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FULL COURT DICE

Rules (v2.0)


Welcome to **Full Court Dice**, a fast-playing basketball simulation that captures the *rhythm* of a real game—runs, momentum swings, and clutch finishes—without tracking every possession.

This rulebook teaches you everything you need to play using the team cards, the **Universal Highlight Table**, and a simple scoresheet. If you've ever watched a basketball game, you'll feel right at home—you'll be surprised how much a handful of dice can capture the rhythm and tension of a real game.



1. Components

You'll need:

- **Team Cards** – Each lists a Run Table (die results 1–6 with point values), Stars with Clutch Ratings, Team Traits, and Signature Highlights.
 - **Universal Highlight Table** – Shared by both teams.
 - **Dice** – Three six-sided dice () for tracking **Momentum** (one per team, one in the shared pool). Keep **two extra dice** nearby for Highlight rolls.
 - **Scoresheet** – One per player, for tracking scoring by Run.
 - **Pencil** – Because keeping score never goes out of style.
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2. Overview

Each quarter plays out through **four Runs**—bursts of action where both teams trade baskets and momentum shifts back and forth.

You'll:

- **Roll dice** to measure how well each team performed during that stretch (the **Run Roll**).
- **Score points** using your team's **Run Table**, showing their offensive rhythm and style.
- **Earn Highlights** when one team dominates a Run, triggering bonus points, momentum shifts, or signature plays.

After four Runs, the quarter ends. Momentum resets to 1-1 at the start of Q2, Q3, Q4, and the first overtime (see Section 4, Step 7 for details). After four quarters, check if the game is close enough for **Clutch Time**.

The result: a game that captures what basketball feels like—surges, swings, and last-second drama—without the bookkeeping.



3. Setup (about 2 minutes)

1. **Choose Teams** – Each team card includes everything you need to play.
2. **Set Up the Momentum Pool** – Place three dice in the center. Each team starts with **1 Momentum Die** (some Team Traits override this—e.g., the Celtics start Q1 and Q2 with 2); the third die stays in the center as the shared **Momentum Pool**.
3. **Identify Your Clutch Star** – Each team card lists 2–4 Stars with Clutch Ratings (+1 to +4). Your **Clutch Star** is automatically the star with the **highest Clutch Rating** on the card (break ties however you like). Their rating matters in close games at the buzzer. The remaining stars are your **Supporting Stars**, available to activate during runs (see Step 4 below).
4. **Grab a Scoresheet** – Track your score in two columns:
 - **R# columns** – Record your running total after each Run's base points.
 - **H# columns** – Update your total after a Highlight adds bonus points.

💡 EXAMPLE

After Run 1, you score 8 points. Write "8" in R1. Then you earn a Highlight worth +3 points. Update to "11" in H1. If no Highlight occurs, leave H1 blank and move to R2.

You're ready for tip-off.



4. Playing a Run

Each quarter consists of four Runs. Both teams act simultaneously each Run: roll, score, possibly activate a Supporting Star, possibly earn a Highlight, and possibly swing Momentum.

The seven steps below describe a single Run. Complete all seven before moving to the next Run.

→ Step 1 – Check Defensive Pressure

Some teams lock down defensively when they're trailing. If a team card says something like *"Defensive Lockdown: when trailing by 5+ points,"* and that team currently meets the condition, the opposing team rolls its **Run Roll with disadvantage** this Run.

Check this at the start of every Run—if the gap drops below the threshold, the pressure turns off. If the gap grows past the threshold later in the quarter, it turns back on.

→ Step 2 – Roll Your Run Roll

Roll your Momentum Dice (1 or 2) and keep the **highest die** as your **Run Roll** (a number from 1–6).

If Rolling with Disadvantage (from Defensive Pressure):

- **With 1 Momentum Die:** Roll a second temporary die alongside your Momentum Die (2 total) and keep the **lower** result. *The temporary die is only for this roll—it doesn't count toward your Momentum.*
- **With 2 Momentum Dice:** Roll both dice as normal, but keep the **lower** result instead of the higher.

If any Team Traits affect your roll (see your team card), apply them now before finalizing your Run Roll.

→ Step 3 – Score Your Points

Look up your Run Roll (1–6) on your team's **Run Table** and note the corresponding point value. Add those points to your total and record the new score in the **R#** slot on your scoresheet.

