



MODERN ROLEPLAYING SYSTEM

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO ROLEPLAYING

D6Pool is a relatively simple roleplaying system using only six-sided dice (though sometimes quite a lot of them).

In a roleplaying game, you and the other players take the role of a **character** while one person acts as the **gamemaster**. The gamemaster tells the overall story while you decide how your character will interact with other characters and the world.

Game systems like D6Pool help you define your character and provide a way to determine the results of your character's actions. The rules give structure to the collaborative storytelling.

THE GAMEMASTER

Each roleplaying session has a gamemaster. The gamemaster controls the world and sets the basic storyline of each adventure. If each roleplaying session is like an episode of a television show, then the gamemaster is the scriptwriter. However, the gamemaster does not write the parts of the major characters; that is the job of the players.

If you choose to be the gamemaster you will not have to create the world and the adventure all on your own. There are plenty of ideas for settings in novels, television and movies, and there are example D6Pool campaign settings. The D6Pool "Cast of Characters" book provides dozens of people and creatures to populate your world.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Each player in D6Pool creates a character to play, defined by a set of skills and abilities. The gamemaster may impose some restrictions on what types of characters you can create, but

otherwise you are free to play any character that fits the setting of the adventure. Perhaps you'd like to play a successful lawyer who discovers he'd rather stop crime in his own way, or a kindergarten teacher who does some work for the CIA on the side?

Once you have a basic concept for your character, you create them in terms of the game system as described in Chapter 4.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The world is full of people (and possibly creatures) that may interact with your character. All of these other characters are subject to the same rule system as the player characters, but their actions are determined by the gamemaster. They are referred to as non-player characters, or **NPCs**.

SCENES

An adventure typically consists of a series of **scenes**. These could be combat situations, car chases, conversations with important NPCs, or covert operations. It is important for the gamemaster to determine when one scene ends and another begins, because some effects and abilities in the game last for one scene or can only be used once per scene.

CHALLENGES

As you decide how your character will react to the world, often the outcome will not be obvious. Did you manage to bash down that door, or wow the crowd with your singing? These situations result in **challenges**, and the D6Pool rule system is used to determine the outcome. The next chapter describes how challenges are resolved.

CHAPTER 2: THE BASICS

ATTRIBUTES

Your character in D6Pool is defined, in part, by six **attributes**: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Intelligence, Charisma, and Perception. The value of each of these attributes is measured as a number of dice (at least 1 and typically not more than 3 or 4). The attribute score represents the number of dice your roll when using that attribute during a challenge.

Strength: You use this attribute for challenges requiring raw strength such as lifting heavy objects or breaking free of restraints. You also use it to determine damage dealt in close combat attacks.

Dexterity: You use this attribute in challenges involving speed. It may also apply to manual tasks requiring precision, like attacking with a weapon, repairing delicate items, or surgery.

Stamina: This attribute represents your ability to persevere in difficult environments and to resist physical threats like disease, poison, and damage from weapons.

Intelligence: This attribute represents your general knowledge about the world. It determines whether you already know something, and it also indicates how well you can research or deduce new information.

Charisma: This attribute is a combination of your attractiveness, self-confidence and basic ability to understand and influence other people. It is used in challenges to persuade someone and when giving a public performance.

Perception: This attribute represents your awareness and alertness. You use it in challenges that determine whether you notice something subtle in the environment.

SETTINGS

Each D6Pool setting (for example: modern, fantasy, science fiction, horror, etc.) is defined by a set of available **skills** and **abilities**.

The skills available in a far future science fiction setting may be very different from those in a medieval fantasy setting. These rules assume a modern day setting.

SKILLS

Skills are specific categories of knowledge or expertise. Like your attributes, your skills are measured by a number of dice indicating how capable you are with that skill. Example skills in a modern setting include Driving, Surgery, or Finance. The set of available skills should cover almost all challenges you will face in a setting. Your character will have zero dice in most skills.

ABILITIES

If you have dice in a skill, you may also have specific abilities associated with that skill. Abilities allow you to stretch the game rules a little. For example, some abilities allow you to take extra actions before other characters take theirs, grant you temporary advantages, or allow you to assist another character's challenges in unique ways.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Your character has a set of advantages and disadvantages. These represent inherent properties of your character that could have positive or negative effects during play. Example advantages include Attractive, Good Luck, Patron, and Wealthy. Example disadvantages include Bad Eyesight, Enemies, Illiteracy, and Poverty. The effect of an advantage or disadvantage is measured in dice (1 die of Poverty, 2 dice of Attractive, etc.).

