

RPG The musical

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RPG The musical (RpgTM) is a **one-page role-playing aid for adding musical scenes to your adventures**, regardless of the game system. Developed under the CC BY 4.0 license.

The RpgTM system uses six-sided dice and you can use tokens to represent your musical notes.

The first step is to convert your current system character into their musical version. The conversion is a very quick process that you can create as a player or you can prepare it in a moment as a GM to give it to your players as a surprise.

First, you must define your character within the musical with a simple sentence. A character in a musical is not a level 8 Barbarian, they are a *mighty barbarian looking to be a meat grinder*, or you are not a detective with a 90% Investigate score, you are an *alcoholic detective who wants to escape the pit of misery he is stuck in*.

Then you must choose three songs, which may or may not be from musicals, that define who you are, where you come from, and where you are going. Simply put: *your present, your past, and your future*.

Finally, we have 3 attributes:

- ♪ **Singing:** which covers all mental and social rolls. Convincing the doorman to let you into the club would be done by singing.
- ♪ **Dancing:** which encompasses all types of skills that require manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination. Sneaking into the club with Stealth without being seen by the doorman would be Dancing.
- ♪ **Acrobatics:** reflects physical activities that require more strength than skill. Jumping, climbing, or even flying would use Acrobatics. Intimidating would also be Acrobatics, as you dominate others with your leaps and flips.

Each attribute has a value of a **minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5**. Your GM will tell you if your character is a novice (1, 2, 3), experienced (2, 3, 4), or veteran (3, 4, 5). As you can see, each level has an array of points that can be allocated to your attributes.

If they are strong (barbarian), you set Acrobatics to a high value and Singing to a low value. If they are skilled (e.g., thieves and rangers), you set highest value to Dancing and the lowest value to Acrobatics. If they are clever and/or charismatic (e.g., wizard, cleric, or bard), you set highest value to Singing and the lowest value to Acrobatics.

System rules

Rolls

To determine the success or failure of your actions, your GM may ask you to roll one of your attributes.

Roll **d6s as your attribute**. Each **5 or 6 is a success**. The more successes, the better your action. In the case of opposed rolls, the player with the most successes wins, and in the case of a tie, the defender wins.

Songs

Your songs work similarly to other game features; both the tone and lyrics can be used in the game. You can use *It's the Night of Love* from *The Lion King* to gain an advantage when trying to seduce someone, or sing *Money, Money* from *Cabaret* to get more money in a deal, or even make it rain with *Singin' in the Rain*.

Let's look at the uses of songs.

- ♪ You can **use a song to make all 4s count as success**. To do this, you have to start humming it, and if the GM hums it back, you can use it. If they go *Shhhhh* or ring a gong, you have tried to insert a song in where it does not belong.
- ♪ If the spotlight shines on you in music scenes, you can **sing the chorus** of one of your songs, and if you spend one of your notes, you can **make the part of the chorus you want comes real**. The GM will decide how many extra successes that refrain gives you on your roll, even if the entire task is completed.

You can only use a song once per game session; to recover it, you must spend one of your notes.

Objects and locations may have their own songs that your PCs can use as if they were their own. You can tell them directly or give them clues when you describe the object or location.

Notes

Each session, you start with 3 notes (C, D, and E) that you can use for:

- ♪ Being able to reuse one of your songs.
- ♪ Rerolling a die from a single roll. If the rolls are contested, each side can spend as many notes as they want as many times as the other side spends their notes.
- ♪ Performing a chorus from one of your songs.

As the session progresses, the GM may grant you more notes (F, G, A, and B) for various reasons:

- ♪ Accompanying songs with gestures such as jazz hands, air guitar, finger snapping, etc.
- ♪ Singing backing vocals for another PC and playing along.
- ♪ In general, following the musical's flow appropriately.

When receiving a note, check the next note on your character sheet on your token, and when you spend it, uncheck your last note. This is important because, as we will see, there are advantages to using two PCs with the same score.

Scenes

Musicals have two types of scenes: normal scenes and musical scenes. Obviously, normal scenes will be played using the game system, but musical scenes are governed by RpgTM.

Musical scenes have three parts: introduction or opening, middle, and grand finale.

Starting to Sing and Dance

At some point in your game, the lights go out, background music starts playing, and a spotlight, no one knows where it came from, illuminates a character, and they can begin their musical scene.

At that point, the GM must define what happens in the musical scene, and the soloist tells the character what the plan is. The GM assigns a number of successes to complete each task, and the number of turns the scene will last. For example, the GM tells them the castle guard wants to arrest them, and the soloist says they will block the door with furniture by dancing, singing or performing acrobatics. At that point, the GM decides how many turns they have, usually 3 or 4, to complete the task.

The soloist has those turns to obtain successes for the task. Each PC with a spotlight is entitled to one roll per turn on the skill chosen for the task. If they pass the challenge, they choose the next part of the scene, for example, dancing down the walls to the floor. If they pass the challenge again, they can choose the third task, for example, riding white horses out of the castle.

If they fail a task, the GM will choose how the scene continues. For example, if they fail to block the door, they could have a duel with the guards performing acrobatic jumps. If they fail two tasks in a row, they fail their musical scene and could end up handcuffed in a dungeon singing their woes.

Choral Scenes

In a solo scene, it can become a choral scene at any time if a PC is in tune with the same pitch as the soloist. Only one PC can enter per turn.

It becomes a duet (gaining a second focus) if another PC has **the same last note as the soloist** and they both use that note. It can become a trio if the next turn there is another PC who has the same pitch as their companions. And so on.

If you join the scene's focus, you must still follow the skill set by the soloist and you can participate in what to do in the next part.

In solo scenes, **those without a focus can only participate in the chorus.**

Fighting

There are no actual combats with attacks and damage, only singing, dancing, or acrobatic duels between your PCs and their nemesis, resolved with opposed rolls.

Enemies each have a the same stats for all three attributes (distributed however you wish), a single song and three

notes.

The attribute you use is determined by the tone of the confrontation. For example, a normal dance duel like *West Side Story* would be Dancing, a duel of wits would be *Singing*, and a *Peter Pan*-style flying sword duel would be Acrobatics.

Playing the Choir

In a musical scene, you can assist the soloist's rolls by playing the choir. **You make rolls for attributes not used by the protagonist of the scene.** That is, if someone is singing to convince the guard to let them in, you can assist them by dancing and performing acrobatics behind them. If you succeed on your assist roll, the person you are supporting can reroll one of their dice if needed.

For example, if the soloist sings about how difficult it is to find and learn a spell to banish Nyarlathotep from our dimension, the choir can dance to bring them books and place them in front of them or perform acrobatics to jump down the library stairs to get the tomes from the top of the shelves.

Returning to real world

Once the scene is resolved, the music gradually fades, the singers fall silent, and the feet stop tapping. As a GM, you can give them the items and benefits they earned in the scene if they have been succeeded.

In fighting scenes, the loser will silently disappear from the stage or from the scene and will not be able to appear in the next musical scene or in any normal scenes between them.

Level up

After each session where has been a musical scene, you can level up your musical character in one of the following ways:

- 🎵 Increase one attribute point. No attribute can be two or more points higher than the next highest attribute. You can not have attributes of 4-2-2, for example; they must be 3-3-2. You can not choose this option twice in a row.
- 🎵 Permanently change one of your songs.
- 🎵 Start your next session with 6 notes instead of 3.
- 🎵 Have a secret fourth song for the next session only.

Character sheet

Name
Description
Songs
Singing	●○○○○
Dancing	●○○○○
Acrobatics	●○○○○
NOTES	C D E F G A B