

QUICK START



CHARACTER CREATION

The Game Master provides the **setting**, which sets the tone, genre, boundaries, and opportunities for characters. Sailing the stars in a space opera will present a different set of limitations than a gritty fantasy escapade on the borderlands. There are no limits to what settings you can use. *More information related to this topic may be found in Building Your Game (pages 135-137).*

The **campaign level** is chosen by the Game Master. This is a measure of a character's raw potential as compared to the rest of the setting universe. Options include low, average, high, and epic. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 21).*

The Game Master selects the **relative experience**; this is a guide for how much training and general life experience a character begins play with. Options include novice, green, practiced, seasoned, regular, and veteran. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 21).*

Every character begins with a **concept**: the vision of the character at the highest level. Summarize the concept in a couple of words like field medic, dashing duelist, or diligent artist. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 21).*

A character's **species** acts as a template for natural ability and potential. It sets many **vital characteristics** and may provide free **traits**. A species may also grant **powers** that every member of the species knows, even if they do not meet the normal requirements. Some of these traits and powers may be unique. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 21-22, 30) and specific species can be found in the Species Guide.*

The **background** of a character acts like a template for developed ability. It dictates four of the **skills** the character begins with at pre-set levels based upon the **relative experience** used. Where these rules present several background options, you

are also free to make up your own. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 22, 30).*

Motivation and temptation are what drive the character. Her motivation is her expressed reason for action, where her temptation is what truly drives her. These may award the character **karma** for certain actions. Events may cause the character to rethink her path in life and provide the opportunity to change her motivation and/or temptation. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 22-24).*

Characters may not have reason to trust one another unless they form formal **relationships** with each other. If one party violates the rules of the relationship, then he cannot earn **karma**; however, forging relationships grants karma. Relationships can change over the course of the game. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 24-26).*

A character's raw **Strength** is assigned by his **species**. The amount of stuff a character can haul about is limited by his **Carrying Capacity**, which is equal to eight times his Strength plus his Athletics skill. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 30).*

Characters have a **tactical movement** score for how far they can move in one action and a **strategic movement** score for how fast they can move over an hour. Both are set by the character's **species**. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 30-31) and Environment (page 153).*

Some **actions** take their toll on a character, draining either her **power pool**, for actions limited by each encounter, or her **power well**, for actions limited by daily usage. Both have an initial rating of five, and they may be adjusted through **traits** and **powers**. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 31).*

A character can suffer an amount of damage equal to her **Health** before she falls unconscious or worse. A character's starting Health is dictated by her **species**. In addition, with a **high campaign level** the character automatically gains her

choice of *determined* or *fortitude*, and with an **epic campaign level** she gains both. These are **powers** that increase the character's Health. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 31).*

Scale is a loose approximation of the longest dimension (e.g. height) for the principle characters in the game. The rules assume that a value of one represents a human adult range, but a game based upon talking mice may hold that a Scale of one is about 20cm. Changing the scale of a character adjusts a number of statistics, including damage and health. Scale is provided by **species**. *More information related to this topic may be found in Core Mechanics (page 16).*

Traits describe the character's species and her nature; they reflect genetics, natural talent, disadvantage, or history. A character's **species** may grant her some **species traits**. In addition, the **campaign level** provides a number of free points to spend on **elective traits** to define how she is different from others of her species. *More information related to these topics may be found in Traits (page 35-46) and in Characters (pages 31-32).*

Campaign Level - Traits	Points
Low Powered Campaign	0pts
Average Campaign	1pt
High Power Campaign	2pts
Epic Powered Campaign	3pts

Relative Experience	Level 1 Skills	Level 2 Skills	Level 3 Skills	Level 4 Skills	Free Points	Max Level
Novice	3	1	None	None	2	2
Green	2	2	None	None	5	2
Practiced	1	2	1	None	10	3
Seasoned	None	2	2	None	15	3
Regular	None	1	2	1	20	4
Veteran	None	None	2	2	25	4

There are sixteen **skills**. Each has an **untrained level** of zero. A character may have a **trained skill level**; however, the **maximum effective level** is two. At skill level two, characters automatically gain one **expertise**, focused study with a narrow field of the skill, which allows them to surmount the maximum effective level limit. *More information related to this topic may be found in Skills and Actions (pages 47-73).*

