The 7 magic-system questions

Answer these before you plan plot around any magic system. If you cannot answer one, that is the next thing to design.

#	Constraint	Ask yourself	If blank, you will…
1	SOURCE	Where does the power come from, and who controls it?	Have no scarcity and no conflict
2	COST	What does each use take from the user?	Solve every problem for free
3	LIMIT	What can it never do?	Rescue the hero with "more power"
4	TELL	What does a use look, sound or feel like?	Lose secrecy and detection
5	COUNTER	What stops it?	Have no credible threats
6	LEARNING	How is it learned, and how do beginners fail?	Teach through lectures
7	SOCIETY	How has it changed law, money, war and daily life?	Have a world that looks like ours

The one-line test: if you replaced the magic with a locked door, a loan or a rival, would the scene still work? If yes, the magic is decoration.

Write your answers

Source	
Cost	
Limit	
Tell	
Counter	
Learning	
Society	

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