

PENANCE

Dice Reference (Custom Dice System)

Absolution Through Steel

Generated dice-reference

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Penance: Absolution Through Steel

Version: 3.0 (v3.0 Dice Pool Advantage Added) **Last Updated:** October 14, 2025

Overview

Penance uses **4 types of custom d6 dice** to add brutal randomness to combat:

1. **Attack Dice** (2d6) - Roll to-hit, determines if attack lands
2. **Defense Dice** (Xd6) - Roll per damage point, chance to block/mitigate
3. **Suffering Dice** (1d6) - Church faction & event self-harm mechanics
4. **Damage Die** (1d6) - DAMAGED card effects, wound penalties

Design Philosophy: - GKR-style to-hit rolls (2d6 target numbers) - BattleTech modifier stacking (range, movement, terrain) - Kingdom Death save dice (block damage, critical effects)

1. Attack Dice (2d6)

Die Face Symbols

Face	Symbol	Value	Name
1		1	GLANCE
2		2	BLOOD
3		3	STRIKE
4		4	DOUBLE STRIKE
5		5	DEATH BLOW
6		0	JAM (critical fail face)

Note: Face 6 (JAM) = 0 value for tactical unpredictability

How to Roll Attack Dice

1. **Calculate To-Hit Target Number** (see Section 3 below)
2. **Roll 2 Attack Dice**
3. **Add both values together**
4. **Compare total to target number**

Hit Result Table

Total	Result	Effect
2 (double)	CATASTROPHIC FAILURE	Weapon jams: discard all Primary Weapon cards from hand, +2 Heat, next attack -2 damage
3-4	Miss (if target 5+)	No damage, attack wasted
5-6	Hit	Standard damage from attack card
7-8	Strong Hit	Standard damage +1
9	Critical Hit	Standard damage +2 , bypass 1 Defense
10 (double)	EXECUTION	Auto-destroy 1 Component, bypass ALL Defense

Example Rolls: - (3) + (5) = **8 total** → Strong Hit (+1 damage) - (5) + (5) = **10 total** → **EXECUTION** (instant component destruction) - (0) + (0) = **2 total** → **CATASTROPHIC FAILURE** (weapon jams)

Special Roll Outcomes

EXECUTION (Double , total 10): - Automatically destroy 1 targeted component (even if <3 Component Damage) - Bypass ALL Defense (shields, armor, reactive cards don't work) - Still deal standard damage from attack card - Defender cannot choose to discard from hand (must discard from deck) - **Brutality:** Even a 1-damage attack with EXECUTION destroys a component

CATASTROPHIC FAILURE (Double , total 2): - Your weapon critically malfunctions - Discard all Primary Weapon cards from hand immediately - Gain +2 Heat (weapon overheats from malfunction) - Next attack this turn or next turn: -2 damage - **Does NOT end your turn** (can still move, use Universal cards)

Example: - Church Confessor attacks with Faithful Thrust (4 damage) - Rolls: (0) + (0) = **2 total** (Catastrophic Failure) - Must discard all Penitent Blade cards from hand - Gains 2 Heat - Next attack -2 damage - **Can still move, use Buckler Shield, or pass turn**

2. Defense Dice (Variable, 1d6 per damage)

Die Face Symbols

Face	Symbol	Effect
1		SHIELD - Block 1 damage
2		ABSORB - Block 1 damage
3		FLESH WOUND - Take damage (discard 1 card)
4		CRITICAL - Take damage + 1 Component Damage
5		PIERCE - Take damage, cannot use reactive cards
6		HEAT - Take damage + 1 Heat

How to Roll Defense Dice

1. **Attacker's attack hits** → Determine damage amount
2. **Defender rolls 1 Defense Die per damage point** - Example: 6 damage = roll 6 Defense Dice
3. **Count SHIELD and ABSORB symbols** - Each blocks 1 damage
4. **Apply special effects** from other symbols
5. **Final damage = Original damage - Total blocks**

Block Probability: 2/6 faces block (,) = **33% chance per die**

Defense Die Effects

**** SHIELD (Face 1)**:** - Blocks 1 damage - No side effects - Most reliable defense

**** ABSORB (Face 2)**:** - Blocks 1 damage - Represents armor plating absorbing hit - No side effects

**** FLESH WOUND (Face 3)**:** - Take 1 damage (no block) - Standard hit, no special effects

**** CRITICAL (Face 4):** - **Take 1 damage (no block)** - +1 Component Damage to targeted component - **Stacks with Component Damage from discarding Primary Weapon cards** - Example^{**}: Roll 3 Defense Dice, get = +3 Component Damage (instant destruction)

