

[Microdungeons] I roll to see if I have shoes on!



DWeird

January 2010 edited January 2010

Luke's little thing and then some other stuff really got me itching to play me some dungeoncrawl. Benhimself ran a few games on [#playnow](#) (in both of which my character got horribly mutilated and died!) with mini-systems he thought of in his sleep or during a shower or something. And then I steal said mini-systems and use them to run games, too!

The minisystem goes like this:

Say what you do and roll a number of d6s.

If the sum of your roll is higher than the opposing roll (either another player or the DM), the thing you wanted to happen, happens.

The number of the d6s you roll is determined by the level of skill you have.

At start, you have only one skill: Do anything 1.

If you roll all sixes on your roll, you can get new skill one level higher than the one you used for the action. The skill must be a subset of what happened to you in the action (Say, Athletics 2 if you were climbing a wall, or Teeth of Biting 2 if you were eating a cake).

For every roll you fail, you get 1 XP.

XP can be used to change a die into a 6 for advancement purposes but not for success purposes.

And that's it! This mini-system works beautifully for crafting characters on the go. Here are some example "charsheets" from the dungeoncrawl of [Cakewalk](#) that I ran:

Krey the Heretic Monk of the Church of Pain : 0 XP Do anything 1, Fist O'Pain 2, Burning Fist O'Pain 3, Heretic 2, Teeth of Biting 2!

Ferret the Son of a Shoemaker: 2 XP Do Anything 1. Boots of Kicking 2. Feet of Feats 3. Supplier 2.

Ryu the Polymorphed Egglayer: 2 XP, Reptilian 2

Now, a wonderful effect of this system is that it pretty much drives you to always bite off more than you can chew and get into as many petty squabbles as you can. If you were running a regular, serious dungeoncrawl, that implication would suck... But if you're running a tongue-in-cheek game that only uses dungeoncrawl tropes as a starting touchpoint, you have a brilliantly funny game at your hands.

We had a battle in a kitchen with ghouls armed with a laddle, cleaver, and a pot. People kept punching or kicking them in the mouths, and they kept biting down on the appendages that got too close.

We had the monk try to **heal** himself with a Church of Pain holy symbol with the effect of his now-angry god spitting on him from above.

We had one of the characters turned into a magnet by a three-mouthed demon sorcerer, and have all the cutlery in the kitchen start flying.

But my favorite moment was this:

I had asked the players if they were doing anything to prepare for the dungeon before leaving town. One of them said he's checking to see if "he has his heirloom shield" with him. He rolls and botches, and so I say: "Your father is a shoemaker. You are not sure why you ever thought you had anything even remotely close to a shield." After a little while, this character and the would-be monk make it to the heavy doors of dungeon Cakewalk and have a little conversation regarding their preparedness. The monk says he's barefoot and happy to be so, 'cause, well, he's a monk! And then the shoemaker says "I check to see if I have shoes on!"... Which is beautiful, of course - we've already established he's the son of a shoemaker, so he definitely has shoes on. So if he **does** win this roll, we know that he doesn't just have shoes on, he has awesome shoes on!

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And then he rolls a 6 on that roll and gets Boots of Kicking 2.

And then he rolls a 3-6 roll for kicking down the dungeon door, and upgrades it into Feet of Feats 3.

One of those beautiful moments when you do something, and the dice then say "Fuck yes, you do this!". And when that happens in this game, you get not only the brief glory of that single moment, but also a skill that becomes a crucial part of your character... Instant running gag!

This little game was the most fun I've had gaming in a long while, so I thought I'd share!

Comments



Potemkin

January 2010

I applaud your pretension-popping awesomeness! Thanks for sharing. I really want to join in the fun!

Excuse me, I must go and write a mini-game for dungeon crawling.



John_Harper

January 2010

Very clever! That sounds like fun.

Teataine Teataine

January 2010

Cool stuff.

Posted By: DWeirdOne of those beautiful moments when you do something, and the dice then say "Fuck yes, you do this!".

Hard not to love those moments. And I like how you handled develop-through-play characters, I've been wanting to do something like this for a while.

The question is, can you do a serious game with this? It seems that when given this sort of freedom, the players (and yes, I include the GM) will inevitably turn it into a comedy romp. This is not a bad thing, I've had a fair share of hilariously silly games myself, but I can't help but wonder if the creative freedom this type of mechanics offer can be harnessed for a different tone.



