

What is Simple D6 (SD6)?

SD6 is a super-lite, free-form roleplaying system adaptable to all settings and meant for people who hate explaining complex systems or just love simplicity in their games. In essence you roll a die (d6), adding a d6 for each skill that would help in the given situation, and then take the highest result and you are done!

Character Creation

Think of a character concept (i.e. a profession) and a suitable name. You start with 1 Quality, 5 Skills/Abilities, 5 Hit Points (HP) and 1 Defense (Def) in all Aspects. You may move 1 HP from one Aspect to another.

Aspects are different areas of interaction and relevant Aspects change depending on the setting/game. Common Aspects are Combat, Social, Magic, or Sanity for instance. There are theoretically unlimited Aspects so be sure to ask your Game Master (GM) which Aspects will be used.

Qualities are very broad skills, jobs, or stereotypes like Charismatic, Strong, Soldier, Diplomat, Ranger, or Smart for instance. You usually only get a single Quality.

Skills are free-form and entirely made up by the player. Skills may be as broad as to cover a field of expertise but should never be usable outside a specific area. Skills like “Close Combat” is as broad it should get but you can build on top of this with increasingly specific skills like Sword Fighting followed by Stabbing if you wish.

Abilities are special powers such as spell-casting, psionics, or powerful martial arts. Not all settings/games use them so be sure to ask your GM if and how they’re being used.

Task Resolution

When rolling for task resolution, count how many Skills/Qualities you have which would reasonably help you do the task at hand and add one. That is the number of d6 you roll. After rolling, pick one d6 which becomes your result and add +1 for every natural 6 remaining.

Interactions which are not actively resisted, like scenery or environment, use the “Success?” column on the Task Resolution Chart. Rolling a Critical Failure means you fail and a single bad thing happens, a Partial Success means you succeeded but not completely (or something bad happens despite you succeeding) and a Critical Success means that you succeed and a single good thing happens. One additional good thing happens per point the roll exceeded 6.

Character/NPC related interactions, are all considered a form of combat, be it social, physical, or magical. You roll 1d6 plus a d6 for every Skill/Quality which would help in the situation, the opponent subtracts their Def in that Aspect from your Degree of Success (DoS) and the rest is lost in HP from that Aspect. When a character reaches 0 or less HP in that Aspect they lose that match. You got your information, negotiated a discount, or your opponent dropped unconscious. Remember to deduct the opponents’ Def before resolving HP loss.

Task Resolution Chart			
Roll	Success?	Degree of Success	Result
1	No, and...	0	Critical Failure
2	No	0	Failure
3	Yes, but...	1	Partial Success
4	Yes	2	Success
5	Yes	3	Success
6	Yes, and...	4	Critical Success
7	Yes, and..., and...	5	Critical Success

A hard but manageable task may incur a penalty to the roll. The penalty, or *Point Penalty*, is subtracted from the final result of the roll.

Advanced tasks are tasks requiring specialist knowledge. When performing an advanced task roll 1d6 fewer than normal – this may reduce you to 0 dice, making the task impossible. This is called a *Dice Penalty*.

Easy tasks are never rolled for. If a task is easy enough to confer a bonus to a roll, just assume that it was a success.

Character Progression

Every session the GM may choose to give all players experience (xp), usually 1-4 points. For 2xp, players may buy a new Skill or Ability relevant to what happened in the session. Extra HP costs 3xp each. Extra Def costs 5xp each. Xp can carry between sessions by GM discretion.

Special Powers/Abilities

Using a special ability in or out of combat counts as an advanced task. When using a power the GM decides the outcome as per normal task resolution rules. Attack powers deal damage as normal combat but may have additional effects, with degree/effect determined by DoS. Note that the following are merely suggestions for including powers in your game and can be considered optional. The values included in said suggestions are also pre-balanced but can be fiddled with.

For settings using powers with a resource, have Abilities draw HP or lower Def temporarily for a round from an Aspect. You can note this as (A-2/0), where the ability drains 2 HP from Aspect A. Powers that draw from an Aspect without a method to regain HP mid-combat should cost -1 HP or -1 Def and Aspects with regeneration -2 HP/-2 Def. If using levels below, costs should be multiplied by the level of Ability.

