

CONVERTING CHARACTERS TO THE SIXTH EDITION

Many of you have run or played in *HERO System* games for so long that you've got dozens, maybe even hundreds, of characters. You'll probably want to convert them over to the Sixth Edition. Here's some guidance on the easiest way to do that.

QUICK CONVERSION TIPS

A full conversion of an existing character may take a little while, since there are lots of new options and rules changes in the Sixth Edition that you'll want to take advantage of, and that means reading over them. In the meantime, here's what you can do to get started:

1. No More Hexes: The *HERO System* no longer measures things in "hexes" (or "inches"). Instead, it just uses meters. This means changing the way Movement Powers and some other elements are noted on the character sheet (for example, Flight 20" becomes Flight 40m) and also has some effect on certain costs and calculations (such as the *Area Of Effect* Advantage).

2. Name Changes: Besides Complications (see below), the names of some other *HERO System* elements have been changed to make them easier to understand or use. Examples include: Energy Blast is now *Blast*; Ego Attack is now *Mental Blast*; Package Deals are now referred to as *Templates*; Ego Combat Value and ECV are now *Mental Combat Value* and MCV; Seduction is now called *Charm*; Succor is now *Boost*; in the Limitations section, Only In Heroic Identity is more generically named *Only In Alternate Identity* and Visible is *Perceivable*; the *Reputation* Perk and Complication are now referred to as *Positive Reputation* and *Negative Reputation*, respectively; and the *Concealment* Combat Modifier is now called *Behind Cover*.

3. Character Creation: In the Sixth Edition, characters are built on slightly more Character Points than their Fifth Edition counterparts, and tend to have fewer Complications (formerly Disadvantages). The recommended Matching Complications amount for each type of character is kept relatively small so that players only select Complications that really matter for defining and playing the character, rather than ones they've taken simply to get points for them.

4. Characteristics: The Characteristics in the Sixth Edition have been significantly changed from previous editions of the *HERO System* to correct balance issues and related character creation problems. You'll need to reconfigure the Characteristics block on your character sheet to reflect how the Characteristics are now arranged, which ones have been removed or added, and so forth. You should also check the cost of each Characteristic, since many have changed.

5. Comeliness: Comeliness has been removed as a Characteristic. If you want your character's appearance to have an effect in the game, you can buy the *Striking Appearance* Talent. As a rough guideline, every 5 COM is equivalent to one level of Striking Appearance.

6. Combat Skill Levels, Penalty Skill Levels, And Skill Levels: The cost structure of these Skills has changed, so double-check your characters' Levels to see if they need to spend more Character Points on them (or perhaps save a few points).

7. Skill Changes: Besides the Skill Levels (see above), the following Skills have undergone rules or cost changes: Rapid Attack; Two-Weapon Fighting. Weapon Familiarity: Off Hand no longer exists; use the *Off-Hand Defense* Talent instead. You might also want to look at the new rule about Proficiencies to see if that would suit your character.

8. Perks And Talents Changes: The following Perks and Talents are new, or have had their cost changed to some degree: Follower; Vehicles and Bases; Ambidexterity; Animal Friendship; Deadly Blow; Environmental Movement; Lightning Reflexes; Off-Hand Defense; Striking Appearance; Weaponmaster.

9. Removed Powers: The following Powers have been removed from the *HERO System* as distinct Powers: Armor; Damage Resistance; Find Weakness; Force Field; Force Wall; Gliding; Lack Of Weakness; Missile Deflection; Transfer. To replace Damage Resistance, see the *Resistant* (+½) Advantage; to replace Armor and Force Field, see *Resistant Protection*; to replace Force Wall, see *Barrier*; to replace Missile Deflection, see *Deflection* and *Reflection*.

10. Changed Powers: The following Powers have had their cost structure or rules mechanics changed to some degree: Adjustment Powers (in terms of buying them to affect multiple game elements simultaneously); Absorption; Aid; Change Environment; Density Increase; Drain; Endurance Reserve; some Enhanced Senses; Growth; Hand-To-Hand Attack; Healing; Images; Life Support; Shape Shift; Shrinking; Stretching; Suppress; Transform. (Note: this list does not include Powers that change due to the switch from hexes to meters.) Additionally, the Automaton Powers have been moved from the Equipment chapter to the Powers chapter.

