

Friendship is Fate v0.3

An Unofficial My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic RPG
by Juniper Jazz

Are people still finding this? Wow. There's a brand new version I wrote below. It's a lot better than this. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/b9eolg1mjad55z9/pony-fae-playtest-001.pdf?dl=0>

Changelog

v0.2

- Lowered the refresh rate from 8 to 5.
- Added rudimentary stunt templates. May make them more robust later.
- Changed number of powers/stunts from 5 to 4, not including Restricted Tactile Telekinesis.
- Made a distinction between Harmony and Skill stunts.

v0.2.2

- Made the magic system for unicorns less all powerful.
- Added more specific guidelines for spell usage.

v0.3

- Made a couple organization changes.
- Implemented the setting creation phase (finally).
- Implemented weapons rules (needs playtesting).

I've separated the Dresden Files version from the Strange Fate version. The Strange Fate version can now be seen here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GKa_6nEqBxXD081CspRU8N-tU9ndt1QsgLaQYQPN5Jg/edit

Fate basics

The fate ladder is what every quantifiable attribute is rated upon, from skills to weight to time. The version of it in Friendship is fate goes from Terrible (-2) to Beyond the Impossible (+10).

- (+10) Beyond the Impossible
- (+9) Impossible
- (+8) Legendary
- (+7) Epic
- (+6) Fantastic
- (+5) Superb
- (+4) Great
- (+3) Good
- (+2) Fair
- (+1) Average
- (0) Mediocre
- (-1) Poor

(-2) Terrible

Everything that is not quantifiable is stated with aspects. These are narrative truths about the subject. A couple examples may be "Fastest Flyer in Equestria", or "Everything Just So", or "Thick, Southern Dialect".

Aspects drive the fate point economy. Each player character gets a number of fate points, which can be spent to tip the odds in their favor or received as compensation for bad stuff happening because of aspects.

Skills are the quantifiable ability of a character to perform actions such as flying, making art, or even fighting. They are rated on the fate ladder.

You can use either a set of Fudge dice or 1d6-1d6. This is how you navigate the fate ladder. Add the final result to your base rung (usually a skill) and that is your position on the fate ladder for that roll.

Fate Points and Aspects

fate points and aspects are the backbone of fate can be used for a variety of actions.

fate points can be spent to...

Add a +1 to a roll

Declare an aspect (more on this in a little bit)

Tag an aspect to improve a situation (add a +2 to a roll or apply a narrative effect that makes their situation easier, many times both)

There are also ways to regain fate points...

Each player character has a refresh rate of 5. Your fate points reset to your refresh rate every session, or when a significant amount of time passes in game. Earth ponies have an added (+2), which means that if they have more than 5 at the end of the session, then they can keep up to three more.

Tag one of your character's aspects to complicate their situation (subtract 2 from their roll or apply a narrative effect that complicates their situation)

An aspect is a short phrase that describes a narrative truth about a subject. They can be used on pretty much anything. They are generally both good and bad. An aspect can be used in two ways, to give a mechanical modification of a roll or to make a difference in a situation. An aspect might let you move just a little farther in a combat situation, or meet a convenient NPC in a search for information.

They can be used by both the player and the GM. A GM may tag a negative aspect and give you a fate point in exchange for complicating the situation. You have the option to resist this tag, but you must pay a fate point in order to do so.

Do not, I repeat, DO NOT use aspects as generic buffs. They must have an impact on the narrative when they are used, even if it's just a character flashbacking to a particular trick they learned in flight school and using it. If you treat them as just a +2 or -2, then I guarantee you that they will be boring.

Setting creation

Mane cast creation and setting creation are linked. You can't have character without setting and you can't have setting without character. It definitely helps to think about the character you want to play as you're building the setting and construct the setting so that it reinforces your concept. Hay, you could even place .

I recommend devoting the first session toward setting and mane cast creation. This way you have a solid stage on which to play out your adventures. Doing them both at the same time is also all kinds of fun.

I'll be assuming that you'll be playing in Equestria and not Middle Earth or an original world.

Setting creation comes in three main phases...

- Themes. The main points shown in the setting.
- Supporting cast. The NPCs that the mane cast regularly interact with. Characters like Applebloom and Princess Celestia.
- Locations. All the different places that the main cast can explore and use.
- Threats. A pool of antagonists to build your adventures around.

