# Game Concept

I want to create a game where people create a character based on themselves. The Character grows with the player and real world improvements improve your character. The Character can be played in a TTRPG style game (with a in app game to follow eventually) that can take place in several different eras, such as wild west, colonial times, or even several versions of the future, to see how you might survive in these eras. The games can be as true to life or fantastic as the story teller (game master) wants it to be to test their player’s characters real world skills in a fantasy land. Rules for world building will be various expansions later.

# Character Sheet information

## Identity & Age Points

* Birthday: Sets the Sun Sign (Fixed) and Age.
* Character Creation Age Points: Players receive 1 Attribute Point and 3 Skill Points for every year of life after age 15.
* The Character Creation and vocation interviews determine, by percentage, where these points are initially distributed
* Leveling up at the character/player’s birthday is handled differently and does not overlap with the character creation process

## The 10 Core Attributes

The system is built on 10 attributes divided into four categories: Physical, Mental, Social, and Worldly. Instead of traditional DnD stats, characters are defined by four pillars:

* Physical: Strength (Power), Fortitude (Stamina), Dexterity (Agility).
* Mental: Wisdom (Riddles/Complexity), Perception (Senses), Ingenuity (Creative Problem Solving).
* Social: Empathy (Emotional Intel), Composure (Calm under duress), Conviction (Persuasion/Negotiation).
* Worldly: Aura (Spiritual signature and external chance/luck).
* Scale Range: 1–10
* The Baseline (2): Represents the "Unencumbered Average." A modern person with a sedentary job and minimal social/physical exertion starts with 2s across the board.
* The Peak (10): Represents the absolute human limit

| **Category** | **Attribute** | **Function & Description** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Physical | Strength | Raw physical power and the capacity to exert force. |
|  | Fortitude | Physical stamina and endurance. (Primary Physical Defense) |
|  | Dexterity | Agility, hand-eye coordination, and physical finesse. |
| Mental | Wisdom | Understanding complex ideas, art, literature, and whimsical riddles. |
|  | Perception | Awareness of the environment. (Primary Mental Defense) |
|  | Ingenuity | Creative problem-solving, invention, and lateral thinking. |
| Social | Emotional Intelligence | Empathy; understanding the thoughts and emotions of others. |
|  | Composure | Force of personality and calmness. (Primary Social Defense) |
|  | Conviction | The ability to persuade, argue, and negotiate effectively. |
| Worldly | Aura | The character’s spiritual signature; influences environmental chance. |

To ensure balance, three specific attributes act as the primary "shields" against different types of threats. These defenses can overlap depending on the situation.

* Physical Defense (Fortitude): Used to resist pain, exhaustion, toxins, and physical wear.
* Mental Defense (Perception): Used as a "filter" to see through illusions, detect lies, and sense magical trickery.
* Social Defense (Composure): Used as a "mental anchor" to resist fear, social pressure, and maintain a facade/poker face

### Aura

Aura is a unique Worldly attribute that acts as a buffer for failure. In one chat it was described like this:  
If we treat Aura as a safety net, it explains why a 2 is the baseline: most people don't have a "guardian angel" effect helping them when they fail. If you have a 0, the universe is actively working against your mistakes, making them worse (a "Crit Fail" magnet). If you have a 10, your "hunches" are almost supernaturally guided.

### **Aura: The Dual-Layer System**

* **Layer 1: The Aura Stat (Scale 1–10)**
  + **Purpose:** Used for storytelling, narrative weight, and active die rolls (e.g., standard attribute checks or the 2d10 fail-mitigation test).
  + **Nature:** A permanent attribute score that represents the character's spiritual or intuitive depth.
* **Layer 2: The Aura Pool (Fixed 3-Point "Burn" Resource)**
  + **Purpose:** A consumable resource used for high-impact mitigation or refilling the Ability Pool.
  + **Nature:** A flat pool of 3 points that exists alongside the stat. It starts fully charged at each Snapshot and does not scale with the 1–10 attribute level.

**Clarifying Note:** > "The Aura Attribute (1–10) determines *how well* you use the power, while the Aura Pool (3 Points) determines *how often* you can try to force a result before needing a rest."