For powers with scaling effects, assign a level (lvl) to powers, with each lvl costing 2xp more than the next. A lvl1 Ability would cost the same as a Skill (2xp), lvl2 would be 4xp, lvl3 6xp and so on. For every lvl above lvl1, roll an additional d6 on the table and add its DoS to the previous roll. You may add Skill/Quality dice between the two rolls only once.

Example: Bob uses a lvl2 Ability, paying the appropriate cost and has 3 Skills/Quality that could help. He can roll 4d6 and then 1d6 for the second level, or choose to spread his dice and roll 3d6 and then 2d6.

Resource regeneration for Aspects like Willpower, Mana, Intellect, etc. can be represented by the Def in that Aspect. For every turn the player chooses to concentrate and rest, they regain HP equal to their Def up to their starting amount.

SD6 Basic GM Resources

On this page you’ll find some basic resources on optional rules, how to gauge basic enemy toughness/threat levels compared to the party as well as sample Abilities using the suggestions on the main rules page.

How Hard to Beat?		
Difficulty	HP	Defense
Easy	2-5	0
Medium	5-6	1
Difficult	5-8	2
Hard	6-8	3
Epic	8-12	4
Legendary	10+	4+

The above is in comparison to a single starting level PC. In group engagements, compare the total HP of participating PC’s and adjust the amount of enemies (in HP totals) accordingly.

How Dangerous Are They?	
Skill Level	# of Relevant Skills/Qualities
Unskilled	0 Skills
Trained	1 Skill
Skilled	2 Skills
Veteran	3 Skills
Master	4+ Skills

For examples, a civilian would typically be unskilled in things like combat, where as a militia or soldier would be trained, elites would be skilled, etc. Do note that in terms of mass groups or to simply save time on how much damage an enemy does, you can set the amount of DoS they’ll do automatically.

What’s Their Power Level?!	
“Power Level”	Abilities/Special Powers
Mortal	0-1 Abilities trained to lvl1
Earth	1+ Abilities trained to lvl 2
Sky	1+ Abilities trained to lvl 3
Heaven	1+ Abilities trained to lvl 4+

If you enable scaling powers it adds a “third” scaling to the game. The first is adding HP and Skills, the latter of which has diminishing returns statistically. The second is Defense, which scales better with HP and makes you stupidly tough past Defense 3. With scaling Abilities it allows you to make truly epic bosses and monsters that can reliably smite lesser creatures in an epic blow, as well as characters that can tackle monsters that would normally be untouchable past Defense 3 or 4.

Weapons	
Weapon/Type	Bonuses/Modifiers
Unarmed	-1 Damage
Small weapon	+0 Damage
Hand weapon	+1 Damage
Heavy weapon	-2 Hit +2 Damage
Massive weapon	-3 Hit +3 Damage
Arrows/Wand	+0 Damage
Claws/teeth/etc.	+1-3 Damage

Above are suggestions for weapons in a more of a fantasy related setting, but these general details can carry into multiple settings. For minus to hit, subtract from the roll and if it gets a hit (i.e. DoS above 0) add the Damage to the original roll’s DoS for total damage. For grittier games increase the modifiers for safer games decrease the modifiers.

Weapon/Gear Quality	
Quality Level	Bonus/Modifier
Poor	-1 Damage
Ordinary	+0 Damage
Extraordinary	+1 Damage
Divine	+2 Damage (or more)

If you want more detail in terms of gear, the above could also apply to bonuses for tests other than combat. Another way to give bonuses are Skills attached to the gear in question (“Burns Things”, etc.). When it comes to items that grant Defense I would personally only have it grant a bonus if it’s Extraordinary or better in nature as Defense is quite strong as a stat.

Gear/Equipment

If you wish to be a bit more detailed on starting equipment or like to balance out weapons amongst PC’s, a quick and dirty method is hand weapon/heavy weapon for melee and small weapon + ranged weapon for ranged/casters. You can assume they start with enough supplies for a small journey, a small amount of wealth (you can choose to count exact amounts) and maybe an item related to their chosen Quality/profession.

