### Character Creation Overview

Characters are the focus of role-playing games. Each player takes on the persona of one or more characters in the fantasy world. The players control their characters by telling the referee (otherwise known as the game master, or GM) what the characters do. The GM causes the players to experience the game world by telling them what they see, smell, hear and feel. By this wordplay and the imaginations of the players and GM, a story is told. The player characters (PCs) are the focus of this story and so, creating your character is the first step to entering the game world.

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Before you begin, talk to your GM. See what types of character the GM would like to see and what kind of campaign he is planning to run. Ask if there are any limitations on the types of characters permitted in the game, or if any other player has a character that is filling a particular role. Your GM might have a theme or story in mind and it is best if your character fits into that theme. A swashbuckling swordsman if great in a “Three Musketeers” type game, but not in a gothic horror story.

In addition, the other players might be able to help you with your character concept. Talk to them and see if any of their characters is already filling a particular niche in the group. One brooding priest makes a unique and interesting character. Having two of them in the same adventuring party blunts their dramatic impact. In addition, try to choose characters with a broad range of skills. Some skill overlap is good. You can never have too many medics. However, if every character has diplomacy, then someone is going to feel as though their skill is wasted.

To make a character, follow these steps:

1. **Description:** Who are you and what do you look like?
2. **Roll primary attributes:** Attributes define your character’s raw ability. Strength, dexterity and intelligence are measured by a number ranging from 0-20. To determine the character’s starting attributes, roll 4d6-4 ten times. Take these numbers and assign them to the ten attributes. Some GMs may allow players to roll more than once to get a set of scores that are above average. Other GMs force the players to create characters with the first set of scores rolled. Characters with 3-5 decent rolls (above 11) will make a fine character. However, realize that interesting characters can be made from almost ANY set of statistics.
3. **Figure secondary attributes:** A second set of attributes represents the characters defensive and movement abilities. These secondary (or figured) attributes are calculated using a set of tables. Figure these scores and mark them on your sheet.
4. **Choose a template:** A template represents a character’s previous training. They provide the character with a basic set of skills and unique abilities. Templates are a means of specializing your character and making him different than the other characters in the group. All characters MUST have a template unless the GM agrees otherwise. Choose a template from the list and write the skills and abilities onto your character sheet.
5. character-back**Buy skills with remaining points:** In addition to choosing a template, every character gets a number of buy points with which to purchase new skills, or increase his proficiency in the skills provided with his template. There are no restrictions to the skills a character can purchase. Mages can buy combat skills; fighters can buy spells or runes and so on. Spend your buy points and customize your character.
6. **Choose limitations and talents:** In addition to special abilities and skills, each character has a number of quirks, faults and gifts that make him unique. He may be overly curious, greedy, have a meddling family or he may have keen eyesight, a knack for getting out of (or into) trouble, or even able to sniff out gold and silver.
7. **Determine starting money and equipment:** Generally, your character will start his adventuring career with a few possessions and cash for traveling expenses. However, different campaigns and GMs will allow different amounts of wealth for starting characters. Your GM might be running a game where the PCs start as prisoners, street urchins or wealthy noblemen. Talk to your GM to see what starting equipment is permitted. Then choose your equipment and money and mark it on your sheet.
8. **Weapons:** Depending on your starting equipment, your character might start the game owning one or more weapons. Choose your starting weapons and record their statistics on your sheet.
9. **Armor:** Not all adventurers wear armor, but many do. Depending on your starting equipment, you may own one or more pieces of armor. Write your armor on your sheet. When you are finished, calculate the total encumbrance value of your armor and note any penalties you take from being encumbered.
10. **Quick Reference:** What? You don’t want to endlessly refer to the book during tense action scenes? Many sections on the sheet are not necessary, but are there for your reference during play.