

CHARACTERS

CHARACTER CONCEPT

A good place to start is to have some idea of what sort of character you want to play; a hardened warrior for example, or a cunning thief. Your character concept does not need to be elaborate at this stage; simply an idea that will help guide certain choices such as race and profession. A few character ideas are listed to provoke your imagination.

- ❖ *Fierce barbarian hunter*
- ❖ *Young, naïve wizard*
- ❖ *Bad-tempered gemstone miner*
- ❖ *Chivalrous, yet disgraced champion*
- ❖ *Suspicious, spirit-worshipping shaman*
- ❖ *Overly-curious explorer-scholar*
- ❖ *Unscrupulous mercenary*

NON-HUMAN SPECIES

Humans are the easiest characters to play and are probably the most common race found in most MYTHRAS campaigns, but one need not be confined to just humans. It is possible to play just about any sapient species because all creatures, regardless of type, are defined in the same way. The Creatures chapter offers a number of alternatives along with detailed character creation options for non-human species. However, if this is your first MYTHRAS character, stick with the rules for humans given in this chapter before branching out into something more exotic.

CHARACTERISTICS

Every sapient creature, be it human, elder race, or monster, is defined by seven characteristics. Each characteristic tells you something about your character; how strong or fast he or she is; how clever or healthy. Characteristics are at the core of every MYTHRAS

This chapter outlines the initial steps for Character Creation. The following chapters provide additional detail, but the essentials are found here.

Every player in MYTHRAS controls a character. A character is the player's alter-ego, his role in the game, and is usually very different, physically and mentally, to the player. MYTHRAS characters can be from a variety of races – although humans are probably the most common, and certainly the best choice for beginning players – and every race is defined in the same way.

The basic character is defined by a series of different elements that describe the character's capabilities. These elements are:

- ✧ Characteristics: such as Strength or Charisma
- ✧ Attributes: things like Height or Movement
- ✧ Standard Skills: expertise in fundamental abilities which everyone shares

Most of these elements are described in terms of numbers, and some are dependent on or calculated by others. What each element means, and how they are determined, is described in the following sections.

DESIGNING A CHARACTER

Characters are usually recorded on a character sheet, which is a handy way of organizing all the information about the character. A blank character sheet is included on pages [302-303](#), but it is recommended that you first design your character using scratch paper, and then transfer the information to a character sheet once you have gone through each step of the character creation process. Work through each element one step at a time before proceeding to the next. Use a pencil and have an eraser handy; certain numbers such as skill values will change several times during the character creation process.

character, and form the basis for most of the other elements such as Attributes and Skills. The seven characteristics are:

- ✧ Strength (STR)
- ✧ Constitution (CON)
- ✧ Size (SIZ)
- ✧ Dexterity (DEX)
- ✧ Intelligence (INT)
- ✧ Power (POW)
- ✧ Charisma (CHA)

Before calculating the characteristics, the following section explains what each represents.

STRENGTH (STR)

STR represents physical strength: how much one can lift, how hard one can hit, and so on. Characters with a high STR are likely to be more heavily muscled whilst those with a low STR are somewhat on the scrawny side. STR is a component of the Damage Modifier (see page 9). If a character is reduced to zero STR he lacks the ability to move or lift objects, becoming bedridden until STR improves somehow (through natural healing or magic, for example).

CONSTITUTION (CON)

CON is measure of health and hardiness. Those with a high CON are physically tough, and likely to be more resistant to disease or poison. Those with a low CON are less resilient, and may be prone to sickness and tire quickly. CON is a component in determining Hit Points (see page 10), and Healing Rate (see page 9). If CON falls to zero for any reason the character dies.

SIZE (SIZ)

SIZ measures mass and helps indicate height and weight. The larger the SIZ the heavier or bigger the creature is likely to be. Most creatures' SIZ has a higher minimum value than other characteristics, representing the smallest example of an adult of that race; which in the case of humans is 8. SIZ is used to help figure Hit Points (see page 10), as larger, heavier creatures tend to have greater endurance against damage. SIZ can also be used to determine a character's Damage Modifier, since mass helps to increase the force of a blow. SIZ provides rough limits to Height and Weight, depending on the character's body frame (see page 9). If SIZ drops below the species minimum they are considered to have wasted away to the point they are bedridden.