Adjusting Starting Creation

With current creation rules and gear assumptions you can assume that the group is fairly well off, better trained and equipped than civilians and average soldiers. But definitely a step below elites or those with particularly shiny gear. However you have the ability to adjust this based on the charts provided. You can have them start even weaker, with less Skills, worse/no equipment and have them struggle to reach even keel. Or have them have bonus beginning Xp to spend and start as veterans in the game.

Optional Rules/Mechanics

The following are all optional mechanics to spice up gameplay for more seasoned players. Note that these include practically everything on the GM page as well as the blurb on special abilities/powers on the rules page, as these were added by me on top of the existing SD6 system. Don't forget you can also add your own!

Fate/Destiny points: Every character gets one 1 at creation and gains more through exceptional acts/cleverness/bad shit happening. Each fate point can be burned at any time to make a die a 6, or to recover 2 HP instantly.

Karma: Particularly positive actions grant Karma points which can be used to grant an additional die on a roll. Negative actions grant enemies boosts like extra damage.

Role play points: Similar to Fate points but generally given as a reward for good roleplaying in character.

True Grit: A PC reduced to 0 HP in a combat can attempt to recover by rolling 1d6. If they roll under their Defense in that Aspect they immediately regain 1 HP. If they fail they go negative/suffer additional consequences. This can be treated as an Ability to be upgraded.

Teamwork: PC's can pool or add dice together on certain attempts if it makes sense for them to do so and they possess relevant Skills/Qualities to allow them to help. However these extra dice only add 1 DoS per 6 rolled.

Criticals: You can choose to have 6's allow a re-roll of other dice used in the attempt per 6 rolled. Or have additional 6's add +2 DoS rather than +1

Casting time: You can add casting time to Abilities to make them more potent or to lower/eliminate casting costs.

Movement + Action: For combat, you can have a character move while making an attack, but they'll suffer a hit penalty or let the enemy gain a hit bonus.

Sustained Spells/Abilities: Most Abilities I have set to only last one turn (per level), but you can have buffs last longer if the resource depletion is continued and cannot be regenerated until the spell is cancelled.

Spirit/Aura Shield: Having a Spiritual or equivalent Aspect be able to act as a second HP bar for regular physical combat HP is a good way to represent higher level beings.

Supernatural Dice: Similar in accumulation to Fate/Destiny points, except it allows you at any time to change the face of a die belonging to anyone, including your enemies' and that of other PC's.

Fatigue: If you're dropped to half of your total HP (rounding down) you lose -1 to all rolls until it is brought above the threshold. If you're at 1 HP, your rolls are at -2 instead.

Special Abilities Balancing/Examples

Note that the following are assuming all three suggestions about powers/Abilities are in place with Social, Physical and Spirit Aspects in play. These were also aimed at a fantasy setting, but can provide insight on Ability creation for other settings. These are also designed assuming one Ability = one specific action with a narrow range of possible effects. Players should be encouraged to be creative with their uses when possible however. I assumed that each level could do damage + 1 effect or 1 effect + possibility of doing more up to a max of +2, whether it be healing/buffing/something else. While I don't penalize single target damage abilities, I do buff AoE abilities that split their DoS among different targets.

1. Lvl1 fireball (S-2/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire
2. Lvl2 fireball (S-4/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire
3. Lvl3 fireball (S-6/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire
4. Lvl1 heal (S-2/0): Heals target's Physical HP, can heal more based on DoS
5. Lvl1 roundhouse kick (P0/-1): Deals damage and can knock an enemy away
6. Lvl2 roundhouse kick (P0/-2): Deals damage and can knock an enemy away
7. Lvl1 snipe (P0/-1): Deals ranged damage and ignores 1 Physical Def

Note that since Lvl2 and above allow you to roll additional times and add DoS, that a level 2 single-target offensive ability could potentially one-shot a regular 5 HP 1 Defense target. However with scaling costs in resource and scaling xp requirements, this naturally prevents cheesing out going for a super powerful ability in the beginning. A player should typically consider the resources (HP/Def), supporting Skills as well what they might sacrificing in other areas.