Themes

The game master should choose one broad theme on which to settle the rest of the setting. This will provide direction for the mane cast players to build upon. This theme should be broad enough to encompass, or at least not contradict, the other themes that the mane cast players will be making.

Next step is for the mane cast players, with the help of the GM, to create three other, less broad themes to be used as aspects in the game and as guides for the supporting cast and locations. These should not directly conflict with the broad theme.

Themes should carry with them a sense of the setting, both in tone and effect. Everypony Knows Everypony may be a good theme aspect. Conflict of Science and Magic is a great one.

Supporting Cast and Locations

The supporting cast is all the characters outside the mane cast that they will be regularly interacting with. Bosses, siblings, recurring antagonists, and so on. Of course, there are also locations where they can be found and that the mane cast can interact with. Characters and their locations are often linked. Where would Twilight Sparkle be without her library or Mr. and Mrs. Cake without Sugarcube Corner?

Supporting cast members are made up of...

- A name.
- One or more aspects, no more than four. One of these may tie into one of the themes. At least one must tie into an aspect of another cast member - either a fellow supporting cast member or one of the mane cast.
- A location where they are most likely to be found. More than one character can reference a single location.

Locations are made up of...

- A name.
- One or more aspects to define the location.
- A supporting cast member who represents the location.

Together with the GM, the mane cast should come up with at nine to twelve supporting cast members and locations total.

Keep in mind, the supporting cast should not generally be antagonists on the level of, say, Trixie or the Parasprites. Those are threats. However, a supporting cast member can become a threat over time (and vice versa). A good example of this kind of development is Princess Luna in the pilot.

Threats

Threats are the antagonists of your setting. Characters like Nightmare Moon, The Great and Powerful Trixie, and the Parasprites.

A threat is different from a supporting cast member in that it is built like a mane cast member, but with slightly more powerful skills.

You need several things to create a threat.

- A concept. What is the idea behind the threat?
- A motivation aspect.
- A pride aspect.
- A Cutie mark or defining trait aspect.
- An aspect tying them to one of the mane cast.

- One fantastic, two superb, and three great skills. Feel free to come up with skills that are not on the list if they are appropriate. You can also go higher if it makes sense.
- Social, Mental, and Physical stress tracks, as in the mane cast creation.

You should probably make a handful of threats at the conceptual level in this first session and one as a fully stated out character.

When you are done, you should have a pretty complete view of the setting that your game takes place in.

Mane Cast

Characters in Fate are, well, everything in Fate. Every character is expressed in the game as a collection of aspects, with other pieces optional, such as skills and stress tracks.

Player characters have:

Name

Race (Earth, Unicorn, or Pegasus)

Concept (a summary of the character in a single phrase, to help guide the construction of the character)

Pride (Pride and how it colors our interactions is a recurring theme in the cartoon. What does your character take the most pride in?)

Childhood phase (A short description of their childhood and an aspect that ties into it)

Cutie Mark Chronicles phase (A short description of how they got their cutie mark and an aspect describing their calling in life)

Big Adventure phase (A short description of the character's first great adventure and an aspect that ties into it. Leave room for another player character to cross over, too)

Magic of Friendship phase (Crossover into another player character's Big Adventure phase and create an aspect that ties into it)

More Magic of Friendship phase (Like the last one, except you cross over with a different character's Big Adventure)

Skills (See the sub-section of Skills)

Stress tracks (Physical, Mental, and Social, each default at 5)

Stunts and powers (Special abilities, stunts are unique to the character but powers are standard for the race)

Refresh Rate (equal to aspects, plus racial modifiers)

Skills

Skills are used in this game in order to adjudicate what your character can and cannot do in a conflict. They are rated on the fate ladder...

- (+10) Beyond the Impossible - If your character has any stat at this level, then they are probably a god.
- (+9) Impossible - Near godly.
- (+8) Legendary - The stuff of legend, told over and over again for all time.
- (+7) Epic - You probably have the ability of a small army.
- (+6) Fantastic - You're highly powerful and influential, probably the best at what you do.
- (+5) Superb - You're probably one of the most skilled people on the planet when it comes to this skill.
- (+4) Great - When you talk, people listen. End of story.
- (+3) Good - You know your stuff.
- (+2) Fair - You have experience and/or raw potential outstripping a professional.
- (+1) Average - A professional in this field.
- (0) Mediocre - You're okay. Not exceptional in the least.
- (-1) Poor - You're not very good at this kind of thing, are you?
- (-2) Terrible - Just... just stop.