DWeird

January 2010

I think it can, actually. In fact, I'm going to try and transfer exactly the same mechanics into a slightly different type of game: communities rebuilding a fantasy world shattered by a catastrophe of some sort. The only real change I will do is change the starting skill from "Do anything 1" to a slightly more somber "Eke out a meager existence 1."

It's my guess that such a minor change would be enough to completely change the tone of the game. We'll see!



Sanglorian

January 2010

Posted By: DWeird

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For every roll you fail, you get 1 XP.

XP can be used to change a die into a 6 for advancement purposes but not for success purposes.

What about changing it so your skill increases if you get all 1s? Then for every roll you succeed, you get 1 XP and spending that changes a die to a 1 for advancement and success purposes.

I feel this would provide a sop for those who fail their rolls and also make spending XP a difficult decision if - say - you get a 6 and a 1. Is short-term success worth giving up long-term advancement?



Nameless

January 2010

That would add meaningful decisions. Might ruin the game.



Potemkin

January 2010

Posted By: Sanglorian

I feel this would provide a sop for those who fail their rolls...

May a merciful heaven spare me from games and game-masters who handle their players with kid-gloves. Making spending XP a meaningful task in itself is a worthy undertaking (yet perhaps unsuited to the style of the game, as Nameless suggests), but to include it by means of offering succor to the unsuccessful is a heinous contradiction of what it is to have failed.

Years of *Paranoia* have honed this sentiment, so you'll forgive me for leaping to the vapourize button as soon as I suspect a one may be rolled. It's not that I hate my players; I wish to intensify their gaming experience with both the threat of real and irrevocable failure, and of the corresponding and proportionate chance of success.

We digress.

-Mike.

stupidgremlin stupidgremlin

January 2010

This is a great concept! I like that it could be used for potentially any genre, as long as there's always some tongue-in-cheekness about it.

I wonder how damage is handled, however. Would they be treated like conditions (a la Lady Blackbird) or more traditional damage tracking?

...

oooh. I am foreseeing using the old Ghostbusters rules for damage with this kind of system. Mmmmmmmmm...



DWeird

January 2010

For damage, we had this cartoony thing where you get busted up and humiliated in one scene, and then we don't really talk about the damage afterwards - unless you want to! Being badly beaten has effects in the fiction, however - you can slip in a pool of your own blood or some such. More serious stuff - losing limbs, getting poisoned, and so on, does need some sort of resolution, but you do it like you do anything else in the game - roll for skills! Of course, since you only gain skills dependent on what "actually happened" during your application of a prior skill, you could actually turn harmful stuff into skills - getting decapitated and then choosing "Headless 2", for instance.



NomdePlume

January 2010

Posted By: stupidgremlinoooooh. I am foreseeing using the old Ghostbusters rules for damage with this kind of system.
Mmmmmmmmmmm...

How did they work?

stupidgremlin stupidgremlin

January 2010

The old Ghostbusters rules had sort of a pool of "luck." You used it when you needed a few extra dice to roll, and you also lost points when you took damage. Eventually, when you "ran out of luck," that's when you'd be hurt enough for something really bad to happen, like getting trapped inside a giant vat of ectoplasm, being sent to the hospital to have your leg reattached with duct tape, getting your Ghostbusters license revoked, etc. If I remember correctly, after a scene, it would be replenished, and you'd be back in the action again (albeit descriptively worse for wear).

It's been awhile, so my memory of the exact rules are kinda rusty, and I think they may have adjusted it somewhat for the Ghostbusters International version (they certainly added a lot of weapons, that's for sure), but that is the gist of it. Though, I must admit, I kinda like DWeird's idea of the damage being treated as another ability. VERY interesting.

Damn I want to play this.



Sanglorian

January 2010

This lemur is High Chancellor, this lemur's going to the petting zoo

Two friends and I played this game, GMless, this afternoon. (I say GMless. I directed most of the action but delegated role-playing of NPCs to the other players. They did well, adding quirks and accents. 'When'd you migrate from the American South?' 'Approximately four seconds ago, sir'.)

It was zany. I let it get stupidly zany because I've read that when introducing freeform games to people, it's best to make the first few sessions zany. People realise they can push the boundaries at a time when you don't mind them pushing the boundaries. Get the over-reaction to freedom out of their veins, and then you can try more serious stuff.

