

Critical Success: Pen and Paper Roleplaying Games

(Sorted by Genre in descending order of complexity)

This list is also available as a [printable PDF](#).

Fantasy

- **Burning Wheel** (Call number: 793.93 Bur)
In Burning Wheel players get to make characters with incredible depth not only in their mechanical differences but also in their past, ethics, beliefs, scars, goals and dreams. The goal of Burning Wheel is to have all of these parts of a character matter and impact the story.
- **Pathfinder - Free Version** (Call number: 793.93 Pat)
Mechanically complex with plenty of options, Pathfinder is a game about freedom of creation. Any character you could come up with can not only be created aesthetically but can also be supported via a myriad of mechanical advantages and disadvantages.
- **5th Edition D&D - Free Basic Rules** (Call number: 793.93 Dun)
This the newest edition of the most popular fantasy roleplaying game ever made. Plenty of spells, traps and monster to make each adventure totally different from the last as well as being an approachable game for beginners and experts alike.
- **Basic Fantasy RPG - Free Game** (Call number: 793.93 Bas)
A free fantasy RPG that focuses on people, not heroes, doing their best to survive against impossible odds. All of them one swing of troll's club away from death. This game teaches you that heroes are forged through the fire of risk and bravery, not created before the game even begins.
- **Dungeon World - Free Version** (Call number: JR 793.93 Lat)
Focuses on the actions the players take and interactions they want to have rather than discussing rules interactions. Story driven fantasy adventures with a focus on keeping everything fast paced and fun.

Horror/Thrillers

- **Call of Cthulhu - Quickstart Rules** (Call number: 793.93 Cal)
Players take on the role of normal human investigators tasked with solving mysteries in a world plagued with all manner of Lovecraftian horrors. Finding Grandpa Jenkin's missing cat can become a horrific fight for survival as the normal world unravels into the pure madness of Lovecraft's elder gods.
- **Paranoia**
In the far future, existence is guided by the single mighty entity known as 'Friend Computer'. This ancient A.I. guides you through your life as a 'Troubleshooter'. Your task is often simply to shoot trouble but in a world filled with dystopian bureaucracy it is often difficult to finish a job on time.
- **Vampire: The Masquerade - Quickstart Rules**

Players each take on the role of a vampire in a modern world with some gothic twists. Being a vampire in this day and age can be difficult.

- **Into the Odd - Free Version**

The world is a little weird. Most people ignore it but not you. No, you want to journey out into those spooky places and come back with otherworldly treasures in hand. There is always some hapless soul that will be the first through a bizarre arcane gateway. As an explorer you know the spoils are worth the losses.

- **Dread - Free Basic Rules** All manner of terrifying tale and spooky story are driven by pulling Jenga blocks instead of dice to determine the outcome of actions. Want to hide from a slasher, punch a werewolf on the nose, or vacuum up a ghost? You'll have to pull from the tower. Just hope that your action isn't the one that bring it all tumbling down.

Sci-Fi

- **Stars without Number - Free Version** You and your crew just travel around taking the occasional odd job. One day you may find yourself playing mailman for some shady corporation or traversing the frozen wastes of some backwater planet. Just hope you don't run out of fuel along the way.
- **Starfinder** In this game you may run into space whales or cast a spell while your friend fires a rocket launcher. It's a nice mix of science fiction and fantasy and makes for a surreal but enjoyable jaunt through space.
- **Blaster! - Free Game** Don't have time to read a bunch of rules? Want to just start shooting a laser gun at some big alien bug? Great, check out Blaster!

Any Genre

- **Fate Core - Free Version** (Call number: 793.93 Bal)
Fate Core is a game system devoid of theme. The goal of the system is to give the players tools that can apply to any theme they would like to play. Whether that means a game with only a few rules or a game with awesome possibilities.
- **Microscope** (Call number: 793.93 Rob)
All great storytellers have to build their world. Microscope turns world building into a cooperative game where players take turns adding events to a timeline. At the end of the game players should have a fully realized world that they could use as the setting for another roleplaying game.
- **Fiasco - Rules Preview** (Call Number: 793.93 Mor)
You and your friends work together to tell a story. It can usually start innocently enough with a few relationships in place and set pieces for the characters to interact with. But by the end you'll be hard pressed to keep the story from going off the rails as inventive dice mechanics drive the story toward a chaotic conclusion.

Modern Day

- **Tales from the Loop** (Call number: 303.483 Sta)
As a kid you may not think anything of the massive factory nearby. But you may still notice when weird things start happening. Adults rarely take you seriously anyways. Tales from the Loop has players take on the roles of these children as they try and get to the bottom of a

paranormal mystery.

- **Kids on Bikes**

Remember all those movies where a bunch of kids go on some kind of crazy adventure? The ones where somehow a group of twelve year olds find a pirate's treasure and escape relatively unscathed? Well if you ever wanted to be in one then check out Kids on Bikes.

- **Golden Sky Stories**

Golden Sky Stories is a heartwarming, non-violent role-playing game that's great fun for all ages. It takes place in a small town in rural Japan, and players take on the role of henge, animals with just a little magical power, including the ability to temporarily take human form. Golden Sky Stories adventures are all about helping others and becoming friends.

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