a picture is worth a thousand words.

A Living World

As the game goes on, the narrator may want to build up a "world book" of information on characters, places, and events from past stories that may be useful later. It also can include ideas the narrator (or even a player) comes up with that haven't showed up yet in any stories during the game, or may not have anything to do with the player ponies, but still are worth keeping in mind for the future.

Some of the latter could show up in the newspapers, for instance, either as *foreshadowing* (to pave the way for, and maybe hint at, future events) or simply as "window dressing" to promote the illusion of living in a busy, complicated world. A world's a big place, after all, and lots of things happen even when the player ponies aren't around.

Another way for the narrator to show an ongoing, active society is to change around some things (especially small ones) in logical ways when the players come back to a place they've visited before—particularly if it's been a long time since they were last there. If what the players did in the past has had a big impact on a place, such changes can be a good way to show them just what kind of impact it was.

An example could be the players happening on a town in a dry land, where there isn't much rain, that depends on a well for water—but the ancient windmill that used to pump water up from the well was damaged or destroyed and none of the local people know how to repair it. Do the players simply pass through? When they return later, the narrator can describe a desolate scene of abandoned, ruined buildings, sand drifting in the doorways. Do they stop and help? They could come back to a hero's welcome in a thriving, healthy town of happy inhabitants. Once the players figure out that their actions can affect the people and places around them, it can be an eye-opening experience for everyone. ✶

~ *Story Seeds* ~

Just like any writer, every narrator may develop her own style, both in the kinds of stories she likes to set up and the way she prefers to handle them. On the other hand, there are rules of thumb authors tend to follow, at least most of the time. Because role-playing is different in many ways from ordinary fiction, some of the rules may be different, but a lot of the basic elements of storytelling are pretty similar.

A story or adventure that should happen in one afternoon or evening of play is kind of like a single episode of the show. A single sentence or a short paragraph probably is enough to start, and the narrator doesn't even have to write it down, as long as she has a pretty good idea what it is. A multi-session story is more like one of the show's two-part stories, and the narrator may need to write down at least a basic description so she won't forget the important points.

Whether the story's big or small, the narrator should be prepared with anything she thinks she'll need, such as maps, notes, and character descriptions. The bigger or longer the story, the more preparation's needed, but don't go overboard. Players have minds of their own. Frequently they'll think of something the narrator didn't, or miss the narrator's hints or clues, and go off in a completely different direction!

When that happens, it's tempting to do anything necessary to force the players back on track, even if it damages the story or the characters. The narrator will have to use her judgment, but being flexible usually is best. Maybe the story won't turn out the way the narrator had in mind, but if everyone has fun—including the narrator—does it really matter?

Re-using ideas from the show is perfectly okay—as long as the narrator tries to use them *differently.* Partly that's so the players don't guess too early what the story's supposed to be, and partly it's to keep the story fresh and original. Think about good and bad movie sequels: The worst ones try to tell pretty much the same stories over again, while the best ones try to tell completely new stories, different from the previous movies, even if they feature the same characters or locations.

Serial or Episodic? Originally, the show's creator wanted the series to be a *serial:* Each new episode would pick up right where the last one left off, allowing the overall *story arc* to be rich and detailed. Company executives, on the other hand, wanted the series to be *episodic:* Each episode would be a separate story—except for occasional two-part stories—allowing new watchers to get into the series quickly without forcing them to catch up on everything that's happened or to watch all the episodes in order.

Of course, the program ended up being episodic, but that doesn't mean the narrator and players have to do it that way. Many role-playing games have been serial, simply following the lives of the characters as they go from adventure to adventure. The story-seeds are written for an episodic game, but most of them should be easy to alter for a serial game.

For that matter, a game doesn't have to be all one or the other. A serial story arc might last for many sessions, then eventually end; that could be followed by some episodic game sessions, maybe leading to another long story arc.

"That's Not What I Ordered"
After a mix-up in shipping, one of the player ponies gets the wrong package—and it's full of parasprites! The first problem is dealing with them, especially if they get loose. After that, finding out where they came from, who sent them, and why probably is pretty urgent.

"An Explosive Situation"
The slightly crazy old uncle of a player pony lives up in the hills, prospecting for minerals. He sends a letter to the player pony claiming other ponies are trying to run him off his claim. It turns out those other ponies are loggers who aren't happy that he's leaving boxes of old, unstable dynamite lying around (so he doesn't have to carry the heavy boxes everywhere) that could blow up if somepony just happens to walk by. . . .

"Stand and Deliver"
The player ponies are hired to help set up a new airship terminal or small seaport well outside the ponies' country. During the journey to the job site, the airship they're on is waylaid by sky pirates in a smaller but faster airship, armed with a swivel-mounted quick-firing breechloading light naval gun. The flyers among the pirates—pegasus ponies, a couple of griffons, and maybe even more exotic creatures—try to land on the bigger airship in order to capture it. Stand by to repel boarders!

"A Giant Complication"
This is a sequel to the previous story. After the pirates are defeated and the airship is repaired, the expedition reaches the place where the new terminal or port will be set up. A thin thread of smoke coming out of a nearby cave turns out to be from a very old sleeping dragon. He's big enough to be a problem if they make an enemy of him, but frail (and lonely) enough that they might be able to talk him into being friendly or at least into putting up with pony neighbors.

"Title and Deed"
The inheritance of a prominent and popular local landowner is being challenged by a stranger from a distant city, who brought old papers that support this claim. Are the papers legitimate or fakes? If the latter, does the pony bearing them know or is he or she a dupe of someone else who has a hidden agenda?

A possible complication can be the disappearance of the local claimant's papers from the family's lawyer's safe (or the whole safe itself). Who took them and how? Where are they? Can they be found and brought back in time for the court case?

"Ten Little Ponies"
Along with the crew and maybe a few other passengers, the player ponies are stuck on a small steamship or large airship that's been damaged by untamed weather and is drifting in pea-soup fog. What no one realizes at first is that a lost changeling was blown aboard during the storm and is making ponies disappear into hidden cocoons one by one.

For an extra twist, the narrator could talk with one of the players privately before the game starts. That player's pony could be the first one kidnapped, and the player would play the changeling until the other players figure out what's going on. ➧

"Cooking the Books" *(by Vikki)*
Some miscreant schoolfoals have discovered a spell that alters the text in their schoolbooks, which lets them contest the grades on their tests. ("It's not a mistake at all! See?") Miscasting the spell, though, has made its effects more far-reaching than they realize—which ponies all over town are finding out.

"What's That Noise?" *(by Vikki)*
Irate dragons show up, insisting that ponies are using a weapon on them. They claim to hear a grating, high-pitched tone that's strongest in the area, and refuse to leave until it's stopped. What's causing it? The dragons are getting more and more upset, and some ponies want to send for military assistance. Can the mystery be solved before hostilities break out?

"The Forbidding Fruit" *(by Vikki)*
An exotic new fruit that some claim tastes better than apples is discovered (or maybe "discovered")! The new plants are sold to local farmers, who put them in fields—only to find that they grow like weeds, even over boundaries, choking out all other crops including apple groves. Trying to uproot them reveals that they refuse to be dealt with like *mere plants.*

Even after dealing with the problems caused by the plants themselves, there might be all sorts of other questions to answer. Who found, or maybe made, them? Why sell them? Is the discoverer innocent, just as much of a victim as everyone who bought the plants, or a villain with a scheme?

"The Slumbering Princess" *(by Vikki)*
One evening while preparing for her duty of raising the moon and guarding the night, the moon princess suddenly collapses on her balcony. She's found after the unusually long dusk is noticed, and her sister, though reluctant to leave her side, covers for her the same way as during the time of her lunar exile.

She's placed in the care of the best physicians, who discover that her condition is some sort of deep sleep. Word spreads like wildfire throughout the land, but stranger news follows as the capital and an expanding wave of towns start to experience total insomnia. Accidents caused by sleep deprivation, and arguments caused by related irritability, skyrocket! After a few days, desperation sets in as it gets harder to concentrate on even simple tasks, no matter how important.

The player ponies at last are visited by cryptic dreams in which the sleeping princess begs them to unite in the capital and, to prove their story, endows them with a memory of her foalhood that only her sister would know.

All sorts of possibilities can follow. For example . . .

- Are the player ponies awake or still dreaming?
- The player ponies could be attacked by their own nightmares—but in the waking world! Are they subconscious memories, fears, or insecurities that must be overcome?
- The capital's population could turn into sleep-deprived mind-controlled zombie ponies, maybe even including the sun princess, and the player ponies must awaken the moon princess to save the day.
- The player ponies may have to enter the moon princess's dreams and battle against the subconscious remnants of the villainess she became before being banished to the moon. ✶

Additional guest contributions will be included in future revisions.

~ *Sample Ponies* ~

On the following pages are several ponies the narrator can use as background characters or players can use directly or as inspiration for their own ponies. Each sample pony is set up as if he or she is a starting player pony, with 12d of added Aptitude dice and 7d of Talent dice.

For a more experienced pony, simply add some experience points for improved Talents or Specialties, or new ones that seem appropriate for the pony. If the group isn't using the Specialties optional rule, convert the sample pony's Specialties to regular Talents; each added Specialty die would become one point of Talent. Most of the sample ponies' Specialties are in whole-die increments to make conversion easier.

These samples are intended to be widely varied, both in the kinds of characters they are and the kinds of games they fit into best. Some were created by players for the author's "pilot" game, while others were created especially for this section.

For a unicorn **Magical Talent,** both Talent and Effect rolls are listed for easy reference. If Illumination or Levitation isn't listed, use the pony's base Finesse for the Talent roll and base Power for the Effect roll. The same goes for a pegasus who tries to use a weatherworking Talent that isn't listed.

"Extras" or "spear carriers": Not every character the player ponies run into needs to be this detailed. A random shopkeeper or some pony who stops to give directions probably doesn't need any numbers—or at most may need an important Talent or two, such as Business or Haggling in the case of that shopkeeper. A bit of vivid description, maybe some personality or physical quirks, and other touches of individuality often can be enough to keep the scene going in an enjoyable and believable fashion. Real people the narrator's met, story characters, and even news items or anecdotes the narrator's heard or read can provide ideas.

