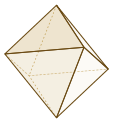
Everything the dice do.

H.I.M.B.O., Elsewhen and Thrice-born run on one system. This page uses the shared names. Where H.I.M.B.O. calls something by its own name, that name follows it in *wine-red italic*.



d8 PILLAR DICE

One for each dot in the Pillar you are using. These decide whether you succeed.



d20 CRITICAL DIE

One on every meaningful action roll, unless a rule says otherwise. It never adds successes. A 20 is a Crit. A 1 is a Botch.



d12 PULSE DICE

Only when you Reach: one for each Pulse you invoke, read on its own.

01 Pillars

SHARED CATEGORY
H.I.M.B.O. PILLAR

Resolve	Finesse	Force	Influence	Insight
Hope	*Instinct*	*Manifestation*	*Beauty*	*Openness*

Pillars are five categories of action, each rated from 1 to 5. Every game has all five and gives them its own names, so your character sheet shows your game's names.

02 Rolling

Say what you want before anyone rolls. Everyone should know what success means before the dice land.

1. Say what you are trying to do, and what happens if it works.
2. The GM sets the Difficulty: usually 5, never above 8. Anything easier than 4 usually just happens.
3. Roll one d8 for each dot in the Pillar, plus the Critical Die.
4. Each d8 that meets or beats the Difficulty is a success. None: you fail. One or more: you succeed. Extra successes count when how well you succeed matters.

DIFFICULTY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
USUALLY NO ROLL				STANDARD			MAXIMUM



Three d8s at Difficulty 5 roll 2, 5 and 7: **two successes.**

Difficulty measures how hard something is. It never makes the impossible possible: if nothing could make the action happen, there is no roll until a power, Reach or some other permission opens the way.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

With Advantage, roll your d8s twice and keep the better result. With Disadvantage, keep the worse. They never stack, and one of each cancels out. Only the d8s are affected.

The better result has more successes. If both have the same number, compare their dice from the highest down. The GM does not add Disadvantage for something the Difficulty already counts.

SPECIALTIES

A Specialty is a field of training, practice or knowledge tied to one Pillar. When it applies, you roll with Advantage. It can also be what lets you attempt something that needs training at all.

THE CRITICAL DIE

Crit (20): something extraordinary in your favour. On a success, it adds something beyond what extra successes give. On a failure, it can make the outrageous but conceivable happen.

Botch (1): catastrophe, not incompetence. The d8s still decide whether you succeed, so you can succeed and Botch.

03 Contests

When someone pushes back, both sides roll, usually at Difficulty 5. The GM chooses which Pillars meet, unless a power already says.

WHO WINS

More successes wins. On a tie, compare both pools die by die from the highest down; a win decided that way is narrow. If the pools are identical, reroll the d8s but not the Critical Dice.

CRITS AND BOTCHES

If only one side Crits, that Crit can overturn a contest they were losing. If they were already winning, something extraordinary happens too. If both sides Crit, the d8s decide and both Crits still count. A Botch never loses a contest by itself.

TWO SHAPES

Attack and Defense: one side acts, and the defender winning stops it. **Clash:** both sides want incompatible things, and the winner gets theirs.

04 Reserve *Belonging*

Your Reserve is a real supernatural substance, not a pool of bonus points. In H.I.M.B.O. it is Belonging.

CAPACITY AND CURRENT

Capacity is how much you can hold. It starts at 2 and can reach 8. Many powers use it to set their scope. **Current** is how much you have right now, never more than your Capacity.

REROLL

After you see your final d8s, spend 1 to reroll every failed d8 once. Successes stay, and the Critical Die does not change. One spend per roll.

HEAL

Spend 1 to heal 2 Normal Damage or 1 Lethal Damage.

REFILL

Reserve comes back only when you obtain more of the substance in the story. It never refills automatically at the start of a session. Each game ties this to a different part of your character, but it works the same way.

05 Reach

The three Pulses are Glambright, Grimdark and Glimmerrot. To Reach is to bring them into an action, and do more than you otherwise could.

Glambright Intensifies and sets apart. It creates novelty and makes the singular exception.

Grimdark Carries forward and accumulates. It works through blood, memory, ownership, history and consequence.

Glimmerrot Connects and recombines. It makes boundaries permeable and creates relationships that did not exist.

HOW

Invoke one, two or all three Pulses, each only once. Each adds a d12, rolled with everything else and read on its own. Pulse dice never add successes.

One or two Pulses normally alter an existing supernatural power or effect. Invoking all three can also make an otherwise impossible ordinary action possible to attempt.