RESOLVING CHALLENGES

Roleplaying will result in situations where the gamemaster must determine whether you are successful in an action. Any such action with an uncertain outcome is referred to in these rules as a challenge.

To determine whether you are successful in a challenge, the gamemaster chooses which *attribute* and *skill* best reflect your chance of success. You add up all the dice in these two traits and roll that many six-sided dice. Any of your advantages that apply, as determined by the gamemaster, may add additional dice to this roll.

Any 5s or 6s you roll on individual dice are **successes**. Only 1 success is required for a relatively simple task, 2 for a difficult task, 3 successes for a very difficult task, etc. The number of successes required is the **difficulty** of the challenge.

You also roll additional dice for any of your disadvantages that apply. Any 5's or 6's you roll on the disadvantage dice are considered **failures** and are subtracted from your total successes. It's a good idea to use different color dice for these.

From here on, the attribute and skill dice for a challenge are referred to as **challenge dice**. Any additional dice that add to the success of a challenge, such as advantage dice, are referred to as **bonus dice**, and any that might result in failures, like disadvantage dice, are referred to as **penalty dice**.

EXTENDED CHALLENGES

Challenging tasks that take a long time or have a number of distinct steps are **extended challenges**. Extended challenges require many separate dice rolls and a large number of total successes, as well as a difficulty for each roll.

When you take an extended challenge you must make successive rolls, each taking a set amount of time, until you roll the required total

number of successes. If any single roll does not meet the difficulty, your entire task fails.

For example, surgery to remove a bullet lodged near a patient's heart might be an extended challenge requiring ten total successes to complete, with a difficulty of 2 and each roll taking an hour. If you attempted this surgery, you would make multiple challenge rolls until the total number of successes reached or exceeded ten. If any single roll had less than 2 successes, your attempt would fail.

At the gamemaster's discretion, you may take time between each successive roll to do other things - setting the task aside for a while. This might make sense when breaking a complex code but wouldn't make sense for open-heart surgery or a race.



OPPOSED CHALLENGES

If you and another character are working against each other and only one can be successful in a given situation, you each take appropriate challenges and whoever gets the most successes completes the task.

In most situations, one of you will clearly be the **defender** and the other the **attacker**. In general, the attacker is the one trying to change a situation. If you're the defender, you add 1 free success to the result of your challenge. The resulting total is the difficulty for the attacker.

The attacker succeeds on a tie in this case, because they have met the difficulty of the task.

A character trying to harm another character should always be considered the attacker.

For example, you try to convince the captain of a ferry that the ship is in danger and he should head back to port. The captain, who is an NPC under control of the gamemaster, is already running late and argues that the ferry should keep going. The gamemaster asks you to take a challenge of [Wisdom + Persuasion], and since this is an opposed challenge, the gamemaster takes the same challenge on behalf of the captain. You roll 1 success. The stubborn captain also rolls 1 success, but adds the 1 free success for being the defender. You fail (you needed 2 successes) and have to come up with a different plan.

For situations where there is no clear attacker or defender, like a race or other fair competition, a tie might indicate a stalemate or joint success, or the gamemaster might require another roll to break the tie.

CHALLENGE MODIFIERS

There are two ways for the gamemaster to adjust the difficulty of your challenges. The first is to increase or decrease the number of successes that must be rolled to succeed on the challenge. This reflects a change in the inherent difficulty of the task, no matter who is performing it. For example, picking a special lock or shooting at a target behind cover are inherently more difficult tasks.

The second way to increase difficulty is to assign penalty dice. This reflects difficulties specific to your character, not the task itself. Penalty dice are failure dice, and work just like the dice rolled for disadvantages.

For example, if you are handcuffed to a pipe and must defuse a bomb one-handed, you may have to roll 1 or 2 penalty dice.

In the same way, if you're in a situation that makes a task easier, perhaps because you have help from others or special equipment, you may get to roll additional bonus dice.