Each team's Run Table reflects their style:

- Fast-paced teams explode on high rolls.
- Defensive teams grind out consistent, steady points.

→ Step 4 – Activate Supporting Stars (Optional)

Once both teams have scored, **either team** may activate **one or more** of their Supporting Stars. Activations stay open until both teams move on to Step 5.

To activate a Supporting Star:

1. **Check the box next to the star on your team card** — each Supporting Star can be used only **once per game**.
2. **Add the star's Clutch Rating to your Run Roll** (new total capped at 6). This becomes your "effective" Run Roll for scoring purposes only.
3. **Look up the new Run Roll** on your Run Table. The new point value **replaces** the base points from Step 3—it's not added on top. Your running total becomes (pre-Run total) + (boosted Run Table value).

You can activate additional Supporting Stars in the same Run, stacking their Clutch Ratings—but the effective Run Roll still caps at 6, so any ratings past the cap are wasted.

Important: Supporting Star activations don't affect who wins the Run. In Step 5, compare the *original* Run Rolls, not the boosted ones.

Your Clutch Star cannot be activated as a Supporting Star—they're saved for Clutch Time.

💡 EXAMPLE

Example: You roll a 3 (6 pts on your Run Table). Activate a Supporting Star with Clutch +2 → Run Roll 5 (10 pts). Activate a second with Clutch +1 → Run Roll 6 (12 pts). Check both boxes.

→ Step 5 – Determine the Run Winner

Compare both teams' **original Run Rolls** (not the points, not any Supporting Star boosts):

- **Difference of 3 or more:** The higher roller earns a **Highlight**—they dominated the Run.
- **Difference of 0–2:** It's a close Run—no Highlight. Both teams keep their points and move to Step 7 (skip Step 6).

→ Step 6 – Resolve the Highlight

The dominating team rolls **2d6** on the **Universal Highlight Table**.

Highlight Advantage: If the winning team has **2 Momentum Dice**, roll 2d6 **twice** and take the higher total. Momentum gives you a better shot at a big result.

The Highlight result may award bonus points, momentum gains, or trigger a **Signature Highlight** (results 10–12).

If you roll a Signature Highlight: Roll 1d6 on your team’s Signature Table for a special play unique to your team—often worth 4–8 points, sometimes with extra momentum.

Some teams trigger Signatures on 9+ instead of 10+ (e.g., Hawks’ *Human Highlight Film*). Check your team card—if the trait calls out a lowered Signature threshold, treat a 9 on the Highlight Table as a Signature roll for your team. Other teams still resolve a 9 as Thunderous Slam.

After resolving the Highlight and any effects, record your updated total in the **H#** slot on your scoresheet.

→ **Step 7 – Adjust Momentum**

Momentum is tracked using three dice—one per team and one in the pool. A team can have **1 or 2 Momentum Dice** at a time.

A team gains Momentum this step when (a) the Highlight Table result awards it, or (b) a Team Trait grants it. If neither fires, move on to the next Run.

Important: If a Highlight grants momentum, a Team Trait that also grants momentum doesn’t stack—you only gain one.

💡 **EXAMPLE**

Your Highlight gives +1 Momentum. Your Team Trait says “Gain +1 Momentum after any Highlight.” You gain one die total. The Trait acts as a backup when the Highlight doesn’t include momentum.

When a Team Gains Momentum

Situation	What Happens
Both teams have 1 Momentum Die (pool has a die)	Take the die from the pool. You now have 2; opponent has 1.
Opponent has 2 Momentum Dice (pool is empty)	Take one from opponent. You now have 2; opponent drops to 1.
You already have 2 Momentum Dice	Score +1 Crowd Surge instead—add +1 point to your most recent total (R# or H#).

Momentum changes take effect immediately. Once the pool die is taken, teams trade Momentum Dice directly with each other for the rest of the quarter; the pool stays empty until the next Momentum reset.

At the start of Q2, Q3, Q4, and the first OT, reset Momentum to 1-1 (one die per team, one in the pool). Do not reset between subsequent OT pairs.

When Step 7 is done, move on to the next Run. Four Runs complete the quarter.