Skills can be used in many different ways in a conflict, depending on their trappings. Trappings are basically just what the skill does in a particular situation. Each skill has trappings associated with it in order to help the GM and player judge whether the skill is applicable in this situation and how it can be used.

Each player character gets...

One skill at Superb

Two skills at Great

Three skills at Good

Four skills at Fair

Five skill at Average (optional)

Skill list

Here is a list of skills that I put together for a pulpy sort of FiM game. You could use it as is, or modify it to suit the genre/tone you're going for.

Academics

This is a skill used for academic research, including history and other general knowledge taught in schools.

Getting an answer from a book in the form of an aspect declaration, or declaring an aspect related to an academic aspect, such as a school. This is done without spending a fate point, and instead is a normal skill roll against a difficulty.

Can be used in debates as an attack or defense skill.

Animal care

Taking care of animals is no easy task. This skill is for animal medicine, training animals, taming animals, and declaring aspects about animals.

Art

This is the skill of creating and assessing art and art history, respectively. With it, you can...

Create works of art, either with magic or your own two hooves.

Declare aspects about works of art, by makes a skill roll against a difficulty check.

Athletics

The ability to balance, run and perform feats of strength.

Contacts

Finding information based on word of mouth and who you know.

Cooking

Use the cooking skill to create food. This could be used to nourish a hungry stomach, impress people with food, and declare aspects about food.

Deceit

Deceit is lying, sleight of hand, and generally hiding things. This skill is generally used to hide an aspect from a character, either against a difficulty rating (opponent's investigation + applicable aspects) or in a contest (all that before + a Fudge dice roll).

Diplomacy

Matters of political importance must be maneuvered deftly. This is telling people what they want to hear, and making sure that shaky social ground is made stable.

Discipline

The ability to control your mentality and magic. Add a point to your mental stress for each level you take in this. Unicorn magic depends on this to not backfire.

Endurance

Having high endurance means that you can withstand continuous physical stress. This raises your Physical stress track one point for each level this is raised above Fair.

Engineering

Engineering is a skill that is new to Equestria and not many schools teach it yet. It is the skill of...

Building complex machines, such as a steerable blimp.

Declaring an aspect, such as a weakness, on a machine.

Etiquette

In the world of Equestria, a quick tongue is often more useful than a quick sword, and social grace is valued higher than brute force. This is a pony's ability to navigate social circles, deal with strangers who value etiquette, and to politely coerce neutral parties, among other things.

Flying

This skill is for Pegasi and pilots with any sort of training. This is generally rolled in contests and combat situations. With flying, you can move one more zone for every two rungs you roll on the fate ladder above zero. So Flying + fudge dice / 2 = the number of zones you are able to cross in a single turn when flying.

Intimidation

This determines how well you can bully others into doing what you want. It is usually rolled against Resolve.

Investigation

Investigation is the ability to find small details in the setting that lead to bigger things. You might use it to...

Declare an aspect upon a suspicious person or place.

Kung Fu

Fighting with your hooves in a combat situation or making assessments about fighting.

Leadership

Intimidation and Rapport are one-to-one methods of getting others to do what you want. Leadership is many-to-many. The entire party rolls, and their average is set against a crowd's average Resolve.

Magic

This is a required skill for Unicorns. It measures how much they know about magic and their effectiveness at casting it. It can be used together with the Academics skill in order to declare aspects about spells, or just to say a spell exists.

Rapport

Sometimes it's better to ask nicely and say your pleases and thank yous. This is a skill for...

Developing friendships with others quickly.

Convincing others to do what you wish.

Resolve

Equestrains can be pretty brutal socialites. This skill raises your Social stress track one point for each level it is above Fair.

Resources

If a character needs something, they cannot just loot a corpse. That would be gross. Make a skill roll against an item's approximate value in order to get it without Wealth. This is useful for items that you can't just buy in a market.