So our conspiracy theorists sitting in a Starbucks ended up a ball of mustachioed muscle, a giant hand with a tiny floppy body following behind and a long stretched man, accompanied by a horse who considers work an honour (their pharaohs build their own pyramids; "You have done a great deed for me. I will let you be my mount!") and an ant who only spoke in koans.

The skill system encouraged the wildness - my character ended up with Resist medical treatment rank 2 and Explain alien concepts with one-handed sign language rank 3. I don't think you could make it into a serious game without fighting the system at least at some points.

There doesn't seem to be rules for ties. We ruled that a tie is a partial success - some good, some bad. This worked great; some of the ideas that sprung from this defined the story (for example, I was paralysed except for one hand).

We lost track of XP. It didn't work for us. I think one person spent XP once. We were in a rush to get to the narration and resolution of the roll, not put tally marks on a sheet of paper.

I wasn't sure how you decided what skills opponents and obstacles had. I decided I would add a skill slot every time an NPC got all sixes. These empty slots were then filled when any NPC needed a skill.

I hope this feedback helps. We had fun!



DWeird

January 2010

Excellent, thanks for giving it a whirl! Regarding the points you made...

Zaniness! Yes, that's pretty much what this inevitably drifts towards. But I found that reigning in the players somewhat and making them stick to the mechanics leads to a more fun game. Specifically, I had players pre-plan the way their characters

would develop, and then just burn the XP they had to build towards that. Saying "nuh-uh, the skill you have has to be a subset of what just actually happened. Why don't you try X as a skill instead?" lead to a couple of brilliant moments - they rarely actually pick X as a skill, but they do reconsider their character concept and just go with the flow. It's easy to just get lost in the zaniness and let anything fly, but it pays to resist that urge a bit, I find.

Your characters are awesome. I salute you!

You're right - there aren't really any rules on ties, but I handled them very much like you did ("I swim in the ale!" vs. "You drown in the ale!", tie = "You both swim and drown a little in the ale.") and it worked great. I guess this should be made an actual rule, no?

As a GM, I never really kept track of XP either, but my players did - religiously. This probably has something to do with the fact that, as twinkly as it was, we were still playing a "dungeoncrawl", which is a type of game that makes you need to care about character effectiveness. I kind of like XP, as it allows a slightly broader range of skills to pop up in play, but it probably needs some sort of visual aid, like taking beads from a bag and then dropping them back in to spend the XP.

The way I handled obstacles... Well, it was a strange mixture of: 1) as many dice as important opponents are there (three armed ghouls = 3d6); 2) by comparison (the demon sorcerer is as powerful as three ghouls, therefore it has 3d6) - in the fiction, I usually couple it with adding more tidbits about the opponent after deciding how many dice the threat will roll (the demon sorcerer has three mouths!); 3) Taking whatever level the skill of the PC is and building up as many elements for the threat as he/she has (the PC has level 4, skill, so... Goblins - in a boat - wielding crabs - who wield seashell scimitars. 4d6!). Very touch-and-go.

But the way you handled it seems potentially far more awesome - I've toyed around with using a similar way of dealing with NPCs in my head, but never really got around to it. And it's a very intuitive way to think about the opposition, no? It's great that you tried this out! Tell me, how did it work? Did the NPC or their powers thusly created became recurring? Got more screen-time, so to speak? I'd really love it if you unpacked your experiences regarding this, because this is a technique (the more you interact with a setting element, the more elaborate and possibly powerful it becomes) that I can see myself applying to a lot of things beyond this silly little mini-system!



noahtrammell

January 2010

I just started up a game on Facebook using these rules. I'm using a map that the players discover along the adventure. I've got 4 1-dice challenges, 3 2-dice, 2 3-dice, and 1 4-dice challenge. I spread these dice across the map, so whenever there's a roll I just roll the ones the players are closest to. I'm also interested to see how the spread of the dice will influence the players' movement until they level up a bit.



Sanglorian

January 2010

Posted By: DWeirdSaying "nuh-uh, the skill you have has to be a subset of what just actually happened. Why don't you try X as a skill instead?" lead to a couple of brilliant moments - they rarely actually pick X as a skill, but they do reconsider their character concept and just go with the flow. It's easy to just get lost in the zaniness and let anything fly, but it pays to resist that urge a bit, I find.

