

# Pure Shoujo RPG

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The world is a twisted and confusing place. Complex relationships based on misunderstandings and hidden passions abound. No one seems to ever get to the bottom of things and anyone who seems to solve all their problems inevitably ends up with even more complicated ones. Regretful misunderstandings, hopeful pining, and vicious feuds abound. However, it could be worse, much worse. And in the world of True Shoujo, it is.

Here love triangles merge and transform to polygons beyond mortal understanding. Here enemy becomes friend, lover, and then enemy once again. The complications seem driven by the need to convolute anything and anyone. As if some gods were having fun at the poor mortal's expense. And indeed you are.

## The Basics

Pure Shoujo is a roleplaying game where each player plays one or more characters, and they build up and break down relationships, friendly, vicious, or romantic. In the process characters slowly grow as they navigate the stormy seas of their fellow characters. Unlike most roleplaying games none of the players needs to be singled out to provide the plot of the game, as the plot is built almost exclusively by the interaction of the characters. One of the players should be selected as the dealer. The dealer's job is to deal the cards and roll the scenes. As a perk the dealer can also tie break for votes the players make.

If everyone agrees, the dealer can have more authority, selecting scenes rather than rolling them, and generally arbitrating. This can work well if the dealer needs to help keep the peace and otherwise drive the game. However, dealers shouldn't take this as an invitation to abuse this power, ultimately you are one of the players, don't forget that responsibility comes with your authority.

Pure Shoujo primarily uses two types of dice, six-sided (d6) and twelve-sided (d12), and a deck of standard playing cards (without jokers). A stan-

dard roll (or just a roll) is simply a roll of a d6 and a d12, adding the two numbers rolled. A match is when the two dice rolled show the same value. A draw is simply a draw from the deck of cards. A vote is a majority vote amongst all players present, usually by show of hands, counted by the dealer. Votes are typically used to decide if a relationship between two characters fulfills the requirements set out for it and to prevent actions by a character that significantly violate their concept.

## Making a Character

First, determine the gender and concept of the character. This may or may not be predetermined by various cards, for example a King requires the player to introduce a male character. Optionally these restrictions can be waived and characters can introduce characters of either gender. The concept should be simple and fit the setting, this is meant to be the first glance we get of the character, how does he or she seem to the rest of the world.

Second determine the starting virtues of the character. The virtues are:

- *Honor* - ability to hold to a course of action and avoid temptations.
- *Cunning* - creativity and underhandedness.
- *Discernment* - understanding of other's actions and motives.
- *Passion* - emotional intensity and drive.
- *Style* - how you carry yourself and influence others.
- *Beauty* - physical attractiveness and skill in using it.
- *Prowess* - physical ability and skill.

There are three ways to determine virtues:

- *Random*: roll four four-sided dice adding them together for each virtue. This method is fast and allows for a great variety of characters.
- *Semi-Random*: roll two d6 adding them together for each virtue. Distribute another 15 points among the virtues. This allows a little more control over the character, no virtue can be above 16.
- *Deterministic*: distribute 60 points over the virtues, none can be lower than 2, and none higher than 16. This allows for the greatest control, but takes far too long and is not suggested for novice players.

Third, choose three specialties, these are areas under each virtue which the character excels.

For example:

- Prowess specialties like strength or quickness.
- Honor specialties like calm or resistant.
- Passion specialties like poetry or fearless.

Then choose three secrets your character holds dear. They needn't be very important to anyone else, but should be at least a little embarrassing if revealed. One secret should be about his or her family, one about how he or she was when growing up, and the third should relate to some more recent event. If you can't think of a secret for one of these, you can start playing the character and write it down later. You can even change the secrets during game, especially if one of them becomes revealed.

Lastly draw two cards and place them face down on the character sheet. These card will describe a relationship you had in the past with one of the other characters.

## Cutting the Cards

At the start of each Pure Shoujo game each player receives a hand of one card plus one for each character they are currently playing. In addition, each time the dice roll a match the player who rolled it may draw a card. If they rolled 1 and 1, the player may give the card to another player, who must take it, if they rolled a 6 and a 6, they may draw two cards and choose which one they keep.

Each of the cards indicates an action or change in relationships which fulfills the card:

- King: Introduce a male character.

- Queen: Introduce a female character.
- Jack: A character leaves, or if you have only one, introduce a character of either gender.
- 10: Unrequited love - one sided True Love.
- 9: Best of Enemies - turn an enemy or nemesis to friend or better.
- 8: This Means War - gain or change nemesis
- 7: Physical Relationship - acquire SO, based on physical attraction.
- 6: Just Friends - drop an SO to a friend or enemy.
- 5: Budding Friendship - make a friend.
- 4: Immediate Dislike - make an enemy.
- 3: Platonic Relationship - acquire SO, based on emotional attraction.
- 2: Going Steady - elevate a friend to an SO, or an SO to a True Love.
- Ace: True Love - go ahead, find one already.