Reactions to the player ponies should be reasonable, though. A gang of tough-looking armored bravos swaggering into town might not be greeted with friendly smiles, for instance—more like nervous suspicion that they might be bandits or outlaws. Of course, that could depend on the kind of place the town is: A frontier village might be a little more willing to accept rough-hewn ponies who obviously have had to travel through potentially dangerous wilderness, while a pony in a big city might be more inclined to call the cops.

Villains and minions: Some of the example ponies can be used as antagonists, working against the player ponies but not really bad or evil; they even might be working for a villain, knowingly or not. Still, sometimes the narrator definitely needs a pony or other creature who really is nasty or ruthless enough to be a true "bad guy". For such a "boss" villain, the narrator should spend as much effort as a player does on creating her pony. That villain needs to be worth working to beat, and when the players succeed, it should be a satisfying victory.

On the other hand, lowly minions, like other "spear carriers", don't need much more than some basic notes—Aptitudes and the most important Talents they're likely to use, maybe with a few quirks to make some of them seem a little more individual. Minions shouldn't get many luck or harmony points, if they get any!

Bumpkin: Earth Stallion *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	2d+1	Run Move	7 yards
Hardiness	2d	Swim & Climb Moves	4 yards
Reflexes	2d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	2d	Strength Bonus	1d
Smarts	3d+2	Cast-Iron Stomach*	4d+5
Senses	2d	Resist Injury & Fatigue*	2d+5
Power	5d	* Includes bonus from Power	

Talent and Specialties (based on . . .) Dice

Cast-Iron Stomach (Hardiness) Stamina Specialty 4d
Resisting getting sick from eating or drinking bad or difficult things

Improvised Weapons (Reflexes) Mêlée Specialty 4d
Fighting using objects not intended to be weapons

Brawling (Reflexes) 3d

Firearms (Coordination) 3d

Business (Smarts) 4d

Cosmopolitan (Smarts) 4d

Confidence (Smarts) 4d

Familiary (Smarts) with pony nation's highways 4d

Moonshining (Power) 6d
Brewing and distilling alcohol in primitive conditions with hoof-built equipment

Medicine (Power) 6d

Trauma Medicine (Medicine) Medicine Specialty. 7d
Treating traumatic injuries from accidents or fighting

Possessions (he usually has a bottle of bourbon in his panniers)

Dwelling (medium) Rented outbuilding on a farm

Money (medium) Income from moonshining

Business (medium) Distillery in the woods

Contact (minor) with the local black market

Weapon (minor) Fancy coach gun: 2 shots, 6d injury; silver-inlaid engraving, scrimshawed ivory butt-plate & side inlay panels, purple velvet shell pouch containing 20 nickel-plated all-brass shells

Bumpkin is the very picture of a hayseed from the back country—but he's smarter than he looks and acts.

Personal Weakness: *Hick*—he behaves a lot like the stereotype of a backwood yokel.

Physical Description: Bumpkin is tall and a little gangly. His slightly shaggy coat is copper-colored; his short, raggedly cut mane and tail are blonde and rough. All of them usually are a bit dirty. His eyes are bloodshot . . . okay, purple. His cute mark is a clay jug with "XXX" marked on it

Best suited for a game set in the country, maybe near a small town, that might be a bit uncouth, but not dark. ➧

Cymbal: Earth Mare *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	1d+2	Run Move	6 yards
Hardiness	2d	Swim & Climb Moves	3 yards
Reflexes	2d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	4d	Strength Bonus	1d
Smarts	2d+2	Resist Physical Fatigue*	3d+3
Senses	3d+2	Resist Injury or Illness*	2d+3
Power	3d	* Includes bonus from Power	

Talents and Specialties (based on . . .) **Dice**

Physical Stamina (Hardiness) Stamina Specialty 3d
Resisting getting tired from physical, not magical, exertion; does not apply to resisting illness
Mêlée (Reflexes) . . . . . 2d+1
Clubs (Mêlée) Mêlée Specialty . . . . . 4d+1
Fighting using blunt instruments that may or may not be intended as weapons
Drums/Percussion (Coordination) Music Performance T. . 6d
Flutes (Coordination) Music Performance Talent . . . . . 4d+1
Dance (Coordination) Performance Talent . . . . . 4d+1
Business (Smarts) 3d
Charm (Smarts) 3d
Familiary (Smarts) with pony nation's highways 3d
Acting (Senses) 4d
Disguise (Senses) 4d
Streetwise (Senses) 4d
Musical Hypnosis (Power) Wild Talent, Effect roll 4d

Possessions (including panniers/saddlebags)

Dwelling (medium) Road-pony caravan that she pulls
Money (medium) Income from performing and petty crime
Musical instrument (medium) High-quality drum set
Musical instrument (minor) Silver flute
Clothing (minor) Performance wardrobe

Cymbal is the stereotypical road pony—independent, mobile, a bit larcenous, alluring, and the kind of filly one doesn't bring home to Mother. Her usual performance is a percussion-and-dance show with drums set at various angles on-stage that she plays as she dances. Some ponies, though, may have figured out there seems be a little more to it than just musical skill. She also is willing to beat a fine rhythm on the skulls of those who get just a little too forward in their appreciation or intolerance.

For all her carefree, flippant ways, she does have a sense of duty, if not to the nation's laws and society, then at least to the Princesses and ordinary folk, whom she adores in equal measure. She's known to be a minor troublemaker and irritant, but she also keeps the local constabulary informed of anything threatening and has been known to undertake dangerous self-assigned missions to keep others out of harm's way. The constables don't quite know what to make of her.

Wild Talent (Musical Hypnosis spell): When Cymbal works at it, her music can hypnotize—holding a small crowd in passive rapture, putting a pony to sleep, weaving a suggestion, or calming a raging opponent. A glow appears around the instrument, but it won't distract those under the spell. To cast it, make a Music Performance Talent roll with applicable modifiers. *Casting distance:* none. *Ranged spell:* use range modifier for the farthest affected creature. *Failure:* spell fizzles. *Mishap:* spell backfires, causing unexpected behavior. *Effect:* Intimidation, Persuasion, or other appropriate Talent roll to hypnotize listeners; resist with Willpower or Smarts, or Senses if appropriate. *Duration:* how long hypnosis lasts before it wears off.

Personal Weakness: *Minor criminal record*—she's known to the authorities for petty theft and disorderly conduct.

Physical Description: Cymbal is short, slim, and graceful, with a dancer's muscles. Her coat is golden and her mane and tail are white and flowing; all of them are carefully tended. Her eyes are azure blue, and her cutie mark is a tambourine.

Best suited for a game set nearly anywhere that might be a bit edgy or daring.

Stormbucker: Pegasus Stallion *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	3d	Run Move	8 yards
Hardiness	3d	Swim & Climb Moves	4 yards
Reflexes	4d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	1d+1	Flight Move	7 yards
Smarts	1d+2		
Senses	2d+2	Strength Bonus	2d
Power	1d+2	Resist Flying Fatigue	4d
Finesse	2d+2	Resist Injury or Illness	3d

Talents and Specialties (based on . . .) **Dice**

Flying Stamina (Hardiness) Stamina Specialty 4d
Resisting fatigue from flying
Brawling (Reflexes) 5d
Buck (Brawling) Specialty: Attacking by bucking 7d
Warboot Parry (Brawling) Spec.: Parrying with warboots . 7d
Dodge (Reflexes) . . . . . 4d+1
Confidence (Smarts) 2d
Painting (Senses) Art Talent 3d
Gambling (Senses) 3d
Investigation (Senses) 3d
Notice (Senses) 3d
Streetwise (Senses) 3d
Black Market (Streetwise) Specialty 4d
Buying, selling, and moving contraband and other illicit goods
Boltworking Talent (Finesse) 3d
Boltworking Effect (Power) 3d
Flying (Finesse) 3d
Emergency Maneuvers (Flying) Specialty 4d
Maneuvering suddenly to avoid crashing or trouble
Sky Chariot (Flying) Specialty 4d
Pulling a chariot through the air safely & comfortably

Possessions (including panniers/saddlebags)
Dwelling (medium) A small flat that he owns
Money (medium) Income from bodyguarding and pick-up jobs
Vehicle (medium) Two-passenger sky chariot that he pulls
Barding (minor) Old royal guard helm: +3d armor, head only; forehead spike, 1d injury plus Strength Bonus (3d total)
Weapon (minor) Warboots: 1d+1 injury plus Strength Bonus and strike dice; Punch, 3d+2 total injury; Box, 4d total injury (+3 or +1d difficulty mod.); Kick, 4d+1 total injury (+6 or +2d difficulty modifier); Buck, 5d+1 total injury (+9 or +3d difficulty modifier)

Stormbucker used to be a royal guard who served on the borders and in the nation's biggest city. He's not a police-pony or detective, but he learned how the "real world" works by assisting in criminal take-downs. He hoped for a posting to the royal palace—what guardspony doesn't?—but then he uncovered some corruption in his own unit.

A lieutenant was taking bribes from smugglers and bureaucrats. Stormbucker reported it, and the lieutenant was tried and convicted, but the court-martial was hushed up and others escaped justice. It all looked to Stormbucker like politics and dirty dealing. He appealed to the Princesses but never got an answer. (What he doesn't know is that his letter was intercepted and buried, so it never reached them.)

He resigned from the guard in disgust and now is a "white hat" muscle-for-hire: bodyguarding, making dangerous deliveries, and doing other, similar jobs. He's known to the local authorities, who sympathize with his history—but they also know he's kind of a loose cannon.

Personal Weakness: *Distrusts authority*—his bad experiences in the royal guard have left a lasting impression.

Physical Description: Stormbucker is large and sturdy, with a well-trimmed gold coat. His short-cropped mane and tail are cobalt blue. His eyes are violet. His cutie mark is a horseshoe over crossed spears.

Best suited for a somewhat dark game set mostly in a big city, with lots of shady figures and scheming.