I think the system would work great for a superhero game where the characters come into their powers. You'd end up with Do anything 1 Superspeed 2 Sonic Boom 3 Oscillate through walls 3 - the base power is fairly weak but open-ended while the more specific you get the more powerful you are.

You're right - there aren't really any rules on ties, but I handled them very much like you did ("I swim in the ale!" vs. "You drown in the ale!", tie = "You both swim and drown a little in the ale.") and it worked great. I guess this should be made an actual rule, no?

Rereading the rules, they imply that on a tie the action fails ('If the sum of your roll is *higher* than the opposing roll ...'). So it's worth explaining that's not the case.

As a GM, I never really kept track of XP either, but my players did - religiously. This probably has something to do with the fact that, as twinky as it was, we were still playing a "dungeoncrawl", which is a type of game that makes you need to care about character effectiveness. I kind of like XP, as it allows a slightly broader range of skills to pop up in play, but it probably needs some sort of visual aid, like taking beads from a bag and then dropping them back in to spend the XP.

A visual aid like tokens was something I considered. Also, I'd recommend having a character sheet - at least a piece of paper. XP tally marks and new skills were easily lost in between all the other notes we were taking and diagrams we were making. It's basic things like a character sheet that get forgotten in more narrative-based, free form games.

But the way you handled it seems potentially far more awesome - I've toyed around with using a similar way of dealing with NPCs in my head, but never really got around to it. And it's a very intuitive way to think about the opposition, no? It's great that you tried this out! Tell me, how did it work? Did the NPC or their powers thusly created became recurring? Got more screen-time, so to speak? I'd really love it if you unpacked your experiences regarding this, because this is a technique (the more you interact with a setting element, the more elaborate and possibly powerful it becomes) that I can see myself applying to a lot of things beyond this silly little mini-system!

I think your system, ad hoc though it may be, is a good one. My system didn't really work for me, but I think that's due to my game rather than any flaw in the system. You hit on the perfect type of game to introduce your system: a dungeon crawl. It's intuitive, well-known, easy to come with ideas for (especially clear, archetypal characters), conflicts are obvious. As much as we had fun, I regret that our first game wasn't a dungeoncrawl.

Which is a round-about way of saying NPCs with skills did not have more traction than NPCs without skills (or more correctly, NPCs that started without skills and picked them up in the same way PCs would).

The benefit of the system was that it didn't seem arbitrary or unfair to the players. They could see the skill slot being opened up well in advance of its being assigned, and there was a logical reason for that skill slot being there. If I assigned skills on a whim, I think my players would feel their advancement was irrelevant - like how in many games your attack goes up by 1 and the average AC of your opponents goes up with one.

It was handy for me as well, because it tended to scale with the players without me having to look at the PCs skills and try to figure out an appropriate skill rank.

That said, there is a danger that your opposition could become crippled with the death or fall-into-irrelevance of one or two NPCs. If those NPCs had all the high rank skills, you're going to have to go back and rebuild your opposition from rank 1 and 2 skills.

In most conflicts, the PCs will be together. Every skill the PCs ever acquired has the chance to be in play. On the other hand, in each conflict only two or three of the skills the opposition ever acquired will be in play. That's a pretty huge disadvantage (partly ameliorated by the fact that the opposition skills can be tailored to the conflict; the PC skills aren't - in fact, the PC skills are by their very nature tailored to the LAST conflict).

An alternative I've thought up is for the opposition to gain skill slots when PCs roll all 1s. That way, your opposition can quickly gain high-rank skills even if all ITS high-rank skills are lost because your PCs still have their high-rank skills.

By the way, our name for your system is 'Roll for Shoes'. Its a reference to your original post as well as a quote from one of our Ghost/Echo games ("You can't roll for sword!").

I hope this helps!



Looks pretty awesome. That's all.



I'm thinking about playing this where the opposition follows the same rules as the PC(s) but the opposition is the microdungeon. So it starts with one die and maybe gets a 2D for Send in the Zombies and later a 3D for Zombie-Infested Rectory, etc. One significant avenue of narrowing the domain of the abilities is geography, for the dungeon. Does that make sense? Is there any obvious flaw?



Potemkin

January 2010 edited January 2010

Posted By: Christopher Weeks I'm thinking about playing this where the opposition follows the same rules as the PC(s) but the opposition is the microdungeon. So it starts with one die and maybe gets a 2D for Send in the Zombies and later a 3D for Zombie-Infested Rectory, etc. One significant avenue of narrowing the domain of the abilities is geography, for the dungeon. Does that make sense? Is there any obvious flaw?