* Usage: 3 point pool under the stat level that can be burnt for several reasons
  + Example: Aura 5 (X) ( ) ( ) [Aura level 5, 1 burnt usage)
  + Option 1: When a primary attribute check fails, a player may "Test their Aura." Burn a point and roll 2d10, then using the formula in the Mitigation test section below, DC 15 recommended but can be adjusted for circumstances, such as 1.5x or 2x the difficulty of the original roll \*\*is DC 15 a good average for this?
    - Mitigation: A successful Aura roll can prevent the negative consequences of a failed check (e.g., you don't solve the lock, but you don't break your pick either).
    - Failing Upward: High Aura rolls on a failure can result in unexpected positive outcomes.
    - If the Aura Roll fails, the story teller can either treat it as a regular failure, or make it even worse (not only do you not pick the lock, you set off the alarm too)
      * The "Bad Luck" Floor (1): Characters with exceptionally low Aura suffer from "Critical Failure Magnets," where standard failures often escalate into fumbles.
  + Option 2: Burn a point for advantage
    - Can burn a Aura Point to :
      * A complete reroll
      * negating environmental hazards
  + Burnt points are not subtracted from the master character sheet, only from the snapshot
  + The pool is refilled by resting in game, 1 point at at time per in-game day but only if the character gets to rest
  + A failed roll can still be offset with either a TP/IP/SP point or by burning an Aura Point for either a luck roll, or a reroll

**1. The Aura Check (Active Resolution)**

* **Purpose:** Used when a character proactively uses their intuition, spiritual depth, or "vibes" to accomplish a task.
* **The Math:** $1d10 + Aura\ Stat + Skill\ Tier$
* **Logic:** This follows the **Core Standard Loop** used for all other attributes.

**2. The Aura Mitigation Test (Reactive Fail-Safe)**

* **Purpose:** A special mechanic used only to prevent "Math Rot" or total failure when a standard roll results in a 0 or 1.
* **The Math:** $1d10(high) + Aura\ Stat - 1d10(low)$
* **Logic:** This is a **unique resolution formula** reserved exclusively for the "Safety Net" mechanic and is never used for standard actions.

"The 2d10 formula is a 'System adjustment’' and does not replace the Core Standard Loop,"

## The Foundation (Education & Environment)

Players choose a path for their formative years (15–22) during the interview process. This accounts for education level without penalizing those who lacked formal schooling.

* Academic: Heavy Scholarship weight.
* Vocational: Heavy Training weight.
* Hard Knocks: Heavy Instinct weight.
* Service: Heavy Social/Physical weight.

Integrating an **Education Section** into the history step is a vital bridge between the "Age Points" and the "Weighted Percentages." It allows us to account for where those years between 15 and 25 (or beyond) actually went.

To solve your "hiccup" regarding different levels of education, we can treat education not as a requirement, but as a **Weighting Modifier**. In this system, "Life" is just as much an educator as "College."

### **The Education Weighting Logic**

Instead of penalizing those without formal schooling, we categorize the *type* of environment the player was in during those formative years. Every year counts toward the point pool, but the **Education Path** determines where the weights fall.

| **Education Path** | **Primary Weighting Shift** | **Logic** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Traditional Academic** (High School/College) | + Scholarship Column | Focuses on **Analysis** and **Research**. |
| **Vocational/Trade** (Apprenticeship/Tech School) | + Training Column | Focuses on **Maintenance** and **Technique**. |
| **School of Hard Knocks** (Self-Taught/Early Work) | + Instincts Column | Focuses on **Intuition** and **Alertness**. |
| **Military/Service** (Basic Training/Academy) | + Social & Physical Pillars | Focuses on **Composure**, **Coordination**, and **Conviction**. |

### **Handling the "Lacking Education" Scenario**

If a player did not finish high school or lacked formal "Extended Education," they aren't "behind" in points—they just spent those points in a different environment.

1. **The Point Parity:** A 20-year-old high school dropout has the exact same **5 Age Points** as a 20-year-old college sophomore.
2. **The Weighting Difference:** \* The **Student** likely weighs heavily into **Scholarship: Analysis**.
   * The **Dropout** who started working construction or navigating difficult street environments weighs heavily into **Training: Coordination** or **Instinct: Alertness**.

### **The "Unfinished" Modifier**

We can add a "Years Completed" toggle. If someone did 2 years of a 4-year degree, they get the **Scholarship** weight for those 2 years, and the remaining years are calculated based on whatever they did next (Job/Hobby history).

