

BUTTON MEN

Originals

a mean little dice game from Cheapass Games

Welcome!

Button Men is a strategy dice game first introduced in 1999, with fighting characters on pin-back buttons. You need only one character per player, and lots of dice.

The original buttons weren't cheap; the price was **\$4.50** for just two characters and a rules sheet. Adjusting for inflation, you'd pay more for *four original characters* than the price of this entire deck.

Button Men: Originals is a collection of five sets from the early years of the game, as well as a few extras we threw in for fun, reformatted as trading cards. The sets are:

Soldiers: The first edition of Button Men includes thirteen colorful characters illustrated by Brian Snöddy, including Changeling, a hard-to-find "rare" character.

Vampyres: Also drawn by Brian Snöddy, the six-character Vampyres set introduced Shadow Dice.

Brom: Carefully crafted as a more advanced set, the Brom set includes a mix of Poison and Shadow Dice, as well as a different size of Swing Die, the V. These twelve characters were illustrated by world-renowned fantasy artist Brom.

Samurai: The seven Samurai characters were illustrated by Ric Frane. They include six core characters and one rare, Tsusuko. They have Focus Dice, which help you go first!

Fantasy: These twelve characters were originally designed as a new starter set, with the addition of "Option Dice," a different type of Swing Die. Illustrations by fantasy legend Larry Elmore.

Fight City: These are four additional characters for the new 2017 edition of Button Men, "Beat People Up." They are illustrated by Cheyenne Wright and Nate Taylor, and include Shadow, Poison, and Rush Dice.

Lucky Promo: We've also included a card for our favorite murder victim, **Doctor Lucky**, illustrated by Israel Evans.

The Basics

First, find some dice. You need lots of polyhedral dice including 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 20-sided dice, and anything else you can get. *If you don't know where to get these dice, your friendly local game store does!*

Players: Two

Playing Time: Ten minutes

You Need: One character card for each player, and the dice required by that character.

Summary of Play: Players fight in rounds of combat, rolling their dice and capturing each other's dice. The first player to win three rounds wins the game.

The Dice: Each character has a unique combination of dice, as dictated by the card. The dice sizes in this set vary between 2 and 30 sides, usually between 4 and 20.

Often we use the shorthand "d" for die. For example, a "d8" is an 8-sided die.

As a general rule, small dice represent *speed*, and large dice represent *strength*. The sizes and types of dice a fighter uses can give you an idea of their fighting style.

Swing Dice: An X is a *Swing Die*, which can be any size between 4 and 20, your choice. If you have more than one X, they must be the same size. There is also a V Swing, which can be any size between 6 and 12 sides.

Option Dice: A die that shows two numbers, one over the other like a fraction, is an *Option Die*, which is like a Swing Die that can choose between only those two sizes.

To Begin

Each player rolls all of their dice, and arranges them so that they can be easily read. Players will take turns.

Whoever rolled the *lowest number* will go first. If the two lowest dice are tied, compare the next two, and so on until a starting player is determined. (If all the numbers are tied, which is very unusual, reroll all the dice.)

On Your Turn: You must make an attack if you are able. If you can't make an attack, you must *pass*.

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Original Button Men character designs

Types of Attack

There are two basic kinds of attack: Power and Skill Attacks. Basic dice can make only these attacks. Others are defined under **Special Dice**.

Power Attack: Use *one* of your dice to capture *one* of your opponent's dice. The number showing on your die must be *greater than or equal to* the number on the die you capture. Set the captured die aside, out of play, and reroll the attacking die.

Skill Attack: Use *two or more* of your dice to capture *one* of your opponent's dice. In this case, the numbers on the attacking dice must *add up exactly* to the number on the captured die. Remove the captured die from play, and reroll all the attacking dice.

Passing: Passing means skipping your turn. You may not pass unless you cannot make any legal attack. When both players pass, the round is over.

End of Round

The round is over when only one player has any dice left, or after both players pass.

Scoring: For each die you captured, you score *its size* in points. For example, a captured d8 is worth 8 points. For each die of your own which you kept, you score *half its size*. So, keeping your own d8 is worth only 4 points.

The highest score wins the round, and the first player to win three rounds wins the game.

If any round is a draw, replay it.

When playing best 3 out of 5, both players choose their Swing Die on the first round, but only the *loser* of each round can change his Swing Die for the next round.

Option Dice can be changed at the same times as Swing Dice.

Learn More About Button Men!

The complete Button Men rules include variations for multiplayer games, drafting, and so much more than will fit on this rule sheet.

In its first incarnation, Button Men had more than 300 playable characters in dozens of expansions, with a ridiculous number of special rules and dice.

You can learn about many of these things, as well as catching up with the newest developments in the game, by checking out **buttonmen.com**.

Credits

Button Men was designed by **James Ernest**. Character designs by **James Ernest, Nick Sauer, and Joe Kisenwether**. Art by **Brom, Larry Elmore, Israel Evans, Ric Frane, Brian Snöddy, Nate Taylor, and Cheyenne Wright**. Rules edited by **Carol Monahan, Cathy Saxton, Cassidy Werner, and Mike Selinker**.

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Special Dice

If a character has special dice, those dice are usually explained in summary on the back of its card. The special dice from this set are described below.

Focus Dice: These are represented as black, and marked with an "f" for Focus.

Focus Dice help characters go first. After the starting roll, if you are *not* going first, you can reduce the values on your Focus Dice so that you *are* going first.

Your opponent can respond by reducing his Focus Dice, and so on until both players are ready to begin, or can't reduce their dice any farther.

If you go first, you can't make an attack with any of the Focus Dice that you turned down. The second player has no such restriction.

Poison Dice: These are represented as green, and marked with a "p" for Poison.

Poison Dice are worth *negative points*. If you keep one of your own Poison Dice, subtract its *full size* from your score. If you capture an opponent's Poison Die, subtract *half its size*.

Rush Dice: These are represented as orange, and marked with an "r" for Rush. Rush Dice have an extra attack as well as an extra vulnerability.

Rush Attack: Use *one* of your Rush Dice to capture *two* of your opponent's dice. The numbers on the target dice must *add up exactly* to the number on the attacking die.

For example, one Rush Die showing 9 can capture two dice showing 4 and 5.

Rush Dice also have a weakness: They can be captured in a Rush Attack by *any type of die!*

Specifically, a Rush Die can be captured, along with one other die of any type, following the same basic rules as a Rush Attack: the two captured dice must add up exactly to the number on the attacker.

For example, if you have a Rush Die showing 2 and another die showing 9, they can be captured in a Rush Attack by any enemy die showing an 11.

Shadow Dice: These are represented as blue, and marked with an "s" for Shadow.

Shadow Dice *cannot make Power Attacks*. Instead, they make *Shadow Attacks*, which work slightly differently.

Shadow Attack: Use *one* of your Shadow Dice to capture *one* enemy die. The captured die must show a number *greater than or equal to* the attacking die, but not greater than the attacker's size.

For example, a Shadow d12 showing a number 7 can capture a target showing any number between 7 and 12.

Note: Bluff's "sp" dice are both Shadow *and* Poison.

We hope you enjoy playing with these classic Button Men!