I like the idea but it's a death-spiral. Once the dungeon gets to winning it can quickly outstrip the PCs and win at everything forever. I think DM-moderation/arbitration rather than an automated system is preferable, personally.

Seeing as it merits not it's own thread: A slightly more 'focused' (ho ho) crawl minigame.

Task resolution is 1d12 roll-under the appropriate attribute. 1 DM and however many players.

Attributes are 'VIOLENCE', 'ADVENTURE' and A THIRD OF THE YOUR CHOICE.

- 'VIOLENCE' is about fighting, running, jumping, lifting and suckin' it up.

- 'ADVENTURE' is about map-reading, tent-pitchery, spotting stuff, wooing maidens and speakin' out yer arse.

- 'A THIRD OF YOUR CHOICE' is whatever. Sorcery, laundry, kleptomania, swash and/or buckle, acrobatics, accountancy. Just write it in capitals somewhere.

You've a '2', a '3' and a '4' to assign to these attributes. Do so.

Beneath draw three ITEM-slots, a box for tallying LOOT and another for HP. You've 12 HP.

You're dead hard.

You can only have three ITEMS at any point. Each ITEM should have a number from 1-3 and be assigned to an ATTRIBUTE (i.e. "SWORD, VIOLENCE 2" or "DASHING 'TASH, SWASHBUCKLE 3"). When using an ITEM, if applicable, add it's item to the ATTRIBUTE. You can't use more than two items at a time ('cause you only got two hands).

Enemies are either humanoid and have VIOLENCE and ADVENTURE and ITEMS (that can be pilfered), monstrous and just have MONSTER (which is both like the two combined) and DEADLY BITS (which act like items but can't be looted) or are traps and have TRAP and DEADLY BITS (i.e. 'CIRCULAR SAW, TRAP 2'). Humainoid creatures and monsters should be attacked and traps should be uncovered and stepped over. Doing so should be rewarded with LOOT. LOOT can buy ITEMS... probably at shops.

Resolution occurs with all results happening simultaneously. Damage done during fights is whatever is displayed on the dice on a successful attack. Rolling a 1 means you can increase an attribute by 1 and something surprisingly useful happens to you.. Rolling a 12 means you have to reduce one attribute and something worthy of tears and recrimination occurs.



Valamir

January 2010 edited January 2010

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A visual aid like tokens was something I considered. Also, I'd recommend having a character sheet - at least a piece of paper. XP tally marks and new skills were easily lost in between all the other notes we were taking and diagrams we were making. It's basic things like a character sheet that get forgotten in more narrative-based, free form games.

Strikes me as the easiest way to do this is just have a big pile of d6s. When you fail you keep the die. Its tactile, its immediate, it doesn't involve an extra action such as acquiring a token or making a tally and you could incorporate rolling those dice as dice in some fashion as desired.



Benhimself

January 2010

Posted By: PotemkinOnce the dungeon gets to winning it can quickly outstrip the PCs and win at everything forever

Well, strictly speaking, under the original system, whoever is losing the most will get the most experience points, and thus advance faster.

Bret_Gillan Bret_Gillan

January 2010

I like this system and want to give it a try. I think I'd hack it slightly to make "Do Anything 1" in "{Character Class} 1" like "Necromancer 1" or "Warrior 1" to make it a bit Dungeony and to help focus the game.



David Artman

January 2010 edited January 2010

I like that Bret. Gimme SOMETHING to provide niche protection other than failure at some (potentially random or, at the least, particular) act which informs the +1.

Of course, flip side... **Do Anything** let's itself fork into... anything. **Necromancy** will only "fork" into more and more specializations of **Necro**. How do I make a Necromancer/Dancer, if I can't ever get **Move 1** or something to get to **Dance 2**? Must I dance with the dead, and fail, to get **Dance 2 (Mostly Dead)**?

Maybe start with **Do Anything 1 AND [Nature/Class/Profession/Race/Perversion/Niche] 1**, to begin? And that gives it a bit of a 3:16 vibe (but, of course, in 3:16, Fighting was one half and Everything Else was the other; in this, Everything Else is opposed by the character's specialized niche, not consistently and always Fighting).