Science

Though related to Academics, the Science skill is used for technical and physical knowledge that is related to your character's aspects and other skills. A couple common uses may be...

Declaring a scientific fact with a skill roll against a set difficulty.

Used alongside Resources in order to make a chemical solution or a tool.

Showmanship

This is a skill for gathering an audience, putting on stage productions, and making speeches, among other things.

Stealth

How well you can hide yourself. This is a contested roll against anybody else in the room and their Perception skill.

Survival

How well can your character survive without the luxuries of civilized life? This includes farming, medicine, finding/making shelter, and so on.

Weather

For pegasi. See the Meteorological Magic power.

Wealth

What is the value of a coin? This is a skill measuring not only your character's wealth, but how they handle it.

Weapons

How good is your character with weapons? This can be used for...

Declaring aspects about weapons.

Fighting using weapons. If you do not have this then conventional weapons will begin at Poor (-1) when attacking.

Races, Stunts and Powers

You must spend a fate point to use a stunt or power. Abilities marked (ambient) do not require a fate point to be spent. Powers marked (REQUIRED) are mandatory for that race.

Race Powers

Earth Pony

An earth pony may take 4 stunts, has Restricted Tactile Telekinesis, and has a (+2) added to their refresh rate.

Restricted Tactile Telekinesis (REQUIRED)

Hold things, even with hooves. (ambient)

Pegasus Pony

A pegasus has 2 stunts, the flight power, Restricted Tactile Telekinesis and Meteorological Magic. They have no race bonus for refresh.

Flight (REQUIRED)

Roll the Flight skill in order to get around obstacles without sprinting, race, and so on.

Meteorological Magic

Roll Weather in order to manipulate clouds and weather with maneuvers.

Can stand on clouds. (ambient)

Restricted Tactile Telekinesis (REQUIRED)

Hold things, even with hooves. (ambient)

Unicorn Pony

Unicorn ponies have 2 stunts, Restricted Tactile Telekinesis, and two magic powers.

If a spell achieves more than one shift in a roll, then roll Discipline and try to beat your magic roll. If you do not beat it, then take mental stress equal to the difference as in combat. Consequences can be taken according to the conditions listed in the power.

Telekinesis (REQUIRED)

Move things with your mind. Using Telekinesis, you can move objects across one zone without moving yourself. You can also move things from hard to reach places, pick an apple (or a whole bushel at once) from a tree and write without using your mouth. It can even be used to attack with previously maneuvered items.

Consequences for a fumbled Discipline roll are going to be caused by the object in question.

You may have dropped it on your hoof or placed it in the wrong spot.

Animation

Giving a temporary, life-like quality. Apply the maneuver aspect "Animated" to the target. The animated object will move across one zone per turn, equal to the amount of shifts you roll. A discipline roll is required regardless of shifts. The only consequence you may take for a fumbled Discipline roll is "Out Of Control".

Color and Light

Making illusions. These may be used as maneuvers, mental attacks, and so on. Consequences for a fumbled Discipline roll are caused by the illusion going out of control. Maybe a spot of light went out of control and temporarily blinded you, or a monster came out as a poorly drawn caricature.

Conjuration

Creating matter out of nothing, which will deteriorate over time. Conjurations last for an amount of rounds equal to the amount of shifts in the roll. Fumbling a Discipline roll will make the conjuration malfunction. Maybe a cloud came out as floating wood, or a stream of water came out as a stream of confetti.

Teleportation

Teleporting yourself from one place to another. Cross a number of zones equal to or less than your magic roll. For each obstacle between you and your target, including blocks, take one mental stress or pay a shift. Failing a Discipline roll may

Transformation

Changing an object from one form to another. This is a maneuver to apply an aspect, such as "Mustachioed" or "Lots Of Itty Bitty Pieces Of Art". This cannot be lethal and it takes a lot of skill (say epic or above) to make major changes to complex organisms.

Restricted Tactile Telekinesis (REQUIRED)

Hold things, even with hooves. (ambient) This power is always on and requires no rolls.

Stunts

Stunts are ways that a player character can bend the rules to make their skills more effective and provide more options for their niche. They can substitute skills in a specific context, make what could be an extremely difficult action easier (because your character's just that good in that situation), and so on.

