### Character Creation

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.

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 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 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.

***Character Creation Checklist***

*Follow these steps to create your Runebearer character:*

* *Generate your* ***7 Primary Stats***
* *Choose Your* ***Template***
* *Calculate Your* ***Figured Stats***
* *Choose Your* ***4 Background Skills***
* *Choose Your* ***8 Tag Skills***
* *Choose Your* ***Starting Talent***

**Primary Stats**

Characters in Runebearer have seven Primary Statistics. The starting value for each statistic is generated with a roll of 2d4+6 to give starting values between 8 and 14. The numbers can be assigned to whatever stats you like. You should consider the type of character you want to play, as well as the skills and abilities you might take when assigning your stats. Warriors will want to focus on Muscle and Toughness, while a wizard might want Wit and Power.

All attributes allow for a bit of interpretation with regards to their meaning. Some characters with a high muscle stat might be big, bulky and muscular. Others might be wiry and vigorous, but the game effects will be the same.

**Muscle (M)**

Muscle represents your character's physical strength and the ability to effectively leverage that strength. Muscle tests are used to open doors, wrestle a struggling enemy to the ground, and to withstand being knocked over by a charging foe.

**Skill (S)**

Skill represents the agility and dexterity of your hero. Characters with a high skill statistic are good at using missile weapons and dodging blows. Skill tests are used to determine the success of tasks requiring hand-eye coordination or nimbleness.

**Reflex & Perception (R)**

Reflex measures the raw reaction-time of your hero and their ability to perceive danger and react to it in a timely manner. Reflex is used to determine your initiative in combat and to dodge many traps.

**Toughness (T)**

Toughness is a measure of your character's hardiness and their ability to withstand damage and other hardships. It determines your starting hit points and how resistant you are to poisons and diseases.

**Wit (W)**

Your wits are a measure of your intelligence and your perception. If you need to answer a riddle or spot a subtle clue hidden in a room, you will make a wit test.

**Power (P)**

Power represents your force of will, your luck, and your connection with the magical aspects of Anthis. Characters with a high power score make the best mages and priests.

**Charisma (C)**

Charisma is a measure of your character's looks, personality and connection to the divine. Many interpersonal skills rely on charisma, as do some magical ones.

**Stat Bonuses**

Each stat has an associated bonus based on its value. The bonus is used to calculate the effective values of skills, and to calculate initiative.

The ***Bonus*** of a stat is equal to

***Stat Bonus = (stat – 10) / 2***

With odd-valued stats, you will calculate a bonus with a ½. Keep the fraction and record it. Skills use two stats to determine their bonus, and if you have two ½ bonuses, they add up to a +1.

**Effect Dice**

Each stat also has an effect die based on your character’s score for that stat. When the result of an action isn’t simply pass or fail, you may be asked to roll one or more effect dice based on the stats involved in the task. The most common example of this is combat – when you hit your opponent, one of your damage dice is your muscle effect die.

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| **Stat Value** | **Effect Die** |
| 0-3 | 1d3-1 |
| 4-5 | 1d3 |
| 6-8 | 1d4 |
| 9-12 | 1d6 |
| 13-15 | 1d8 |
| 16-18 | 1d10 |
| 19-20 | 1d12 |
| 21-22 | 1d12+1 |
| 23-24 | 1d12+2 |

***Character Creation Checklist***

* *Generate your* ***7 Primary Stats***

*To create your primary stats, roll 2d4+6 seven times and record the results. Now assign each of the values to one of the primary stats in whatever order you choose based on the type of character you intend to play. A powerful warrior will focus on Muscle and Toughness, while a cunning wizard will want Wit and Power.*

**Templates**

A template represents a character’s training or background. They provide the character with a basic set of starting skills and abilities. Templates are a means of specializing your character and making him different than the other characters in the group. Choose a template from the list, write the stats, skills and abilities onto your character sheet and then pick one of the template’s boons and record that as well.

The templates available to your character will depend on your campaign setting. There are currently three Runebearer settings in the works, Anthis, Bostonia, and Swordsphere. Each of these worlds has different templates to represent the types of characters and stories in them. To provide an example of the concept, and a starting point for GMs to create their own, these rules will list a set of basic templates based on standard fantasy RPG archetypes.

Almost all templates will have skills associated with them, and some of them will give talents or other abilities. Unless otherwise specified, all skills given by a template are considered ***Background Skills***. Unless otherwise specified, any talent acquired does not count as your talent pick for level one, nor does it count against the number of talent trees you can ultimately learn.

**Sample Templates**

**Apothecary**

In any world, there are many dark corners that reward the curious with naught but grievous injury. You are a novice healer, hoping to ease the suffering of your fellow villagers using medicine and the bounty of the land.

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| ***Stat Modifiers:*** +1 Skill, +1 Wit  ***Skills:***   * Herb Lore * Medic * Choose Two from:   + Administrate   + Alchemy\*   + Craftsman   + Interrogate   ***Boons (choose one):***   * **Empathic Healer** – You have the uncanny ability to take others' pain as your own. By spending an inspiration, you can give your hit points to an adjacent ally and take on their wound effects. You gain an extra free check any session you use this power to heal 4 or more hit points. * **Green Thumb** – You get a +2 to any tests related to growing plants. Whenever you find herbs in the wild, you find 50% more (round down; min +1 dose). * **Taste Tester** – You start with the talents *Resist Poison(2)* and *Resist Disease(2)*. You also get a +2 to identify substances, potions and herbs if you can taste them.   *\*Note: Taking Alchemy as a skill requires that your first talent pick be* ***Alchemist’s Apprentice*** *from the Master Alchemy tree.* |

**Hunter**

You grew up in the wilds, tracking dangerous wildlife and then bringing it down with your spear or bow. Given the choice, you sleep under the stars – more comfortable in the hills and forests than in the cities of men. You are a survivalist, able to find food and shelter in the most inhospitable locales.

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| ***Stat Modifiers:*** +1 Skill, +1 Toughness  ***Skills:***   * Animal Lore * Survival * Track * Choose one from:   + Bow   + Spear & Shield   + Thrown   ***Boons (choose one):***   * **Animal Companion** – You start the game with the Animal Companion talent. This does not count against your talent tree total unless you take another talent from this tree. * **Blood Hound** – Once you catch the scent of your prey, you are relentless. If your prey is bleeding, you have a piece of them (fur, hair), or something they have worn, you get a +4 bonus to track them. This bonus lasts a week, or until the circumstances change (GM’s discretion). * **Swift Hunter** – You get +2 Initiative, +2 to your Combat Move and +1 bonus to Dodge. |