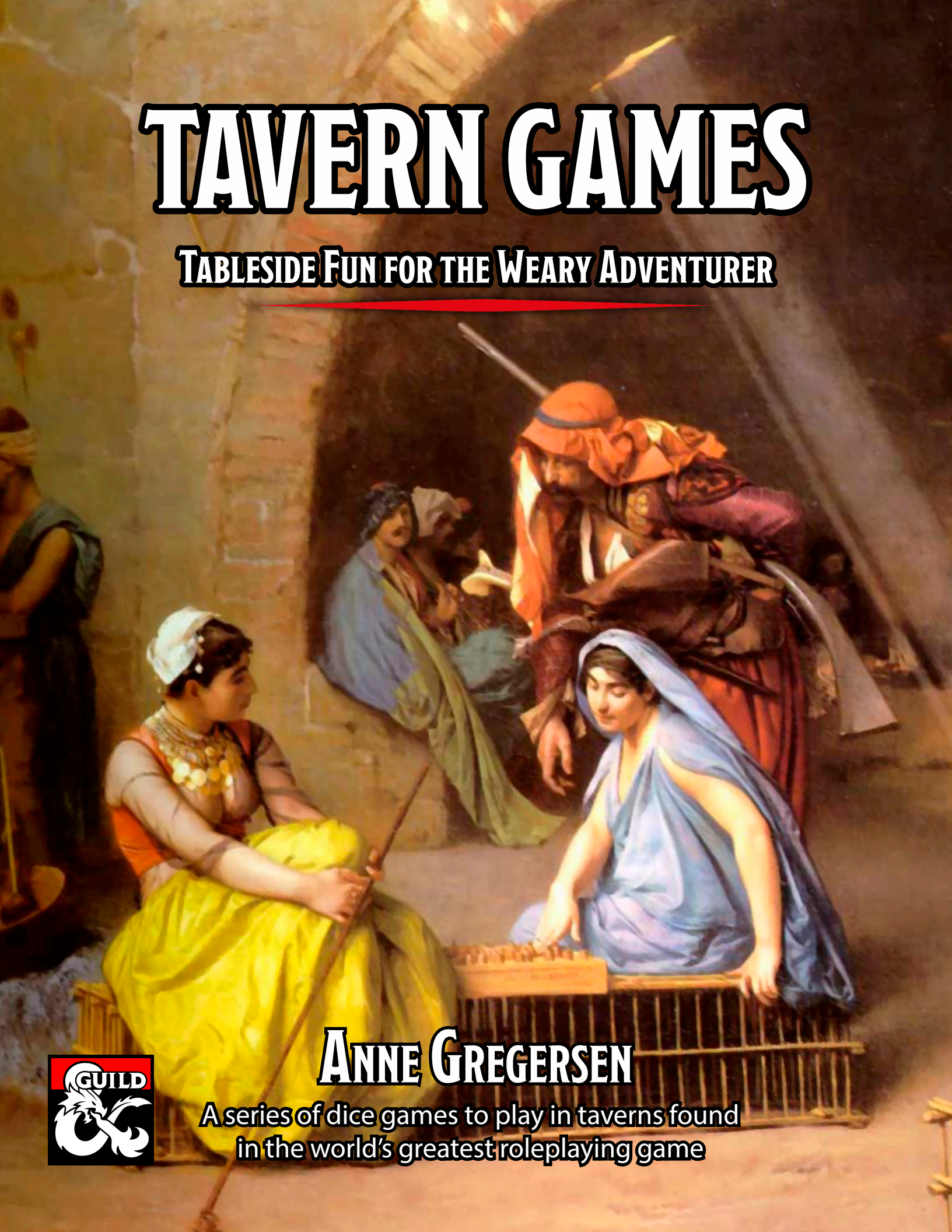


TAVERN GAMES

TABLESIDE FUN FOR THE WEARY ADVENTURER



ANNE GREGERSEN

A series of dice games to play in taverns found
in the world's greatest roleplaying game



CONTENTS AND CREDITS

CREDITS

Lead Designer: Anne Gregersen

Editing and Writing: Anne Gregersen

Cover Illustrator: Jean-Léon Gérôme

Interior Illustrations: Carl Wilhelm Hahn and Valentin de Boulogne

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ENTERTAINMENT, GAMES AND GAMBLING

TAKE A SEAT!

