Sixtacular System Reference Document

Sixtacular

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Introduction

[This SRD includes a few notes in brackets and blue text like this; these are notes for designers on how to go about using the Sixtacular system for your own games. Also, note that this SRD has some p. XX references that you'll want to either replace with proper page numbers or remove from the text.]

Things You'll Need

Hopefully you're sold on the idea of giving this game a try. Otherwise what am I doing with my life? Uh, anyway, there are a few things you're going to need to get together before you can play.

People

This is a game you play with other people, so you're going to need to get some friends together to play, whether in person or online. Specifically, you need one person to be the Game Master, and around 2-6 people to be the "players," who will each play the part of a paranormal investigator. You'll need to get these people together for something like 3-6 hours.

Dice

You'll need some six-sided dice, say around 6-8 or so, and one die of a distinctly different color to be the Weird Die. If you can get a die with a special symbol in place of the 6 for the Weird Die, even better.

Pencils and Paper

This game also calls for pencils and paper. Specifically pencils rather than pens because you'll occasionally need to erase stuff. You can use blank paper or index cards, but ideally, you'll want printouts of the actual character cards for the game. You can download a PDF of those from my website.

Playing Online

If you want to play online, you'll need some medium of communication, preferably one that lets you roll dice. Things like Roll20 and Google Hangouts are good for that, though simpler stuff like IRC or Slack will work too. It doesn't hurt to use Google Drive or any of the other shareable document platform things for character sheets and notes and whatnot.

Playing the Game

Action Resolution

When your character tries to do something that has some difficulty involved, the GM will ask you to make a roll. Pick up as many six-sided dice as the Stat that best fits the action in question to roll, and add another 3 dice if your Talent is applicable. You can also roll additional dice from things like spending Awesome Points, using helpful items, etc.

Once you know how many dice you're going to roll, pick up that many (including a **Weird Die**; see below), roll them bones, and add them up. If you can match or beat the difficulty number that the GM decided on, you're able to succeed! Go you!

Difficulty	Required Roll	Examples
Automatic	None	Hit the broad side of a barn, drive a car, make a phone call, cross an empty street, climb some stairs
Easy	5+	Hit a target at point-blank range, climb a tree, do your 1040EZ, parallel parking
Normal	10+	Hit a target at normal range, dodge through traffic, figure out an occult tome, get out of a ticket
Hard	20+	Hit a target at long range, figure out an arcane grimoire, dodge through heavy traffic, get out of jail
Impossible	30+	Hit a target with your eyes closed, climb a brick wall, convincingly pretend to be a god

Opposed Actions

When two characters are directly acting against each other, you can treat it as an opposed action. This means that each character makes a roll like in normal Action Resolution, but instead of each trying to reach a certain goal individually, you're trying to get a higher result than the other guy. If you do, you win!

Helping

Suppose you want to lend a hand to a friend. That's cool of you. In game terms, if you can justify why your character can be of some help and commit a reasonable amount of effort, you can let the other character roll an additional die. If you're playing in person, pick up the actual die and hand it to them.

Exceptional and Ridiculous Success

If you beat the required roll (or in the case of an opposed action, the opposition's roll) by 10 or more, it's considered an **Exceptional Success**. If you beat the required amount by 20 or more it's considered a **Ridiculous Success**.

Exceptional Success means that you did a really good job at whatever you were doing, so that you get a little something extra, and maybe some extra dice on a future roll.

Ridiculous Success means that you managed to succeed to a ridiculous degree, to the point where the magnitude of your accomplishment goes beyond what you'd actually want. If you're

trying to hit on someone at the bar, you wind up with a stalker. If you're trying to understand an arcane grimoire, a piece of it starts inhabiting your brain. You get the idea.

The Weird Die

However many dice you roll, make one of them a die of a different color. (If you can get a die that has a symbol in place of the 6, even better.) This is the Weird Die. If you roll a 6 on the Weird Die, it counts as zero towards your overall result, and something *weird* happens. You can still succeed with a weird result (though admittedly having one die give you zero points doesn't help), but it's going to be a bit weird regardless.

Weird Failure

If you fail and you rolled a 6 on the Weird Die, you not only fail, but you have some bad stuff happen to you that might cause an injury or significant inconvenience, or just something gross.

Weird Success

If, despite having one die give you zero points towards your total, you manage to roll high enough to succeed, the weird die ensures that something strange or just annoying happens. Although you succeed, your next step is going to be tricky.

["Weird Die" is a genericized naming; feel free to rename it or outright eliminate it from your game.]

Fighting and Damage

Handling Combat

In this game, combat is a little loosey-goosey. There aren't specific rules for how far you can run or rolling for initiative. The GM might call for a roll to see who's quick enough to rush in first or whether you can run fast enough if the situation calls for it, but otherwise combat is a conversation, just like the rest of the game.

When a player can act is a judgment call from the GM; if you're not sure, ask the player questions about what they're doing until you have a good idea of what's going on. Try to give everyone a chance to do stuff, and if it comes to it, just start asking the players what their characters are doing in turn.

