

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the *HERO System*, a complete set of universal roleplaying rules that lets you create characters for any setting or background, from Fantasy, to modern-day action heroes, to Science Fiction, to comic book superheroes. Using the *HERO System* rules, you can create any spell, technology, power, weapon, ability, or other effect you can imagine.

The *Sixth Edition* of the *HERO System* is the culmination of nearly thirty years' worth of game design and play experience. The *HERO System* was first published as *Champions* in 1981, and was officially expanded into a truly "universal" roleplaying game system with the release of the Fourth Edition in 1989. Those rules were improved upon in the Fifth Edition (2002) and Fifth Edition, Revised (2004). And now in turn the Sixth Edition builds upon the Fifth Edition and decades of experience with the *HERO System* rules to make them more fun and flexible than ever before!

If You're New To The HERO System...

...then we suggest you get started by reading the two sections immediately following this one. *The HERO System Philosophy* discusses the principles and guiding philosophies that affect the design and play of the game, to provide you with an idea about how to approach the rules in general. After that comes *Basic Rules And Concepts*. It provides a brief glimpse of what the *HERO System* is and does, and shows how you can use it to create some of the most enjoyable roleplaying games you've ever played in.

When you finish those two sections, you can dive into character creation or whatever other subject catches your fancy. If you get confused by any of the terms (like all game systems, this one has a lot of its own "gamespeak"), look them up in the Glossary (6E1 22) or the Index.

If you've used the *HERO System* before, you can simply go to the *Converting Characters To The Sixth Edition* section on 6E1 20. That will serve as a good introduction to the Sixth Edition for you.

Other Resources

The two volumes of the Sixth Edition — *Character Creation* ("6E1") and *Combat And Adventuring* ("6E2") — provide you with all the rules you need to create characters and campaigns set in any time, place, or genre. But there's a lot more *HERO System* information and resources available if you want them.

THE HERO SYSTEM CORE LIBRARY

First, Hero Games publishes supplements for the *HERO System* at a steady pace. For the Sixth Edition, the foremost among these are the *HERO System Core Library* — supplements providing detailed information about a subject for any *HERO System* game! Besides the Sixth Edition rulebooks themselves, the Core Library includes:

The HERO System Basic Rulebook (the "BR"), an "easy learning" version of the *HERO System* rules with all of the core rules but few of the options, variants, or complex elements;

The HERO System Advanced Player's Guide (the "APG"), a volume of expanded, optional, and variant rules for experienced users of the *HERO System*;

The HERO System Bestiary (the "HSB"), a collection of hundreds of animals, monsters, creatures, and other beings written up in *HERO System* form for use in your games;

The HERO System Equipment Guide (the "HSEG"), a compendium of all sorts of devices, weapons, gadgets, and other gear for your characters;

HERO System Martial Arts ("HSMA"), a complete guide to hand-to-hand combat and fighting styles from around the world in the *HERO System*; and

HERO System Vehicles ("HSV"), advanced rules for creating and using vehicles, including hundreds of examples from all time periods, settings, and genres.

OTHER SUPPLEMENTS

But the Core Library is only the beginning. Hero Games and the *HERO System* have been around for about 30 years, so there are lots of supplements you can use with the *HERO System* rules. Although the rules have changed significantly in many ways from edition to edition, the central elements of the *HERO System* have

remained virtually unchanged over the decades. That means nearly any existing supplement, not just the ones Hero Games publishes in the future, can be a part of your Sixth Edition games. In particular there are thousands of pages' worth of supplements for the Fifth Edition that are easy to adapt to and use with the Sixth Edition rules.

THE HERO SYSTEM ONLINE

The *HERO System* doesn't just exist on the printed page — Hero Games has a thriving presence online. Our website at www.herogames.com has a "Free Stuff" page containing free game aids, example characters and scenarios, and all sorts of other fun stuff. The website also has an Online Store where you can buy Hero Games products. And there are hundreds (if not thousands) of fan-created websites containing *HERO System* characters, campaign settings, house rules, and just about anything else you can think of.