5. Team Traits

Every team card lists 1–3 **Team Traits**. The card tells you *what* each trait does; this section tells you *when* to apply it during a Run.

Trait Type	Example Text	Apply During
Defensive Pressure	<i>“When trailing by N+ points, opponent rolls with disadvantage”</i>	Step 1
Pressure Point Penalty	<i>“Also subtract 1 point when your opponent rolls under pressure”</i>	Step 3
Low-Roll Reroll	<i>“Re-roll Run Rolls of 1 or 2”</i>	Step 2, after rolling
Bonus Momentum on Highlight	<i>“When you win a Highlight, gain +1 Momentum even if the result didn’t grant it”</i>	Step 7, only if a Highlight was won and it didn’t already grant momentum
Next Run Roll Boost	<i>“When you win a Highlight, your next Run Roll is +1 (max 6)”</i>	Step 2 of the next Run
Start-of-Quarter Momentum	<i>“Start Q1 and Q2 with 2 Momentum Dice”</i>	Momentum reset (start of quarter)
Lowered Signature Threshold	<i>“Signatures trigger on rolls 9–12”</i>	Step 6, when reading the Highlight total—this team’s Signatures fire on 9+ instead of 10+

Read your team card at setup so you know which triggers to watch for. (Trait effects don’t stack with identical rewards from the Highlight Table—see Step 7.)



6. Halftime & Overtime

Halftime: After Q2 Run 4, reset Momentum to 1-1 and start Q3.

Overtime: If the game is tied at the end of Q4, reset Momentum to 1-1 and play **two Overtime Runs** using the same rules. After the pair:

- If one team leads by 5+: they win.
- If the margin is 1–4: go to **Clutch Time**.
- If still tied: play another pair of OT Runs (no momentum reset between pairs).

Playing OT in pairs keeps both teams on equal footing—no game ends on a single lucky roll.



7. Clutch Time (Margin of 1–4)

This is where legends are made.

After Q4 (or after any OT pair), if the margin is **1–4 points**, the *trailing team* gets one last shot.

1. **Roll 2d6 + your Clutch Star's Rating.** If your team currently has **2 Momentum Dice**, add **+1** to the total.
2. **Check the Clutch Chart:**

Deficit	Needed to Tie	Needed to Win
Down 1	11–12	13+
Down 2	12–13	14+
Down 3	13–14	15+
Down 4	15+	— (cannot win outright)

- **Tie:** Play two OT Runs, then re-check if the margin is still 1–4.
- **Win:** The trailing team steals the victory at the buzzer.
- **Below tie threshold:** The leading team holds on and wins.

Points Awarded on a Successful Roll

- **Tie result** — The trailing team gains points equal to the deficit (ties the game exactly, forcing Overtime).
- **Win result** — The trailing team gains deficit + 1 points (steals a 1-point lead at the buzzer).
- **Down 4** has no Win outcome—the best a down-4 team can do is tie and force OT.

Margin of 5+ at any check: No Clutch Roll is needed; the leader wins immediately.

EXAMPLE

*Lakers trail 98–96 (down 2). Magic Johnson is the Clutch Star at +4 (highest rating on the card), and the Lakers have 2 Momentum Dice (+1 bonus). Roll 2d6: dice show 4 and 4 = 8, plus modifiers (+4 Clutch +1 Momentum) = **13 total**. Down 2 needs 12–13 to tie → Overtime!*



8. Quick Reference

Phase	What Happens
Setup	Each team 1 Momentum Die. Clutch Star = highest-rated star on the card (others become Supporting Stars). Ready scoresheet.
Each Run	Check Pressure → Roll Run Roll → Score → <i>(optional)</i> Supporting Star → Compare Original Rolls (3+ diff = Highlight) → Resolve Highlight → Adjust Momentum.
Momentum	3-die pool, max 2 per team. Gaining while at 2 = +1 Crowd Surge (bonus point).
Highlights	Win Run Roll by 3+ → Roll 2d6 (roll twice, take higher if 2 Momentum Dice). Result 10–12 = Signature (roll 1d6 on team's table).
Supporting Stars	After scoring, check off one or more unused Supporting Stars to add their Clutch Ratings to your Run Roll (cap 6). Once per game per star. Doesn't affect Run Winner.
Defensive Pressure	If a team card's trailing-by threshold is met, that team's opponent rolls with disadvantage.
End of Quarter	Reset Momentum 1-1 at the start of Q2, Q3, Q4, and the first OT.
Clutch Time	Margin 1–4 at end of Q4 or OT pair → 2d6 + Clutch Star Rating (+1 if 2 Momentum Dice).
Overtime	Tied at end of Q4 → play 2 OT Runs. Repeat until a winner (or Clutch Time triggers).