ANATHAYM'S SAGA

The cover of this book shows a female warrior, Anathaym, battling for her life against a creature intent on killing her. Throughout MYTHRAS we'll be using Anathaym as an example of a character and, through her, showing how the MYTHRAS rules work. Her saga begins here, with character creation. Emma, the player, is creating her first MYTHRAS character and has already decided that she will call her Anathaym. Emma's Games Master, Steve, has told all the players that his MYTHRAS campaign will be set in a fantasy world based heavily on ancient Greece, so Emma and her fellow players, Dave, Colin, and Jo, know a little about the world their characters will inhabit, and how to picture it.

Anathaym's world centres on a city-state called Meeros. The rules examples make mention of Meeros frequently, its inhabitants and general culture (which is late Bronze Age). Meeros's enemies are the barbarians known as the Badoshi Warlords.

As well as Anathaym several other example characters are used: Kara - Anathaym's sister and a priestess; Zamothis - Anathaym's combat tutor; Xenos - A Meerish warrior and Anathaym's hated rival; Kratos - A sorcerer bent on destroying Meeros; Mju - a wandering mystic of the plateau desert nomads.

Meeros is used simply as a backdrop for the rules examples; the world is not developed beyond these illustrations, and it does not form a MYTHRAS default setting. Games Masters can, of course, use Meeros in their own games developing it as they need if they so desire.

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Agility, balance, and reflexes are measured by DEX. Characters with high DEX are fast, nimble, and graceful of movement. Those with a low DEX tend to be lumbering and clumsy. DEX is an important aspect of Action Points (see page 8), and Initiative Bonus (see page 10). If a character is reduced to zero DEX they suffer functional paralysis, unable to move until the situation is rectified.

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

INT is measurement of cognitive ability. It indicates the capacity for a character to think both logically and creatively. Those with a lower INT score are not necessarily stupid, but they are likely to be constrained in how creatively they can employ their wits. Creatures with an INT of 7 or below are considered sentient, retaining animal level instinct, and able to react to stimuli. Individuals with an INT of 8 or higher are deemed fully sapient. INT is a factor in calculating Action Points (see page 8), and Initiative Bonus (see page 10). If INT is reduced to zero the character becomes completely mindless.

POWER (POW)

Power is a measurement of a character's soul, spirit, inner drive, and capacity for magic. It encompasses a number of different things and is a relatively abstract measurement, but is also one of the most important. POW is the characteristic that marks a character out to the gods or other supernatural powers, and is an indication of divine or magical potential, as well as being an indication of

the force of their personal determination. POW governs a character's Magic Points (see page 10), and Luck Points (see page 10). If a character's POW ever drops to zero they lose all independent will.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma measures personality, and is independent of physical appearance. Someone with a high CHA for example, might be ugly or plain to look at, but blessed with a charm and wit that more than compensates for not being handsome. Likewise a low CHA might indicate someone who is radiantly beautiful but utterly shallow or simply meek. A good CHA is often useful for those who wish to be leaders or centres of their local community. Diehard loners and submissive followers tend towards the other extreme. CHA affects a character's Experience Modifier (see page 9). If CHA is ever falls to zero, the character can no longer socially interact with others, becoming so painfully shy or antisocial they are ignored or even driven away.

CALCULATING CHARACTERISTICS

Each characteristic has a numerical value to determine how potent it is. Characteristic values can be calculated in one of several ways; either by random dice rolls or by allocating a predetermined number of points. Which method to be used is governed by the Games Master.

Games Masters are free to modify rolling techniques or values to suit their own campaigns. For instance if the Games Master wished randomly rolled player characters to be more heroic, or at least free from handicap, he could permit the re-roll of an unusually low result; or allow the player to take up to three points from one characteristic, and assign them to another providing the new scores do not exceed the normal characteristic range; or even permit one of the dice used to roll each characteristic to be substituted for its full value. Likewise if using point allocation, a character can simply be assigned a larger pool of characteristic points.