Marathon: Pegasus Stallion *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	2d	Run Move	7 yards
Hardiness	4d+1	Swim & Climb Moves	4 yards
Reflexes	2d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	2d	Flight Move	8 yards
Smarts	2d+1		
Senses	2d+2	Strength Bonus	1d
Power	3d	Resist Flying Fatigue	4d
Finesse	1d+2	Resist Injury or Illness	3d

Talents and Specialties (based on . . .) **Dice**
Stamina (Hardiness) . . . . . 6d+1
Navigation (Smarts) 4d
Orienteering (Navigation) Navigation Specialty 5d
The use of maps and charts (rather than using instruments or examining the lay of the land)
Geography (Smarts) Science Talent . . . . . 2d+2
The science and study of the lands, the features, the inhabitants, and the phenomena of the world
Postal Service Administration (Smarts) Admin. Specialty . .1d+2
Dealing with the royal postal service
Aerial Teamster (Finesse) 3d
Efficiently loading, pulling through the air, and unloading a van, wagon, or cart
Flying (Finesse) 4d
Bump of Direction (Finesse) 4d
Weather Sense (Finesse) 5d
Magical ability to understand exactly what the weather's doing at the moment and how it may change over the next day, assuming it isn't influenced by magic

Possessions (including panniers/saddlebags)
Dwelling (medium) A small flat that he rents
Money (medium) Income from postal work
Maps (medium) Case of maps and charts
Toolkit (minor) Navigation instruments with case
Library (minor) Books with an emphasis on romances (in the old meaning of the word: novels about exotic places and characters, what today would be called pulp fiction)

Marathon works for the royal postal service, flying letters and small packages long distances from post office to post office.

Personal Weakness: *Introvert*—he doesn't make friends easily or quickly.

Physical Description: Marathon is average size for a pegasus stallion, but with an athletic build like a marathon runner. His coat is dark blue with an undertone of gray. His mane and tail are light grayish-blue; he keeps the former fairly short and the latter slightly longer. His eyes are greenish-blue. His cutie mark is a pony sandal with wings.

Best suited for a game that may involve traveling, but tends to be based in one area. ⧫

Wind Shear: Pegasus Mare *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	3d	Run Move	8 yards
Hardiness	3d	Swim & Climb Moves	4 yards
Reflexes	2d+1	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	2d+1	Flight Move	7 yards
Smarts	2d+1		
Senses	2d+1	Strength Bonus	2d
Power	2d+1	Resist Fatigue	3d+1
Finesse	2d+1	Resist Injury or Illness	3d

Talents and Specialties (based on . . .) Dice

Stamina (Hardiness) . . . . . 3d+1
Swimming (Reflexes) . . . . . 3d+1
Administration (Smarts) . . . . . 2d+2
Knowledge of rules and regulations and how an organization works
Familiarity (Smarts) with city where game is set . . . . . 2d+2
Lifeguard (Smarts) . . . . . 2d+2
Rescuing a victim from drowning without letting a panicking victim drown the rescuer too
Medicine (Smarts) 3d
Survival (Smarts) 3d
Marine Survival (Survival) Specialty dealing with ocean . 4d
Urban Legends (Smarts) . . . . . 2d+2
Knowledge of spooky stories that may or may not really have happened somewhere
Rescue Search (Senses) Search Specialty . . . . . 3d+1
Finding lost victims in the wilderness or on the ocean
Flying (Finesse) . . . . . 3d+1
Weather Sense (Finesse) 3d
Windworking Talent (Finesse) 3d

Possessions (every pony gets panniers/saddlebags)
Dwelling (medium) A small flat that she rents
Money (medium) Income from patrol work (and maybe writing)
Phonograph and record collection (medium)
Toolkit (minor) Survival vest with minimal gear (for example, compass, first-aid kit, whistle, waterproof canister of matches, firecrackers, and a pair of flares)
Sunglasses (minor) High-quality flyer's shades with lanyard

Wind Shear works on the local coastal patrol, helping to safeguard seafarers and those who live close to the ocean. She's good at her job, but those around her know full well she also is a little crazy. A favorite piece of advice she gives is "Always put a lanyard on your sandwich. You don't want to drop it when you're sitting on a cloud taking your lunch break."

Personal Weakness: *Loopy*—the sky isn't the same color in her world. She's willing to believe the most outrageous things and is a little overenthusiastic. Parents occasionally tell their foals not to drink too much seawater or they'll end up like her.

Physical Description: Wind Shear's lean and wiry like a track-and-field athlete and fairly attractive. Her well-groomed coat is medium purple; her mane and tail are glossy black, straight, and medium length. Her eyes are deep purple. Her cutie mark is a white five-pointed star with a gold upraised wing.

Best suited for a fairly light game that ranges from silly to serious, set in a coastal area around a port city.

Starry Skies: Unicorn Mare *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	1d+2	Run Move	6 yards
Hardiness	2d	Swim & Climb Moves	3 yards
Reflexes	2d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	1d+2		
Smarts	4d	Strength Bonus	1d
Senses	2d	Magic Stamina	3d
Power	2d+2	Resist Injury or Illness	2d
Finesse	4d	**Magical Style:** Pyromancy	

Talents and Specialties (based on . . .) Dice

Magical Stamina (Hardiness) Stamina Specialty 3d
Resisting fatigue from using Magical Talents
Astronomy (Smarts) Science Talent 5d
The study of heavenly bodies and phenomena
Optics (Smarts) Science Talent 5d
Working with light using lenses & related instruments
Mathematics (Smarts) Science Talent . . . . . 4d+1
Working with advanced equations and calculations, including geometry, algebra, and calculus
Charm (Smarts) . . . . . 4d+1
High Society (Charm) Specialty . . . . . 5d+1
Dealing with the upper classes and the places where they tend to spend their time
Sharp Vision (Senses) Notice Specialty for seeing well . . . 3d
Illumination (Finesse) Talent 4d
Illumination (Power) Effect 4d
Levitation (Finesse) Talent 4d
Levitation (Power) Effect . . . . . 2d+2
Pyrokinesis (Finesse) Talent . . . . . 4d+2
Pyrokinesis (Power) Effect 4d
Generating heat in a target object, possibly to the point of causing it to melt or catch fire

Possession (including panniers/saddlebags)
Business (major) Telescope and optics shop; she lives in a room above the storefront
Money (medium) Income from the business
Telescope (minor) High-quality collapsing spyglass
Mirror (minor) Silvered segmented folding parabolic steel mirror (24" diameter): +1d injury or Effect with Pyrokinesis and combat Illumination, +1d resistance to light or fire magic when used as a shield; use Levitation or Coordination for Talent roll, depending on how it's being used

Starry Skies is a classic mage-type: able to attack and defend at range fairly well, but fragile when the bad guys finally get their grubby mitts on her. Her favorite combat moves will be blinding flashes, enhanced by her mirror if she has time to deploy it, or good old-fashioned telekinetic rock-chucking. She will direct fire spells at living beings only as a last resort.

Magical Style: *Pyromancy* is fire-related magic. The "Pyrokinesis" spell isn't a flamethrower, fireball, or wall of fire; it's the ability to generate heat and to stare at things until they catch on fire. It's like opening a hot oven and getting slapped in the face by the hot air coming out—just add sparkly special effects.

Personal Weakness: *Unusual appearance*—she looks odd even for a brightly colored magical pony. ◗

Physical Description: Starry's cutie mark is a galaxy surrounded by nebulæ, representing her talents in all things astronomical—in particular, her interest in cosmology and her nation's place in the universe. In other ways, her appearance is unusual enough to be memorable and a little unnerving. She's small and somewhat slender for an adult unicorn, but much of her coloration is similar to that of the moon princess, especially the cobalt blue of her coat. Her mane and tail of deep violet frosted with magenta, sometimes dotted with red glowing motes, also is out of the ordinary. Her eyes are ruby red.

In fact, her costumery on Nightmare Nights often is as either the moon princess or the villain that princess used to be, and she's scared the proverbial pants off of more than one foal.

Best suited for a figurative game of classic high adventure, including questing and epic journeys.

Galea: Unicorn Mare

Muscle	2d	Run Move	7 yards
Hardiness	2d	Swim & Climb Moves	4 yards
Reflexes	2d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	2d		
Smarts	4d	Strength Bonus	1d
Senses	2d	Resist Fatigue	3d
Power	2d	Resist Injury or Illness	2d
Finesse	3d	**Magical Style:** Martial magic	

Talents (based on . . .)	**Dice**
Leadership (Smarts)	5d
Navigation (Smarts)	5d
Piloting (Coordination)	3d
Stamina (Hardiness)	3d
Force Blast (Finesse) Talent	3d
Force Blast (Power) Effect	3d
Force Bubble (Finesse) Talent	3d
Force Bubble (Power) Effect	3d
Illumination (Finesse) Talent	3d
Illumination (Power) Effect	3d

Possessions (including panniers/saddlebags)
Knighthood (med.) Dame Commander of the Order of the Sun
Money (medium) Pensions and partnership dividends
Dwelling (medium) Townhouse with small yard in town
Contact (minor) With the Royal Guard and business world
Toolkit (minor) Set of navigation and sighting instruments

Galea served for many years as a Royal Guard officer in the airship corps, eventually reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel and assuming command of a large transport airship. During a training exercise, a smaller airship with an inexperienced crew collided with hers, causing both airships to crash. Her firm leadership, quick thinking, and clever use of her spells during the crisis saved lives, but she herself was seriously injured.

Her age and injuries forced her to retire; she still has a slight limp and isn't quite as strong as she used to be. In recognition of her sacrifice and gallantry, she received a retirement promotion to colonel and a knighthood. Both provided her with generous pensions, which she used to buy a townhouse.

She spent several months recuperating and adjusting to life as a retiree, but found it . . . boring. A group of investors, who were forming a company to build and operate an airship larger than any previous design, approached her to offer a chance to invest and to be the airship's captain. She leapt at the chance.

Magical Style: *Martial magic* is related to combat and war, including spells that help an officer exercise tactical command.

Personal Weakness: *Officer's manner*—her military training and bearing tend to come out in her attitudes and actions.

Physical Description: Galea is thin and a bit stringy with age. Her coat is a medium stone-gray, and she generally keeps it well-groomed. Her mane and tail are two-tone blue and somewhat wavy; she keeps them as neat and tidy as she did when she was in the Guard, though they're a little longer now. Her eyes are orange-red and usually narrowed. Her cutie mark is a *galea* (Roman legionary helmet) with face-guard in profile.

Suited for almost any game, with modification. In a comedic game, she can be competent but officious and self-important; in a serious game, she can be focused and professional.