But the best feature of the website is the message boards. The boards have thousands of registered fans, many of whom post every day. It's one of the friendliest, most enthusiastic communities in gaming. Hero fans are ready and eager to answer questions, provide help, or just have fun talking about the *HERO System*.

Last but not least, you can contact Hero Games directly by e-mail at info@herogames.com. We're glad to answer questions from the fans about Hero's rules or products.

HERO DESIGNER CHARACTER CREATION SOFTWARE

If you like to use your computer to improve your gaming, check out the *Hero Designer* character creation software available from Hero Games. Custom-designed for the single purpose of creating *HERO System* characters, it simplifies the creation process by automating everything and doing the math for you — it turns the task of creating a *HERO System* Player Character, vehicle, weapon, or anything else you can think of into a matter of a few keystrokes and mouse clicks. You can find out more at www.herogames.com.

THE HERO SYSTEM PHILOSOPHY

It may sound strange or pretentious to say that a roleplaying game has a "philosophy," but over the three decades in which the *HERO System*'s been designed, published, and played, a set of principles governing how the *HERO* rules should be created, perceived, and used has evolved. To help you understand the rules and get the maximum enjoyment out of them, here's the *HERO* philosophy:

DRAMATIC REALISM

The *HERO System* rules aren't designed to be "realistic." Not only is "realism" difficult to define, it's often not a lot of fun. Instead the aim of *HERO* is to simulate *dramatic realism* — the sort of "realism" you see in movies, comics, novels, and the other forms of fiction that inspire you to play roleplaying games in the first place. That means *HERO* allows for verisimilitude — a general likeness of or similarity to "reality" — but within the context of dramatic adventure and action. Thus, characters tend to be harder to kill than they "realistically" should be, they're more likely to succeed at dangerous or outlandish tasks, and so forth. It's all part of the fun of a roleplaying game.

Now, that's not to say you can't make a *HERO System* campaign more "realistic" if you want to. There are optional rules in this book and Hero Games supplements to make the game less "dramatic" — tougher, grittier, less powerful and flamboyant. But the main thrust of the rules is dramatic realism.

CREATIVE FREEDOM

The *HERO System* is designed to free up *your* creativity and let you create the type of character, ability, weapon, spell, or any other thing *you* want. This flexibility, this creative power, is the hallmark of *HERO*, the one thing that truly sets it apart from every other roleplaying game. For example, rather than having to use what Hero Games calls a "Lightning Bolt," the *HERO System* gives you the tools to create a Lightning Bolt the way you think it should work. There's information in this book and various supplements to show you how Hero Games would do it, if you want to know or want to save yourself some time and effort, but you don't have to use that information if you don't want to.

In short, the *HERO System* is all about unleashing your imagination and your creativity. However, like any other meaningful freedom, this one brings with it certain responsibilities.

DOING THE CREATING

First and foremost, if you want to take full advantage of the *HERO System*'s flexibility and power, you have to do the work. *You* have to create the characters, the spells, the villains, the weapons, the campaign setting, or whatever else you happen to need. Most roleplaying games don't require gamers to do that, but it's the price to be paid for what the *HERO System* can do for you.

Fortunately, it's not as much work as it might seem at first. For one thing, there are dozens of Hero Games supplements that have characters, spells, vehicles, weapons, and whatever else you need already created for you. If you don't want to use them as-is, it's an easy matter to change them to suit yourself rather than creating what you want from the ground up. But even if you prefer to do all your own work, the more of it you do the easier it becomes, and the larger your own *HERO* resource base grows. Many *HERO* gamers consider using the rules to create things as much fun as playing the game!

RESPONSIBLE AND MATURE PLAY

Second, the freedom and power offered by the *HERO System* bring with them the responsibility to use the rules in a fair, proper, and mature manner. Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the *HERO System* rules are as “balanced” as possible. “Balanced” means that the more effective something is the more it costs, and that roughly comparable game elements have roughly comparable costs (see *You Get What You Pay For*, below). However, no roleplaying game system can ever be perfectly balanced or totally “bulletproof” (immune to misuse or misapplication of the rules). And that’s doubly true for a game as complex as the *HERO System*, with its hundreds of interlocking game elements that you assemble into characters and abilities.

