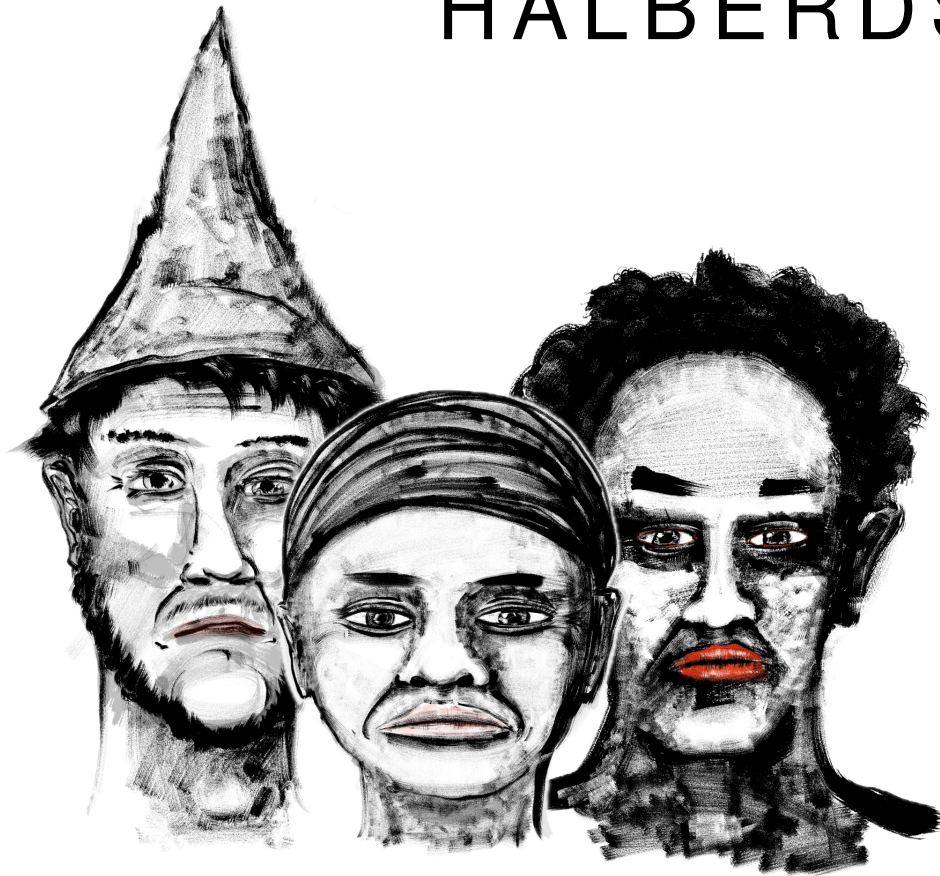


JUST HALBERDS



What is this?

This is a super simple role-playing game using just two six sided dice (2d6). One person is the referee (you?) and your friends play people in an imagined world. The referee imagines the setting and the situations these imaginary people come across, your friends say how the people they are playing react, the referee says how the setting reacts, and on it goes. The story of these people is your story.

The dice come into play when something of consequence is going to happen and you want to leave the outcome to chance. Whenever people struggle, you'd roll dice. Do they succeed or do they fail? And what are the consequences going to be?

Making characters

Each player needs to make a character in the game. This is the person they control.

1. a name
2. a profession
3. a skill
4. a special ability

A profession is something anybody could have learned in their youth: tinker, tailor, soldier, spy. A skill is something could learn as part of their adventuring life style: sword fighting, hunting, fishing. A special ability is something you could learn from a master in the game: a spell, a special technique.

After every game session, the referee might add a new skill or a new special ability to one of the characters. If you kept trying to ride a horse, you might the riding skill. If you kept trying to punch people, you might learn the boxing skill. If you asked the elves to teach how to sing their songs, you might get the special ability to sing songs of sadness. If you asked the treasure hunter to teach you a new spell, you might get the new special ability to shoot icicles.

Rolling dice

The player and the referee both roll two six sided dice (2d6). The player's roll indicates how well they did and the referee's roll indicates how hard it was. If the player rolls higher, they win; if the referee rolls higher, they fail; if they roll the same number, something new and unexpected happens.

When you roll you dice, add one for every profession, skill and special ability that applies. If you're Fo Pi, the fist-fighting fire-mage shooting fireballs from your palms (profession: fire-mage; skill: fist-fighting; special ability: fireball) then you might get a +1 for being a fire-mage and a +1 for shooting fireball in a fight.

Similarly, the referee might add +1 to the roll if you're fighting orcs in melee because that's what they're good at, or the referee might even add +2 to the roll if you're fighting the orc boss.

The effect of your actions are going to be decided by the referee. Feel free to negotiate, but don't overdo it. Keep the game flowing and roll with the punches. Please, don't argue too much. I promise it's going to be an entertaining game even if you have to suffer the occasional setback.

Hits

Every character can take three hits.

- Light armour grant an extra hit but prevent spell casting.
- Heavy armour grants two extra hits but prevents spell casting, sneaking, climbing, running, and swimming.
- A shield grants an extra hit and also prevents spell casting, sneaking, climbing, running, and swimming.

Thus, a magic user without armour can take three hits. A thief in light armour can take four hits. A warrior in full gear can take six hits.

When you're rolling dice, the losing side usually takes damage:

- If the difference is small (say one or two), this is one hit.
- If the difference is big (say three or four), this is two hits.
- If the difference was huge (five or more), apply extra effects if you have special abilities, or make it three hits.
- If you're down to two hits, you've taken a beating.
- If you're down to one hits, you're injured and that prevents you from doing anything strenuous.
- If you're down to zero hits, you're down and out. If your enemies want to kill you, they can. Recovery takes many days.

Initiative

Whoever says they begin, has the initiative. Fo Pi the fire-mage is fighting alongside two other mages against five orcs. They surprised the orcs and so Fo Pi gets to say what they do. They have the initiative because that's what is happening in the story.

When you land a hit, you keep the initiative and can determine who goes next. This continues until the orcs get a better result. Now the tables are turned! The orcs have the initiative. They are going to grapple Fo Pi. They get to add one to their roll because they're tough and Fo Pi probably just gets to add one to their roll for their fist-fighting skill as it's hard to imagine how they would use their fire-magic and their fireball in such a situation. And as long as the orcs roll better, they can keep doing that.

Agreeing on special effects

You can use special abilities to get a +1 when rolling your dice, as described above. In addition to that, they have special effects. The exact effects are determined at the table.

Let us return to Fo Pi, the fist-fighting fire-mage shooting a fireball at five orcs. You roll a seven and add two, so your result is nine. The orcs roll six and add one because they're tough warriors. There is a difference of two. What does it mean?

There's an explosion. Fire is everywhere. The five orcs are thrown in all directions. One of them doesn't get back up. It's dead because orcs just have one hit in my game.

Fo Pi's player might have thought that the fireball would kill them all and challenged the result. Here's why I think one dead is good enough:

- The difference between the two results was small. One hit is enough.
- Fo Pi is a newbie mage. A mighty fire-mage might have collected many more powerful spells: wall of fire, hellfire.
- I'm picturing Fo Pi's fireball like a simple ball of fire, about as powerful as a superb kick from a distance.

If players argue that they think it should be a huge explosion instead, ask the other people at the table. Do they think that's fair? How about the players of fighters and thieves, do they agree? Is there some other limit on the use of fireballs? Agree on what the special effect does and continue playing. The next time you run into a similar situation, you'll remember and there won't be a discussion.