When a player decides they have fulfilled the conditions of a card, they reveal the card to the rest of the players, and they all vote to determine if the card was indeed fulfilled. During this vote you are permitted, and even encouraged to discuss your reasons. This can help the player decide whether to give up on the card or try again later. For cards that introduce a character this vote determines if the new character should be permitted in the game.

If the vote succeeds the card is placed aside and a new one is drawn. Also each time a card from Ace to 10 is fulfilled, the player who played it may raise one of their character's virtues by 1, add a specialty, or draw and place a new background card. Usually this is applied to the character involved in the relationship, but it need not be. If the vote fails, the player who revealed the card may choose to discard the card and draw another in its place, or keep the card to try again later.

## In the Past

The background cards are played differently than those in a player's hand. These cards are left on individual characters and can be revealed at any time to introduce a past relationship between that character and any other character currently played. This relationship is not subject to a vote, and is not necessarily something current. The purpose of these background relationships is to help flesh out characters and to introduce connections which can drive later relationships.

For this purpose, face cards (King, Queen, and Jack), indicate miscellaneous relationships, such as being related, having worked together or gone to the same school previously, or having had a mysterious encounter sometime in the past. Once used, background cards are discarded to the same pile as the rest of the cards. New characters procured by the face cards receive one background card when they enter play.

## Rolling the Dice

When a character attempts an action that is uncertain and important, including when in competition with another character, the player rolls the dice and tries to roll under their virtue. If successful, the amount rolled under indicates how successful the character is, rolling under by a one has a minor effect, while rolling under the number by 5 or more entitles the player to describe a significant outcome. If the player failed to roll under, describe instead how the character failed at the action, with the effects more spectacular bigger the difference.

On resisted actions both players roll under an appropriate virtue, and whichever character succeeded more (or failed less) comes out on top, describing what happens. Actions may also use an appropriate modifier as listed on the character sheet. These range from Cakewalk (+4) to Insane (-8). These modifiers are applied to the virtue being rolled under. Multiple modifiers listed there can also apply.

In particular are the relationship modifiers, which add to virtues for actions that further or support the relationship, and subtract on actions which harm the relationship. In this case, use the largest modifier applicable, then add or subtract as appropriate.

Regardless of the outcome of an action, something has changed. Rolling the dice means accepting consequences, either positive or negative for the character. If you fail, the consequence typically

makes your action more difficult, so if you wish to attempt it again, you must find another way to do what you wish. For example, if you are fighting another student in a kendo class and you fail to hit, then you most likely are hit instead. And remember, for contested actions, both players are involved in describing the consequences of the action.

You shouldn't be afraid of the consequences of your character's actions. Instead, failure is an opportunity to make things more interesting. Remember, you have control of how you fail, barring the other players vetoing it, so be creative and look for ways to make both failure and success fun for the other players as well as yourself.

As far as combat is concerned, in the normal play of True Shoujo characters can only die if this is agreed to by their player. Characters who are physically damaged get the Hurt modifier until sufficient time passes for what ever injuries they have sustained to be healed. Note, however, character death does fulfill the Jack card.

## Counting the Votes

When an action causes some dispute between two players, the dispute should be handled by a vote. In particular if one character is attempting the influence another and the players involved disagree on the results, a vote should be held to determine the effect. This should be done quickly, and without much arguing. Ideally the players involved should quickly try to reach a compromise or explain their positions to each other. Regardless any player can call a vote if a dispute begins to take too long.

## Setting the Scene

One of the duties of the dealer is to make a roll at the start of each scene to determine the location, and any other associated details. These tables should be determined in advance. Sample scene tables are included in the sample game below. When a relationship vote occurs (not necessarily succeeds) the scene ends, unless a player decided to call a vote to extend the scene, only one such vote is allowed. Likewise a vote may be called to cut a scene short before a card is played.

Any player can develop a scene table or a network of them. As long as the group agrees to use it for the session anything goes. One general guideline however is to place events at the more rare scenes. Typically these events occur the first time the scene is rolled, but it could be a consistent event, based on

another roll, or delayed for several scenes. A wide variety of options exists, however events should not come to dominate the game. The central action is intended to be between player's characters.

One other aspect of scenes is that while players can play any number of character at a scene, a player with no characters there may play a Cameo, which is a role without any virtues defined. This can be a random classmate, or a teacher, or anything else that is part of the scene. They can play them as a normal character, but they always fail any rolls they need to make. A particularly interesting Cameo can be turned into a character proper with the appropriate cards.