**** PIERCE (Face 5):** - **Take 1 damage (no block)** - Cannot use reactive defense cards^{**} (shield blocks, parries, etc.) - Represents armor-piercing hit - Disable reactive cards for THIS damage instance only

**** HEAT (Face 6):** - **Take 1 damage (no block)** - +1 Heat^{**} - Can trigger Strain roll if pushed into Danger Zone (5+ Heat)

Defense Dice Example

Setup: Dwarven Heavy takes **8 damage** from Church attack

Step 1: Roll 8 Defense Dice - Result:

Step 2: Count Blocks - **3 Shield symbols ()** = Block 3 damage - Reduced from 8 → **5 damage**

Step 3: Apply Special Effects - **2 Critical symbols ()** = +2 Component Damage to targeted component - **1 Heat symbol ()** = +1 Heat - **1 Pierce symbol ()** = Cannot use reactive defense cards

Step 4: Defender Chooses Discard - Must discard 5 cards (chooses 3 from hand, 2 from deck) - If any Primary Weapon cards discarded → Add to Component Damage

Step 5: Final Component Damage - 2 (from) + 1 (from 1 Primary Weapon card discarded) = **3 Component Damage - Component DESTROYED** (reached threshold)

Statistical Breakdown

Defense Die Probabilities: - Block (or): $2/6 = 33.3\%$ - Standard damage (): $1/6 = 16.7\%$ - Critical damage (): $1/6 = 16.7\%$ - Pierce (): $1/6 = 16.7\%$ - Heat (): $1/6 = 16.7\%$

Expected Blocks per Damage: - 3 damage = ~1 block (33%) - 6 damage = ~2 blocks (33%) - 9 damage = ~3 blocks (33%)

Variance: - Lucky roll: 6 damage, roll 6 blocks (all /) = **0 damage taken** - Unlucky roll: 6 damage, roll 0 blocks (all) = **6 damage + penalties**

3. To-Hit Modifier System

Base To-Hit Number

Default: 5+ (roll 2d6 Attack Dice, total must equal or exceed 5)

Range Modifiers

Range	Modifier	Final Target
Short (0-3 hexes)	+0	5+
Medium (4-6 hexes)	+1	6+
Long (7-10 hexes)	+2	7+
Extreme (11+ hexes)	+3	8+

Movement Modifiers (Attacker)

Hexes Moved This Turn	Modifier
0 (Stationary)	+0
1-3	+1
4-6	+2
7+ (Sprint)	+3

Note: Applies to attacker's movement during their current turn

Movement Modifiers (Defender)

Hexes Moved Last Turn	Modifier
0 (Stationary)	+0
1-3	+1
4-6	+2
7+ (Sprint)	+3

Note: Applies to defender's movement during their previous turn

Hex-Side Facing Modifiers

Hex Side	Arc Name	Modifier	Notes
1 (Front)	Front Arc	+0	Standard defense
2 (Front-Right)	Weapon Side	+0	+1 damage if hit (vulnerable)
3 (Rear-Right)	Flank (Weapon)	-1 (easier)	Exposed flank
4 (Rear)	Rear Arc	-2 (easier)	Blind spot, +3 damage if hit
5 (Rear-Left)	Flank (Shield)	-1 (easier)	Rear flank
6 (Front-Left)	Shield Side	+1 (harder)	Shield protection, +1 Defense if hit

Facing Diagram:

[1] 1 = FRONT (hardest to hit)
[6] [X] [2] 2 = WEAPON SIDE (vulnerable, +1 damage)
[5] [3] 3-5 = FLANKS (easier to hit)
[4] 4 = REAR (easiest, +3 damage)
6 = SHIELD SIDE (harder, +1 Defense)
X = Your Casket

Terrain Modifiers

Terrain	Modifier	Effect
Open Ground	+0	No cover
Light Cover (rubble, low walls)	+1	Partial concealment
Heavy Cover (fortress walls, forest)	+2	Significant obstruction
Obscured (smoke, darkness)	+2	Limited visibility
Elevated (attacker on high ground)	-1 (easier)	Height advantage

Stacking: Multiple terrain modifiers can apply - Example: Target in forest (+2) AND obscured by smoke (+2) = **+4 total**