Many a would-be hero have started their journey towards adventure by meeting interesting folk in a tavern. Games of chance and skill are a common sight in the taverns and inns of the world, and offers a great opportunity to mingle with the local populace, as well as listen to the latest gossip and rumors going around the area.

The following section offers different types of playing cards and dice sets, as well as rules and mechanics surrounding cheating and bluffing while playing games of chance with your fellows at the table.

GAMING SETS

Some people take pride in their skill and luck at the gambling table, just as artisans take pride with the skill they have with their tools of choice. These people might have chosen to indulge themselves with a fancy deck of cards, or maybe in a dice set that has a tendency to roll one number more than is normal.

Gaming Sets

Item	Cost
Dice set, common	1 sp
Dice set, clear	2 gp
Dice set, ivory	5 gp
Dice set, steel	1 gp
Dice set, weighted double	5 gp
Dice set, weighted heavy	10 gp
Dice set, weighted high	1 gp
Dice set, weighted sticky	20 gp
Playing card set, common	5 sp
Playing card set, fancy	2 gp
Playing card set, simply marked	2 gp
Playing card set, expertly marked	20 gp

Dice set, common. This is a simple set of polyhedral dice. They are often carved from wood or bone, and the faces of the dice are marked with simple numbers.

Dice set, clear. This set of dice is made out of glass or crystal. Though it might look fragile, it is surprisingly hard and will not break or chip from being thrown on a table. The dice are see-through, making it impossible for them to be weighted unless by magical means.

Dice set, ivory. This is a well-carved and decorated set of dice made from beautiful white ivory with the numbers drawn on in dark color.

Dice set, steel. These steel-cast dice are heavy and have a definite weight to them when they are thrown, which makes them very satisfying to use.

Dice set, weighted double. These dice look like normal dice, but they have been modified. These dice have had the face with the 1s removed and replaced with a second 6.

While playing dice games using these dice, you can't roll 1s. If someone suspects something is off with the dice, they must succeed on a DC 5 Investigation check to determine that the dice have been tampered with.

Dice set, weighted heavy. These dice were made to be slightly heavier to one side, giving higher chances of rolling a specific number. When you play using these dice there is an 80% chance that the dice will roll the number they favor. Making heavy dice requires the work of a skilled craftsman, and they look just like regular dice. If someone suspects something is off with the dice, they must succeed on a DC 10 Investigation check to determine that the dice have been tampered with.

Dice set, weighted high. These dice are the least popular dice among fraudulent players, as the cheating aspect of the dice is easy to spot. High dice have had the dice faces of 1, 2, and 3 replaced with the numbers 4, 5, and 6. While playing dice games using these dice, you can't roll 1s, 2s, or 3s. If someone suspects something is off with the dice, they must succeed on a DC 5 Investigation check to determine that the dice have been tampered with.

Dice set, weighted sticky. These dice are hollow and have an lining of sticky resin and a tiny metal ball on the inside of them. This ball can be loaded to a particular side of the dice by hitting the dice against a hard surface, making the interior ball stick to the resin, and skew the rolls towards a specific number. When rolled, there is an 80% chance that the dice will land on the opposite side of the designated number, as the iron ball is weighing the dice down. Sticky dice are very difficult to spot, as a talented con artist can quickly change the nature of the dice by slamming the dice against their palm or the table. If someone suspects something is off with the dice, they must succeed on a DC 20 Investigation check to determine that the dice have been tampered with.

Playing card set, common. The backs of this simple card set made out of thick paper is blank or has a very simple pattern. Each card is painted with a marker determining its suit and value.

Playing card set, fancy. The quality of this card set is much higher than that of a normal set. The backs are decorated with a complex design, and each card is painted with beautiful artwork depicting famous people and creatures.

Playing card set, simply marked. This set of playing cards has been marked with drawn lines of ink on the backs and by folding the corners. While playing with this card set, you have advantage on every check you make to cheat or get a read on your fellow players. If someone suspects something is off with the cards, they must succeed on a DC 10 Investigation check to determine that the cards have been tampered with.