As mentioned earlier I consider higher level Abilities to be in the domain of lategame anyhow, with maxing out HP/Skills as the first scaling and defense as the second. When it comes to resource consumption this adds an interesting dynamic as well to combat. Consuming Spirit HP leaves you more vulnerable to mental attack and lowering Physical defense to physical attack. There's an inherent trade-off, which makes giving bosses these Abilities an interesting way to make them much deadlier but also with weaknesses.

PC Fantasy Examples (Common Archetypes)

Quality: Barbarian

So:[5/1] P:[6/1] Sp:[4/1]

Skills: Pummeling, breaking things, intimidation, tribal know-how

Abilities:

lvl1 Barbarian rage (P-1/0): Deals damage and grants bonus damage based on DoS

Quality: Mage

So:[5/1] P:[4/1] Sp:[6/1]

Skills: Lesser spellcasting, basic spell formations, fire spellcasting

Abilities:

lvl1 fireball (S-2/0): Deals damage and can set target on fire

lvl1 firewall (S-2/0): Blocks off an area with a wall of fire based on DoS

Quality: Ranger

So:[6/1] P:[5/1] Sp:[4/1]

Skills: Weapons handling, tracking, traps, negotiation

Abilities:

lvl1 snipe (P0/-1): Deals damage at range and ignores 1 Physical defense

Quality: Cleric

So:[5/1] P:[4/1] Sp:[6/1]

Skills: First aid, holy presence, lesser spellcasting

Abilities:

lvl1 combat heal (S-2/0): Heals a target based on DoS

lvl1 blessing of might (S-2/0): Buffs a target's next attack damage based on DoS

Quality: Warrior

So:[4/1] P:[6/1] Sp:[5/1]

Skills: Close combat training, hand weapons training, running

Abilities:

lvl1 cleave (P0/-1): Deals damage to two nearby enemies with +1 damage against both (split DoS)

Quality: Rogue

So:[6/1] P:[5/1] Sp:[4/1]

Skills: Lockpicking, lying, stealth, close combat training

Abilities:

lvl1 puncture (P0/-1): Deals reduced (-1) damage to reduce target's physical defense by 1 until next turn

Even More Special Ability Examples

lvl1 fireball (S-2/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire

lvl2 fireball (S-4/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire

lvl3 fireball (S-6/0): Deals damage and can set an enemy on fire

lvl1 heal (S-2/0): Heals friendly target of damage, can heal more based on DoS

lvl1 blessing of strength (S-2/0): Grants target a damage boost, can be bigger based on DoS

lvl1 holy shield (S-2/0): Shields target with extra HP, can shield more based on DoS

lvl1 roundhouse kick (P0/-1): Deals damage and can knock an enemy away

lvl2 roundhouse kick (P0/-2): Deals damage and can knock an enemy away

lvl1 precise throw (P0/-1): Deals damage and is a Ranged Attack

lvl1 shadow dance (P-1/0): Increases physical defense by 1 until next turn

lvl1 taunting shout (P-1/0): Forces nearby enemies to attack you, can affect enemies further away based on DoS

lvl1 battle shout (P0/-1): Increases nearby allies' next attack damage, can affect allies further away based on DoS

lvl1 guard armor (P-1/0): Increases Physical defense by 1 until next turn

lvl1 snipe (P0/-1): Deals damage ignoring 1 point of defense

lvl1 sweeping blow (P0/-1): Deals split DoS damage to three targets, each hit with +1 damage

lvl1 flame breath (S-2/0): Deals split DoS damage to three targets, each hit with +1 damage

lvl1 cold reading (So0/-1): Deals damage and boosts your next attack by the net damage dealt, usable only in social situations against the same target

lvl2 spirit slash (P0/-1 S-2/0): Deals damage to Spirit HP, if target's Spirit HP is 0, damage is doubled against Physical HP

lvl1 dominate mind (S-2/0): Deals normal Spirit damage. If target Spirit HP is reduced to 0 or below, he immediately becomes your slave as long as his Spirit HP remains at 0 or below. You can either act on your own or make an action with the thrall each turn.

lvl1 hallucination (S-2/0): Deals normal Spirit damage. If target Spirit HP is reduced to 0 or below, they are affected by a hallucination of your choice until their HP recovers above 0.