Complete To-Hit Calculation Example

Scenario: - Church Scout (attacker) shoots Dwarven Heavy (defender) with pistol - Range: 5 hexes (Medium) - Scout moved 4 hexes this turn (aggressive advance) - Dwarf moved 2 hexes last turn (repositioning) - Attacking Dwarf’s **shield-side (hex 6)** - Dwarf is behind light cover (rubble)

Calculation: 1. Base: 5+ 2. Range (Medium, 5 hexes): +1 → **6+** 3. Attacker moved 4 hexes: +1 → **7+** 4. Defender moved 2 hexes: +1 → **8+** 5. Shield-side facing: +1 → **9+** 6. Light cover: +1 → **10+**

Final To-Hit: 10+ (only possible with double EXECUTION roll)

Attack Roll: (5) + (3) = **8 total Result: MISS** (needed 10+, got 8)

Modifier Quick Reference Table

Situation	Modifier
Short range (0-3)	+0
Medium range (4-6)	+1
Long range (7-10)	+2
Extreme range (11+)	+3
Attacker stationary	+0
Attacker moved 1-3	+1
Attacker moved 4-6	+2
Attacker sprinted 7+	+3
Defender stationary	+0
Defender moved 1-3	+1
Defender moved 4-6	+2
Defender sprinted 7+	+3
Front arc (hex 1)	+0
Weapon-side (hex 2)	+0
Flanks (hex 3, 5)	-1
Rear (hex 4)	-2
Shield-side (hex 6)	+1
Light cover	+1
Heavy cover	+2
Obscured	+2
Elevated (attacker)	-1

Total Modifier Range: -3 (rear arc + elevated) to +13 (extreme range + sprint + defender sprint + shield-side + heavy cover)

4. VERSION 3.0 OPTIONAL: Dice Pool Advantage/Disadvantage

v3.0 OPTIONAL MECHANIC: Instead of static +1/+2 modifiers, use Dice Pool system. See [dice-pool-advantage.md](#) for full rules.

Quick Summary:

Advantage (Roll 3d6, take 2 highest)

- **Use when:** Target has favorable conditions (flanking, rear arc, high ground)
- **Effect:** +17% hit chance, more dramatic critical hits
- **Example:** Flanking attack (old: -1 modifier) → Roll 3d6, take 2 highest

Disadvantage (Roll 3d6, take 2 lowest)

- **Use when:** Target has unfavorable conditions (long range, heavy cover, sprinting)
- **Effect:** -17% hit chance, more dramatic failures
- **Example:** Long range attack (old: +2 modifier) → Roll 3d6, take 2 lowest

Critical Advantage/Disadvantage (Roll 4d6, take 2 highest/lowest)

- **Critical Advantage:** Triple EXECUTION chance (from 2.78% to ~8%)
- **Critical Disadvantage:** Severe penalty situations (extreme range + cover + sprint)

Conversion Table

Old Modifier	v3.0 Dice Pool
-2 or better	Critical Advantage (4d6 take 2 highest)
-1	Advantage (3d6 take 2 highest)
0	Standard roll (2d6)
+1	Disadvantage (3d6 take 2 lowest)
+2 or worse	Critical Disadvantage (4d6 take 2 lowest)

Design Philosophy: Dice Pool system creates more dramatic swings (big crits, big failures) while maintaining same average hit chances through variable dice pools.

5. Suffering Dice (1d6, Church & Events)

Used for: Church of Absolution self-harm mechanics and campaign events

Die Face Symbols

Face	Symbol	Effect
1		DIVINE MERCY - No self-harm
2		BLOOD PRICE - Discard 2 cards (self-harm)
3		ZEALOT'S FURY - Discard 1 card, +1 damage to all attacks this turn
4		PENANCE - Discard 1 card, +1 Heat, +2 damage next attack
5		MARTYRDOM - Discard 3 cards, +3 damage to next attack
6		ABSOLUTION - Discard 1 card, recover 1 card from discard

When to Roll Suffering Dice

Church Faction Cards: - **BLOOD OFFERING:** Roll 1 Suffering Die instead of auto-discarding 2 cards - **Flagellant's Zeal:** Roll 2 Suffering Dice, apply both effects - **Martyrdom Protocol:** When redirecting damage, roll 1 Suffering Die per 3 damage redirected

Campaign Events: - **Penance Rituals** (settlement event) - **Taint Purging** (when Taint reaches 8+) - **Soul Bargains** (desperate deals with Bonelord Thresh) - **Flesh Bargain** (voluntary flesh bargain)

Suffering Die Effects

**** DIVINE MERCY (Face 1): - No self-harm - Rare blessing**** (16.7% chance) - Church pilot prays: "The Harmony spares me this time."