ASSISTING

When another character takes a challenge, the gamemaster may permit you to **assist** if it makes sense in the current situation. You take a challenge for the skill used to assist, and if you get at least 1 success die (after subtracting failure dice), the character performing the actual challenge rolls 1 additional bonus die.

Note that the assisting challenge and the actual challenge might not use the same skill.

For example, Dr. Marks is performing surgery after a plane crash on a desert island. He asks you, another survivor, to assist him by handing him instruments and monitoring the patient's pulse. The gamemaster allows you to assist with a [Perception + Self Control] challenge. You get 2 successes, so the good doctor rolls 1 extra bonus die on his [Dexterity + Surgery] challenge.

The gamemaster always has the final say on whether assisting makes sense in a given challenge.

Some abilities may allow you to contribute more than 1 bonus die as part of an assist.

MULTIPLE ASSISTS

When multiple characters attempt to assist another character, they each take an assist challenge. However, the character taking the actual challenge can only use the bonus from one of the assisting characters.

SITUATION CHALLENGES

The gamemaster can use your character traits to determine whether a specific event occurs during play. For example, the gamemaster might roll [Intelligence + Pathology] to determine whether you've ever published a paper in a medical journal, or roll dice for your Enemy disadvantage to see if your enemy appears at an inopportune time.

CRITICAL SUCCESS

If you roll more successes than the difficulty of a challenge, the additional successes are **critical successes**. The effects of critical successes vary and are ultimately up to the discretion of the gamemaster.

During an extended challenge, your critical successes typically just add to the your total

successes, shortening the entire task. When you physically attack another character, critical successes add dice to your damage roll or lead to specific types of damage. See Table 2.1 for a list of Critical Success effects.

Table 2.1: Critical Success

Challenge	Critical Success Results
Movement	<i>Additional distance moved</i>
Attack	<i>Additional damage dice, or special damage roll for bleeding, etc.</i>
Damage	<i>Wounds</i>
Extended Challenge	<i>More success added to total</i>
Assist	<i>Possible additional dice for assisted challenge, depending on abilities</i>
Skill	<i>Exceptional results</i>

FUMBLE

If you take a challenge and end up with more failures than successes, you **fumble**. Note that this can only happen if you are rolling at least 1 penalty die (perhaps from a disadvantage). A fumble is a spectacular failure with negative consequences beyond a normal failure. If you fumble while attacking, you could drop your weapon or accidentally attack a friend. If you fumble during a vehicle chase, you probably crash. A fumble during a social interaction challenge could turn a neutral NPC into an your enemy.

When you attempt to assist a challenge and fumble, any net failure dice are applied to the challenge you are assisting as penalty dice, even though the other character doesn't choose to use your assistance.

Table 2.2: Fumble Results

Challenge	Fumble Result
Movement	<i>Fall prone or no movement if prone</i>
Attack	<i>Drop weapon or strike ally</i>
Skill or Extended Challenge	<i>Costly failure</i>
Assist	<i>Assisted challenge Penalty</i>

PERSONA POOL

You begin play with 2 dice in your **persona pool**. These dice can be added to any challenge roll as bonus dice, but once used they are lost.

The **persona dice** in your persona pool can be replenished by the gamemaster. Any time the gamemaster feels you have acted in line with one of your personality patterns (see Chapter 4), you may receive a persona die as a reward.

In the same way, the gamemaster may take away a persona pool die when you fail to act in accordance with a personality pattern. If you have no dice left in your persona pool, the gamemaster can force you to act in accord with your personality patterns.

Persona pools work best if your gamemaster has a set of dice distinct in appearance from everyone else's. This way it is obvious how many persona pool dice each player has. When you use any of them, you simply return them to the gamemaster.

EASY CHALLENGES

You may sometimes face challenges that are very easy, but not a sure thing. In this case, the gamemaster can set the difficulty at zero, so only fumbles are failures. This is the case with normal movement actions during cinematic scenes.

PERCEPTION CHALLENGES

Perception challenges are used to determine whether you notice an object, sound or smell of interest or pick up on nonverbal queues. They are generally composed of your Perception attribute and a skill related to the item in question.

For example, if you are walking through the jungle and are stalked by a puma, the gamemaster might require an opposed challenge between your [Perception + Zoology] and the puma's [Dexterity + Stealth]. Noticing computer files that have been tampered with might require a [Perception + Computers] challenge against a set difficulty.