Yeah... that's how I'd do it...

stupidgremlin stupidgremlin

January 2010 edited January 2010

Posted By: David ArtmanOf course, flip side... Do Anything let's itself fork into... anything. Necromancy will only "fork" into more and more specializations of Mecro. How do I make a Necromancer/Dancer, if I can't ever get "Move 1" or something to get to "Dance 2"?

Maybe Do Anything 1 AND [Nature/Class/Profession/Race/Perversion/Niche] 1, to begin?

Or perhaps the Do Anything 1, and then you start off with one Skill at 2, which represents your particular Ability/Class/Race/Weirdness/Flavour of Spam/Niche? This way you can still attempt anything, but have some particular strength to make you stand out from every other fish-monger and tailor.



David Artman

January 2010

That'd work, too. I don't mind starting D&D with 2nd level characters, or BW with 5 LP characters either! 😊

**DWeird**

January 2010

Changing the initial to reflect a pre-defined class or trope or some such would likely take away a good deal of the zaniness and make it a good and proper dungeoncrawl. I urge you to try it out!

Protecting niche hasn't been a problem in any of the games I played or ran, however. With character abilities being so malleable, the only thing you really need to do to be different from someone else is to do something differently - which is what players usually pick up and go for without even thinking about it.

In a small game that didn't even get off the ground much, we had a party that barely managed to keep itself together, with an overbearing guy with Violent Streaks 2 and Obsessive Hoarding 2, a sneaky thieving scout bastard with Be a Total Badass 2, and a peaceful would-be leader who was really Good at Noticing Things 2.

In another game, we had a monk who punches things and eats cake, a shoe-merchants son who kicks enemies and supplies things, and a shapeshifted reptile that layed eggs for combat.

And yet in another (solo) game, we had a clutz who had awed a large group of rats into submission and had something like... "Royal Rodent Decree 4" as his highest skill, and used it to declare goblins illegal creatures and such.

It's ridiculously easy to make your own niche in this game, and there's no reason not to. If you want to focus the game on a particular theme, changing the initial skill around is great! But I believe the urge to design your character in advance is something you have to fight if you want to play this game. It's about developing a character through play, and if you come in with a strong concept already, you may miss out on all the little surprises that really make this game.

Not that I'm one to stop you from trying new things!

**ChristopherWeeks**

January 2010 edited January 2010

So, I played this twice, real quick with my kids last night. I used Bret's "class" hack, but in doing so decided that I'd do it next time the way that MichaelW just suggested with Do Anything at one and [class] as two. I also used my suggestion up-thread and started the "dungeon" with one die and let it fork out. Further, I didn't remember the details of how XP was to work. We played that you got an experience point for every one rolled and you could spend them to modify a roll. So their primary purpose was twofold: consolation for getting a lousy roll and also, allowing chosen skills and successes at a later date.

First, I gathered Kivi and Garrett and gave them a sheet of paper each. I told them they were going to explore The Tower of Danger and asked them what kind of person they wanted to play. Kivi, who is eight, answered "monster hunter" immediately and Garrett (15) asked if they had to be like fantasy. To which I answered yes but when he wanted to be a gunslinger, I said that was cool. So the monster hunter 1 and the gunslinger 1 set off across the land to find the Tower of Danger. It's interesting how much Garrett's choice to be a gunslinger changed things. All I had planned was the name of the opposition and the assumption that it would be a fantasy setting. I was thinking of it as a four-room thing: an outside area, a first-floor, basement and second floor of the tower. I figured keeping it small was a good way to combat the death spiral MikeB warned of. When they got to the tower, a skeletal coyote rose out of a stand of grass and moved to attack. On my first roll, I earned Spawn Skeletal Creatures 2 and Kivi threw a rock at it but missed while Garrett lassooed the beast, but it bit through the rope -- which was mildly lame of me. They ended up killing it before it got to hurt anyone and each kid got their first extra skills: Running 2 and Shooting 2, respectively. We stopped before they encountered the top floor, but the basement was full of giant rats and they couldn't get a light-source going -- so we enjoyed some real tension. At the end of the game, Garrett had a couple XP but no more extra skills -- just the shooting 2, but Kivi never got any XP but ended with Running, Find Traps, Boxing and Throwing all at 2. Her actions were much more varied -- throwing stars, finding traps, lighting a fire, punching, etc. The Tower of Danger ended up with skeletal monsters 2, Hard to Accomplish Simple Things 2, Giant Rats 2, and Giant Rat Fur 3.

