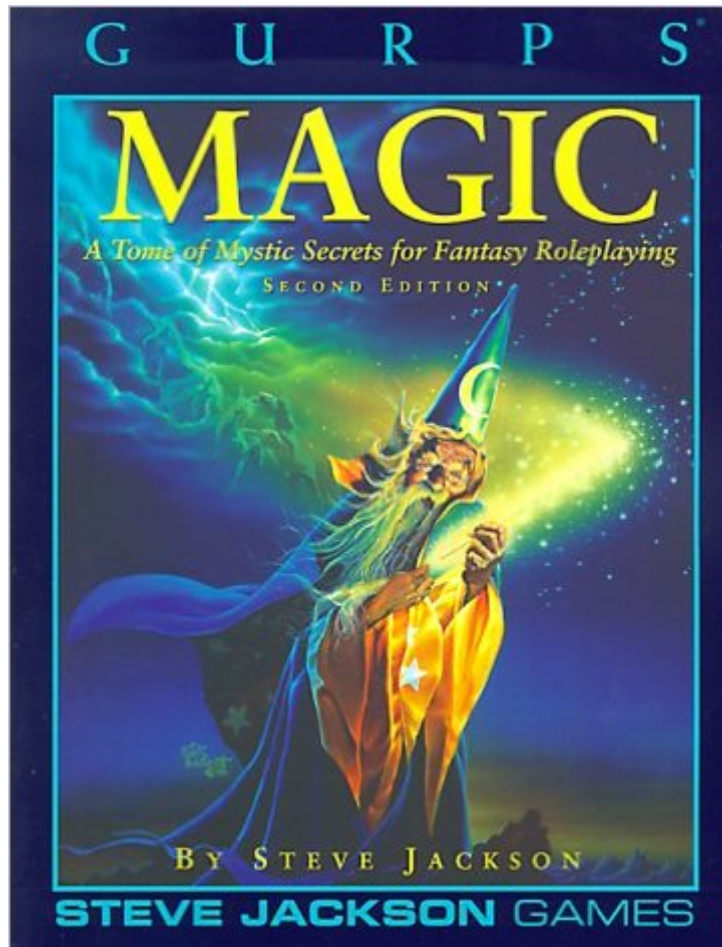


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GURPS Magic 2nd Ed *OP (GURPS: Generic Universal Role Playing System)



Synopsis

Computer Game Strategy Guide

Book Information

Series: GURPS: Generic Universal Role Playing System

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Customer Reviews

GURPS Magic is a RPG magic system designed to fit seamlessly into the Generic Universal Role Playing System, and as such it is extremely successful. Magic allows you to add magic using characters to any GURPS campaign easily. The system emphasizes a skill-based approach where more difficult spells can be learned only after basic spells have been learned. A character's skill with a spell determines his ability to successfully use that spell, and he can always improve his skill through study and practice. A character can cast any spell he knows, providing that he has the strength to cast that spell (the effect is tied into a "realistic" measure of fatigue), so even a beginning magician can be flexible, if not powerful. Yet also built into this system are some useful game restraints that prevent a magician from becoming overwhelmingly powerful. A useful comparison is AD&D, where a beginning magic user is absurdly weak and can cast one weak spell a day, yet at the high levels can control spells that rival a modern armored division in effect. Magic allows beginning characters to be more playable and fun to play, while prevents experienced characters from taking over the show. As in real life, this skill based approach tends to channel a character into specializing in a particular "field" of magic without the use of artificial restrictions such as "class" found in other games. If the system has any problems, it is that it literally is too generic. While it can be used "as is", it requires a lot of work on the part of the players and game master if they want a system that closely models "historical" or fictional magic systems. If you want a game that portrays

the setting of the Arabian Knights, for instance, it is not simply a matter of deleting those spells that don't fit the genre since more advanced spells that do fit might require those spells as learning prerequisites.

This book contains a large number of the spells in the GURPS gaming system, and plenty of rules and ideas for creative magic use. The sheer number and variety of spells explained in this book is mind-boggling. As some others have said, the GURPS magic system is not as overwhelmingly powerful as the magic of some other gaming lines, but it is well thought out. The spells are quite versatile, and almost every spell can be cast at varying levels of power, for varying cost. This enables you some control the range of damage/effects produced, and enables the tailoring of spells to certain situations. Some of the more powerful spells are tools of amazing power, if you can cast them. Don't ignore the "lesser" spells either. Just keep in mind that with enough creativity any spell can be magnificently effective, especially if your campaign involves a high level of realism. This book is a must for anybody who wants to use GURPS magic.

There are a lot of quirky things about this magic system, and I would have done much of it differently. For example, I think a lot of the spell durations are just too short. For example, if you want to disguise yourself with an illusion, you have to pay fatigue every minute to keep it going. A fairly simple and not too powerful effect, but only the mightiest of mages are mages can disguise themselves for more than 5-10 minutes. Magic in combat is kind of weird; it's slow, which is a dangerous combination with the large distance penalties to skill (-1 per yard), because it means for many spells you have to stand close to your target and hope they don't whack you when your concentrating. In practice, I find that magic is most useful for setting up defense and augmenting offense before battle, but once battle is joined it is less useful. Some of the spells are awesomely powerful. Some of them cost so much fatigue that it is difficult to see how you would ever use them. Overall, I would say that the system works though. It is kind of fun learning to work the system to be able to do what you want. Despite the limitations mentioned above, magic in this system is a valuable and powerful force.

This magic system seems, at first, to be extremely weak and limiting. If you are used to AD&D (as is likely the case) it IS; however, upon closer examination you discover that it ISN'T. Sure, for a 100-point campaign a mage is very costly and, unless specialized, will be limited. That's how it would be in real life, if there were magic. Keep at it, though, and soon a mage will be the most

powerful member of your party. Apply GURPS Magic to a 250 or (wow) 500 point campaign and your power will surpass even that of your meta-human cohorts. As with all GURPS products, the "real-world" rules make Magic truly enjoyable and playable. If *you* are creative then nothing is impossible (just save up the character points). GURPS is a system where you have to *think*--that's what sets it apart from all the rest. In summary, an extremely useful sourcebook!

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