**** BLOOD PRICE (Face 2):**** - Discard 2 cards (self-harm) - Standard Church sacrifice - Expected outcome for BLOOD OFFERING

**** ZEALOT'S FURY (Face 3): - Discard 1 card - +1 damage to ALL attacks this turn - Tactical choice****: Less self-harm, sustained damage boost

**** PENANCE (Face 4): - Discard 1 card - +1 Heat - +2 damage to next attack only**** - Risk/reward: Heat buildup for burst damage

**** MARTYRDOM (Face 5): - Discard 3 cards (brutal self-harm) - +3 damage to next attack only - High risk, high reward****: Sacrifice for lethal strike

**** ABSOLUTION (Face 6): - Discard 1 card - Recover 1 card from discard pile - Net cost****: 0 cards (discard 1, recover 1) - Allows card cycling (discard weak card, recover strong card)

Suffering Dice Strategy

BLOOD OFFERING Card (Church Faction): - **Old mechanic:** Auto-discard 2 cards - **New mechanic:** Roll 1 Suffering Die - **Expected value:** ~2 cards discarded (same as before) - **Variance:** - Best case: DIVINE MERCY (0 cards) - Worst case: MARTYRDOM (3 cards)

Risk/Reward Analysis: - 1/6 chance (16.7%) to avoid all self-harm () - 1/6 chance (16.7%) to get +3 damage burst () - 2/6 chance (33.3%) to get sustained +1 damage (or)
- **Trade consistency for unpredictability**

Multiple Suffering Dice (Flagellant's Zeal): - Roll 2 Suffering Dice, apply both - **Example:** + = Discard 5 cards total, +3 damage next attack - **Example:** + = Discard 1, recover 1 (net 0 cards, no bonus) - **Example:** + = Discard 2, +1 Heat, +1 damage all attacks + +2 damage next

5. Dice Probability Tables

Attack Dice (2d6) Probability

Total	Probability	Cumulative	Result
2 ()	2.78%	2.78%	Catastrophic Failure
3	5.56%	8.33%	Likely miss
4	8.33%	16.67%	Likely miss
5	11.11%	27.78%	Hit (if target 5+)
6	13.89%	41.67%	Hit
7	16.67%	58.33%	Strong Hit
8	13.89%	72.22%	Strong Hit
9	11.11%	83.33%	Critical Hit
10 ()	2.78%	86.11%	EXECUTION

Note: Totals above 10 impossible (max die value = 5)

Hit Chances by Target Number: - **5+**: 72.22% (accounting for JAM face) - **6+**: 58.33% - **7+**: 41.67% - **8+**: 27.78% - **9+**: 13.89% - **10+**: 2.78% (EXECUTION only)

Defense Dice Block Probability

Single Die: - Block: 33.3% (or) - Standard damage: 16.7% () - Critical: 16.7% () - Pierce: 16.7% () - Heat: 16.7% ()

Expected Blocks: | Damage | Expected Blocks | Expected Damage |
|-----|-----|-----| | 3 | 1 | 2 | | 6 | 2 | 4 | | 9 | 3 | 6 | | 12 | 4 | 8 |

Variance Examples: - **6 damage, 0 blocks** (all): 11.6% chance - **6 damage, 6 blocks** (all): 0.14% chance (very rare) - **6 damage, 2 blocks** (expected): ~29% chance

Suffering Dice Probability

Face	Symbol	Effect	Probability
1		Divine Mercy (0 cards)	16.7%
2		Blood Price (2 cards)	16.7%
3		Zealot’s Fury (1 card, +1 dmg)	16.7%
4		Penance (1 card, +1 Heat, +2 dmg)	16.7%
5		Martyrdom (3 cards, +3 dmg)	16.7%
6		Absolution (1 card, recover 1)	16.7%

Expected Cards Discarded (single die): - $(0 \times 1 + 2 \times 1 + 1 \times 1 + 1 \times 1 + 3 \times 1 + 0 \times 1) / 6 = 1.17$ cards average

Comparison to Fixed Cost: - Old BLOOD OFFERING: Always 2 cards - New BLOOD OFFERING: ~1.17 cards average (but high variance)

6. Dice Manufacturing Specifications

Attack Dice (2d6)

Material: 16mm standard d6, custom engraved **Colors:** Black dice, silver/white symbols

Face Layout: 1. GLANCE (value 1) - Shield symbol 2. BLOOD (value 2) - Blood droplet 3. STRIKE (value 3) - Single crossed swords 4. DOUBLE STRIKE (value 4) - Double crossed swords 5. DEATH BLOW (value 5) - Skull 6. JAM (value 0) - Broken gear