By default, the options listed below are suggested.

DICE ROLL, IN ORDER

Roll the indicated dice for STR, CON, SIZ, DEX, INT, POW and CHA taking each rolled score as it comes. Since the results of these rolls can be somewhat random, it is often better to decide on a character concept after the dice are rolled. Otherwise the final characteristics may preclude a preconceived role.

The dice used depends on the creature or race chosen. For humans roll 3d6 for STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA; then 2d6+6 for SIZ and INT. Other species use the dice listed against their entry in the Creatures chapter.

DICE ROLL, ASSIGN

As above, except that the player may exchange values between characteristics with the same dice range. For example when rolling up a human, the player could swap values between the STR, CON, DEX, POW and CHA characteristics which share a 3d6 range, or between the SIZ and INT characteristics with their 2d6+6 range – but never switch over rolls from one group to the other.

POINTS BUILD

Instead of rolling dice to determine characteristics, players build their character from a preset pool of 80 points. Certain rules apply to the points build option:

- ✧ 1 point in a characteristic costs 1 Point from the Points Build pool
- ✧ Characteristics cannot be *lower* than the minimum value or *greater* than maximum value of that characteristic
- ✧ All Characteristic Points must be used in the design process. Points cannot be held over or used for anything else.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character also has a set of attributes. These are particular capabilities derived from the characteristics, or determined by them that are used to govern certain factors of game play. The attributes are:

- ✧ Action Points
- ✧ Damage Modifier
- ✧ Experience Modifier
- ✧ Healing Rate
- ✧ Height and Weight
- ✧ Hit Points
- ✧ Initiative Bonus
- ✧ Luck Points
- ✧ Magic Points
- ✧ Movement Rate

ACTION POINTS

How often a character can act in a combat round (see the Combat chapter) is determined by Action Points. How they are used is discussed in more detail on page 91, but to determine a character's base number of Action Points take the sum of INT and DEX, and consult the chart below:

ACTION POINTS

INT + DEX	Action Points
12 or Less	1
13–24	2
25–36	3
For every additional 12 points	+1

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *INT: Clever characters can more easily exploit openings, and opportunities that lend them an edge in combat*
- ✧ *DEX: Agile characters react more quickly, and can therefore act more often during combat*

DAMAGE MODIFIER

The bonus amount of damage a character inflicts when they physically strike or apply force. It is generally used in combat situations, but can also be utilised when attempting to break objects.

The damage modifier is an extra die roll which is either added to, or subtracted from, the damage inflicted by the weapon or tool. If a negative damage modifier takes a weapon's damage to zero or below then no damage at all has been inflicted.

Add together STR and SIZ, and consult the Damage Modifier table:

DAMAGE MODIFIER

STR + SIZ	Damage Modifier
5 or Less	-1d8
6-10	-1d6
11-15	-1d4
16-20	-1d2
21-25	+0
26-30	+1d2
31-35	+1d4
36-40	+1d6
41-45	+1d8
46-50	+1d10
51-60	+1d12
61-70	+2d6
71-80	+1d8+1d6
81-90	+2d8
91-100	+1d10+1d8
101-110	+2d10
111-120	+2d10+1d2
121-130	+2d10+1d4
Each 10 points	Continue Progression

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *STR: stronger characters can apply more brute force*
- ✧ *SIZ: greater size usually indicates greater mass or leverage*

EXPERIENCE MODIFIER

Over the course of play characters improve their skills and capabilities. This is achieved through the use of Experience Rolls which are explained in more detail on page 71.

A character's CHA score may adjust the number of Experience Rolls the character has, reflecting the relationship he has with his peers, and his reputation in his community. If CHA is high people are willing to put themselves out to help train or support the character whilst they undergo tuition. Conversely, if CHA is particularly low, there may be some difficulty improving one's capabilities without the assistance of others; finding someone to spar against for example.