This ensures a "High School level education" isn't a gatekeeper, but a specific type of weight. Someone who left school early to work on a farm isn't "uneducated" in your system; they are simply **Highly Trained** in a way a student is not.

## 9 Universal Abilities/custom skills

### **The Abilities Table**

| **Instincts (Innate) Instinct Points Pool (IP)** | **Training (Vocal/Hands-on) Training Points Pool (TP)** | **Scholarship (Academic/Theory) Scholarship Points Pool (SP)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Alertness (Physical)** | **Coordination (Physical)** | **Research (Physical)** |
| **Social Cues (Social)** | **Technique (Social)** | **Analysis (Social)** |
| **Intuition (Mental)** | **Maintenance (Mental)** | **Instruction (Mental)** |
| [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) |
| [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) |
| [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) | [Custom Slot] (Anchor: \_\_\_) |
| [Vocation Journeyman Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) | [Vocation Journeyman Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) | [Vocation Journeyman Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) |
| [Vocation Expert Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) | [Vocation Expert Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) | [Vocation Expert Custom Slot](Anchor:\_\_\_) |

* Skills creates a consistent language for all characters, while the 9 Custom Slots (3 per column) allow for the infinite complexity of real-world professions and hobbies.
  + "A Vocation at **Journeyman** or **Expert** level grants the ability to expand a **Resource Pool** (IP, TP, or SP) beyond the standard 3-slot limit. This expansion should be a logical progression of that specific Vocation."
  + This can be expanded to a 4th skill in a column at Vocation Journeyman and a 5th at Vocation Expert.
  + Not every job will have 9 skills, but the max is 3 per column until a specific level is reached.
  + This 9 custom skill limit is FOR THE CHARACTER not the job. Depreciated skills may be removed to add new but the 4th and 5th levels are for specific vocations
* Skills are provided levels 1-10; 1-2 is skill Novice, 3-4 is skill Apprentice, 5-6 is skill Journeyman, 7-9 is skill Expert, 10 is Skill Master. The levels are 1-10, and the different Tiers are explained used for rolls and other bonuses.

Skill Proficiency Table

| Level | Title | Tier Rank (for Bonus Calculation) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Novice | 1 |
| 2 | Novice | 1 |
| 3 | Apprentice | 2 |
| 4 | Apprentice | 2 |
| 5 | Journeyman | 3 |
| 6 | Journeyman | 3 |
| 7 | Expert | 4 |
| 8 | Expert | 4 |
| 9 | Expert | 4 |
| 10 | Master | 5 |

* **The 1-10 Scale:** Used for detailed advancement and specific difficulty checks.
* **The 1-5 Tier Rank:** Used when a rule calls for a "Tier Bonus" (e.g., Roll = 1d10 + Attribute + Tier Rank).
* **Expert Range:** Note that the "skill Expert" tier is broader (Levels 7-9) to reflect the significant effort required to bridge the gap between Skill Journeyman and skill Master.

### **Revised Skill Tier Statement**

* + "Skill proficiency is measured on a scale of 1 to 10. These numerical levels are grouped into five **Proficiency Tiers (Titles)**. The numerical level represents the specific degree of mastery, while the Title determines the mechanical bonuses or narrative permissions associated with that tier."
* A 4th custom skill can be added to one of the columns when a person reaches Vocation Journeyman level and a 5th at Vocation Expert. The Vocation Master level bonuses are in the game mechanics, and we may add some later
* Math Note: The backend calculates with high precision (decimals) to prevent "math rot." The UI displays whole points, while mechanics/active math round to the nearest 0.5.
* here is the finalized Abilities Table and the Anchor Rule as we've defined them.

**Base Slot Capacity:** Starting characters are limited to 9 Custom Skill Slots in addition to the 9 universal skills, distributed as 3 slots per attribute column (Physical, Mental, Social).

**Vocation Scaling:** The 9-slot limit is the standard baseline. Additional slots are unlocked only through Vocation progression:

* **Vocation Journeyman Level:** Unlocks a 4th slot in the attribute column corresponding to the Vocation.
* **Vocation Expert Level:** Unlocks a 5th slot in the attribute column corresponding to the Vocation.