THE FOUR BOUNDS

Each Pulse buys one change to one Bound. Say which Bound, what you are changing, which Pulse, and why that Pulse can do it.

Scale: how much it covers. **Time:** how long, how soon, how often. **Potency:** how strong or complete. **Access:** what normally keeps it out, such as touch, sight, identity or a barrier.

WHAT HAPPENS

	PULSE DIE SUCCEEDS	PULSE DIE FAILS
Action succeeds	It succeeds with the change, as far as the Pulse die allows.	It succeeds without the change. **+1 Exposure.**
Action fails	It fails. The Pulse still shows up somewhere in the story, but cannot finish the action another way.	It fails, with no change. **+1 Exposure.**

REACH DEGREE: HOW FAR A SUCCESSFUL PULSE DIE REACHES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
ALWAYS FAILS			LOCALIZED		BROAD		MAJOR		VAST		WORLD

A Pulse die succeeds when it meets your Pulse Difficulty, which rises with Exposure. Localized stays immediate and tight. Broad goes beyond the situation at hand. Major reshapes a site, a community or a system. Vast crosses huge distances, populations or spans of time. World-scale is the greatest earthly expression the effect can meaningfully have: anywhere in the world, every relevant target, or indefinite reach.

06 Exposure

Exposure is what repeated contact with the Pulses does to a Self. It never touches your d8s. It makes the next Reach harder.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
D4	D5		D6		D7		D8

EXPOSURE TRACK · PULSE DIFFICULTY BELOW ◆ DRAW A MANIFESTATION

MARKING IT

Every Pulse die that misses your Pulse Difficulty marks 1 Exposure. At 0 Exposure your Pulse Difficulty is 4. If several Pulse dice miss at once, mark them from the lowest roll up, and you break ties. That decides which Pulse crosses a line.

MANIFESTATIONS

When your Exposure crosses 2, 4, 6 or 8, draw a card from your game's Manifestation deck, from the pile of the Pulse that pushed you over. Each card makes something specific happen: an event, a changed rule, a threat, a being, sometimes a gift. It lasts on its own terms, even after your Exposure falls.

REST

After at least four hours of rest, roll your Rest Pillar at Difficulty 5, with no Critical Die. Each success removes 1 Exposure. In H.I.M.B.O., your Becoming names your Rest Pillar.

CLAIM

When the GM brings a real development to your Claim, the thing that still has a hold on you, your Exposure drops to 0 at once, however it turns out. You can ask for one, but only the GM bringing it into play resets your Exposure.

Exposure can sit at 8. Nothing vents or resets on its own. At 8 your Pulse Difficulty is D8, so any Pulse that succeeds is at least Major.

07 Conflict

Conflict starts when goals collide and the order of events matters. It uses the same rolls. A disagreement alone does not start rounds.

YOUR TURN

One Action, plus ordinary movement and small interactions. One Reaction per round, only on a trigger; it returns at the start of your next turn. A Bonus Action only when a power grants one.

ACTIONS

Attack, Evade, Maneuver, Influence, Power, Flee or Other. The category does not choose the Pillar. What you are trying to do does.

ORDER

Nobody rolls for it. Highest Resolve · *Hope* goes first. Ties go to Finesse · *Instinct*, then Force · *Manifestation*, Influence · *Beauty*, Insight · *Openness*, then Reserve · *Belonging*. The same order repeats every round.

MOVING

The scene is made of Areas, not squares. Alongside your Action, move within your Area or into the next one. Sprint spends your Action to cover up to three Areas.

ENGAGED

Close enough to fight hand to hand. Moving away is allowed unless you are Grappled or held, and nobody gets a free attack when you go.

DEFENDING

Your first defense each round is normal. Every later defense that round is at Disadvantage. Evade spends your Action on defense, so later defenses that round avoid that Disadvantage, and Exposed cannot cut your defenses that round, though it is not cleared.

IN A CONTEST: HOW MUCH YOU WIN BY

	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL AND MENTAL
Narrow	Win by 1, or on the tiebreak. The intent happens. An Attack deals its base Damage.	The intent happens: if you persuade her you are authorized, she believes it.
Strong	Win by 2. An Attack adds +1 Damage or one appropriate Condition.	A cleaner, fuller, more complete result.
Overwhelming	Win by 3 or more. An Attack adds +2 Damage, or +1 Damage and a Condition, or two appropriate Conditions.	The result, and possibly one Social or Mental Condition.

There is no damage roll. If what you wanted was a Condition, such as knocking someone Prone, winning imposes it. Ordinary Influence cannot create supernatural mind control.