An adventure game could follow the airship's travels to exotic lands or contract jobs around the ponies' country. In that case, substitute a suit of armor for the townhouse, including an alicorn-cover on the helm and war-boots on the hooves; a Hardiness of 2d can be a bit fragile in a serious fight.

For a lighter game, she might have retired a second time but kept her part ownership of and investment in the airship.

Silver Tuppence: Unicorn Stallion *(guest contribution)*

Muscle	1d	Run Move	6 yards
Hardiness	1d	Swim & Climb Moves	3 yards
Reflexes	1d	Jump	2 yards
Coordination	1d+1		
Smarts	5d		
Senses	3d+1	Strength Bonus	1d
Power	3d	Resist Injury or Illness	1d
Finesse	4d+1	**Magical Style:** Numismatics	

Talents (based on . . .)	**Dice**
Alertness (Reflexes)	2d
Accounting (Smarts)	5d+1
Math dealing with business income and expenses	
Business (Smarts)	5d+1
Intimidation (Smarts)	5d+1
Leadership (Smarts)	5d+1
Organization (Smarts)	6d+1
Creating & maintaining order in a document or effort	
Willpower (Smarts)	5d+1
Barista (Senses)	3d+2
Brewing, steeping, mixing, or otherwise creating safe, tasty, and beneficial or well-balanced drinks	
Writing (Senses)	4d
Levitation (Finesse) Talent	5d+2
Levitation (Power) Effect	3d
Illumination (Finesse) Talent	4d+2
Illumination (Power) Effect	3d
Metal Appraisal (Finesse) Talent	4d+2
Metal Appraisal (Power) Effect	3d

Possessions (including panniers/saddlebags)
Dwelling (medium) A nice flat in the lord's *seat* (manor house, castle, or palace from which the lord runs his lands)
Money (medium) Income from majordomo's job
Steamer trunk (medium) Contains a couple of butler-style outfits, pince-nez glasses with clip-on sunglasses, sundry toiletries, and a couple of blankets
Toolkit (minor) Accountant's portfolio in a leather case, with abacus, chalk and small chalkboard, ledger paper, fountain pen with refills, letter paper, envelopes, candle wax, and a copy of the lord's wax seal for official business
Toolkit (minor) Wet bar with tea set, coffee set, and liquors

Silver Tuppence works as a *majordomo* for the lord (or lady) in charge of the area where the game is set. He helps to keep the household's accounts in order and acts as the lord's agent for various tasks, including inspections and audits of businesses and local government agencies within the lord's lands.

For a stallion he's a bit pretty, and he's polite to the point of fussiness—but when the chips are down he can be surprisingly firm and able. He's not fond of leaving the lord's seat, preferring to work in his study, but all too often there's some errand that simply *has* to be run, and of course he usually gets chosen to do it because he's so reliable and capable.

Magical Style: *Numismatics* in the real world is the study and collection of coins, paper money, and medals. In Silver Tuppence's case, it is magic dealing with those things, and by extension other metals of value and financial instruments—stocks and bonds, letters of credit, and the like.

Metal Appraisal spell: Senses what, if any, metals and how much are in an object or location. *Casting distance:* none. *Ranged spell:* use range modifier for how far away object or location is. *Failure:* spell fizzles. *Mishap:* spell gives false information. *Effect:* Notice dice to determine if object or location contains metals, what those metals are, and how much. *Duration:* instant; in effect, the spell asks a question and gets an answer.

This spell is right on the edge of his Magical Style, and is phrased to make it useful for adventuring as well as more everyday accounting purposes. For example, it can be used to determine if steel or iron slugs are mixed in with silver or gold coins, but it also can be used to determine if there is iron *rebar* (reinforcing bar) inside a brick wall—say, as part of a building inspection. Another possibility is to count the monetary value of a pile or bag of coins without touching it, which would require a suitably high difficulty for the spell's Effect Notice roll.

Personal Weakness: *Fussy homebody*—he can be a bit obsessive-compulsive and hard to pry out of the lord's seat for any kind of outing.

Physical Description: Silver Tuppence is slim and lanky, delicate enough to be mistaken easily for a mare. His impeccably groomed coat is silver gray. His mane and tail are similarly tidy—white with a shock of blue, worn straight and bound with a ribbon at the end, then curled. His eyes are copper-colored. His cutie mark is a pair of silver coins stamped with the seals of the royal princesses.

Best suited for a light adventure game that takes place mostly in one area. ✶

Additional guest contributions will be included in future revisions.

This twelve-page ***quick reference*** can be punched and placed in a binder with the rest of the rulebook—or printed on or glued to both sides of heavy card-stock sheets, then assembled into a foldable screen to shield the narrator's notes and story-spoilers from the players' view. The panels can be arranged in any order that suits the narrator. Be aware, however, that the tables are extremely abbreviated and are intended as reminders, not as substitutes for the actual rules. If there's a conflict between this quick reference and the rules sections, follow the rules sections.

~ First Things First: Creating a Pony ~

Checklist for Creating a Pony

Step 1: What Kind of Pony?
A. Choose the pony's tribe: earth pony, pegasus, or unicorn.
B. Choose whether the pony's a mare (female) or stallion (male).

Step 2: Aptitudes
A. List the starting Aptitudes of the tribe chosen for the pony.
B. Add 12d (36 points) to Aptitudes.

Step 3: Talents
A. Choose the pony's Talents and describe them if necessary; for a unicorn, choose the pony's Magical Style.
B. Decide whether each Talent is Mundane or Magical.
C. Decide for each Talent what Aptitude to base it on.
D. Add 7d (21 points) to Talents.

Step 4: Personal Weakness
Decide on the pony's Personal Weakness.

Step 5: Finishing Touches
A. Describe how the pony looks.
B. Name the pony; describe anything else that's important.
C. Note down the pony's Moves and Strength Bonus.
D. Decide on the pony's important possessions.

Optional Rule: Too Many Dice!

Whole Dice	5d	Wild Die	Whole Dice	5d	Wild Die
11d	+21	+35	19d	+49	+63
12d	+25	+39	20d	+53	+67
13d	+28	+42	21d	+56	+70
14d	+32	+46	22d	+60	+74
15d	+35	+49	23d	+63	+77
16d	+39	+53	24d	+67	+81
17d	+42	+56	25d	+70	+84
18d	+46	+60	26d	+74	+88

~ Doing Things: Basic Task Resolution ~

Difficulty and description	Range
Trivial: can do task without thinking about it	0 or less
Routine: task takes little thought or effort	1 to 5
Easy: having a good Talent helps with task	6 to 10
Middling: doing task right takes skill and effort	11 to 15
Hard: should be well-trained in kind of task	16 to 20
Very hard: only best-trained has good chance	21 to 25
Impossible: success is worth telling stories about	26 or more

Modifier and example	Range
Huge disadvantage: no tools, complicated repair	+16 or more
Big disadvantage: extreme interference	+11 to +15
Fair disadvantage: major interference	+6 to +10
Small disadvantage: minor interference	−1 to −5
Small advantage: minimal tools for the job	−1 to −5
Fair advantage: rough-and-ready tools for job	−6 to −10
Big advantage: good tools for the job	−11 to −15
Huge advantage: best tools for the job	−16 or less

Taking extra time on task	Modifier to dice rolled
Taking 2 times as long on task	+1d
Taking 4 times as long on task	+2d
Taking 8 times as long on task	+3d

Rushing the task	Difficulty modifier
Taking ¾ as long as normal on task	+5
Taking ½ as long as normal on task	+10
Taking ¼ as long as normal on task	+20

Success!	Result
exactly	barely successful; a little less than expected
by 1 to 4	adequately successful but nothing special
by 5 to 8	quite successful; may get a little extra
by 9 to 12	very successful; should get a little extra
by 13 to 16	extremely successful; should be rewarded
by 17 or more	amazingly successful; should get big reward

Dice:	+1	+2	1d	1d+1	1d+2	2d	2d+1	2d+2	3d	3d+1	3d+2	4d	4d+1	4d+2	5d	5d+1	5d+2	6d	*(and so on)*
Points:	1	2	**3**	4	5	**6**	7	8	**9**	10	11	**12**	13	14	**15**	16	17	**18**	*(and so on)*

~ Plumb Tuckered: Fatigue and Rest ~

Fatigue roll:	1	2	**3**	4	5	**6**	7	8	**9**	10	11	**12**	13	14	**15**	16	17	**18**	19	*(& so on)*
Difficulty:	0	3	**6**	9	12	**15**	18	21	**24**	27	30	**33**	36	39	**42**	45	48	**51**	54	*(& so on)*

Level of exertion with examples	**Roll**
Light work: walking, carrying light load	1 hour
Moderate work: trotting, carrying medium load	10 min.
Heavy work: cantering, carrying heavy load	1 minute
Maximum effort: galloping, carrying very hvy. load	1 round

DM = difficulty modifier

Condition for fatigue modifier	**DM**
Hot weather	+5
Very hot weather	+10
For each exertion beyond the heaviest single one	+5
Only light work, if pony is pacing herself	Trivial
For each range beyond short that spell is cast	+5
For Heroic flight	+5

Simplifying Fatigue During Rounds

Activity	**Exertion**
Being less active than fighting (hiding, thinking, freeing prisoners, etc.)	Medium work
Fighting or otherwise being active most of the time	Heavy work
Roll for fatigue after finishing actions	Maximum effort
Extra effort optional rule: +1d to all rolls for the round	Maximum effort

~ Icky Stuff: Injury, Illness, and Healing ~

Injury or illness *(use second column for changed values, if any)*			
≤ 0	≤ 0	Bruised	No effect
1–3	1–	Stunned	–1d to all tasks this round and next
4–6	–	Minor	–1d to all tasks until healed
7–9	–	Serious	–2d to all tasks until healed
10–12	–	Major	–3d to all tasks until healed; may be unconscious for 10d minutes
13–15	–	Mortal	Unconscious until healed; Hardiness roll each minute to stay alive
≥ 16	≥	Death	Immediate

Natural healing from	**Roll after**	**Difficulty**
Stunned (no recovery roll needed)	—	automatic
Minor illness or injury	3 days	6
Serious illness or injury	3 days	6
Major illness or injury	2 weeks	6
Mortal illness or injury	5 weeks	8

Medical treatment for	**Roll after**	**Difficulty**
Minor illness or injury	1 day	10
Serious illness or injury	1 day	15
Major illness or injury	1 day	20
Mortal illness or injury	1 day	25