At character creation, each player character gets two stunts if they are a pegasus or a unicorn, and four if they are an earth pony. One or none of these may be a Harmony stunt, and the rest may be skill stunts.

Harmony

Choose one of the Elements of Harmony below. If you meet its condition then you may add a six sided die to your roll and narrate a magic power related to the skill. If you do not then you may still use the power and take the bonus, but you must also pay a Fate Point and take on a Moderate Mental consequence.

Laughter || The player must make the other players laugh.

Loyalty || The character must be doing it entirely for the benefit of another regardless of their previous desires.

Kindness || The character must be doing it to protect others.

Generosity || The character must be giving something up for the benefit of another.

Honesty || The character must have revealed earlier in the session, or be in the process of revealing a truth.

Magic || Another harmony skill must be in play at the same time.

Skill stunt

A Skill stunt is an exceptional skill, lucky situation, special exception, or other mundane power. You can use them to add a bonus to a specific use of a skill beyond what a single aspect tag can bring, or substitute skills, or even make up new skills. A player character may take up to two to begin with.

They are described simply as a

Title What is the stunt called?

Effect What does the stunt do, mechanically?

Action Resolution

Action resolution in Friendship is Fate is simple.

There are three types of standard actions you can take. A simple action, a contest, and an assessment.

Simple Actions

A simple action is an action where nobody is opposing you, but there is some challenge. The GM will decide on the difficulty on the fate ladder and the player rolls 4df (four fudge dice) + applicable skill + modifiers. The player must meet or exceed the difficulty to succeed.

Contests

A contest is when somebody is opposing you. you both roll 4df + skills + modifiers. The higher number wins. If the higher number is at least 3 shifts above the opposing roll, then the winner has done something that is quite spectacular.

Assessments

An assessment is when you are trying to reveal or declare a target's aspects with a skill. Roll against a target difficulty as in a simple action. If it's against a player character, roll as in a contest.

Aspects

During any sort of action, you can tag aspects in order to help or hinder your effort. Each tagged

aspect gives either a +2 or a -2, depending on how they apply. If an aspect helps, then add a +2 to your roll and spend a fate point. If it hinders your efforts, add a -2 and receive a fate point. If the game master compels the aspect, then you may spend a fate point in order to resist it.

Shifts

The difference between the target number (or opposing roll) and your roll is measured in shifts. Each shift is a rung on the fate ladder. Shifts from a successful roll can be used in simple actions in order to make an effect last longer, take less time to put into effect, make it better quality, and so on.

Complex Actions

Certain actions, like building a gadget, might take longer to perform, or have complex steps involved. When this happens, assign the complex task a target difficulty. For every shift that is rolled over the difficulty, lower it. For every shift below, add one to the difficulty. When the tasks' position on the fate ladder drops to zero, then the task is complete.

OR

Play it as a combat.

Combining Skills

Sometimes it is necessary to use multiple skills at once. For example, when trying to cast a spell while balancing on a platform. To do this, decide which skill is being used primarily (in this example, Magic) and the skill that it depends on (in this case, Dexterity). Roll for the primary skill. If the secondary skill is higher, add a +1 to the roll. If it's lower, subtract a -1.

Combat

Combat also uses action resolution, but is more a configuration of action resolution rather than a different kind.

The basic combat mechanic is...

Determine the kind of combat it is, Physical, Mental, or Social.

Establish all the different groups of combatants.

Begin round

Determine actions

Take action - Actions go in this order...

Movement (Moving across zones can happen at any time during the Take action step, usually before or after a character's main action for that round)

Speaking (Speaking actions, such as in a debate)

Maneuvers (Establishing aspects on the scene and characters)

Blocking (Defending, or obstructing a path)

Attacking (Physical violence)

Begin next round

Determine Combat Type

Establish what kind of conflict is taking place. Which stress track should primarily be referenced?

Establish Groups

Make sure it's clear who's fighting who, over what. Make sure everybody knows who's who for the purposes of this combat.

Determine Actions

When taking action, determine the actions being done at the beginning of the round. Actions all go in the order above. If two of the same kind of action are declared in the same round, then go in alphabetical order by character name.