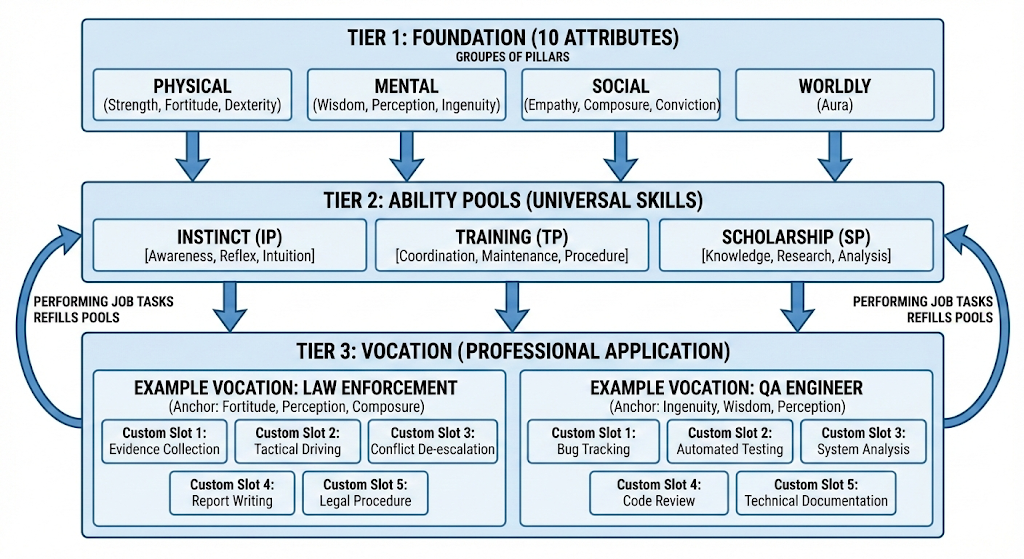
**Usage Constraint:** These 4th and 5th slots are reserved for specialized skills relevant to the Vocation and cannot be filled during the initial character creation phase unless needed for a vocation that has reached the required level.

### **System Definitions and Structural Logic**

* **Pillar vs. Resource Pool:** The system uses a grid to map abilities/skills. The horizontal **Rows** represent the **Pillars** (Physical, Social, Mental), which provide the thematic framework. The vertical **Columns** represent the **Resource Pools** (Instincts, Training, Scholarship), which designate where skills are categorized and how spendable points are allocated for gameplay.
* **Skill Slot Capacity:** A standard character is equipped with **9 Universal Skills** (fixed) and up to **9 Custom Skill Slots** (3 per Resource Pool column), for a total of 18 skills.
* **Vocation Expansion:** Upon reaching **Journeyman** or **Expert** level in a Vocation, a character may expand a Resource Pool (IP, TP, or SP) beyond the standard 3-slot limit. This allows for a **4th custom slot** within that specific column, provided the skill is a logical and articulated progression of that Vocation.
* **Attribute Nudge Exceptions:** While "Unique Attribute Nudges" from Sun Signs generally align with a Sign's primary Pillars, they are considered specialized outliers. A nudge may grant a bonus to an attribute outside of the Sign's weighted Pillars (e.g., a Social/Mental sign granting a Physical attribute nudge) without being considered a system contradiction.

The Customization Rules

1. Universal Floor: Every character starts with a baseline in the first three skills of each column (determined by the Interview/Vocation questions).
2. The "Doc Brown" Logic: Modern skills apply to any era through "Fundamental Principles." Storytellers set the DC based on the player's logical explanation.
3. There is no minimum for skills
4. Custom Slots: These represent specialized life paths. A player defines the name of the skill based on their character's background or through the vocation background.
5. The Anchor system: For any custom skill, the player must designate which of the 10 Attributes it "Anchors" to. This choice represents how that theoretical knowledge is applied in practice (e.g., Medicine anchored to Dexterity for a Surgeon, or Medicine anchored to Wisdom for a Diagnostician).

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Recovery Logic

**Since these are different types of energy, they should recover differently:**

* **IP (Instinct): Recovers when you spend time in nature, meditate, or experience a "win" (adrenaline).**
* **TP (Training): Recovers through repetitive practice or "maintenance" habits (cleaning gear, light exercise).**
* **SP (Scholar): Recovers through quiet study, reading, or solving puzzles.**

### **The Hierarchy of Character Mechanics**

To maintain system clarity, the character is defined by three distinct layers that use the **Physical, Mental, and Social** framework:

1. **The Pillars (The Themes):** The overarching conceptual categories. They act as labels for grouping both Attributes and Skills.
2. **The Attributes (The Engine):** The numerical values (e.g., Dexterity, Wisdom, Conviction) within each Pillar. These represent the character's **raw potential** and are used for base rolls and derived stats.
3. **The Resource Pools & Skills (The Application):** The **IP, TP, and SP** columns. These represent how the character **applies** their potential. Skills are the specific competencies, and Pools are the spendable energy used to trigger them.