Playing card set, expertly marked. This set of playing cards has been marked with elegant, subtle differences in shading and colors when they were made. These differences are subtle enough that most average players won't notice them. While playing with this card set, you have advantage on every check you make to cheat or get a read on your fellow players. If someone suspects

something is off with the cards, they must succeed on a DC 20 Investigation check to determine that the cards have been tampered with.

RULES OF PLAY

Playing games comes with its own set of rules. People have expectations as to how you will behave and act, and an attempt at cheating might end with you getting thrown out of the establishment or getting a beating in a back alley of the tavern.

GAMING SET PROFICIENCY

If you are proficient with a gaming set, such as playing cards or a dice set, then you can add your proficiency bonus to any check you make while playing a game that uses that specific type of gaming set.

If the situation calls for the use of a specific skill while playing with a gaming set you are proficient with, such as Sleight of Hand or Deception, you are considered proficient in that skill.

BLUFFING

When playing games that involve betting over a number of rounds, you might want to want to trick your fellow players into thinking you have better cards than you actually do. Or you might try to fool them by making them believe you have a weak hand when you don't.

To bluff, you make a Charisma (Deception) check against your opponent's Wisdom (Insight) check. If you roll a higher Deception check than the opposed Insight check,

you were able to bluff the person in question. Likewise, if you roll lower, the person sees through your trickery and will catch your bluff.

CHEATING

Most tavern games offer some ways of cheating if you are creative enough. It might involve fumbling a die or pulling a card from your sleeve.

If you are trying to cheat by way of manipulating the dice or cards being played with, you must make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check opposed the Wisdom (Perception) checks of those sitting with you or watching you play. Anyone who rolled a higher Perception check than your Sleight of Hand check noticed that you were attempting foul play.

The DM determines if it is possible for you to cheat in a given situation. When cheating, you get to reroll one die. You choose which die to reroll and you must take the second result. You cannot determine the outcome of the die.

READING YOUR OPPONENT

You can try to get a read on how confident or uncomfortable your fellow players at the table are feeling without them knowing. This check is usually limited to once per game. To get a read on your opponent, you make a Wisdom (Insight) check against their Charisma (Deception) check. If you roll high enough on your Insight check, you are able to get an idea about how confident the person you're playing against is in the hand they have. If you roll lower than the opposed Deception check, you are unable to get a read on the person in question.



TAVERN GAMES

Depending on where you are from in the world, different games of chance and skill have been established as a means for people to gamble some coin or test their wits against their friends. For the wandering tribes to the north, it was most likely displays of strength and agility that took center stage, whereas the southern cities with their taverns and inns took on playing cards and dice games as a means to pass the time.

The following games act as supplements to what entertainment you might be able to find at the local watering hole, as well as more serious games found in houses of chance and gambling dens.

CARD GAMES

The following games are played using a *playing card set*, so if a character has proficiency with a playing card set they may be able to use their proficiency bonus when playing the games in this section. The results of the games are, however, still determined by rolling dice, despite the fact that the characters are using cards in-game.

MOUNTAINS

This game of cards had its origin in heavily mountainous regions, but it has spread to be popular among many different peoples and societies.

Number of Players: Minimum of 1 (against the house)

Betting: This game is most often played against the house, but can also be played in groups. The house has set a minimum buy-in, which varies depending on the establishment.

Before any cards are drawn, the players must pay the buy-in. After the buy-in has been paid, the house rolls 2d8 and shows the result to the players. The players can now bet money up to a maximum of triple the buy-in. After betting, they draw one card, represented by rolling 1d8. If the number on their die falls between the two numbers rolled by the house, the player gets the double of their total bet, including the initial buy-in. If they fail or the house-rolled dice are the same or has no numbers between them (such as 4 and 5), the player loses.

RULER'S BLUFF

A card game made popular by the higher nobility, which was later adopted by the lower classes. The rules were seen as too complex, and then were simplified by the common people to make it easier and quicker to understand.

Number of Players: Minimum of 2

Betting: Players throw a set amount of coins into a pot before drawing any cards. Every round, each player has the chance to raise the bet, call it, or fold after drawing cards. Betting continues until all bets are equal. Whoever wins takes the pot.