9. Example Quarter (Celtics vs Lakers)

Boston leads 28–24 to start Q2. **Celtic Pride** gives the Celtics **2 Momentum Dice** at the start of Q2; Lakers have 1; pool is empty.

Lakers Run Table: **3 / 5 / 7 / 9 / 10 / 12**. Celtics Run Table: **3 / 5 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 11**.

Run 1

- Lakers trail by 4 — no pressure yet (Flashy Defense needs 7+)
- Lakers (1 die) roll **3** → Lakers Run Table at 3 = **7 points** → Lakers 31
- Celtics (2 dice, keep higher) roll 2 and 6, keep **6** → Celtics Run Table at 6 = **11 points** → Celtics 39
- No Supporting Star activations
- Celtics win Run Roll by 3 → **Highlight!**
- Celtics have 2 Momentum Dice → **Highlight Advantage:** roll 2d6 twice, keep higher. Rolls: 7 and 11 → use **11** → **Signature!**
- Celtics roll 1d6 on their Signature Table → **4:** *“DJ pickpocket to layup, Bird to Parish and-one”* → **+5 pts, +1 Momentum**
- Celtics already at 2 Momentum Dice → +1 Momentum becomes **+1 Crowd Surge** (+1 pt instead)
- Celtics’ Run 1 total: +11 + 5 + 1 = **+17 pts** → Celtics 45
- **Lakers 31, Celtics 45 | Momentum: LAL 1 / BOS 2**

Run 2

- Lakers trail by 14 → **Flashy Defense fires!** Celtics roll with disadvantage this Run.
- Lakers (1 die) roll **2** → Lakers Run Table at 2 = **5 points** → Lakers 36
- Celtics (2 dice with disadvantage — keep lower) roll 5 and 3, keep **3** → Celtics Run Table at 3 = **7 points** → Celtics 52
- Lakers activate **two Supporting Stars** this Run:
 - **Kareem (+3):** Run Roll 2 → 5 → Run Table at 5 = **10 points** → Lakers 41. Check Kareem’s box.
 - **Scott (+1):** Run Roll 5 → **6** (table ceiling) → Run Table at 6 = **12 points** → Lakers 43. Check Scott’s box. (Worthy stays available — his +2 would be wasted past the cap.)
- Original rolls: 2 vs 3 → difference of 1 → No Highlight
- **Lakers 43, Celtics 52 | Momentum: LAL 1 / BOS 2**

Run 3

- Lakers trail by 9 → Flashy Defense still fires.
- Lakers (1 die) roll **6** → Lakers Run Table at 6 = **12 points** → Lakers 55
- Celtics (2 dice with disadvantage) roll 6 and 2, keep **2** → Celtics Run Table at 2 = **5 points** → Celtics 57
- Lakers win Run Roll by 4 → **Highlight!**
- Lakers have 1 Momentum Die (no advantage); roll 2d6 = **10** → **Signature!**
- Lakers roll 1d6 on their Signature Table → **1**: *“Worthy slam, Kareem hook, Magic layup — 6-0!”* → **+6 pts, +1 Momentum**
- Lakers 61. Pool empty → Lakers take a die from the Celtics
- **Lakers 61, Celtics 57 | Momentum: LAL 2 / BOS 1**

Run 4

- Lakers lead by 4 — no pressure (Lockdown needs Celtics trailing by 5+)
- Lakers (2 dice) roll 4 and 6, keep **6** → Lakers Run Table at 6 = **12 points** → Lakers 73
- Celtics (1 die) roll **5** → Celtics Run Table at 5 = **9 points** → Celtics 66
- Celtics activate Dennis Johnson (+1): Run Roll 5 → **6** → Run Table at 6 = **11 points** → Celtics 68. Check DJ’s box.
- Original rolls: 6 vs 5 → difference of 1 → No Highlight
- **End of Q2 → Reset Momentum to 1-1** (Celtic Pride applies only to Q1 and Q2)
- **End of Quarter: Lakers 73, Celtics 68**

Each Run tells a story — Celtic Pride’s early burst, Flashy Defense disrupting the rhythm, and back-to-back Signatures swinging the quarter.



10. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- ❌ **Adding both Momentum Dice together** — Only the **highest die** counts (or the lowest under disadvantage).
- ❌ **Applying Defensive Pressure to Highlight rolls** — Pressure only affects **Run Rolls**, never the 2d6 Highlight roll.
- ❌ **Forgetting to reset Momentum each quarter** — Reset to 1-1 at Q2, Q3, Q4, and the first OT (not between subsequent OT pairs).
- ❌ **Stacking Trait + Highlight momentum gains** — Choose one; they **don’t stack**.

- ❌ **Skipping the Crowd Surge** — When you'd gain Momentum but already have 2 dice, add **+1 point** instead.
 - ❌ **Forgetting to check Defensive Pressure each Run** — Score changes can activate or deactivate pressure mid-quarter.
 - ❌ **Triggering a Highlight on a 2-point gap** — You need a Run Roll difference of **3 or more** to earn a Highlight.
 - ❌ **Using Supporting Star boosts to trigger a Highlight** — Always compare the **original** Run Rolls. The boost adds points, not Highlights.
 - ❌ **Using your Clutch Star as a Supporting Star** — They're reserved for Clutch Time only.
 - ❌ **Forgetting Highlight Advantage** — If you have **2 Momentum Dice** when a Highlight fires, roll 2d6 **twice** and keep the higher total.
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11. Tips

- A game typically runs **20–30 minutes** once you're comfortable with the rhythm.
- Print team cards on heavy stock or laminate them for repeated play.
- Keep the Universal Highlight Table visible to both players at all times.
- Pay attention to your opponent's Team Traits on their card—knowing when their pressure fires is a huge advantage.
- Plan your Supporting Star activations carefully. Spending a +3 star on a 1-roll is more impactful than spending it on a 5-roll.
- Momentum isn't just about your next Run Roll—it unlocks Highlight Advantage too, so it's often worth pressing for.

Good luck, and enjoy the game! 🏀🎲



12. Glossary

- **Clutch Rating** — A +1 to +4 value printed on every Star, representing how much they boost clutch or supporting moments.
- **Clutch Star** — The star with the **highest** Clutch Rating on your team card. Handles Clutch Time; not available as a Supporting Star.
- **Clutch Time** — The end-of-regulation moment when the margin is 1–4: the trailing team rolls 2d6 + their Clutch Star rating to attempt a tie or win.
- **Crowd Surge** — The +1 point you earn when you would gain Momentum but already have 2 Momentum Dice.
- **Defensive Pressure** — A team trait (on some team cards) that forces the opponent to roll with disadvantage when that team is trailing by a certain threshold.
- **Disadvantage** — Rolling two dice and keeping the **lower** result instead of the higher.
- **Highlight** — A 2d6 roll on the Universal Highlight Table, earned when a team wins a Run Roll by 3 or more.
- **Highlight Advantage** — With 2 Momentum Dice, roll 2d6 **twice** on a Highlight and keep the higher total.
- **Momentum Die / Momentum Pool** — Three dice total (one per team, one in the central pool). Extra dice let you roll with advantage for better Run Rolls and Highlights.
- **Run** — A single scoring sequence. There are 4 Runs per quarter (16 per regulation game).
- **Run Roll** — The die result (1–6) you roll each Run to look up points on your Run Table.
- **Run Table** — The 6 point values on your team card corresponding to Run Rolls 1 through 6.
- **Signature Highlight** — A team-specific special play triggered by a Highlight roll of 10–12 (some teams, like the Hawks, trigger on 9+ via a Team Trait). Roll 1d6 on your team's Signature Table to resolve.
- **Supporting Star** — Any star on your team card that isn't your Clutch Star. Usable once per game to add their Clutch Rating to a Run Roll (stackable with other Supporting Stars in the same Run, capped at 6).
- **Team Trait** — A special rule printed on a team card (defensive pressure, bonus momentum, reroll conditions, etc.).