Skill Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Incremental Cost	1	2	3	5	8	13	21	34	55	89
Cumulative Cost	1	3	6	11	19	32	53	87	142	231

Each character starts with free **trained levels** in each of her **background skills** based upon the **relative experience** assigned. In addition, the character is assigned a number of free points. For levels one and two, the cost to improve a skill is equal to the skill level; thereafter, the cost is equal to the sum of the cost for two levels before it, like the Fibonacci sequence. The cost to improve a skill is provided by the accompanying chart, and each level must be purchased sequentially. The maximum trained level that a character can begin with for any skill is provided by the relative experience. When considering what skills to take, you may want to take a peek at powers to make sure that you meet the requirements for any that look to fit your concept. *More information related to these topics may be found in Characters (page 32) and in Skills and Actions (pages 47-73).*

Characters learn extraordinary abilities called **powers**, which

may be active or passive. Powers are organized by **method** (e.g. the core method includes powers that are natural extensions of skills without reliance upon outside forces) and **practice**. The methods and powers available are limited by the **setting**. Within a method, powers are further categorized into **elements**, thematic groupings. *More information related to this topic may be found in Core Mechanics (pages 18-19) and in the individual power chapters, including Core Method (pages 107-126) and Artifice (pages 127-133).*

The most common **practices** include **developments** (passive effects that are always on), **boosts** (free actions that modify a principle action with extra effects), **stances** (powers that once activated provide a passive benefit for the encounter), and **actions** (perform an act to render and effect). Actions are further broken down to provide labels and common characteristics and can include shouts, spells, prayers, assemblies, and the like. *More information related to this topic may be found in Core Mechanics (page 19).*

All characters begin with the language power for their native language. The **relative experience** also grants a number of free **powers**. A character can purchase any power allowed by the Game Master so long as he meets the requirements. In order to purchase a power of a tier higher than lesser, in addition to any listed requirements, the character must possess five powers of the same **element** of the next lowest tier (e.g. five lesser tier powers of the same element to purchase greater tier powers of that element). *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (page 32).*

Relative Experience	Starting Powers
Novice	2
Green	4
Practiced	6
Seasoned	8
Regular	12
Veteran	16

The final step of creation is to dress and arm the character. There is no simple approach to this as starting **wealth** and **equipment** can vary by social class, culture, available technology, history, and more. Game Masters should customize starting possessions to the characters and campaign, but they should not impart a significant advantage to some characters over others through equipment unless agreed upon by the participants. *More information related to this topic may be found in Economy & Equipment (pages 87-105).*

CHARACTER GROWTH

Characters may grow dramatically or mechanically. Dramatic character growth is managed by **karma** whereas mechanical character growth is governed by **experience**.

Characters accumulate **karma** through character exploration and drama, and they spend karma to affect the outcome of actions. Karma can also always be spent like a **success**. It is only important to track a character's current karma, not total karma. A character's maximum karma is five, but this may be adjusted by traits and powers. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 28-30).*

Characters accumulate **experience points** (XP) through their adventures and spend these points to permanently remove **elective traits**, improve **skills**, purchase new **expertise**, or gain new **powers**. Characters have no maximum amount of experience, but a character's total earned XP as well as his remaining unspent XP should be tracked. *More information related to this topic may be found in Characters (pages 33-34).*

- **Removing a trait costs five experience points times the value of the trait.** Only traits labeled as removable may be

bought off, and species traits may never be removed, whether labeled as removable or not.

- **Improving a skill** costs a number of **experience points equal to the next level** for levels one and two. Thereafter, the cost is equal to the **sum of the cost for two levels before it**, like the Fibonacci sequence. By default, a character can only buy one level in each skill per game session (e.g. a character with six XP banked cannot drop it all at once to go from level 0 to 3).
- **Additional expertise** costs **three experience points** but require the character has an actual trained level of two in the affected skill.
- **New powers** cost **two experience points** to purchase. Nearly all powers require a minimum level of skill; listed required skills are for the character effective skill level. Some powers are labeled as **repeatable**; they can be purchased more than once, but each purchase cumulatively increases the required skill level by two.