Optional Rule: Natural Hazards

Hail or sleet:	Mod.	Heavy	V. hvy	Extr.	Max.
Injury/round:	1d	1d+1	1d+2.	2d	3d

Hazard	**1d**	**1d+1**	**1d+2**	**2d**	**2d+1**	**2d+2**	**3d**	**3d+1**	**3d+2**	**4d**	**← Injury**
Asphyxiat.	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	Round
Drowning	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	Failed Roll
Dehydrat.	1	1 ½	2	2 ½	3	3 ½	4	4 ½	5	5 ½	Days
Starvation	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Days
Cold	40–49 4–9	30–39 –1–4	20–29 –7––2	10–19 –12––7	0–9 –18––13	–10––1 –23––18	–20––11 –29––24	–30––21 –34––24	–40––31 –46––35	–50––41 –46––41	°F each hour °C each hour
Falling	6–10 2–3	11–15 3–5	16–20 5–6	21–25 6–8	26–30 8–9	31–35 9–11	36–40 11–12	41–45 12–14	46–50 14–15	51–55 16–17	Feet Meters
Collision	26–30 24–27	31–35 28–32	36–40 33–37	41–45 37–41	46–50 42–46	51–55 47–50	56–60 51–55	61–65 56–59	66–70 60–64	71–75 65–69	Yards/round Meters/round

Size	Examples	Size	Examples	Size	Exam.
40	Dragon	3	Small cart	−6	Housecat
24	Bldg. (8 flrs.)	3	Sun princess	−6	Breadbox
20	Bldg. (4 flrs.)	2	Moon princess	−9	Rat
14	Bldg. (2 flrs.)	0	Adult pony	−12	Mouse
10	Train car	−3	Foal	−15	Coin
6	Large wagon	−3	Medium dog	−21	Ant

Visibility in air	Distance
Ideal: clear mountain/arctic air	45–60 miles (72–91 km)
Typical: sea level near town/city	20–30 miles (32–48 km)
Haze: thin fog, smoke, etc.	1.25–3 miles (2–5 km)
Mist: medium fog, smoke, etc.	0.625–1.2 miles (1–1.9 km)
Fog or clouds: thick smoke, etc.	0.62 miles (0.95 km) or less
"Zero" visibility	110 yards (100 m) or less

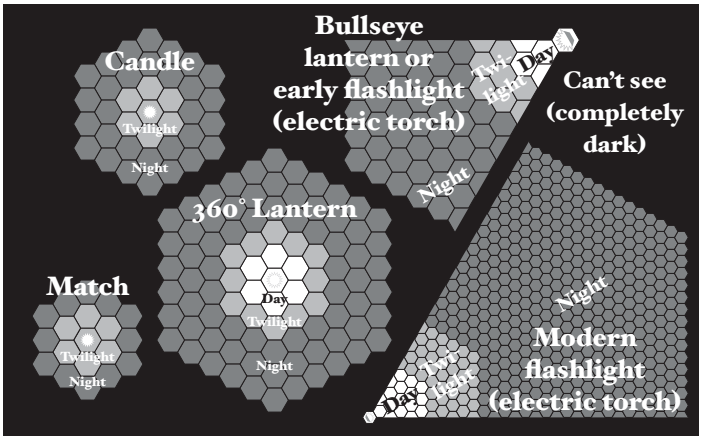
Precipitation*	Visibility
None: 0 inches (0 mm)	See table at right
Very light: ≤ 0.01 inch (0.25 mm)	4–8 mi. (6.4–13 km)
Light: 0.02 to 0.04 in. (0.26–1 mm)	2–4 mi. (3.2–6.4 km)
Moderate: 0.05 to 0.16 in. (2–4 mm)	1–2 mi. (1.6–3.2 km)
Heavy: 0.17 to 0.64 in. (5–16 mm)	½–1 mi. (0.8–1.6 km)
Very heavy: 0.7 to 2.0 in. (17–50 mm)	¼–½ mi. (0.4–0.8 km)
Extreme: 3 to 8 in. (51–203 mm)	⅛–¼ mi. (0.2–0.4 km)
Maximum: > 8 inches (203 mm)	1/16–⅛ mi. (0.1–0.2 km)

* Drizzle may be *very light* or *light;* half visibility.
Snow may be 6 to 11 times as bulky; half visibility.

Visibility Conditions	DM
Light smoke or fog, *or* middle distance	+3 *or* +1d
Thick smoke or fog, *or* long distance	+6 *or* +2d
Very thick smoke or fog, *or* very long distance	+12 *or* +4d
Twilight (half normal range of visibility)	+5
Night (one-fourth normal range of visibility)	+10

Light	Day	Twilight	Night	Lasts
Match	—	0–1 yards	2 yards	4 rounds
Candle	—	0–1 yards	2–3 yards	1 hour
Lantern*	0–1 yards	2 yards	3–5 yards	6 hours
Flashlight*	0–5 yards	6–10 yards	11–30 yds.	see rules

* Flashlight casts 30° cone; lantern may cast 360° circle *or* 30° cone — double distances if cone.



Beaufort Scale		Knots	mph	km/h	Conditions on land	Conditions on water
0	Calm	little or no wind, too light to feel			Calm — smoke rises vertically	Flat seas with no significant waves
1	Light air	1–2	1–3	1–5.5	Smoke drifts, wind vanes are still	Ripples without crests
2	Light breeze	3–6	4–7	5.6–11	Leaves rustle, wind vanes move	Small wavelets, glassy crests
3	Gentle breeze	7–10	8–12	12–19	Leaves and twigs move	Large wavelets, scattered whitecaps
4	Moder. breeze	11–15	13–17	20–28	Small branches move, dust raised	Small waves with breaking crests
5	Fresh breeze	16–20	18–24	29–38	Small trees sway, med. branches move	Many whitecaps, slight spray in air
6	Strong breeze	21–26	25–30	39–49	Large branches move, umbrellas pull	Foam crests frequent, some spray
7	Near gale	27–33	31–38	50–61	Trees move, hard to walk	Sea heaps up, foam blown in streaks
8	Fresh gale	34–40	39–46	62–74	Twigs broken off, very hard to walk	High waves, breaking crests, spray
9	Strong gale	41–47	47–54	75–88	Branches break, some saplings fall	High waves, some rolling over, spray
10	Whole gale	48–55	55–63	89–102	Trees break, shingles come loose	High waves with overhanging crests
11	Violent storm	56–63	64–72	103–117	Much damage to plants and roofs	Extremely high waves, lots of spray
12	Hurricane force	≥ 64	≥ 73	≥ 118	Major damage to plants and houses	Huge waves, air filled with spray
—	Typical tornado	90–100	104–115	167–185	Catastrophic but uneven damage	Waterspout; extreme conditions

Doing More Things: Special Task Rules

How Much Can a Pony Lift, Carry, and Pull?

D = difficulty
tons = US short tons
tonnes = metric tonnes

pounds	kg	D
0.1 to 2	0 to 0.9	1
2.1 to 10	1.0–4.5	2
11 to 20	4.6–9.1	3
21–40	10–18	4
41–60	19–27	5
61–80	28–36	6
81–100	37–45	7
101–120	46–54	8
121–140	55–64	9
141–160	65–73	10
161–180	74–82	11
181–200	83–91	12
201–240	92–109	13
241–280	110–127	14
281–320	128–145	15
321–360	146–163	16
361–400	164–181	17
401–500	182–227	18
501–600	228–272	19
601–700	273–318	20
701–800	319–363	21
801–900	364–408	22
901–1000	409–454	23
1001–1100	455–499	24
1101–1200	500–544	25
1201–1300	545–590	26
1301–1400	591–635	27
1401–1500	636–680	28
1501–1600	681–726	29
1601–1700	727–771	30
1701–1800	772–816	31
1801–1900	817–862	32
1901–2000	863–907	33

tons	tonnes	D
1.01–1.10	0.91–1.00	34
1.11–1.20	1.01–1.09	35
1.21–1.30	1.10–1.18	36
1.31–1.40	1.19–1.27	37
1.41–1.50	1.28–1.36	38
1.51–1.60	1.37–1.45	39
1.61–1.70	1.46–1.54	40
1.71–1.80	1.55–1.63	41
1.81–1.90	1.64–1.72	42
1.91–2.00	1.73–1.81	43
2.1–2.5	1.9–2.3	44
2.6–3.0	2.4–2.7	45
3.1–3.5	2.8–3.2	46
3.6–4.0	3.3–3.6	47
4.1–4.5	3.7–4.1	48
4.6–5.0	4.2–4.5	49
5.1–5.5	4.6–5.0	50
5.6–6.0	5.1–5.4	51
6.1–6.5	5.5–5.9	52
6.6–7.0	6.0–6.4	53
7.1–7.5	6.5–6.8	54
7.6–8.0	6.9–7.3	55
8.1–8.5	7.4–7.7	56
8.6–9.0	7.8–8.2	57
9.1–9.5	8.3–8.6	58
9.6–10.0	8.7–9.1	59
11–15	10–14	60
16–20	15–18	61
21–25	19–23	62
26–30	24–27	63
31–35	28–32	64
36–40	33–36	65
41–45	37–41	66
46–50	42–45	67
51–55	46–50	68
56–60	51–54	69
61–65	55–59	70

Load is carried on	*
Skids, smooth surface	2
Primitive cart/wagon	10

Load is carried on	*
Modern cart/wagon	20
Train or canal barge	100

* Divide weight of load by number listed

Teamwork

Leader's orders or instructions	Difficulty
Simple or general commands	3
Easy or specific commands	7
Difficult or very specific commands	12
Very difficult or precise commands	17
Extremely difficult or very precise commands	22
Exacting commands	28

Group's ability	Diff. Mod.
Follows leader no matter what	–20
Members will sacrifice for each other	–15
Has trained a lot to work together	–10
Has trained a little to work together	–5
Has worked together a lot or is willing to	None
Has worked together several times	+5
Has worked together only a few times	+10
Has never worked together or most of group hates each other	+15
Not interested in working together, or members hate each other or can't communicate	+20

Using Magical Talents

Size of weatherworking or spell	D
Very small: 1 pip/die Effect; spell lasts 1 hour, is no effort	0
Small: half Effect; spell lasts up to 1 hour, is light work	5
Medium: full Effect; spell lasts 10 min., is medium work	10
Large: Effect and a half; spell lasts 1 min., is heavy work	15
Very large: double Effect; spell lasts 1 round, max. effort	20

Casting distance and magical range modifiers	DM
Casting distance: –1d per yard beyond 1 yard from pony	—
Short: yards equal to number of whole dice of Effect	—
Medium: more than short to 10 times short range	+5
Long: more than medium to 100 times short range	+10

D = difficulty DM = difficulty modifier

Move	Yards per round	Maximum
Run	5 + 1 per die of Muscle*	8 Moves per round
Swim, Climb	½ of Run Move	4 Moves per round
Jump	¼ of Run Move	4 Moves per round

* Earth pony may use Power instead if it's greater.