The game has three rounds. The first round, each player rolls 3d6, which they keep hidden. The second round, 1d6 is rolled out in the open. The third round, another 1d6 is

rolled out in the open. Once per game, a player can discard one of their hidden dice, rerolling it, but this can be done only in the first or second round. Whoever has the highest hand after the third round wins.

1 is low and 6 is high. Lowest to highest hands are: pair, two pairs, three of a kind, low straight (1-5), high straight (2-6), full house (one pair and three of a kind), four of a kind, five of a kind.

TRIANGLE

A game that was invented by the settlers of three small islands lying just off the coast. Travelers who passed through the area were quick to pick up the game and bring it with them as they continued on their journeys.

Number of Players: Minimum of 2

Betting: Players throw a set amount of coins into a pot before drawing any cards. Every round, each player has the chance to raise the bet, call it, or fold after drawing cards. Betting continues until all bets are equal. Whoever wins takes the pot.

The game has three rounds. The first round, each player rolls 1d12 which they keep hidden. The second round, each player rolls 1d8 which they keep hidden, and the third round each player rolls 1d6 which they keep hidden.

The player with the highest total wins. A 26 is the highest possible number you can get, but the best hand you can get is a 3 (1, 1, and 1) which beats everything.

TWELVE NIGHTS

Supposedly, this game was first introduced to the common people through a comedy play. Though the play itself has been lost to history, the game grew popular enough to find a place at many gambling house and tavern tables.

Number of Players: Minimum of 1 (against the house)

Betting: This game is most often played against the house, but can also be played in groups. The house has set a minimum buy-in, which varies depending on the establishment.

The objective of this game is to get a total of 12. Each player starts with two cards, represented by 2d6 which are rolled when the bets have been made. The players are playing against the house.

1s can be worth either one or ten points, otherwise points equal the number rolled on the dice, and players can choose to hit or stay. Taking a hit means rolling an additional d6.

If the final hand of a player is lower than 12 and higher than that of the house, the player wins their bet back. If the player hits a total of 12, the payout is double what they bet. If the house wins, the player loses their bet. The player can also choose to fold, taking back half of their initial bet.

DICE GAMES

The following games are played using a *dice set*, so if a character has proficiency with a dice set they may be able to use their proficiency bonus when playing the games in this section. The results of the games are determined by the players at the table rolling dice.

FARKLE

The first recorded mention of Farkle was in a festival directory advertising an upcoming fair meant to honor the coming of summer. Due to its simplicity, it was quick to gain popularity and is a common pass-time among people all over the continent.

Number of Players: Minimum of 2

Betting (Optional): The players throw a set amount of coins into a pot before rolling any dice. The winner takes the pot.

A game of Farkle can take a while to finish, and is a common past-time among tavern goers or merchants waiting for their carts to be inspected by the city watch.

The objective of Farkle is to be the first one to reach 10,000 points. Many variations of rules exist for Farkle, the most common ones having been listed below.

One player begins by rolling their six dice and checks to see if they have rolled a scoring combination (which can be read below). Any dice that make up a scoring combination can be set aside and the player may then choose to roll all the remaining dice. Each time they roll, the player must set aside at least one scoring dice, but they don't have to set aside all scoring dice.

If all dice are set aside for scoring, the player can roll all six dice again and continue to add onto their accumulated score.

A player's turn continues until they fail to roll any scoring dice or they decide to bank their scored points, writing them down and adding them to any points granted by previous rounds. The dice are then forwarded to the next player. First one to reach 10,000 points wins.

Scoring:

- **1.** 100 points.
- **5.** 50 points.
- **Three 1's.** 1000 points.
- **Three 2's.** 200 points.
- **Three 3's.** 300 points.
- **Three 4's.** 400 points.
- **Three 5's.** 500 points.
- **Three 6's.** 600 points.
- **Series (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 together).** 3000 points.
- **Three Pairs.** 1000 points. (4 of a kind and a pair is 1500 points).

Scoring combinations only count if they are made on the same roll. So if you roll a 1 on one turn, and then roll two 1s on the next turn, you have 300 points, not 1000.

Optional rules:

- **Minimum Score.** To bank your points, you must roll a minimum of 400 points.
- **Initial Score.** To start banking your points, you must roll a minimum of 1000 points first.
- **Greed.** If the player that went before you did not roll all their dice, you may roll those dice in addition to the 6d6 you are already rolling.