Any attempt to make the *HERO System* “bulletproof” would only interfere with its goal of being flexible and fun — it would prevent people who want to use it in proper, creative ways from doing so easily. Therefore *HERO* relies on *you* to use it with an attitude of fairness and responsibility. Sure, it’s *possible* to create a relatively cheap weapon that can destroy a planet in a single shot, or a character who’s far more powerful than other characters, or a superpower that no villain can resist. But just because you *can* do something doesn’t mean you *should*. When you create characters and abilities, ask yourself if they’re reasonable, fair, and fun for the campaign.

To put it another way, having a car gives you the freedom to go places, and having a hammer gives you the freedom to build things. But having a car doesn’t give you the right to drive on the sidewalk, and just because you have a hammer doesn’t mean you should hit people with it. Both are *possible* uses of those tools, but they’re not *proper* or *responsible* ones. And similarly, just because you could design a campaign-breaking power using the *HERO System* doesn’t mean that’s a valid use of the rules. Consider the consequences of what you create before you introduce it into the game.

DRAMATIC SENSE AND COMMON SENSE

When you’re creating things with the *HERO System* or playing in a *HERO System* game, you should use your dramatic sense and common sense. *Dramatic sense* refers to that sense of what’s “right” and “wrong” in a story — a sense you’ve been developing ever since you started to read books and watch movies. It’s there inside you even if you don’t know it yet, and it’s one of your best assets as a roleplaying gamer.

For example, when a villain in a story starts to give a big, dramatic speech about his plans, your dramatic sense tells you that you shouldn’t just attack him. That’s not fun, or appropriate; the thing to do is let him complete his speech, *then* commence the climactic fight scene! Similarly, dramatic sense tells you that if one Player Character has a special or distinctive ability (or set of abilities), you shouldn’t try to out-do him at them — that’s his “shtick.” You should work with the other players and the GM to ensure that each character is unique and fun in his own way.

Using your dramatic sense also means you shouldn’t let the rules get in the way of creating a fun, exciting story. If the rules as written diminish the drama of the game for you, ignore or change them (either permanently, or on a case-by-case basis). For example, if it would be more dramatic for Professor Barnes to wake up right before the burglars escape with his new invention, let him — even if the rules say he wouldn’t get to take any Recoveries yet.

Even in a game based on dramatic realism, *common sense* is often just as important as dramatic sense. Common sense helps preserve the verisimilitude by keeping you from using the rules to break the “feel” of the game and the setting. Nothing ruins a game faster than applying the rules “by the book” regardless of what common sense says. If you’re setting up a murder mystery scenario and your common sense tells you a character can kill someone by shooting him with a small pistol, then let him, even if the rules say he can’t possibly do enough damage that way to kill the victim with a single shot. Similarly, your martial artist character might have a Kick attack that the rules say is powerful enough to smash through a bank vault door. But common sense tells you that people can’t kick through vault doors; it’s an absurd idea, even in a world of dramatic realism. Ignore the letter of the rules and follow their common sense spirit. (But of course, in some genres, such as Superheroes, your dramatic sense may trump that and tell you that characters *can* kick through vault doors... if so, have fun!)

CUSTOMIZING HERO TO SUIT YOURSELF

One aspect of the freedom the *HERO System* offers is customizability: you can alter the rules, or use optional and variant rules, to make the game play the way *you* want it to play. There are many examples of this discussed throughout 6E, but you can certainly go beyond that if you want. For example you could alter the cost of some Characteristics, add Skills to the Skill List (or take some off it), combine two Powers into one, or rule that characters don’t get Post-Segment 12 Recoveries. It’s all up to you!

Customizability is particularly important for the *HERO System* because different groups play the game very different ways. Some groups favor combat, some prefer social interaction; some rely on cooperation between Player Characters, others feature competition; some focus on character conception, while others emphasize character construction and maximum points efficiency. None of these ways are wrong; the important thing with the *HERO System* is to have fun, however you define “roleplaying game fun.” But it means the 6E rules, which are balanced and “fair” for the average gaming group, may be unfair or easily abused by your group if your playstyle isn’t “average.” If you see that happening in your game, you should “tweak” the *HERO System* until it suits the way you like to play. It’s not that the tool is broken — it’s that it needs a few minor adjustments for what you have in mind.

YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

One of the most important general principles underlying the *HERO System* is *you get what you pay for*. That's a shorthand way of saying several things.

GAME BALANCE

The first is that for the average gaming group, the rules as written are reasonably “balanced.” This means that if Ability X and Ability Y both have a more or less equal effect during the game, they should have a more or less equal cost. Of course, any game element in the *HERO System* can be overwhelmingly powerful, or next to useless, in certain situations. But overall, during the course of a *HERO* campaign, abilities of equal cost should be equally effective. (And as mentioned above, if you find that the rules in 6E aren't “balanced” for your gaming group due to your preferred style of play, change them!)

But the idea of “balance” extends beyond adding up the numbers on the character sheet. Player Characters should not only be “balanced” against one another, they should be properly “balanced” against the setting they're a part of. This is where the GM comes in. Ideally he designs villains that are challenging, creates adventures that give each character an equal opportunity to shine over the course of the campaign, and adjusts the world to suit the nature of the campaign and what the players want to do. For example, if the campaign is fast-paced Superhero fun with lots of over-the-top action, the GM might reduce the defense and BODY of buildings, vehicles, and objects so they're easier to smash through or throw at other characters, and reduce the damage caused by firearms so heroes can ignore conventional opponents. On the other hand, if the Superhero game is supposed to be dark, grim, and gritty, objects might remain as they are, while guns become even deadlier.

Because roleplaying games tend to involve a lot of combat and action, *HERO System* elements that feature prominently in those situations — Attack Powers, defenses, and the like — tend to receive more detail and to cost more than abilities which have little or no effect in them. For example, a mere 1d6 worth of Blast (5 points) is equal to or greater than the cost of being Immortal, of being financially Well Off, or having an Eidetic Memory. It's not that those three abilities are valueless; in fact, over the general course of a character's life they're probably much more valuable than a Blast 1d6. But they have little, if any, impact on combat or other situations where the rules need to tell you a lot about the options involved and where a character's abilities need to be balanced and effective. Thus, they don't cost very much; in the long run they don't have much impact *on the game*, and so shouldn't cost a lot of Character Points.

PAY FOR WHAT YOU USE

Second, the “you get what you pay for” principle means that, generally speaking, characters should only have to pay Character Points for things they actually use during the game that

have an effect in the game. 6E1 31 discusses this further, but what it means in broad strokes is that you don't have to pay Character Points for every single little thing a character knows or can do. If a character wants to have an ability that has no significant effect on game play — such as an obscure Background Skill or two that defines his job or personal interests — often the best thing for the GM to do is just to let him have it for free... or, if the GM thinks the ability will only rarely be useful, to reduce its cost to more accurately reflect its utility.

The opposite point is equally true: if a character uses something a lot in the game, or has an ability that can be very effective in some situations, he should probably pay Character Points for it. (One general exception is when *all* characters get the same thing for free, such as a game where no character pays Character Points for weapons or armor.)

A CHARACTER SHEET IS NOT A TAX RETURN

While “balance” is an important concern in any roleplaying game, and particularly in the *HERO System*, don't get too bogged down in juggling numbers (unless your gaming group enjoys that). The *HERO System* is a game, not a tax return, so if the numbers start to get in the way of your fun, find a way around that (for example, by using “pre-built” powers, gadgets, and spells from Hero Games supplements). On the other hand, if part of your group's enjoyment of the game is tinkering with the numbers and squeezing every drop of efficiency out of every Character Point spent, that's great too.

Generally speaking, there's no need to obsess over the “accuracy” of what you create. Rather than fretting over whether you've built a particular ability, spell, power, or the like “correctly,” do your best to figure out how to build what you want with the *HERO System* rules (or, if necessary, have the GM build it for you). Then let it work the way you want it to; don't worry about whether you're “right.” It's your game, so however you want to do it (or the GM wants you to do it) is “right.”