Movement	Minimum	Maximum	Difficulty
Walk	1 yard	1 Run Move	0
Trot	> 1 Run Move	2 Run Moves	5
Canter	> 2 Run Moves	4 Run Moves	10
Gallop	> 4 Run Moves	8 Run Moves	15
Swim	0 yards	4 Swim Moves	5 per Move
Climb*	0 yards	4 Climb Moves	5 per Move
Jump	—	1 jump	5
per yard (0.9 m) farther than Jump Move			+5 DM
galloping start	−5 DM for 1 round; −10 DM for 2 rounds		

* If climber has Climbing Talent, may make 2 Climb Moves with difficulty 5; +5 difficulty per additional Climb Move.

Running maneuvers	Limits and effects
Speed up *or* slow down	By no more than 2 Moves
Move backward	Difficulty 5; walking only
Turn 60° *or* sidle	A turn isn't movement, sidle is
Swim/climb maneuvers	**Limits and effects**
Speed up *or* slow down	By no more than 1 move
Turn *or* sidle (swimming)	A turn isn't movement, sidle is

Bad conditions for movement *(including flying)*	DM
Uneven surface, small obstacles, choppy water, climbing a tree, flying in strong winds	+5
Big obstacles, strong current, climbing a rough wall, flying in rough air	+10
Lots of big, close obstacles, stormy weather, a few hazards in the air	+15
Narrow path, big waves, climbing a smooth wall, lots of hazards in the air	+20
Collapsing hallway, swimming or flying in a hurricane	+25

DM = difficulty modifier

Flight	Yards per round	Maximum
Normal	5 + 1 per die of Power	8 Flight Moves per round
Heroic	More than 8 Flight Moves in a round	

Flight	Minimum	Maximum	Difficulty
Hover	—	0 yards	3
Slow	1 yard	1 Flight Move	0
Moderate	> 1 Flight Move	2 Flight Moves	5
Fast	> 2 Flight Moves	4 Flight Moves	10
Very fast	> 4 Flight Moves	8 Flight Moves	15
Heroic	> 8 Flight Moves	+5 DM per doubling of moves	

Basic maneuvers	Limits and effects
Speed up *or* slow down	By no more than 8 Flight Moves
Fly low (close to ground)	+5 flying difficulty modifier
Gain *or* lose altitude	By no more than 4 Flight Moves
Turn 60° *or* slip*	A turn isn't movement, a slip is
Glide	+5 difficulty mod., −1 fatigue level

* Heroic: 1 turn/slip allowed at end of Moves; slip ¼ of Moves.

Advanced maneuvers	Limits and effects
Fly backward	Difficulty 5; slow flight only
Rotate inverted *or* upright	+1 flying difficulty modifier
Break sound barrier	+10 DM for that round only
Half-loop *or* half-roll	+5 flying difficulty modifier
Power-dive *or* zoom-climb*	Base difficul. on altitude change

* Gravity subtracts from altitude; see gravity table below.

Round pulled by gravity:	*First*	*Second and later*
In power-dive or zoom-climb:	140 yards	500 yards
Falling while spread-eagled:	140 yards	300 yards

Taking off & landing	Maneuver/difficulty
Take off	Jump ≤ 2 yards (galloping start allowed)
Land at walking speed	Jump down from height
Land at trotting speed	+5 to jump difficulty
Land at cantering speed	+10 to jump difficulty
Land at galloping speed	+15 to jump difficulty
Land faster than gallop	+20 to jump difficulty

Optional Rules for Movement

A runner . . .	Must go straight . . .
Making 2 Run Moves	1 yard before turning or sidling
Making 3 Run Moves	2 yards before turning or sidling
Making 4 Run Moves	4 yards before turning or sidling
Making 5 Run Moves	6 yards before turning or sidling
Making 6 Run Moves	8 yards before turning or sidling
Making 7 Run Moves	12 yards before turning or sidling
Making 8 Run Moves	16 yards before turning or sidling
Turning or sidling too soon suffers +1 DM per yard too soon	

Maneuver	Optional limits and effects
Gain altitude	Slow down 1 yard per yard altitude gain
Lose altitude	Speed up 1 yard per yard altitude lost
Slip	May make 2 turns in opposite direction
Per turn or slip	Slow down by ½ Flight Move
Per half-loop/-roll	Slow down by 1 Flight Move
Glide: must go faster than 2 Flight Moves; no landing, hovering, speeding up, or advanced maneuvers	

A flyer . . .	Must go straight . . .	of . . .
Making 2 Moves	1 yard before turn or slip	1 yard
Making 3 Moves	2 yards before turn or slip	1 yard
Making 4 Moves	4 yards before turn or slip	1 yard
Making 5 Moves	6 yards before turn or slip	½ Move
Making 6 Moves	8 yards before turn or slip	½ Move
Making 7 Moves	12 yards before turn or slip	1 Move
Making 8 Moves	16 yards before turn or slip	1 Move
Turning or slipping too soon suffers +1 DM per yard too soon		
In heroic flight may not make turns immediately after slip		
Making 1 Move may turn freely but can't slip, half-loop/-roll		

A flyer . . .	Must go straight . . .	of . . .
Making 2 Moves	2 yards before half-loop/-roll	1 yard
Making 3 Moves	4 yards before half-loop/-roll	½ Move
Making 4 Moves	8 yards before half-loop/-roll	½ Move
Making 5 Moves	12 yards before half-loop/-roll	1 Move
Making 6 Moves	16 yards before half-loop/-roll	1 Move
Making 7 Moves	24 yards before half-loop/-roll	2 Moves
Making 8 Moves	32 yards before half-loop/-roll	2 Moves
Half-looping/-rolling too soon gets +1 DM per yard too soon		

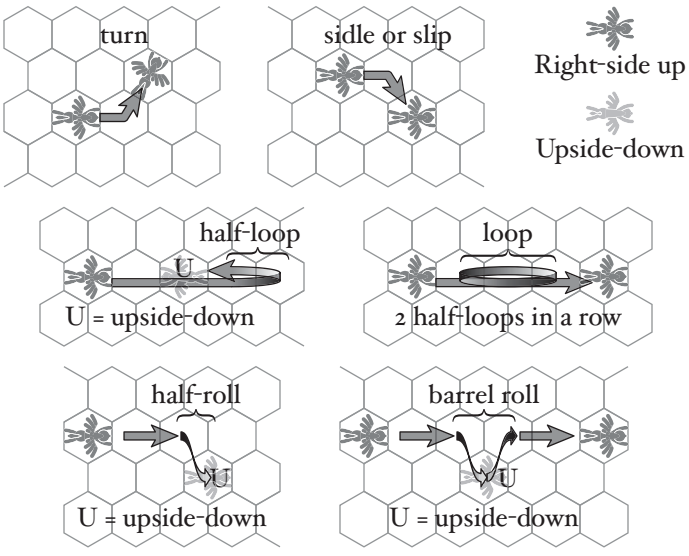
— *Two Bits: Buying Things* —

Possession of money: / **Dice for purchases:**	Major 6d	Mod. 4d	Minor 2d	None 1d

Price range	Diff.	3d times
Cheap: 1–20 bits	1–5	1 bit
Inexpensive: 21–200 bits	6–10	10 bits
A little expensive: Hundreds of bits	11–15	100 bits
Kind of expensive: A few thousand bits	16–20	500 bits
Expensive: Several thousand bits	21–25	1000 bits
Very expensive: Tens of thousands of bits	26–30	10,000
Costly: Hundreds of thousands of bits	31–35	100,000

Things that can affect prices	Diff. Mod.
Item is: low-quality, damaged, very common, or simpler technology than commonly available; local market is flooded	–5 or less (each)
Customer pays on time, customer shops there a lot, or seller has no complaints	–1 or less (each)
Customer doesn't pay on time or is a problem	+1 or more
Item is: high-quality, in very good shape, heavily decorated, uncommon, not easily available, in big demand, or a bit more advanced technology than commonly available	+5 or more (each)
Item is: not available to public, out of season, from far away, or much more advanced technology than is commonly available	+15 or more (each)

Purchase difficulty	How often?
Casual: ≤ number of money dice	Several per day
Normal: > number to 3 times number of dice	One per day
Luxury: > 3 times number of money dice	One per week



~ Fast and Furious: Rounds and Actions ~

Step 1. Initiative
Determine order of play with Alertness or Reflexes rolls; does not count as full action.

Step 2. Actions
Decide how many, and which, full actions to take; apply multi-action penalty if needed.

Step 3. Is It Over?
Determine whether to continue with rounds or to revert to normal handling of time.

~ Them's Fightin' Words: Combat ~

Step 1: Defense

Defense	Attack difficulty
Passive: no special effort to defend	10
All-out: no other actions allowed	Dodge *or* Reflexes roll + 10
Normal: other full actions allowed	Dodge *or* Reflexes roll
Block: trying to stop attacks	Brawling, Mêlée, *or* Reflexes roll
Pary: trying to deflect attacks	Brawling, Mêlée, *or* Reflexes roll

Step 2: Attack

Unarmed	Attacker uses . . .	Injury	DM
Bite	Teeth	*	+3 (or +1d)†
Punch, butt	One front hoof or head	+1‡	No modif.
Box or clip	Both front hooves or wing	+2	+3 (or +1d)
Kick	One rear hoof	1d	+6 (or +2d)
Buck	Both rear hooves	2d	+9 (or +3d)

Toughness, with examples	Dice
Flimsy: plywood door	1d
Tough: weapon or hard wooden door	2d
Sturdy: floor safe or bolted steel door	3d
Very sturdy: a few layers of steel	4d
Reinforced: many layers of steel	6d

DM = Difficulty Modifier
* Strength Bonus only.
† *Subtract* 3 (or 1d) if attacker and target are very close.
‡ For a unicorn using her alicorn (horn), use +2 instead.