## A Word of Warning

The purpose of True Shoujo is to make fanciful, bizarre, and genuinely amusing games. The easiest way for a player to stop having a good time, is if he or she is taking things too seriously. Sometimes this is unavoidable, and players should try to be conscientious in doing things that are likely to offend another player. If a player becomes attached to a particular character, don't manhandle it, but don't avoid it like the plague either. Try to talk to him or her and find a way to handle things, even if it requires the character in question to be retired or at least placed aside for a time. Likewise, you should never expect your characters to succeed all the time, and the setbacks can be more fun than the victories, provided the character is played consistently and entertainingly. Always keep in mind, that you should have fun and help the other players have fun too.

## Appendix 1: Variants

Shoujo themes often appear in different anime genres. Some are (comparatively) realistic, while others delve into fantasy or science fiction. Two common genres are Maho Shoujo (Magical Girls) and Mecha Shoujo (Giant Robot Girls). Maho Shoujo involves transforming super-powered heroines and heroes seeking to stop some dark foe. They transform into a magical form and use strangely thematic powers. Mecha are giant robots, from advanced power armor suits to giant-sized humanoid battle machines. Invariably the pilots are fraught with their own emotional and relationship problems, a perfect stage for the twistiness of Pure Shoujo.

## Maho Shoujo

Any characters who will be magical should take a specialty related to their transformed self. Usually this specialty is under a virtue closely linked with the transformed character. Transforming takes an action, but no roll, and you should describe the sequence the first time it occurs. Any magical attacks or special maneuvers should also be taken as specialties. Most characters will only have two or three of these. For villains, these specialties can also include summon monster of a given type. This allows them to produce monsters of the week, which are played as Cameos. Typically, the first monster type so taken will be defeated by the first magical attacks the other characters take, and so on. Over time the attacks and the monsters will improve, usually just in the nick of time. For this reason, number the character's attacks and monsters, based on the order they are taken. If used directly these specialties provide +2 for each level. So the third monster type puts it's opponents at -6, while a second attack type is a +4 virtue action. Monsters may be Hurt by any successful attack, but are only destroyed by an attack of equal or higher level.

## Mecha Shoujo

Mecha are treated as a specialty, which may be taken multiple times. Each level prevents the mecha from being Hurt by any attack of less than it's level. Likewise the mecha can be Hurt a number of times equal to it's level, before it is Ineffective. The virtue that the Mecha specialty is placed under determines how the Mecha is piloted and what is rolled to make attacks. Each level the mecha gains a special effect attack, this should be noted. Each action, the mecha may make any number of special effect attacks so that the total is no higher than the total level of the mecha. This allows defeat of multiple mecha. Cameos may play any mecha of at most half the highest mecha in the group (round down). They roll on a virtue of 10.

## Appendix 2: Examples

This is a basic setting for Pure Shoujo, Taniyama-sensei's 10th grade class, including a sampling of students and teachers. The scene lists provide a series of common high school anime events and locations.

## Characters and Scene Tables

**Suzi-chan:** A new student.

Honor 10 - Kendo

Cunning 6

Discernment 9

Passion 12 - Speeches

Style 7 - Dress Sense

Beauty 11

Prowess 7

**Elie-chan:** Best gymnast at the school.

Honor 11

Cunning 8 - Witty

Discernment 14

Passion 7

Style 11

Beauty 7

Prowess 15 - Gymnastics, Dance

**Mari-chan:** Top of the class.

Honor 9

Cunning 12

Discernment 16 - Exams, Notice Weaknesses

Passion 11 - Poetry

Style 2

Beauty 8

Prowess 9

**Taniyama-sensei:** Calligraphy and Homeroom Teacher

Honor 5

Cunning 10 - Students

Discernment 15 - Calligraphy

Passion 8

Style 12 - Innocent Expressions

Beauty 9

Prowess 4

**Konyada-sensei:** English teacher

Honor 7

Cunning 16 - Subtlety

Discernment 13 - Troublemakers

Passion 9

Style 5

Beauty 12

Prowess 12 - Throwing

**Benshya-sensei:** Gym teacher and Gymnastics Coach.

Honor 9

Cunning 8

Discernment 7

Passion 10 - Calisthenics

Style 13 - Gymnastics

Beauty 5

Prowess 15 - Gymnastics

**Taki-kun:** School bully.

Honor 7 - Friends

Cunning 3

Discernment 4

Passion 15 - Ignore pain

Style 5

Beauty 6

Prowess 15 - Beat down

**Nada-kun:** Clueless heart-throb.

Honor 10

Cunning 4

Discernment 5

Passion 11

Style 14 - Attract, Enthrall

Beauty 13 - Eyes

Prowess 6

**Kolder-kun:** Kendo Captain.

Honor 9

Cunning 9

Discernment 11

Passion 13 - Kendo

Style 13 - Kendo

Beauty 4

Prowess 13 - Kendo

**Yashita-sensei:** History teacher and Kendo instructor.

Honor 10

Cunning 6

Discernment 7

Passion 16 - History, Kendo

Style 9

Beauty 8

Prowess 14- Kendo

**Tanaka-sensei:** Chemistry teacher

Honor 12 - Honesty

Cunning 15 - Experiments

Discernment 4

Passion 14 - Science!