RULES AND SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE DISTINCT

One foundation of the *HERO System* is this: the rules are distinct from the *special effects* of an ability. You can read more about special effects on 6E1 120, but in short, the term refers to the appearance and manifestation of an ability. For example, in many roleplaying games characters have the power to project lightning bolts from their hands. There's a rule for this that defines what a Lightning Bolt is — how it functions in game terms (how deadly it is, how far it reaches, and so forth). That same rule doesn't define a Fireball, or a Radiation Blast, or a Sonic Beam; it only applies to a Lightning Bolt. In short, the rule and the special effect are the same.

But in the *HERO System*, those two things — rule and special effect — are separate. *HERO* doesn't have any rule for “Lightning Bolt.” Instead, it has several game elements that describe different ways to injure or harm a target at a distance.

You pick the game element(s) *you* think define how a “Lightning Bolt” should function in game terms. In other words, *you* create your own Lightning Bolt, and *you* decide how it works. Another character may have a Lightning Bolt power that works differently. And a third character may use the exact same game elements that you used for your Lightning Bolt to build his Fire Arrows spell.

The *HERO System* refers to this as *reasoning from effect*. First you choose the special effect for a power or ability. Then you decide what game effect that ability or power should have. Then you build the power or ability with the game elements that provide that effect.

As you read through the rules, don’t assume that a particular special effect applies to a game element just because of how it’s presented. Each game element has to be put where it makes the most sense based on common conception, but that’s not a restriction. For example, *Stealth* is one of the Skills in the game because for the vast majority of characters being sneaky is a matter of skill and learning. But a character could buy *Stealth* defined as “a magic spell I cast that makes me sneaky,” while another character is a ghost and buys *Stealth* because he’s transparent and semi-solid, which makes it easy for him to hide. Both of those are valid uses of *Stealth*, even though neither is an ability the character learns and practices.

THE 3D6 BELL CURVE

The *HERO System* uses 3d6 for Skill and Attack Rolls. This creates a “bell curve” of probabilities that helps characters succeed at the difficult tasks they encounter during their adventures. It allows for some predictability and reliability, since numbers near the low and high end of the range are much less likely to occur than numbers in the middle. (By comparison, a single-die system, such as rolling one twenty-sided die, has an equal probability of any given number occurring.) On the other hand, a bell curve also means that bonuses or penalties to rolls can have a significant effect. See 6E2 280 for more information, including a table of the percentage chance to roll any given number on 3d6.

NO ABSOLUTES

With a few minor exceptions, the *HERO System* doesn’t have any “absolutes.” There’s no guaranteed way to hit another character with an attack, no foolproof way to avoid an attack, no total immunity to any phenomenon or type of attack. This is for two reasons. First, absolutes tend to unbalance roleplaying games and create problems during play. Second, even in the adventure fiction that inspires roleplaying game campaigns, “absolutes” are rarely absolute. When one supposedly exists, often the whole point of the story is for the heroes to find a way to avoid or bypass the “absolute”... which means it wasn’t really an absolute after all. See 6E1 133 for more information.

THE GAMEMASTER’S DISCRETION

The 6E rules often use the phrase, “in the GM’s discretion,” meaning the GM has authority to allow an optional rule, choose between two rules, or the like. The intent there is to bring to the reader’s specific attention one of the key philosophies of the *HERO System*, which is that *the GM can change any rule as he sees fit*. He can make a rule work differently, get rid of it, replace it with a variant rule, or whatever else he wants to do. Just like *HERO* relies on the players to create their characters with responsibility and maturity, it relies on the GM to adapt the rules to suit the setting he’s created and the type of campaign he wants to run. While we think you’ll enjoy the game the most as it’s written in this book, ultimately the written rules are just guidelines and suggestions. Change them to suit yourself — to make your games more exciting, dramatic, and fun.

FORBIDDEN AND NOT FORBIDDEN

As you read and interpret the *HERO System* rules, keep two important principles in mind.