Special	Attacker . . .
Grab	Attack diff. modif. of +6 (or +2d); each round target is grabbed, attacker can use Strength Bonus;target trying to escape rolls Muscle contest against attacker (counts as an action)
Choke	Cuts off target's air, using Strength Bonus on first round; after that, use general Grab rules
Flip	Yanks target into falling; target suffers 3d injury from hitting round and then is prone
Hold	Holds target; subtracts 3d or more from injury
Slam or throw	Lifts and slams or throws target into nearby object with two actions (lift and slam), both needing lifting rolls; injury equals toughness roll for object; attacker's Strength Bonus may damage object, resisted by toughness roll
Tackle	Tries to grab target's body; +3 (or +1d) to attack difficulty, normal injury dice first round, Strength Bonus after
Trip *or* knockdown	Rolls Muscle (or Talent) contest against target; +6 (or +2d) to difficulty of attack; if successful, target falls but is not injured; target must take a full action to stand up
Push	Rolls Muscle (or Talent) contest against target; +3 (or +1d) to difficulty of attack; if successful, –2d from target's next Agility roll, but target is not injured

Optional	Attacker . . .
Disarm	Tries to knock weapon or object from target's grip; target can use an action to roll Muscle (or Levitation) against "injury" roll in a contest to keep a grip on weapon or object
Entangle	Tries to tangle up target with lasso, net, whip, etc.; target isn't injured, but can't take any actions besides trying to break free in a contest against "injury" roll; slipping out is an Agility roll, and breaking weapon is a Muscle roll
Lunge	Rushes target; add ½ yard (45 cm) to range of attack, +3 (or +1d) to attack difficulty, –1d injury
Sweep	Makes roundhouse blow or leg sweep; –6 (or –2d) from attack difficulty and –1d from injury

Step 3: Range

Range	Distance	Example	DM
Close	0–3 yards (0–2.7 m)	A few steps away	–5
Short	Beyond 3 yards to 1st range listing	Rifle fire across ballroom	None
Medium	Beyond 1st range list. to 2nd range listing	Pistol fire across ballroom	+5
Long	Beyond 2nd range list. to 3rd range listing	Rifle fire across sports field	+10

Condition	Effect
All-out attack	−6 (or −2d) from attack difficulty and +1d to injury; can't take any other actions in round
Crouched target	+3 (or +1d) to attack difficulty; +3 (or +1d) more if crouched target is moving; crouched target can move only half as far as normal
Prone target	−6 (or −2d) to attack difficulty at point-blank/short range; +6 (or +2d) at medium/long range
Size	See "Size" table for example values
Surprise	In first round, goes first or +1d to all actions

Cover and visibility	DM
Target can't see at all	−12 *or* −4d
Light smoke/fog, dim light, twilight, *or* target ¼ hidden	+3 *or* +1d
Thick smoke/fog, moonlight, *or* target ½ hidden	+6 *or* +2d
Very thick smoke/fog, darkness, target ¾ hidden, *or* attacker can't see at all	+12 *or* +4d
Target is completely hidden*	†

* If attack does more injury/damage than protection provided by cover, what's left may hit the target. Usually the cover will have to be destroyed before the attacker can hit the target.

† Can't hit target directly.

Step 4: Special Conditions

Optional	Effect
Aiming	Shooter taking no other action gets +1d to attack roll per round aiming at target; +3d max.
Group Att.	See "Teamwork" tables for information
Multiple weapons	Multi-action penalty if using multiple weapons in round
Quick draw	Attacker can subtract dice from attack roll and add them to initiative roll for a round
Unwieldy weapon	+5 to attack difficulty: weapon is more than 2 ft. (60 cm), hard to use, or user doesn't understand

Called Shot	DM	Injury	Effect of injury
Head	+3 *or* +1d	+12 *or* +4d	−1 to Smarts, Senses, initiative
Heart	+12 *or* +4d	+12 *or* +4d	No actions next round
Arm	+2 *or* +1d	−2 pips	−1 to rolls with injured arm
Leg *or* wing	+3 *or* +1d	−1 pip	−1 to Reflexes, Coordination, init.

DM = Difficulty modifier

Step 5: Roll!

Step 6: Injury or Effect (if successful)

Type of barding (armor):	Leather	Mail	Plate
Hardiness roll modifier:	+1d	+2d	+3d

~ List of Sample Talents ~

Muscle Talents

Blacksmithing Working iron into useful artifacts or devices.
Lifting Used instead of Muscle for hefting and carrying.
Lumbering Harvesting wood from trees with minimal waste.
Move Increase (ability) Add to Muscle for Run Move.
*Plowing** Pulling, steering, and operating a plow or harvester.
Teamster Loading, pulling, and unloading a van, wagon, or cart.

Hardiness Talents

Stamina Replaces Hardiness to resist fatigue, poison, illness.

Reflexes Talents

Acrobatics Performing gymnastics and breaking falls.
Alertness Replaces Reflexes for rolling initiative; see the rules in "Fast and Furious: Rounds and Actions" for details.
Brawling Fighting without weapons.
Climbing Scaling steep surfaces to move upward or downward.
Contortion The ability to wiggle out of bonds or restrictions.
Dodge Avoiding attacks or obstacles; see the rules in "Them's Fightin' Words: Combat" for details.
Jumping Leaping, including over obstacles, without falling.
Mêlée Fighting with close-up weapons (clubs, blades, *et cetera*).
Running Moving on one's hooves (or paws or feet).
Sneaking Moving silently, using cover and misdirection.
Swimming Moving through the water and breathing properly.

Coordination Talents

Firearms Shooting pistols, rifles, shotguns, and cannon.
Legerdemain Fancy manipulation and misdirection.
Lockpicking Opening locks, disarming simple traps.
Masonry Building sturdy and useful brick and stone structures.
Missile Weapons Shooting bows, crossbows, and slings.
Performing Any single kind of performance is a Talent.
Piloting Steering or guiding mechanical vehicles.
Throwing Flinging or catching objects accurately.
Tinker Building, repairing small or simple mechanical devices.

Smarts Talents

Business Running an enterprise successfully and profitably.
Charm Influencing other ponies or creatures with charisma.
Confidence Using bluffs, lies, and trickery on others.
Cosmopolitan General knowledge of other cultures.
Demolitions Using force to destroy structures or objects.
Engineering Designing and building big, complicated devices.
*Farriery** Hoof care—trimming, balancing, rasping, shoeing.
*Farming** Planting, maintaining, harvesting, and processing.
*Forestry** Caring for forests and the lands where they grow.
Forgery Creating or spotting fake documents, art, or currency.
*Husbandry** Breeding, rearing, and caring for animals.
Intimidation Influencing others through threats and fear.
Languages (group) Any single language is a Talent.
Leadership Directing groups of other ponies or creatures.
*Medicine** Treating sick or injured ponies.
Navigation Using maps or other means to avoid getting lost.
*Preserving** Using any method to prevent food from spoiling.
Repair Returning damaged or worn devices to good condition.
Science (group) Any single science is a Talent.
Telegraphy Operating and maintaining telegraph equipment.
*Veterinary Medicine** Treating sick or injured animals.
Willpower Resisting stress or pain, or attempts to influence.

Senses Talents

Acting Playing a fictitious role, on the stage or anywhere else.
*Animal Training** Teaching animals to perform tasks and follow commands.
Art (group) Any single form of art is a Talent.
*Cooking** Preparing foods that are safe, nutritious, and tasty.
Craft (group) Any single craft is a Talent.
Disguise Changing appearance with make-up, costume, posture.
Familiarity Knowledge of a specific geographical area; the bigger the area, the less detailed the knowledge is.
Gambling Playing games of chance or skill.
Hiding Keeping still and avoiding notice, concealing objects.
Investigation Gathering clues to solve puzzles or mysteries.
Journalism Gathering and presenting information about newsworthy events.
Notice Observing things or details with sight and other senses.
Oratory Public speaking to influence large audiences.
Persuasion Influencing small audiences with talk, gifts, or other methods.
Searching Canvassing an area systematically for hidden objects.
Streetwise Finding information, goods, and contacts in an urban environment.
*Survival** Techniques for living in wild conditions.
Tracking Following a creature's trail without being noticed.
Writing Communicating effectively using text rather than spoken language.

Pegasus Magical Talents

Bump of Direction Orients a pegasus even when she can't see.
Flying Moving through the air without losing control and falling; see "Hoofin' It and Wingin' It: Movement" for details.
Flight Increase (ability) Add to Power for Flight Move.
Weatherworking (group) Controlling and manipulating clouds: Boltworking, Cloudworking, and Rainworking Talents.
Windworking Controlling and directing of winds.

Unicorn Magical (Spell) Talents

Force Blast shoots a beam of raw magical force at a target.
Force Bubble creates a protective sphere of magical force.
Illumination creates a glow like a will-o'-the-wisp—see the rules in "Visibility: How Far Can a Pony See?" for details.
Levitation lifts, carries, and manipulates objects using magic.
Prime Mover powers a mechanical device that's designed for it. The narrator may decide to allow any unicorn to use it rather than requiring it to be part of the unicorn's Style.
Pyrotechnics creates a fireworks-like display of flashes, starbursts, or simple images. Can be used to attack: *dazzle* creates a blinding flash; *explosion* causes real injury.
Transformation (group) Talent must specify, with narrator's approval, what can be transformed and what it can be transformed into.
Wink moves creatures or things across distances "in the wink of an eye".