EXPERIENCE MODIFIER

CHA	Exp. Modifier
6 or Less	-1
7-12	0
13-18	+1
Each 6 points	+1

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *CHA: charismatic characters possess greater force of personality and the ability to encourage co-operation from friends, comrades, and peers*

HEALING RATE

After receiving injuries, a character needs to recuperate. Healing Rate determines how quickly they naturally recover from wounds. Depending on the severity of the injury (see page 80), the Healing Rate denotes how many Hit Points are recovered per day, week or month.

HEALING RATE

CON	Healing Rate
6 or Less	1
7-12	2
13-18	3
Each 6 points	+1

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

A character's height and weight depend on two things: SIZ, and the character's body frame. Three body frames are provided; lithe (slender, athletic, underweight), medium, and heavy (broad shouldered, barrel-chested, overweight). Players are free to pick their preferred frame depending on how they envisage the character. If non-humans are being created, race may limit the choice of body frame.

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

SIZ	Height (cm)	Lithe (Kg)	Medium (Kg)	Heavy (Kg)
1	1-45	1-5	1-7	1-9
2	46-80	6-10	8-14	10-18
3	81-105	11-15	15-21	19-27
4	106-120	16-20	22-28	28-36
5	121-130	21-25	29-35	37-45
6	131-140	26-30	36-42	46-54
7	141-150	31-35	43-49	55-63
8	151-155	36-40	50-56	64-72
9	156-160	41-45	57-63	73-81
10	161-165	46-50	64-70	82-90
11	166-170	51-55	71-77	91-99
12	171-175	56-60	78-84	100-108
13	176-180	61-65	85-91	109-117
14	181-185	66-70	92-98	118-126
15	186-190	71-75	99-105	127-135
16	191-195	76-80	106-112	136-144
17	196-200	81-85	113-119	145-153
18	201-205	86-90	120-126	154-162
19	206-210	91-95	127-133	163-171
20	211-215	96-100	134-140	172-180
21	216-220	101-105	141-147	181-189
Each point	+5 cm	+5 Kg	+7 Kg	+9 Kg

HIT POINTS PER LOCATION

Location	1–5	6–10	11–15	16–20	21–25	26–30	31–35	36–40	+5 pts
Leg	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	+1
Abdomen	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+1
Chest	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	+1
Each Arm	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	+1
Head	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	+1

To calculate height and weight, which is measured in centimetres and kilos, cross reference SIZ with the body frame selected. The result is a range of values that your character's height and weight falls into. You should choose the actual value from within this range.

The Height and Weight table can, of course, be used to determine the physical properties of anything, but is primarily designed to reflect humanoids. Other creatures however can have more extreme body frames beyond those given here. See the Creatures chapter, page [224](#).

HIT POINTS

Hit Points represent how much injury an area of the body can withstand before it becomes useless, possibly resulting in incapacitation, and ultimately the character's death. The body of every creature is divided into separate locations – humans for example have seven; the head, chest, abdomen, arms, and legs – each location with its own hit points.

Some creatures, such as monsters or different classes of animal, by their very nature often have radically different body structures, yet each location they possess still has Hit Points. When a location's hit points are reduced to a certain level through damage of any kind, then the character suffers certain consequences that reflect the severity of the injury. For further information concerning wounds see page [80](#).

To calculate the Hit Points of each location, add CON and SIZ together and cross-reference on the Hit Points table.

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *CON: healthy, resilient individuals can withstand more punishment than frailer ones*
- ✧ *SIZ: greater bulk helps absorb damage, and reduce the significance of an injury*

INITIATIVE BONUS

The moment at which someone reacts in combat is governed by initiative. Initiative Bonus acts as a modifier to initiative rolls; the higher the bonus, the faster one responds in a combat situation, determining when you can act. Further factors – armour for example – modify it. The Combat chapter goes into more detail on how Initiative works (see page [90](#)).

Initiative Bonus is the average of the DEX and INT characteristics.

