

Baby's First Fudge Dice

by Jonathan Walton

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So you recently acquired Fudge, that wonderful, wonderful game that isn't a game. Maybe you downloaded the [PDF file](#), maybe you even printed it out, or (gasp!) maybe you went all out, paying good money for the [Grey Ghost Expanded Edition](#). Whatever the case, you have it, and that's the important part.

Flipping though the pages, you aren't thrown by the lack of a setting, the absence of background material, the missing character classes, the utter deficiency of standard attributes and skills, the scarcity of campaign suggestions, the shortage of that fluffy fiction stuff, or the dearth of the other things you'd expect to find in most roleplaying games.

No, you love it. In fact, you revel in the freedom from restrictions. You do a dance on the heads of all the Rules Lawyers you've ever played with. You brainwash yourself to erase "I'm not sure if you can do that" from your vocabulary. You tattoo "Just Fudge It!" on your cute little buttocks. Well, maybe not. But you like it a lot.

Fudge is running through your veins (as if you were a chocolate bunny). Fudge is bursting from your center and gushing all over your being (as if you were a s'more). Fudge is your life's work and you sing of it all day long (as if you were an Oompa Loompa). You can't wait to get together with some players and dive into the yummy goodness that is Fudge. However, there is one slight problem.

Dice.

You don't have any Fudge dice.

Sure, you've programmed your brain with a bell-curve, and are now able to roll up to 30dF in your head (the results lean a little towards Legendary+++), but you intended that). However, when your players arrive, they want dice. For some reason, they don't understand the world of Fudge that you're immersed in ("There's no d20?!"), they aren't moved by the depth of your vision ("_You_ made up the setting?!"), and they don't sympathize with your newfound love ("Hey, where're the Doritos?").

Drat.

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Foiled again.

But no! Wait! On the far horizon, beyond the Lands of Sorrow, leagues from the kingdoms darkened by thoughts of life-without-Fudge, there is a glimmer of hope, a beacon shining in the gloom. Inspired by that flicker of potential, your melancholy leaves you. The side of the righteous can never rest, not when there is still Fudge to be played.

Racing through your dwelling at Ludicrous Speed, you search meticulously for some basic supplies. First you raid the 12-year-old copy of Risk that is stashed in the closet, to no avail. You've long since pillaged the game of all useful components, the only remnants being those silly cards with pictures of Napoleonic generals and badly-drawn outlines of nations. Fekt! Disillusioned but not without hope, you seek better plunder, cannibalizing Monopoly, Candyland, Payday, Parcheesi, and a bizarre entity known as Encore: The Sing-Along Boardgame. Still, the gods laugh at you. Even Sorry's pop-o-matic bubble is empty, having been sliced open months ago in an eldritch sacrifice to your temporary obsession with miniature games.

There are no spare dice in the entire house.

Finally, weak from exhaustion and lack of nourishment, you fall face forward on the floor of your bedroom, lacking the strength to make the last few steps. Closing your eyes, you hear the sound of your own oncoming doom. Life without Fudge? Sourcebooks that are published on time? The ideas are absurd. Silently, you waited for oblivion to sink upon you.

"GM! Hey, do you have any more Oreos or N64 games?"

Rudely awakened, you open your eyes...

...To a vision of loveliness.

There, under the bed, untouched by the turning of countless years, is an antediluvian box with the word "Yahtzee" engraved on the side. Suddenly, your heart begins to beat once more. Reviving instantly, you sack the game for its bountiful ivory, returning in triumph to your (unimpressed) companions, clutching dice in one hand and a Sharpie in the other.

Now, you can play.

Well, sort of.

d6						
dF(a)						
dF(b)						
dF(c)						

Fudge People like options. Lots of options. Likewise, in converting your basic 6-sided dice (the dotty kind, not the ones with numerals) to Fudge Dice, you've got some options.

First of all, this article assumes that you're starting with standard d6s, white dice with black dots. This may not be the case. Since we're talking about cannibalizing other games, you may have to use red dice, blue dice, or marbled lime-green dice. However, in any case, you're likely to have either black or white dots, and so need to find a permanent marker or paint pen in the appropriate color. Yes, corrective fluid (i.e. Whiteout) will work in a pinch, but it's likely to crack and break off over time (or even in the course of an evening's play).

Next, you get to pick just how you're going to convert your dice.

Ultimately, you need each die to have two "plus" signs (+), two "minus" signs (-), and two "zero boxes" ([]). Ideally, the "zeroes" should just be blank, but unless you want to go to the hassle of filling in spare dots with a white paint pen, boxes do just fine.

There are 3 different ways to get the signs you want out of a standard d6, and they are all diagrammed in the graphic above.

Of the various ways to go about it, I would suggest the method labeled "(a)" as the easiest and best. Using this method, converting sides 2-6 to Fudge signs (by playing connect-the-dots with your permanent marker) is almost intuitive. Sides 2 and 3 become "minus" signs with a single diagonal line, 4 and 6 become boxes with 4 easy strokes, and 5 becomes an X-shaped "plus." The only awkward part is making the central dot of side 1 into an "X" (so as to match side 5), but even that is relatively simple.

If that's not your cup of tea, method (b) is almost as easy. The only difference is that side 1 becomes a "minus" side, while side 3 becomes the remaining "plus." This way is slightly less intuitive, since side 3 is a dead-ringer for a "minus," but it still turns out nicely.

Finally, if you want to go against the grain, method (c) is also an option. Using this pattern, sides 3, 5, and 6 are the same as in method (a), while side 1 becomes a "minus" in the manner of method (b). Substituting, side 4 becomes an easy "plus" with two diagonal strokes, looking even better than 1 and 3 do as X's. However, now side 2 has to become a box, with is probably the most awkward of the conversions listed here. Without some extra dots, it's pretty difficult to make those corners look nice.

If you want to try even stranger conversions, go right ahead. These are just the most obvious ones and the methods I think look the best with the least hassle. Also remember that nothing says you have to use a single method for all your Fudge Dice conversions, though that does keep them looking uniform.

In any case, what you end up with are some rather decent Fudge dice, cheaply made and good enough that you can keep using them for years. Due to natural wear, you may occasionally have to touch up your lines ("permanent" markers not being completely permanent), but that's easy enough. In many cases, converted "dotty" dice turn out even better than converted blank dice.

If you're in a hurry to play or don't have a local store that carries Fudge dice, there's no better alternative out there.