~ List of Sample Equipment ~

Available Almost Anywhere

Cheap (buying difficulty 1–5)
Alarm clock (1840s)
Backpack
Basic rations (a few days)
Blanket
Crowbar
Duffel bag
Eating utensils
Lantern
Lighter (Döbereiner's lamp)
Marbles
Newspaper, magazine
Personal hygiene kit
Pocket-watch (basic)
Rope, cotton, 50 yards (150 ft. or 45 m)
Rope, hemp, 50 yards (150 feet or 45 m)
Sewing machine, portable (1840s)
Shovel
Steamer trunk
Tent, 1-pony
Torch

Inexpensive (buying difficulty 6–10)
Basic clothing
Carpenter or construction toolkit
Iron spikes (8) and piton
Pocket-watch (high-quality)
Sleeping bag or bedroll
Tent, 3-pony
Wood stove

Available in Cities or by Mail-Order

Cheap (buying difficulty 1–5)
Camera film (1830s)
Compass
Flashlight, large (1890s)
Flashlight batteries (1890s)
Holster
Kerosene heater (1850s)

Inexpensive (buying difficulty 6–10)
Art supplies
Binoculars
Camera (1830s)
Disguise kit
Electrician's tool kit (1880s)
Emergency medical kit (1880s)
Gas stove (1850s)
Mechanic's tool kit
Rifle scope (1830s)
Telescope, small
Typewriter (1870s)

Unusual or Rare

Cheap (buying difficulty 1–5)
Lockpicking tools

Inexpensive (buying difficulty 6–10)
Archæologist's tool kit (1880s)
Gas mask (1840s)
Hobble
Jungle explorer's kit
Parachute

A Little Expensive (buying difficulty 11–15)
Evidence kit (1880s)

Useful Information

Binoculars Add 1d to rolls for looking at, or for, things more than 2 yards (1.8 m) away, but only in daylight.
Crowbar Add 1d to Muscle rolls when prying something.
Flashlight See rules in "Visibility: How Far Can a Pony See?"
Gas mask Adds 2d to wearer's Hardiness roll against a gas attack or cancels out 1d of subtraction from roll, whichever is more appropriate.
Hobble Cuffs front or rear hooves and comes with a key; difficulty of picking lock is 15, toughness of hobble is 15.
Jungle explorer's pack Add 2 to rolls for surviving in jungle or heavy forest; has pith helmet, insect repellent, and mosquito netting in a small knapsack.
Iron spikes and piton Add 1d to climbing rolls; must be used with a rope.
Lockpicking tools Add 1d to rolls for picking locks, but only if user has Lockpicking Talent.
Marbles A pony who steps on marbles scattered on the ground makes a Running or Reflexes roll each step until she can move away from them. Difficulty is 15; each step is an action.
Rifle Scope Add 2 to rolls for shooting at medium or long range, but only if shooter spent previous round aiming. Also works as a small telescope.
Rope, hemp Hemp rope is heavy-duty, able to support a lot of weight; toughness is 5.
Rope, cotton Cotton rope is medium-duty, able to support some weight, but not as much as hemp; toughness is 3.
Shovel Add 1d to rolls for digging.
Telescope Add 2d to rolls for looking at, or for, faraway things, but user must spend a round to focus it.
Tool kits Every tool kit includes a container and all tools and parts needed for working on normal tasks; adds 1d to rolls for that kind of work.

Purpose-Built Mêlée Weapons

Blunt	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Extra-light	+2	Short	Blackjack
Very light	1d	Short	Sap
Light	1d+1	Either	Brass knuckles (short), mace (long)
Medium	1d+2	Either	*Tonfa* (short), quarterstaff (long)

Sharp	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	Short	Dagger, bayonet, survival knife
Light	1d+1	Either	
Medium	1d+2	Either	Shortsword
Heavy	2d	Long	Rapier
Very heavy	2d+1	Long	
Extra-heavy	2d+2	Long	Broadsword
Huge	3d	Long	Large axe

Flexible	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	Long	Bullwhip
Light	1d+1	Long	
Medium	1d+2	Long	*Kusari-fundo* (chain with heavy ends)
Heavy	2d	Long	Ball and chain

Improvised Mêlée Weapons

Blunt	Injury	Length	Real-World Examples
Extra-light	+2	Short	Crowbar, shovel
Very light	1d	Short	Hammer
Light	1d+1	Long	Baseball bat, large stick

Sharp	Inj.	Length	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Short	Arrow, bolt, dart, iron spike
Extra-light	+2	Short	Awl, ice pick, household scissors, pen knife, screwdriver, stake
Very light	1d	Short	Hedge clippers, shears, chef's knife
Light	1d+1	Short	Hatchet
Medium	1d+2	Long	Machete

Flexible	Injury	Length	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Long	Cotton rope
Extra-light	+2	Long	Hemp rope

Purpose-Built Ranged Weapons

Missile Wpns.	Inj.	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Real-World Examples
Very light	1d	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	15 yards (14 m)	Sling and stone
Heavy	2d	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	250 yards (229 m)	Shortbow and arrow
Huge	3d	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	250 yards (229 m)	Longbow and arrow

Thrown Wpns.	Inj.	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Real-World Examples
Small	+1	Muscle roll	Muscle + 1 yard	Muscle + 2 yards	Dart
Very light	1d	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	15 yards (14 m)	Throwing dagger
Heavy	2d	5 yards (4.5 m)	25 yards (23 m)	40 yards (37 m)	Javelin (unwieldy weapon)

Improvised Ranged Weapons

Throw	Inj.	Diff.	Short	Med.	Long	Examples
Small	+1	+5	Muscle roll	Muscle + 1 yd.	Muscle + 2 yd.	Apple thrown by front hoof
Extra-light	+2	+10	Double result of Muscle roll plus modifier, if any			Apple kicked by back hoof
Extra-light	+2	+5	Muscle − 2 yd.	Muscle − 1 yd.	Muscle roll	Rock thrown by front hoof
Very light	1d	+10	Double result of Muscle roll minus modif., if any			Rock kicked by back hoof

Mechanical Weapons	Injury	Capacity	Short Range	Medium Rng.	Long Range
Small crossbow	4d	1	10 yards (9 m)	25 yards (23 m)	50 yards (46 m)
Medium crossbow	4d	1	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	200 yards (183 m)
Large crossbow	4d+1	1	10 yards (9 m)	100 yards (91 m)	300 yards (274 m)
Catapult (Size ≥ 12)	3d+2	1	50 yards (45 m)	100 yards (91 m)	200 yards (183 m)

	Firearms	Injury	Capacity	Short Range	Medium Rng.	Long Range	Real-World Examples
Early	Matchlock musket	3d+2	1	10 yards (9 m)	20 yards (18 m)	40 yards (37 m)	
	Flintlock pistol	3d+1	1	5 yards (4.5 m)	10 yards (9 m)	25 yards (23 m)	
	Flintlock musket	4d	1	25 yards (23 m)	40 yards (37 m)	100 yards (91 m)	
	Small cannon*	4d	1	50 yards (45 m)	200 yards (183 m)	800 yards (732 m)	
	Large cannon*	5d	1	50 yards (45 m)	150 yards (137 m)	500 yards (457 m)	
Sidearms	Low-power	3d+2	8	10 yards (9 m)	20 yards (18 m)	30 yards (27 m)	Early 9-mm automatic pistols
	Medium-power	4d	6	12 yards (11 m)	25 yards (23 m)	40 yards (37 m)	Colt .38 snub revolver
	High-power	4d+1	6	15 yards (14 m)	30 yards (27 m)	45 yards (41 m)	Colt .45 Peacemaker
Carbines	Low-power	4d+2	10 (1†)	10 yards (9 m)	20 yards (18 m)	40 yards (37 m)	
	Medium-power	5d	10 (1†)	12 yards (11 m)	25 yards (23 m)	50 yards (46 m)	
	High-power	5d+1	8 (1†)	15 yards (14 m)	30 yards (27 m)	60 yards (55 m)	.30-cal. M-1 Carbine
Rifles	Low-power	5d+2	8 (1†)	20 yards (18 m)	40 yards (37 m)	80 yards (73 m)	
	Medium-power	6d	6 (1†)	25 yards (23 m)	50 yards (46 m)	100 yards (91 m)	
	High-power	6d+1	6 (1†)	30 yards (27 m)	60 yards (55 m)	120 yards (110 m)	Winchester 94 (.30-30)
	Very high-power	6d+2	5 (1†)	35 yards (32 m)	70 yards (64 m)	140 yards (128 m)	
	Heavy	7d	5 (1†)	40 yards (37 m)	80 yards (73 m)	160 yards (146 m)	Springfield M-1903
Shot.	Double-barrel	6d	2	20 yards (18 m)	40 yards (37 m)	60 yards (55 m)	Remington 30 (12 gauge)
	Sawed-off	6d	2	15 yards (14 m)	20 yards (18 m)	30 yards (27 m)	*(Barrels cut to shorten it)*

Explosive Devices	Injury	Full	Half	Quarter	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range
Gunpowder bomb	6d	0–2 yards	3–4 yards	5–8 yards	Muscle – 2 yards	Muscle – 1 yard	Muscle roll
Stick of dynamite	5d	0–2 yards	3–5 yards	6–10 yards	Muscle – 3 yards	Muscle – 2 yards	Muscle + 1 yards
Fragmentation grenade	6d	0–3 yards	4–8 yards	9–16 yards	Muscle – 4 yards	Muscle – 3 yards	Muscle + 3 yards
Smoke grenade	3d‡	0–1 yard	—	—	Muscle – 4 yards	Muscle – 3 yards	Muscle + 3 yards

Throwing Explosives

Range	Difficulty
Close	0
Short	10
Med.	15
Long	20

Condition	DM
Thrower can't see target area directly	+6
Target area is not "even ground"	+4
Target area is very hard (bomb bounces)	+4
Target area is very soft (bomb sinks)	–4

* Size 15

† Ammunition capacity is 1 for any percussion cartridge carbine or rifle.

‡ Subtract 1d from all rolls for Reflexes, Coordination, and vision while inside the smoke; burning chemicals injure like a torch (3d) until they burn out or are wiped off.

"Once upon a time, in the magical land of Equestria . . ." With these words, the world was introduced to *My Little Pony Friendship Is Magic.* This half-hour television program became a surprise hit in its first season, not only with the young girls for whom it was intended but with people of all ages and many cultures—thanks to its creators' determination to present well-written stories, vivid characters, and a fascinating setting.

Those qualities have made this storybook principality and the good-hearted ponies who live there a wonderful place to visit, even if only in one's imagination. *Pony Tales* is a vehicle for that imagination, providing rules to guide any group of friends with a bunch of dice and maybe some maps in spending a few hours around a table exploring Equestria for adventure and entertainment.