Take Action

When performing an attack (Speaking or Attacking could be an attack) on another character's stress track, define who it is that is attacking and defending. The attacking character rolls a skill to attack with and the defender rolls a skill to defend with, as in a Challenge action.

If the defense beats the offense by 2 or less, then nothing happens. If the defense beats the offense by three or more, then the defender can make a counter attack on the same round against the attacker's base defensive skill, in addition to their normal action.

If the offense beats the defense in an attack, then subtract the resulting shifts from the defender's stress. However, some of that stress damage can be absorbed by taking a consequence. Only one consequence may be taken per character per combat round.

Consequences

Consequences are aspects that are applied to a character as the result of an attack. They allow a character to go on at the cost of injury declared by that player's character.

A Minor consequence takes off up to 2 points of stress damage resulting from attack and goes away after the scene is over. This is generally something like a momentary embarrassment or a minor abrasion. You may take up to 4 in a single scene.

A Moderate consequence takes off 3 to 4 points of stress damage and last an entire session. These are things like a bloody nose or a significant social faux pas. You may take up to two in a single scene.

A Major consequence lasts an entire adventure and takes off 5 to 7 points of stress damage. You may take only one in a single scene.

Maneuvers

Maneuvers are used to create tactical advantages with aspects. Roll a skill that you could use to make the maneuver possible. If you are setting a maneuver aspect on an object, roll against a number set by the GM. If you are setting a maneuver aspect on a character, then it's a contest and you must roll against a defense roll.

Maneuvers come in two types, Fragile and Strong. A fragile maneuver is created if you roll 0 to 2 over the target number. It goes away after the next round. A strong maneuver is achieved if you roll 3 or more over the target number. They go away at the end of the scene.

Movement

Space in combat is divided up into zones. These are logical divisions of space in combat and can even have aspects. They depend on the focus of the scene. The Grand Galloping Galla might be divided up into a few zones like The Punch Bowl or The Dance Floor with aspects Somebody's Spiked The Punch or Do The Pony Polka.

A character may move through one zone in addition to their action at any time during the combat round. However, if they need to get someplace quickly then they can sprint. Sprinting takes up all your actions for the round. Choose an appropriate skill and roll. The total of the roll is the amount

There may also be obstacles in between zones, which take effort to get over. They usually just take one more turn to get past. You could work to get over it and take your time, or you can sprint over it to get to your destination faster at the expense of other actions in that round. Each

Blocking

Blocking is a pretty important tactical maneuver. To block, determine what you want to block, then roll a defensive skill and add any modifiers (maneuvers come in pretty handy for this). This means that you are putting an extra effort into defending something besides yourself. You take the damage for that other something.

Weapons

Weapons are any tool that you can use to attack an opponent. secrets and lies as well as blades and hugs. Weapons have three ratings, which determine how good they are at defending and attacking, and how difficult they are to use. They may also have aspects.

To use a weapon you must roll for the Weapons skill against the weapon's difficulty and the opponent's defending roll. They don't stack. The player must beat them both in a roll in a roll

and then they may inflict their weapon's Attack rating on their opponent. If you generate spin, then you may also add that to your damage.

Weapons are limited by the Combining Skills rules. For example, take an attempt to hurt somebody with a lie. The player would need to combine their Weapons skill and their Deceit skill in order to weaponize their lie.

Advancement

Of course, going on awesome adventures with your friends is going to make you better at going on awesome adventures with your friends. It will change your character, and your aspects and skills should reflect that.

Character advancement comes in three grades...

Minor

Minor advancement happens when a character's story advances. It's called minor just because it's a change to a single character. When it is dramatically appropriate, swap out an aspect for a new one.

Moderate

This is when a milestone for the entire group happens and the world changes because of it. Newsworthy events that might not shake the world, but are important anyway. Dragonshy and Swarm of the Century are examples of episodes that would end with an instance of moderate advancement.

All characters may swap an aspect or raise one of their skills by one rung or take a new stunt/power.

Major

This is the, well, major stuff. Saving the world from a thousand years of night is a good example. In this event, the party has impacted the world in a profound way, or realized a great destiny, or just saved the whole world from destruction. This might also apply to significant time skips of two or more years. Bump three skills on each character up one rung, take a stunt/power, and reassess any aspects that may need to be changed.

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