

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

◆ GENERAL CONCEPT

A *roleplaying game* (or RPG) is a type of **cooperative tabletop game** in which players explore an imaginary world, creating the narrative as they live through their characters. The players describe aloud the actions their characters intend to take, in line with the rules of the game.

◆ HOW DOES IT WORK?

RPGs are generally 'spoken' games. The game is led by one of the players, who is known as the **Gamemaster** (or **GM**). The GM knows the game rules and understands the main threads of the narrative that is being played out in the scenario, describing the players' surroundings and the events that take place, and slipping into the shoes of all the other characters that the players meet. They do not play as an opponent, but are more like the director of the game, serving as an adjudicator and monitoring the coherence of the game world. The GM makes sure that the rules of the game are being followed and that everyone has a chance to speak.

The other players are **playable characters** (or **PCs**). Each of the PCs is given a sheet that summarizes the characteristics of the character they are playing. During the game, each of these players will describe the actions they wish to make, interact with their surroundings, and attempt to succeed at their mission, while trying to reflect the personality of their alter ego as much as possible.

Unlike in a film script, where all the scenes have been determined in advance, a roleplaying game offers the chance for players to shape the narrative as it gradually unfolds. The approach resembles an improvisation exercise.

The GM, like the PCs, will regularly roll dice to find out whether their own actions have succeeded or failed.

Example of an interaction:

GM: *You reach the door. The corridor is lit by a single torch and no one is on guard.*

PC: *I'll try to discreetly open the door.*

GM: *Okay – make a*

check to see
if you
manage
to stay
discreet.

Dexterity

Ultimately, your aim – for all players, including the GM – is to have fun and enjoy yourselves, by creating a remarkable story together.



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