Attacking

When one character attacks another, they make a roll using the Action Resolution rules with an appropriate Stat (and Talent, if applicable). Particularly for when dealing with ghosts, it's good to be flexible about what stats PCs can use, so that no one gets totally screwed if they have a low Action.

If they have a weapon and can use it effectively, the GM gives them a bonus of 1 to 4 dice depending on how menacing and effective the weapon is.

Dice	Example Weapons
+1	Brass knuckles, long fingernails, umbrella
+2	Knife, whip, frying pan
+3	Chair, nightstick, pistol, sword
+4	Axe, bazooka, broadsword, chainsaw, rifle

In hand-to-hand or melee combat, the target gets to make an opposed roll to try to avoid getting hit. If the attacker gets the higher roll, the attack hits and does damage as usual.

For a ranged attack, the attacker needs to roll high enough to hit a target number based on the range.

Range	Required Roll
Point-Blank (10' or Less)	5+
Normal Range	10+
Long Range 50' (or 500' for a rifle)	20+

The target *may* be able to dodge if they have space and the opportunity, in which case they can make an opposed roll, though the attacker still has to reach the minimum required roll for the range.

Damage

This isn't the sort of game where player characters really die, but they do get hurt, inconvenienced, and sometimes outright hospitalized. If you really and truly want your character to bite the big one, you can just declare that at a suitable moment and start thinking up a new character. For everything short of that, we use the damage rules below.

When a character gets hurt in combat (and doesn't spend Awesome Points to avoid it), they take damage. Damage takes the form of a temporary reduction to their stats. The player whose character is getting damaged decides which stats get reduced this way (and you can distribute the damage among multiple stats), but you have to mark off as many points as the points of damage you take. If a character takes 5 or more points of damage at once, or if any one stat goes down to zero, they also lose consciousness.

In combat, a successful attack causes 2 damage, but an Exceptional Success instead causes 3 damage, and a Ridiculous Success causes 5 damage.

Outside of combat, the GM can assign 1 to 6 points of damage when it seems appropriate, though it's usually fair to let the player try to act and/or make a roll to avoid getting hurt.

Recovering from Damage

Characters will eventually get better of course. We play a little fast and loose with this, but here are the rules for different ways of recovering:

Story Time Recovery: If there's a decent gap between sessions, you just recover all damage before you start a new session.

Natural Recovery: If a character doesn't do anything special, they recover 1 point of damage every 3 days.

First Aid: First aid lets a character recover a little bit. If someone successfully administers first aid, you recover 2 points of damage, but you can only benefit from first aid once per session.

Hospital Stay: If a character goes to the hospital, they recover 1 point of damage every day.

Gaining Awesome Points

Awesome Points are a general measure of your character's protagonist-ness and ability to muster up extra effort. New characters start the game with 20 Awesome Points, but you'll have plenty of opportunities to gain more. Which is good, because Awesome Points are great for saving your bacon.

Fulfilling Your Motivation
When your character manages to fulfill their motivation reasonably well, the GM will tell you to roll the Weird Die. You gain that many Awesome Points. If you roll a 6, you gain 1 Awesome Point, but something weird happens so that your accomplishment isn't quite what you wanted.

What qualifies as fulfilling a motivation is inherently subjective, but it should be relatively easy for a player to do so once or twice per game session if they try. A discovery for Soulless Science can be something incremental, and Romance can just be going on a non-terrible date.

In any case, the GM should keep a list of the PCs' motivations handy and generally be on the lookout both for instances of motivations being fulfilled and opportunities to bring motivations into the game.

Doing Cool Stuff
The GM can also hand out an Awesome Point or two whenever a PC does something especially cool, something that makes the game more fun, or something that just gets everyone laughing out loud.

End of Session Reward
At the end of each session, the GM will award Awesome Points based on how well the PCs did overall:

- **If you screwed up**, each player rolls a die and gets that many points.
- **If you achieved your goals and generally did good enough**, each character either resets to 20 points or gains 3, whichever would leave them with more.
- **If you did an amazing job**, each character either resets to 23 points or gains 6, whichever would leave them with more.

Reducing Stats
If you are truly desperate for Awesome Points, you can permanently reduce a Stat by 1 point to gain 20 Awesome Points. If a stat is already at 1 (either its normal value or its current value including damage), you can't reduce it any further.

Spending Awesome Points
There are a few different ways you can use your Awesome Points, though the first two are probably the most important.

Since you'll usually get the points you spent back and then some at the end of each session, don't worry too much about conserving them, especially when you're barreling towards the conclusion.

Rolling More Dice
Before you roll for an action, you can spend as many Awesome Points as you want to roll that many additional dice. You have to do this before you actually roll though.

Players are encouraged to give some kind of justification for whatever obscure bit of knowledge, rarely-invoked skill, or stroke of luck is letting the character perform better than usual.

Get Out of Danger

If something is about to cause you harm, you can spend Awesome Points to avoid it. If it's something that's going to cause damage, it costs 2 Awesome Points for each point of damage it would cause.