First, *just because something isn’t explicitly forbidden doesn’t mean it’s allowed*. No game designer could think of every possible permutation, combination, interpretation, or use of the *HERO System* rules, so situations may arise in your game that the creators of these rules didn’t foresee. While it’s *usually* safe to assume that something which isn’t forbidden is allowed, the final decision is *always* up to the GM. If he doesn’t want to interpret or use the rules the way you want to, his decision governs.

Second, *just because something is explicitly forbidden doesn’t mean you can’t do it (with the GM’s permission)*. Even when the rules say you can’t do something, the GM can relax that restriction if he feels it would be justified to do so. For example, the rules say you can’t apply the *Attack Versus Alternate Defense* Advantage to the *Entangle* Power. But if a player came up with an idea for an AVAD *Entangle* the GM felt was a good one that didn’t unbalance the game, he could allow the player to buy that power for his character.

ALL IN THE NAME OF FUN

The last and most important philosophy of the *HERO System* is this: *the rules are designed to help you have fun*. If a particular rule makes the game less fun for you, that rule isn’t working well for you — so change it. Similarly, ignore “letter of the rules” arguments in favor of interpretations that make the game more enjoyable.



BASIC RULES & CONCEPTS

The *HERO System* seems complex at first glance, but don't worry, it's easier than it looks. Unlike many game systems, which have different types of rules for different parts of their games (combat, magic, character creation, or what have you), the *HERO System* has a lot of consistency and internal logic. Once you learn the important parts, it becomes easy to figure out how other parts of the system work. You can always refer to the Glossary (6E1 22) or the Index if you can't remember what a particular term means or how to do something in the system.

Dice & Dice Rolling

The *HERO System* uses six-sided dice (d6) to resolve combat, the use of Skills, and similar situations. The number before the “d6” notation indicates how many dice to roll. For example, 12d6 means 12 dice; 2d6+1 means roll two dice and add one point to the total.

Most dice-rolling in the *HERO System* requires you to roll 3d6 and get a result equal to or less than some number. This is written in the text by a minus sign (-) following the number. For example, a Skill your character can perform successfully on an 11 or less roll is written 11-.

Whenever you attempt any 3d6 roll — whether an Attack Roll, Skill Roll, Characteristic Roll, Perception Roll, or other roll — a result of 3 (three ones) always hits or succeeds; a result of 18 (three sixes) always misses or fails. The Gamemaster (GM) should consider giving a character some advantage when his player rolls a 3 (perhaps some extra dice of damage), and some disadvantage for rolling an 18 (perhaps reducing the character's DCV for a Segment or two).

Scale & Movement

Movement in the *HERO System*, and other things involving distance, are measured in meters, abbreviated “m.” For example, a flying character might buy Flight 20m, meaning he can fly up to 20 meters as a Full Move.

STANDARD HEIGHT, WEIGHT, AND LIFESPAN

For *HERO System* purposes, all characters are considered to be 2 meters (about six feet) tall (and if it matters, about ½m “wide” and ½m “thick”) and weigh 100 kilograms (220 pounds). Powers, Complications, or other abilities they buy may change this, but that's the defined “norm” for the game. Obviously characters can vary tremendously in height — a Special Forces soldier, a mountain dwarf, and a Japanese schoolgirl who's secretly a master of the martial arts are very different in size and weight. But for game purposes, they're all treated the same, unless they buy some sort of ability that represents being a different size (such as extra Defensive Combat Value [DCV] to represent being significantly smaller than normal).

For *HERO System* purposes, all characters are considered to have a lifespan of 100 years. You can vary this by buying the *Longevity* form of Life Support (6E1 245) for the character.

Character Points & Rounding

In the *HERO System*, you use *Character Points* (see below) to purchase all of your character's abilities and powers. Sometimes this requires calculations involving division or multiplication. Examples include determining the Active Point cost of a power to which you apply an Advantage, the Real Point cost of a power to which you apply a Limitation, a character's DEX Roll, and the Endurance (END) cost of a power.