MASON

Though not as old as Farkle, Mason has risen to be just as popular as the game it is inspired by. Mason is believed to be a heavily modified version of Farkle made popular by workers and laborers who wanted to be entertained during their breaks.

Number of Players: Minimum of 2

Betting (Optional): The players throw a set amount of coins into a pot before rolling any dice. The winner takes the pot.

Each player has 6d6, which are rolled at the same time. After rolling, you tally all the dice that rolled a 4 or higher and reroll them. Repeat until no die rolls a 4 or higher. Your score is determined by the number of die rolls that are 4 or higher. The winner is determined after one round of playing. Highest score wins.

High-Round Mason. The winner is the one who reaches a set score first, usually between 20 and 50 depending on the length of the game. Players keep their total scores after each round, adding them together as they go through the rounds. First one to reach the set score wins.

MIDDLE'S 7

A simple and quick game that is a common sight in many taverns, though it is in competition with *Weighted Scales* for popularity in gambling dens.

Number of Players: Minimum of 1 (against the house)

Betting: This game is most often played against the house, but can also be played in groups. The house has set a minimum buy-in, which varies depending on the establishment.

Players place their bets and then declare either Higher, Lower, or Middle's 7. The house then rolls 2d6 and adds the numbers together.

Higher refers to numbers that are higher than 7, Lower refers to numbers lower than 7, and Middle's 7 is a total of 7. If a bet of Higher or Lower is correct, the return is double. If the bet of Middle's 7 is correct, the return is triple.

PIG

Just like Farkle and Mason, Pig is a simple game that is very popular among the common people. Pig is especially popular among the poorer classes, as the need for materials is low. Unlike Farkle and Mason, which both require the use of six dice, Pig only needs one dice to play.

Number of Players: Minimum of 2

Betting (Optional): The players throw a set amount of coins into a pot before rolling any dice. The winner takes the pot.

Each turn, the player rolls 1d6 again and again, tallying up the numbers as they roll them as their score. The player must roll a total of 7 before they can write down their score and pass the die to the next player, but they do not have to stop at 7 and can keep going as long as they like.

If the player rolls a 1, they score nothing on that turn and it becomes the next player's turn. The first player to reach a set amount of points, usually between 50 and 100, wins.



TWINS OF CHANCE (ROULETTE)

An extremely popular game in casinos and gambling houses, it is sometimes played with a large spinning wheel instead of dice if the gambling house is wealthy enough.

Number of Players: Minimum of 1 (against the house)

Betting: This game is most often played against the house, but can also be played in groups. The house has set a minimum buy-in, which varies depending on the establishment.

For this game, the house rolls 2d20s that are of different colors or are otherwise easy to tell apart. Most standard gambling houses uses dice that are black and white.

The player can choose between different kinds of betting:

- **Single Number - 3:1 Return.** The player picks one specific number between 1 and 20. If either of the dice rolls the chosen number, the player wins.
- **Single Number, Specified - 9:1 Return.** The player picks one specific number between 1 and 20 to be rolled on one specific die. If the chosen die rolls the chosen number, the player wins.
- **Odd or Even - 1:1 Return.** The player picks between even and odd numbers. If both the dice roll to land on the player's choice of odd or even, they win.
- **Odd or Even, Total - 1/2:1 Return.** The player picks between even and odd numbers. If the total of the rolled numbers land on the player's choice of odd or even, they win.

WEIGHTED SCALES

Due to this game favoring the house so greatly, it is a common find in lowly and high-end gambling houses alike.

Number of Players: Minimum of 1 (against the house)

Betting: This game is most often played against the house, but can also be played in groups. The house has set a minimum buy-in, which varies depending on the establishment.

The player picks one number between 1 and 6. The house then rolls 3d6. If one number lands on the chosen number, the player gets a their bet back. If two numbers land on the chosen number the return is doubled, and if three numbers land on the chosen number the return is tripled.

Light Scales. The rules are the same for Light Scales as they are for Weighted Scales, except the house rolls 3d4s instead of 3d6s, and the player picks a number between 1 and 4 instead of between 1 and 6.