### **Why this prevents confusion:**

* **Attributes as "Potential":** By defining Attributes as the "Engine," it protects them from being confused with "Pools" (the fuel) or "Skills" (the output).
* **Separation of Scale:** It makes it clear that a **+1 Attribute Nudge** (like your Pisces +1 Dexterity) affects the character's raw "Engine," whereas a **Vocation Skill Slot** affects their "Application."
* **Term Consistency:** It acknowledges that "Physical" is a theme that applies to both a group of stats and a row of skills, but they function on different levels of the game's math.

By framing it this way, the Attributes section remains the "source" of the character's power, and the skill grid/pool definitions we just built simply explain how that power is used.

## Character Creation & Stat Growth

* Stats are set through an "Interview" process of 20 questions to be determined later (answering questions about real-life habits/traits).
  + The Weighted Interview (G.O.A.T. Test)
    - 20 Questions / 4 Answers each / 2 Attributes per answer.
    - The 160-Hit Matrix: Each of the 10 attributes appears exactly 16 times to ensure perfect mathematical balance.
    - After the 20 question lifestyle questions, the percentages are recorded and further modified by the vocation section
* Habit Tracking: Real-world actions provide "Buffs." This is a point of refinement
  + Level ups occur on the player/characters birthday
  + Tasks are rated 1–10 based on objective system strain to determine the XP multiplier.
    - 1–2 (Passive): Can multitask easily. (1x XP)
    - 5–6 (Absorbed): Must stop task to answer a question. (2x XP)
    - 9–10 (Limit): Max physiological/mental output; requires recovery. (5x XP)
    - This scale needs to be filled in so that each number has an associated multiplier, 1 being the minimum, 5 being the maximum

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## The Escrow System

* Evolution XP: Granted immediately to the "Bank" for use on your birthday.
* Ability Pools: High-intensity real-world tasks refill spent IP/SP/TP. These points are "Escrowed" until the next session or an appropriate in-game rest period. This point has been forgotten by some chat sessions
* Finishing a major project or class provides a one-time XP burst.
  + Formula: >>Project\_Hours x Difficulty x Aura<<
* Moving from average to elite becomes increasingly difficult.
  + The **Evolution Ladder** as a **Curve Variable (C)**. Cost = Base x (Current Level)^C
* If C is **2**, the jump from Level 6 to 7 is manageable.
* If C is **3**, that same jump becomes the "almost impossible" wall you described.

\*\*The math needs to be worked out in specific detail here, what will the exponent C be? Each level needs a clear value

| Feature | Maintenance / Hobby (Steady Drip) | Accomplishment (The Burst) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Trigger | Daily/Weekly logging of a task. | Reaching a defined "Finish Line" or Milestone. |
| Frequency | Repeatable (Gym, Practice, Shift). | One-time (Cert earned, Project finished). |
| Formula | $Hours \times Difficulty \times 10$ | $Project Hours \times Difficulty \times Aura$ |
| Primary Goal | Refills Ability Pools + Banks XP. | Massive XP Deposit into the Bank. |
| Example | 1 hour of Archery (Difficulty 5) = 50 XP. | Finishing a 40-hour Python Course (Difficulty 8, Aura 5) = 1,600 XP. |

* THIS SECTION WAS REPLACED BUT I WANT TO FIND A WAY TO WEAVE IT BACK IN---The 28-Day Cycle
  + Completing a skills task in real life grants +1 Temporary Attribute point for 28 days and helps refill the associated skills pool (TP/IP/SP).
  + Temporary Buff: Logging a real-world habit grants a buff for 28 days.
    - Activity must be significant or last at least an hour to count
  + Grace Period: A 5-day window to miss a habit without losing progress.
  + Permanent Evolution: Maintaining a habit for 3 consecutive months (with grace periods) converts the temporary buff into a Permanent Attribute Point to be applied at the characters birthday up to 2 points in a skill