Dramatic Editing

With the GM's permission, a player can spend Awesome Points to add a detail to the game. Usually this costs 2 Awesome Points, but it costs 4 for something contrived, and 6 for something ridiculous. Also, the GM can refuse to let you do dramatic editing if they think it just won't work.

Archetype Ability

Each character has an archetype, and each archetype comes with a special ability that costs Awesome Points.

Improvement

Between sessions you can spend 30 Awesome Points to permanently increase a stat by 1, to a maximum stat value of 5. You can't go above a total of 15 stat points however.

You can also spend 30 Awesome Points to permanently acquire a second Archetype and its ability, but you can only do this once.

In both cases, you should be able to explain why your character can make this improvement.

Character Creation

Using d66 Tables

For most of the things in character creation there are optional d66 tables (except for that one case on the next page where it's d6 tables). Get two six-sided dice, and designate one as the tens digit and the other as the ones digit. Roll them and put the results together to get one of 36 possible items numbered 11 through 66.

For example, if you make the tens die black and the ones die white, a roll of 3 on the black die and 5 on the white die will give you a result of 35, like this:

$$\text{⚂} + \text{⚄} = 35$$

You can use the corresponding table to randomly generate that part of your character, or you can pick something from the table that strikes your fancy, or you can just make up something of your own.

[The SRD doesn't include any d66 tables or pre-made Archetypes or Motivations, as they need to be heavily customized for the particular genre of your game.]

1. Archetype

Your archetype is the general sort of character you are. You'll have plenty of opportunities to define your character in more detail as you round out the rest, but your archetype gives you an ability, a special thing that it lets you do in the game by spending one or more Awesome Points. Unlike a lot of other things in the game, archetype abilities just *work* as long as you spend the points on them, though in some cases you may have to make rolls to properly use the results.

2. Quirks

"Quirks" are random details about a character that tell us a bit more about them. They can be minor, cosmetic things, or major things that will force the GM to play a new NPC or two.

You should have at least one quirk, but you can create/choose/roll two or three if you like. If you roll and get two that seem to contradict each other, you can of course go ahead and re-roll.

3. Stats

Stats are a measure of how competent your character is at different things, so they're pretty important when you're playing the game. Assign a total of 12 points among the four stats (Action, Brains, Contact, and Cool), giving each one a value between 1 and 5. The value is how many six-sided dice you'll roll (before adding bonuses from talents, gear, etc.) when you attempt an action that uses that kind of ability.

Action

Sometimes you need to get off your butt and do stuff. It kinda sucks, I know, but that's the life of a paranormal investigator. This is the stat you use to run around, fight, shoot your etheric ray thrower, that kind of thing.

Brains

Being smart and knowing stuff are also important qualities for a paranormal investigator. Brains is the stat you use for doing research, doing technical stuff, figuring things out, and so on.

Contact

Contact is your ability to deal with normal people in relatively normal ways. It's essential for things like interviewing witnesses, convincing the cops you're not mentally ill and/or scammers, and getting a good deal.

Cool

Cool is your ability to stay calm and collected despite all the crap that will inevitably come your way as a paranormal investigator. If your Cool stat is high, you're, you know, *cool*. Cool enough to not use too many commas in your sentences. Cool is good for overcoming fear as well as being collected in social situations.

[You're more than welcome to change the selection of stats to better fit your own game.]

4. Talents

For each of the four stats, pick, roll, or create a Talent for your character. This is something that falls under that stat that your character is particularly good at. When you make a roll where a talent applies, you get to roll an extra 3 dice. It'll usually be pretty obvious, but the GM is the final arbiter of whether a talent applies.

5. Motivation

Your character's Motivation in the major thing that drives them. This both gives you a guideline for how to role-play your character and is one of the ways you earn Awesome Points. You're welcome to come up with something else; just be clear on when you should be gaining Awesome Points for it. Also, PCs' motivations shouldn't overlap *too* much, because different motivations add variety to the game.

6. Starting Awesome Points

Each character starts with 20 Awesome Points. Circle the "20" on your character card, and you're done.

In case you missed it, see p. XX to learn how you get more Awesome Points, and p. XX for what you can spend them on. It's pretty cool actually!

7. Stuff

[You will have to decide for yourself how exactly to handle equipment, and whether or not it's even a factor in your game in the first place.]

8. Name and Other Details

The stuff you've done up until now should give you a fairly good idea of what your character is like. To finish up, give them a name and maybe fill in a few other details if you want.

Later On: Reworking Characters

While you can do a tiny bit of actual character advancement in this game by trading in 30 Awesome Points to bump a stat up by 1 point or get a second archetype (see p. XX), you may still find yourself wanting to rework your character in some way, and I'm okay with that. Maybe it just feels right to

change your Motivation when your goofy would-be womanizer gets married, or maybe you find that the way you set up your Stats and Talents turned out to screw you over for how you wanted to play the game.

As long as the GM is cool with it and it makes some kind of sense, you can change pretty much any of the things you assigned during character creation later on, between game sessions. They just have to remain within the original character creation rules, so you have to have the same number of stat points, one talent per stat, and so on.