When you calculate the cost of something using division or multiplication, always round off to the next whole number in favor of the Player Character (unless a specific rule indicates otherwise). Numbers from .1 to .4 round down; numbers from .6 to .9 round up; and .5 rounds up or down depending upon what's best for the character. You only have to round to one decimal place (unless the GM requires more precise rounding).

If a calculation involves two or more separate parts or stages, round at each separate step of the calculation.

Example: Carl creates an Iridescent Flames spell for his character. He builds it as a Blast 7d6 (base cost of 35 points) with the Advantage Reduced Endurance ($\frac{1}{2}$ END; $+\frac{1}{4}$). That gives the spell an Active Point cost of $(35 \times (1 + .25) =) 43.75$ points. According to the rounding rules, that rounds up to 44 Active Points. Carl now applies the Limitations OAF (wizard's staff; -1) and Gestures ($-\frac{1}{4}$). That yields a Real Point cost of $(44 / (1 + 1 + .25) =) 19.5$ points, which rounds down to 19 points. Carl's character must pay 19 Character Points for the Iridescent Flames spell.

The rounding rules only apply to division and multiplication. If a character buys something that costs less than a full point, he doesn't get to round that down to zero — he has to round it up to 1 point, because there's no division or multiplication involved and he's not allowed to get something “for free.” The minimum cost of anything in the *HERO System*, no matter how the cost is calculated, is 1 Character Point.

ROUNDING FRACTIONS

Sometimes the rules require the character to halve the value of an Advantage or Limitation, which is expressed as a fraction. In that case, the rounding is in favor of the character, as usual. For example, $+\frac{3}{4}$ rounds to $+\frac{1}{2}$ (since it's best for the character), while $-\frac{3}{4}$ rounds to $-\frac{1}{2}$; $+\frac{1}{4}$ rounds to $+\frac{1}{2}$, $-\frac{1}{4}$ rounds to $-\frac{1}{2}$.

Abbreviations

HERO System books use some standard abbreviations for cross-referencing purposes. “6E1” is this book, *The HERO System 6th Edition, Volume I: Character Creation*. “6E2” is the other main rulebook, *The HERO System 6th Edition, Volume II: Combat And Adventuring*. Thus, a reference to “6E1 224” means page 224 of this book; 6E2 37 means page 37 of *Combat And Adventuring*.

For other standard *HERO System* abbreviations, see the Glossary on 6E1 22.

CHARACTER CREATION

The heart of the *HERO System* is its rules for character creation. Using them, you can create any type of character, power, gadget, or ability you want, subject to the GM's campaign restrictions.

You build *HERO System* characters with *Character Points*. You purchase everything a character can do — from his ability to lift heavy objects, to his skill with weapons, to his ability to use magic or superpowers — with Character Points.

Your GM will tell you how many points you have to build your character with — the more points, the more powerful the character, generally. You can spend most of your Character Points without any requirements, but you only get to spend some of them if you take a matching value of *Complications* for your character. Complications are disadvantages, hindrances, and difficulties that affect a character and thus help you



to define who he is and properly simulate the concept you have in mind for him. For example, your character might be Hunted by an old enemy, or adhere to a Code Of Honor, or be missing one eye. (See 6E1 414 for more information about Complications.)

There are five things a character can buy with Character Points: *Characteristics*, *Skills*, *Perks*, *Talents*, and *Powers*.

CHARACTERISTICS (6E1, CHAPTER TWO)

All characters have *Characteristics* (such as Strength, Intelligence, and Speed), which represent basic physical, mental, and combat capabilities common to most characters. The text in Chapter One of 6E1 defines these Characteristics for you. An average human has Characteristics of about 5-10.

Several Characteristics all have *Characteristic Rolls* equal to $9 + (\text{Characteristic}/5)$ or less. For example, a character with a DEX of 20 has a DEX Roll of $13 - (9 + (20/5) = 13)$. When the GM asks you to make a Characteristic Roll (such as a DEX Roll to walk along a narrow beam), you roll 3d6 like normal. The more you make (or fail) the roll by, the greater your degree of success (or failure). The GM imposes negative modifiers on the Characteristic Roll when you attempt particularly difficult feats, making it harder to succeed.