Value markings: Small number in corner (1-5, 0 for JAM)

Defense Dice (Variable)

Material: 16mm standard d6, custom engraved **Colors:** Red dice, white symbols

Face Layout: 1. SHIELD - Shield icon 2. ABSORB - Gear/armor icon 3. FLESH WOUND - Blood droplet 4. CRITICAL - Skull 5. PIERCE - Piercing arrow 6. HEAT - Flame

No value markings (effect-based, not numeric)

Suffering Dice (1d6)

Material: 16mm standard d6, custom engraved **Colors:** Crimson/dark red dice, gold symbols

Face Layout: 1. DIVINE MERCY - Holy shield 2. BLOOD PRICE - Blood droplets 3. ZEALOT'S FURY - Flaming sword 4. PENANCE - Sacred flame 5. MARTYRDOM - Crowned skull 6. ABSOLUTION - Halo/holy gear

Aesthetic: Church of Absolution theme (religious martyrdom)

7. Quick Reference: What Dice to Roll When During Attack

1. **Declare attack** → Calculate To-Hit target number
2. **Roll 2 Attack Dice** → Add values, compare to target
3. **If hit** → Defender rolls Defense Dice (1 per damage)
4. **Apply damage** → Defender discards cards

During Defense

1. **Attack hits** → Determine damage amount
2. **Roll X Defense Dice** (X = damage)
3. **Count blocks** (and)
4. **Apply special effects** ()
5. **Discard final damage** (original - blocks)

Church Self-Harm

1. **Play BLOOD OFFERING** card
2. **Roll 1 Suffering Die**
3. **Apply effect** (discard cards, gain damage bonus)
4. **Make next attack** (with bonus if applicable)

4. Damage Die (1d6)

When to Roll

Roll Damage Die when a DAMAGED card is removed:

1. **Sacrifice Action** (0 SP): Discard DAMAGED to Discard Pile → Roll Damage Die
2. **Purge Action** (0 SP): Discard DAMAGED to Damage Graveyard → Roll Damage Die
3. **Discarded by Damage**: DAMAGED card discarded when taking damage → Roll Damage Die (cascading failure)

Die Face Results

Face	Symbol	Result	Effect
1		Minor Strain	Gain 1 Heat
2	△	System Glitch	-1 SP at start of next turn
3		Internal Bleeding	Discard 1 card (to Damage Graveyard) at start of next turn
4		Structural Weakness	Next attack against you: +1 Component Damage
5		Critical Malfunction	+1 Pilot Wound immediately
6	⚡	Adrenaline Surge	Gain 1 SP immediately (the lucky outcome!)

Strategic Use

When to Sacrifice vs Purge:

Sacrifice (to Discard Pile): - Wound comes back after reshuffle - Use when: Early game, plenty of HP, need hand space temporarily - Risk: DAMAGED card cycles back into deck in 3-5 turns

Purge (to Damage Graveyard): - Wound removed permanently - Use when: Late game, low HP, want to reduce death spiral - Benefit: One less dead draw in your deck forever

When to Keep: - Hoping to avoid damage until end of combat - Hand isn't clogged yet (only 1-2 DAMAGED cards) - Waiting for opportune moment (low Heat, high HP) - Gambling on rolling Adrenaline Surge when you need SP

Example Scenarios

Scenario 1: Early Sacrifice - Turn 2, drew DAMAGED card, still at 26/30 HP - Player: "I'll Sacrifice it now" → Roll Damage Die → Get "Minor Strain" (+1 Heat) - DAMAGED goes to Discard Pile → Will reshuffle in ~4 turns - Hand freed up, can draw useful cards

Scenario 2: Late Purge - Turn 8, down to 12 HP, drew DAMAGED card - Player: "I'm Purging this permanently" → Roll Damage Die → Get "System Glitch" (-1 SP next turn) - DAMAGED goes to Damage Graveyard → Gone forever - Reduces death spiral, worth the -1 SP penalty

Scenario 3: Cascading Failure - Turn 5, have DAMAGED in hand, decide to keep it - Take 4 damage, one discarded card is DAMAGED → Roll Damage Die - Roll: "Critical Malfunction" (+1 Pilot Wound) - The wound you ignored just caused a Pilot injury!

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"The dice are the will of the Harmony. You cannot control fate—only face it."

"Every roll is a prayer. Every result, divine judgment."