Style 9

Beauty 7

Prowess 9

**Tsuyuan-sensei:** Substitute teacher.

Honor 7

Cunning 16 - Acquiring Trust

Discernment 16 - Emotions

Passion 12 - Teaching

Style 4

Beauty 5

Prowess 6

**School:**

- 2 - School bus to Tokyo (go to Tokyo table)
- 3 - Someone's house (randomly decide)
- 4 - Cram School
- 5 - a Buddhist Temple (1st time: the caretaker takes one of the characters under his wing)
- 6 - Kendo Practice
- 7 - Before School (in front)
- 8 - History Class
- 9 - Chemistry Lab
- 10 - Homeroom
- 11 - Gym Class
- 12 - English Class
- 13 - After School (in front)
- 14 - Gymnastics Practice
- 15 - Under a bridge (1st time: gang of Bully's, rival school)
- 16 - The Diner
- 17 - Street Corner (near school)
- 18 - End of School (in front, go to Summer Vacation table)

**Tokyo:**

- 2 - Tokyo Tower (every time: it explodes at the end of the scene, it always does)
- 3 - Gymnastics exhibition
- 4 - Dark alleyway
- 5 - Train station.
- 6 - Kendo tournament.
- 7 - Aquarium
- 8 - Library
- 9 - Art Museum
- 10 - Bus back to School (return to School table)
- 11 - Science Museum
- 12 - Hotel rooms and hallway
- 13 - Classical Concert
- 14 - Gymnastics competition.
- 15 - Opera
- 16 - History lecture
- 17 - Kendo exhibition
- 18 - Random weirdness (dealer's choice)

**Summer Vacation:**

- 2 - Kendo practice
- 3 - Gymnastics practice
- 4 - Summer School
- 5 - School starts (Homeroom, return to School table)
- 6 - At the beach
- 7 - Under a bridge
- 8 - Street corner
- 9 - Dance club
- 10 - Someone's house (randomly decide)
- 11 - The Diner
- 12 - Burger joint
- 13 - Chinese Restaurant
- 14 - Party at someone's house (randomly decide)
- 15 - Buddhist Temple
- 16 - Train Station
- 17 - Library
- 18 - Cram School

# Character Sheet

**Name:**

| Virtue      | Rating | Specialties |
|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Honor       |        |             |
| Cunning     |        |             |
| Discernment |        |             |
| Passion     |        |             |
| Style       |        |             |
| Beauty      |        |             |
| Prowess     |        |             |

**Relationships:**

|                                          |                                |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Friends:</i> (+1 or -1)               | <i>Enemies:</i> (+1 or -1)     |
| <i>Significant Others:</i><br>(+2 or -2) | <i>Ex's:</i> (+1 or -1)        |
| <i>Family:</i> (+2 or -2)                | <i>Best Friend:</i> (+3 or -3) |
| <i>Nemesis:</i> (+3 or -3)               | <i>True Love:</i> (+4 or -4)   |

**Secrets:**

*Family -*

*Growing-up -*

*Present -*

**Modifiers:**

Having a Specialty +2

Action Difficulty:

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| Cakewalk    | +4 |
| Easy        | +2 |
| Normal      | 0  |
| Hard        | -2 |
| Heroic      | -4 |
| Super-human | -6 |
| Insane      | -8 |

Other Modifiers:

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| Help from Friends | +2       |
| Multiple Foes     | -2       |
| Hurt              | -2 or +2 |

**Cards:**

- King: Introduce a male character.
- Queen: Introduce a female character.
- Jack: A character leaves, or if you have only one, introduce a character of either gender.
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- 9: Best of Enemies - turn an enemy or nemesis to friend or better.
- 8: This Means War - gain or change nemesis
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- 6: Just Friends - drop an SO to a friend or enemy.
- 5: Budding Friendship - make a friend.
- 4: Immediate Dislike - make an enemy.
- 3: Platonic Relationship - acquire SO, based on emotional attraction.
- 2: Going Steady - elevate a friend to an SO, or an SO to a True Love.
- Ace: True Love - go ahead, find one already.