08 Damage

Player characters normally have an eight-space Damage track; other beings and phenomena may have more or fewer spaces. Each space is a circle inside a diamond: fill the circle for Normal Damage, the diamond for Lethal. Either one takes a space.



• NORMAL ◆ LETHAL

DAMAGE RATINGS

0	Unarmed blow, shove, minor collision
1	Knife, club, a dangerous short fall
2	Handgun, axe, powerful bow
3	Rifle, shotgun, high-speed vehicle
4	Grenade blast, monstrous force
5	Anti-materiel weapon, structural collapse
6	Heavy ordnance, extreme supernatural force
7	Force that would obliterate most beings
8	Can take out even a supernatural being

Damage 0 is not nothing. The roll can still move someone, Grapple them, knock them Prone or impose a Condition.

PROTECTION

Protection X subtracts X from incoming Damage, after any extra Damage from the margin of victory, to a minimum of 0. It does not make you harder to hit.

RESISTANCE

Damage is Physical or Metaphysical. That is its type, separate from whether it is Normal or Lethal. Resistance to a type halves whatever is left after Protection, rounding up. Two Resistances to the same type do not stack.

WOUNDS

0 TO 1 LETHAL	2 TO 3 LETHAL	4 TO 5 LETHAL	6 TO 7 LETHAL	8 LETHAL
None	+1	+2	+3	Dying

Every 2 Lethal Damage is a Wound, and each Wound adds 1 to the Difficulty of every roll, never past 8. You heal Damage, not Wounds: heal the Lethal Damage and the Wound goes with it.

TAKEN OUT AND DYING

A full track with fewer than four Wounds means you are **Taken Out**. Four Wounds, or any Lethal Damage while Taken Out, means you are **Dying**. If you are still Dying at the end of the third round, you are Dead. More Lethal Damage does not hurry it.

A successful Insight · *Openness* roll **stabilizes** a Dying character and stops the count. A medical Specialty gives Advantage, and the roll may Reach. You stay Taken Out with all your Damage, and new Lethal Damage starts a fresh three rounds.

HEALING

Rest: each dawn, if you have taken no new Damage since the last, heal 1 Normal. Seven days without new Damage heal 1 Lethal.

Treatment: once a day, roll the Pillar the treatment calls for, with Advantage if it fits a medical Specialty. Each success heals 1 Normal. It cannot heal Lethal.

Reach: roll Resolve · *Hope* at Difficulty 6 with one to three Pulse dice and the Critical Die. You need at least one success. Each success heals 1 Normal. Each Pulse die that succeeds and shows 7 or more heals 1 Lethal. Failed Pulse dice still mark Exposure.

09 Conditions

A Condition is a named, temporary state. It is either on or off, never stacks with itself, and always says how it ends.

PHYSICAL

Prone
You cannot leave your position until you stand, and standing uses your movement. *Ends when you stand.*

Grappled
You cannot move away from the grappler, and actions that need free movement may be out of reach. *Ends when you escape or break the hold.*

Blinded
You cannot act on what you cannot locate. If you know roughly where it is, you may try at Disadvantage. *Ends when you can see.*

Deafened
Nothing that relies on hearing alone. *Ends when you can hear.*

Silenced
Nothing that needs your voice. *Ends when the cause is removed.*

Paralyzed
No physical action with the affected body. Nonphysical actions remain possible if the effect and your circumstances allow. *Ends when the cause ends.*

Exposed
Your next defense rolls one fewer d8. Evade holds it off for the round. *Ends once it has cut a defense.*

SOCIAL AND MENTAL

Shaken
+1 Difficulty on Resolve · *Hope* rolls. *Ends with the scene, or when composure returns.*

Compromised
+1 Difficulty to resist Influence that uses the leverage behind it. *Ends when that leverage stops working.*

Frightened
You cannot willingly move closer to the source unless you must. *Ends when the source is gone, the scene ends or the fear is overcome.*

Distracted
Disadvantage to notice anything outside a named focus. *Ends when you spend an Action to refocus, the distraction ends, or the scene does.*

10 Powers in play

Every power says exactly how it is used. These words mean the same thing in every game.

ACTIVATION

Action, Bonus Action, Reaction (with its trigger) or Passive.

DURATION

Instant resolves at once. **Sustained** lasts while you keep its stated requirement. **Ongoing** lasts until its stated end.

FOCUS

You can hold one Focus effect at a time. Keeping it takes no Action, Reaction, Bonus Action or roll, though the power's own costs and maximum duration still apply. It ends if you let go, start another, fall unconscious, are Taken Out, take a new Wound, or something interrupts it.

RANGE

Self, Touch, Engaged, Same Area, Adjacent Area, Within a number of Areas, or Special.