11. New Powers: The following Powers are new, or are significantly changed from the Fifth Edition: Barrier; Damage Negation; Deflection; Reflection; Regeneration; Resistant Protection.

12. Removed Advantages: The following Advantages have been removed, or have been incorporated into other Advantages: Based On Ego Combat Value; Damage Shield; Explosion; No Normal Defense; Time Delay.

13. Changed Advantages: The following Advantages have had their cost structure or rules mechanics changed to some degree: Area Of Effect; Armor Piercing; Double Knockback; Duration Advantages; Hardened; Increased Maximum Range; Indirect; Invisible Power Effects; MegaScale; Usable On Others.

14. New Advantages: The following Advantages are new, or are significantly changed from the Fifth Edition: Alternate Combat Value; Attack Versus Alternate Defense; Damage Over Time; Impenetrable; Resistant; Time Limit.

15. Removed Limitations: The following Limitations have been removed, or have been incorporated into other Power Modifiers: Activation Roll; Gradual Effect; Independent; Requires A Skill Roll. (See the new *Requires A Roll* Limitation.)

16. Changed Limitations: The following Limitations have had their cost structure or rules mechanics changed to some degree: Costs Endurance (to maintain); Perceivable (formerly Visible).

17. New Limitations: The following Limitations are new, or are significantly changed from the Fifth Edition: Requires A Roll; Unified Power.

18. Power Frameworks: Elemental Controls have been removed from the *HERO System*; the *Unified Power* Limitation in effect replaces them. Multipower slots are now referred to as Fixed (f) and Variable (v), rather than “ultra” and “multi.” The cost structure of Variable Power Pools has changed slightly.

19. Complications: What used to be called Disadvantages are now called *Complications*. This changes the names of several of them (for example, “Psychological Limitation” is now called Psychological Complication). There have also been some cost and structural changes that you may need to take note of — for example, Complications that involved rolls (like DNPC and Hunted) now use a standard rule for frequency/commonality that doesn’t involve rolling dice. Most importantly, the typical character doesn’t have as many Character Points’ worth of Complications as in previous editions.

20. No More DEF: Objects that used to have a single Defense (DEF) Characteristic now have PD and ED, just like characters. This also affects the way some Powers, such as Entangle and Tunneling, are expressed.

GRANDFATHERING COST CHANGES

The Sixth Edition changes the cost of some *HERO System* elements, as well as removing some elements and introducing a few new ones. That may mean that the overall cost of a character, or of one of his key abilities, has gone up or down. The GM can use several approaches to resolve the situation. He should make his decision based on what the player wants to do, what’s most appropriate for the character, what fits the character’s concept the best, and what’s best for the campaign as a whole.

In some cases, such as converting Movement Powers to meters, the change is really only cosmetic. In that case, you just change the notation — what was once Flight 15” is now Flight 30m.

In other cases the cost of a Power has increased but the effectiveness has stayed the same. In short, a Fifth Edition character can’t buy as much of the Power for the same points. Several options are available. In many cases the fairest one is for the GM to “grandfather” the character, giving him the additional Character Points he needs to keep the character at the same level of power for free. Penalizing the character because of a change in the game system isn’t fair.

However, in some situations, many GMs would rather not “grandfather” characters this way for reasons of campaign balance or fairness between characters. In that case, players will just have to reduce their characters’ level of power. At his option, the GM might give them some free Character Points to buy some other abilities or powers to make up for the loss, or eliminate a Complication or two. Or he may ask all players to redesign their characters from scratch using the Sixth Edition point totals and game elements.

Sometimes the Sixth Edition rules provide a way to do something easily which was difficult under the Fifth Edition rules. The character should reconfigure his power according to the new rules. If the new power costs more, the GM should consider “grandfathering” him, as discussed above.

In any case where a change in the *HERO System* rules saves your character points, congratulations! You have some additional points you can spend (perhaps on new abilities introduced in the Sixth Edition). Gamemasters shouldn’t deprive characters of saved points just because a change in the rules makes something cheaper.