Kivi had to get in the bath and go to bed, and Garrett asked if we could play again without her. So I drew a stream coming out of a cave, with his village downstream and explained there was a river spirit in the cave that the villagers had to make sacrifices to or the water would become thin and foul. He told me that he was a Wizard. Wading up the stream, into the cave, he encountered a room that was a hive of stinging insects. He beat them by chilling the room and then swatting many down and letting the rest return to their hives to hibernate. I'd decided this was to be a two-room dungeon so there was just one left -- looks like this'll be a quick run. Or not. The next room -- reached through a narrow twisting crack in the rocks, lead to a room full of water with a large glowing blue crystal on one side. Here, we went back and forth, often failing to effect the other meaningfully -- constraining future narration, but only superficially and temporarily. Some good stuff did evolve out of

that, but it took too long. The first two-thirds of the fight was over the crystal. He couldn't break it off and take it and it seemed to be the source of danger. Eventually, he transmuted it back into the hero from three generations ago who once came here to free the village from the spirit. That was cool. In the end, the spirit tried to buffet him in a coin-laden whirlpool and crush him but he turned the remaining water (he'd dammed the source) into steam -- killing it and burning himself. He ended up with Wizard 1, Quick Reactions 2, Metamorphosis Spells 2, Brave 2, Revert Metamorphosis 3, Force Spells 2 and I ended with Cave of Watery Spirits 1, Crystal of Power 2, Intimidating 2, Force Resistance 2, and Hurt People 2. I chose not to use XP at a couple of points because it had dragged on too long and I wanted Garrett to win. I'm not sure if that was good or bad, but it was OK.

Garrett quite likes it. Kivi **really** didn't want to go to bed. It'll be interesting to figure out what I have to do to present a second challenge to an already developed party/character that doesn't just whiff against their superior dice. I'm kind of committed to starting the dungeon like a starting character (whether that's 1 or 1+2) but maybe giving it a pool of xp or maybe just making it longer so that the characters win a few rooms handily before the dungeon picks up a few skills.

**DWeird**

January 2010

Sweet!

You're not the first person to have a problem with the XP rules, it seems... Lead me to think that, as written, they are probably the most counter-intuitive bit of the rules. I like to think that the "gain XP for failure" rule is about learning from life's harsh harsh lessons, but that may not always work all that well.

The way you handled dungeons seems cool to me! Maybe the "Dungeons" have a common, inexhaustible pool of XP? Say, you gained some XP earlier on for one dungeon and bought skills with that XP. Then you move on to another dungeon, and the amount of XP gained moves on to that one (but NOT the skills gained via rolled 6s).

I like how this moved beyond the initial setup, with people trying out all sorts of different variants of the rules!

**Benhimself**

January 2010

Wow! Thanks for posting this, DWeird, it's a little surprising but gratifying to see the (admittedly very simple) system get so much response. Especially with absolutely no intervention on my part.

I've had some thoughts for rejiggering the thing in general, but it's cool to see other people taking hacking it into their own hands, too.

tony_dowler tony_dowler

January 2010

This is really great. I'm really enjoying reading it. I hope I get a chance to try it out!

**Krak3n**

November 2013

Ok, I have to stop being such a creeper here.

Since I first saw this thread I have continually come back to it. I just love the simplicity of all this.

Also, the amount of back and forth that I see on this site concerning rules and "trying things" is very refreshing.

**jessecoombs**

November 2013

Thanks! I'm stealing this!

**brunobord**

September 2014

I was wondering if any of you has used the Roll for Shoes ruleset for other settings (Space, Cyberpunk, Super-Heroes, ... other?)



ChristopherWeeks

September 2014 edited September 2014

I spent a while working on [The City](#) with the help of [this Praxis thread](#) which is a mod/setting for Roll for Shoes. (My connection to Google is flaky right now and it's rendering the doc as messed up, but I'm not sure if that's real or an artifact of my connection.)



Big_J_Money

March 2015

Related idea based on a way earlier post (I will try to play in the next couple weeks!):

Play with a GM(s). They have similar rules as the players with these modifications:

- A GM can create as many characters/creatures/obstacles (agents) "off-stage" as they wish
- The results of rolled 6's and XP in play are applied only to off-stage agents
- Instead of using XP to turn a die into a 6, GMs can spend them in 2 ways
- Spend an XP to create a new "type" of creature/obstacle
- Spend an XP along with an all-6's roll to improve a "type" instead of a single agent

So as the players grow more powerful, so do their potential opponents, based on this randomized economy of power.