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *INT: clever fighters can predict attacks and anticipate their opponent's strategies*
- ✧ *DEX: faster characters react and respond more quickly than slower ones*

CON+SIZ

LUCK POINTS

Luck Points represent that strange force differentiating adventuring heroes from everyday folk. Call it fate, karma or simple good fortune. Luck Points can be used to:

- ✧ Re-roll the dice, if they are unfavourable
- ✧ Mitigate physical damage or other unfortunate circumstances
- ✧ Gain an edge at a vital moment in combat

Exactly how they are used, and when, is described on page [81](#).

Once a Luck Point is spent, the pool decreases; when one is out of Luck Points, no more are available – unless the Games Master makes an impromptu award – until the next game session when they replenish to their normal value.

LUCK POINTS

POW	Luck Points
6 or Less	1
7–12	2
13–18	3
Each 6 points	+1

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *POW: power is a measure of luck and divine favour; a gift of fate, or the ability to cheat it*

MAGIC POINTS

Mystical abilities and spells cast in MYTHRAS usually rely on Magic Points. Since the availability of magic may be limited by a campaign setting or to specific magical professions, some characters will find this Attribute superfluous.

For those who can utilise such powers, a character's Magic Points are equal to their POW. These points are used to cast spells, the cost of which is dependent on the type of magic used. When the caster runs out of Magic Points he has exhausted his ability to cast any spells until they are replenished.

The Reasons Why...

- ✧ *POW: Power is a measure of both willpower – used to command the magical fabric – and the psychic strength the character channels from their environment*

MOVEMENT RATE

Movement is not calculated from Characteristics but is a default value which differs between species. The base Movement Rate for humans is 6 metres, although certain skills can improve this. The section on Movement, on page [69](#) offers more detail.

STANDARD SKILLS

By default, every Adventurer has a range of Standard skills allowing him to perform a variety of actions with varying degrees of expertise. These skills are detailed more fully in the Skills chapter, but cover a range of everyday activities and local knowledge which anyone can use without specialised training. At this point of character creation, players will only need to know the base values of each Standard skill.

The basic score of each Standard skill is determined by the sum of two characteristics or a multiple of a single characteristic. The value represents the character's innate competence in a given area, in effect their raw talent before any formative training received as part of his culture and profession.

The Standard Skills Table shows how the basic values are calculated, along with a brief description of what the skill is and does. The score represents the percentage chance of success for a skill; so, an Athletics score of 25 is expressed as 25%. How skill percentages work, and more detailed skill descriptions are provided in the Skills chapter.

Note that the basic percentages for some skills will be modified by both culture and profession, so these starting values will change as character creation progresses.

STANDARD SKILLS

Skill	Basic Percentage
Athletics	STR+DEX
Boating	STR+CON
Brawn	STR+SIZ
Conceal	DEX+POW
Customs	INTx2
Dance	DEX+CHA
Deceit	INT+CHA
Drive	DEX+POW
Endurance	CON x2
Evade	DEX x2
First Aid	INT+DEX
Influence	CHA x2
Insight	INT+POW
Locale	INT x2
Native Tongue	INT+CHA
Perception	INT+POW
Ride	DEX+POW
Sing	CHA+POW
Stealth	DEX+INT
Swim	STR+CON
Unarmed	STR+DEX
Willpower	POW x2

ANATHAYM'S SAGA

Emma prepares to create Anathaym, a human adventuress. The campaign uses the assigned dice roll method, so characteristic rolls are made first, and then allocated to the characteristics as the players wish. Emma rolls the following on 3d6: 11, 7, 13, 9, and 16. Since humans calculate their SIZ and INT using different dice, she then rolls 2d6+6 twice, and gains a 10 and 14. After some thought Emma assigns them thus: STR 11, CON 13, SIZ 10, DEX 16, INT 14, POW 7, CHA 9

For a human, Anathaym is of average strength, and fairly hardy. She is small, reasonably smart, yet is somewhat unlucky. On the other hand she has excellent reflexes. Last but by no means least, her charisma is a little below average, probably indicating she is slightly shy.