Unrelated, but I'm going to try at **a damage rule:**

- Any agent can declare their roll is an attempt to damage/destroy/maim/etc another agent.
- To succeed, you have to roll at least one 6, along with your success
- (Debating whether this rolls still counts towards improvement; both ways would be fun, really)
- When damaged, an agent removes one of their dice or hits permanently
- XP can be spent to add hits to an agent instead of turning dice into 6's
- The cost of a hit in XP is equal to how many hits you currently have

...and **a weaknesses rule:**

- When you fail a roll, you gain 1 XP *only* if you create a new weakness
- A new weakness is a d6 with a name
- You can roll a weakness at any time during another roll - if the weakness result is equal to or beats your skill result, you still fail regardless of the skill result
- When you apply a weakness but still manage to succeed, you gain 1 XP *for every die the weakness has more than the skill you rolled*
- Weaknesses increase their number of dice when they result in all 6's

So if you roll Sword and Shield (2) with the weakness Vertigo (3) and succeed, you gain 1 XP.

You might use different colored dice.



Big_J_Money

March 2015

Ok here's the setting I want to use to play this:

Daemons and Drudges

You're a drudge in the service of a mighty Daemon. Well sort of, if you can call being totally unacknowledged service. The crap on the shoe of a Daemon is 100 levels higher in the supernatural pecking order than you are. Only 1 very base job is expected of you, which requires neither any skill nor ability. For some unknown reason, you've just acquired the spark of free will.

This occurred while you were performing your task in one of the countless Realms among an unimaginably infinite multiverse.

It just so happened to a few other drudges you have encountered. Although you're now self aware, you know absolutely

nothing about the Daemon you supposedly serve, except that clues to Its nature surely must gained by observing the manifestations and characteristics of your own increasing power and talents, as you make out a life for yourself, ascending upward toward... perhaps your own eventual Daemon-hood?

To play

- Pick any name
- Make up any kind of title (possibly one of countless) for your patron Daemon. Or roll on a set of tables to generate a daemonic title*
- Roll on a table of inane, base tasks which was the only thing you cared about before acquiring a will**
- _ Roll on a table to determine what Realm you're currently in when this happens***
- Work with the other players to brainstorm several ideas for the complicated situation you find yourselves in. This can be related to the tasks each of you were performing or can be completely tangential
- Pick a name for your Drudge.... or not, and be named by your deeds.

* -- Are there any tables out there for this already? Examples of possible Daemon titles:

"Thirster of worlds-blood"

"The silent thistle"

"Amalgam of no things"

"Fiery Justice"

"Patron of toilet seats"

"Dawn of Time"

...I mean, literally ANTHING

** I'm thinking a table with at least 20 absurdly inane things that cosmic peons might do

*** Realms can also be anything:

Fire, Ice, Water

Ideas

Cats

Kitchen Utensils

...etc



AsIf

March 2015

* -- Are there any tables out there for this already?

This might be useful...

http://www.random-generator.com/index.php?title=Name_Generators



Big_J_Money

March 2015

Okay, when I get a chance I'm going to dedicate a thread to this setting, but I just have to share some of the results that came out of the random generators I made myself:

Daemonic Titles

"The Corrupt Fingernail"

"The Darkness onto dust"

"The Descending Whore that spits out the rain"

"The Cup with pure scorpions"

"The Beauteous Avenger, Lord of anxious enemies"

"The Restoring Beer that is greater than queens"

Realms to adventure in:

"The Realm of honeyed kingdoms"

"The Realm of coming gardens"

"The Realm of jests"

The base job your Drudge was tasked with:

"To move sewage"

"To observe water"

"To produce logical fallacies"



Paul_T

March 25

I feel like someone posted about this before, but since I can't find it I'll assume I imagined it:

People have been playing this game online as part of the "Saving Throw" livestreamed games channel. Here's a sampling - you can find full sessions there as well. Pretty cool!

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=iW-EIXx8dCY>



Dreamofpeace

June 17

I stole the idea and had a bit of fun with it: [most recent post on my blog](#)



hamnacb

June 18

This is sooo great! Thx for the necro



Dreamofpeace

June 20

Ha, as long as someone got a chuckle out of it 😊

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