Characteristics assigned, Emma now figures Anathaym's attributes.

Action Points: with INT and DEX totaling 30, Anathaym has 3 Action Points. She can think and act quickly in perilous situations.

Damage Bonus: Anathaym's STR 11 and SIZ 10 give a total of 21, which means she has no Damage Bonus. Although Anathaym has a small physique, her strength partially counteracts her stature, preventing any loss of power when attempting to damage something.

Experience Modifier: Anathaym's CHA 9 results in no Experience Modifier. Anathaym is somewhat unassuming, finding it a little difficult to make friends and accept others into her trust.

Healing Rate: Anathaym's CON 13 results in a Healing Rate of 3. Whilst unexceptional in terms of size and strength, Anathaym heals from her wounds quickly.

Height & Weight: Emma has decided that she would like Anathaym to be slender. So she cross references Anathaym's SIZ on the Lithe column for her Weight. At SIZ 10 she is between 161 and 165 centimetres tall – Emma settles on 165 – and she weighs between 46 and 50 kilos. Emma decides that Anathaym is at the lower end of the scale, and opts for 47kg. Emma reasons that Anathaym is willowy to the point of looking ascetically thin – an appearance which leads many to underestimate her.

Hit Points: CON 13 and SIZ 10 means Anathaym's Hit Points will be average, her hardiness compensating for her small, slight frame. Adding CON and SIZ gives a result of 23 which denotes that she has 5 Hit Points in her Head and Legs, 7 in her Chest, 6 in her abdomen, and 4 in her Arms. Anathaym is tougher than she looks.

Initiative Bonus: With INT 14 and DEX 16, Anathaym has a Initiative Bonus of 15. She often acts first in combat, seizing the initiative.

Luck Points: Anathaym has a POW of 7 which grants her 2 Luck Points. Thus, twice a game session, she can call upon these Luck Points to aid her in a variety of different ways.

POW 7 gives Anathaym only 7 Magic Points. She isn't particularly concerned; she's smart and agile, and those traits are more important to her.

Anathaym's Standard Skills work out as follows:

Athletics 27%, Boating 24%, Brawn 21%, Customs 28%, Dance 25%, Deceit 23%, Drive 23%, Endurance 26%, Evade 32%, First Aid 30%, Influence 18%, Insight 21%, Locale 28%, Native Tongue 23%, Perception 21%, Ride 23%, Sing 16%, Sleight 25%, Stealth 30%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 27%, Willpower 14%.

Clearly at this stage her weakest Standard Skill is Willpower, reflecting her shyness and lack of self-confidence; whereas her best is Evade indicating Anathaym's natural grace and coordination. These raw talents will be further improved by her cultural upbringing and chosen profession as described in the following two chapters.

COMBAT STYLES

A Combat Style is the skill relating to fighting and the use of weapons. It is a diverse skill with many specialisations related to the culture or profession which teaches it. Most fighting traditions encompass training in multiple weapons, along with the techniques required to use them all effectively, whether singly or in combination. In addition they often assume a situational element, such as fighting as close order infantry or whilst mounted. Therefore a Combat Style is an umbrella skill that melds together many related aspects of fighting under a single ability, removing the need to purchase multiple sub skills.

All Combat Styles have a Basic Percentage equal to STR+DEX.

Since most people can pick up a weapon and instinctively either swing, throw or fire it, Combat Styles are considered Standard Skills. Yet due to their potentially diverse nature, they are categorised and defined separately, under names suitable to the genre of the game setting.

For example, a campaign centred on professional gladiators, where set-piece bouts between conflicting weapon techniques is important, a character might learn the Combat Style (Retiarius) or Combat Style (Murmillo); whereas a travelling merchant campaign might feature wandering tribesmen with Combat Style (Horse Nomad) instead. The precise weapons covered by a particular style are normally defined by the Games Master (for further details see Combat page [88](#)).

Characters learn Combat Styles as part of their culture and profession, as described in the following two chapters.