#### **How the Level-Up Works:**

1. **Total XP Audit:** The app tallies your Physical, Mental, and Social XP.
2. **Point Allocation:** Based on the thresholds we discussed (e.g., 500 XP for an early level), the app tells you how many **Attribute Points** you've earned for the year.
3. **The "Level 43" Moment:** Your level increases to match your age. You get a "Level Up" screen that shows your growth:
   * *"Last year you were a Level 42 vocation Journeyman Cop. This year, through your Dedicated Study, you are a Level 43 vocation Novice QA Engineer with +1 Ingenuity."*

#### **The "Leaking Tank" Rule:**

If a player is **Inconsistent** (0–1 days/week), they don't lose the XP they already earned, but they don't generate enough to hit the next threshold. They might have a "birthday" where their level goes up, but their stats stay the same because they didn't put in the "Dedicated" work to evolve.

# II. Celestial Mechanics

## Lineage: The Zodiac System

\* Sun Sign Pillar Weighting (The 3% / 1.5% Rule)

In this system, a character's "Lineage" (replacing traditional fantasy races) is determined by their Zodiac Sign. This influence dictates their base physical traits, inherent predispositions, and cosmic "flavor."

* The Concept: Characters are born under one of the twelve celestial signs. This provides a narrative and mechanical foundation for their identity.
* Mechanical Role: The Zodiac sign provides the starting "Attribute" modifiers and a unique "Sign Ability" that can be triggered during play.
* Each sign provides a "nudge" to the weighted percentages (Major: +3%, Minor: +1.5%). No two signs share the same Major/Minor/signature fingerprint.

| Sun Sign | Major Pillar (+3%) | Minor Pillar (+1.5%) | Unique +1 Attribute Nudge |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aries | Physical | Social | +1 Strength | The fire of the ram makes heavy burdens feel like feathers in your grip. |
| Taurus | Physical | Mental | +1 Fortitude | Like the mountain itself, your body stubbornly refuses to acknowledge fatigue. |
| Gemini | Mental | Social | +1 Ingenuity | Your mind is a shortcut-machine, finding the fastest path through any puzzle. |
| Cancer | Social | Physical | +1 Composure | You are the eye of the storm; chaos around you never breaches your inner shell. |
| Leo | Social | Mental | +1 Conviction | Your belief in your own path is a drumbeat that never falters or slows. |
| Virgo | Mental | Physical | +1 Wisdom | You see the "right" way to do things with a clarity that others have to study for. |
| Libra | Social | Physical | +1 Empathy | You speak the unspoken language of the room, feeling the shifts before they happen. |
| Scorpio | Social | Mental | +1 Perception | Nothing stays hidden from you; the world’s secrets reveal themselves to your gaze. |
| Sagittarius | Mental | Social | +1 Conviction | Your movements have the effortless grace of an arrow already halfway to the mark. |
| Capricorn | Physical | Mental | +1 Wisdom | You are a vessel for discipline, capable of holding more routine than most can bear. |
| Aquarius | Mental | Social | +1 Ingenuity | Your mind is a vast library with extra shelves for the strange and the new. |
| Pisces | Social | Mental | +1 Dexterity | Your soul is an ocean; you can carry a depth of raw "gut feeling" that never dries. |

### The Lunar Auspices

| # | Phase | Mechanical Nudge (+5% Total) | The Whimsical "Nudge" Description |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | New Moon | +5% Instinct (IP) | You are a seed in dark soil, sensing the world through vibrations rather than sight. Your gut knows the truth long before your mind can find the words for it. |
| 2 | Waxing Crescent | +2.5% Instinct / +2.5% Training | You are the first spark of a rising fire, eager to turn your raw hunches into repeatable habits. You learn the "how" of the world by following the whispers of your intuition. |
| 3 | First Quarter | +5% Training (TP) | You are the steady hammer on the anvil, finding your rhythm in the glorious repetition of the grind. To you, mastery is not a destination but the beautiful music of a well-oiled routine. |
| 4 | Waxing Gibbous | +2.5% Training / +2.5% Scholarship | You are the artisan perfecting the blueprint, bridging the gap between steady hands and a curious mind. You don't just follow the procedure; you study the heartbeat of the machine. |
| 5 | Full Moon | +5% Scholarship (SP) | You are the lighthouse in the storm, casting a brilliant, cold light on the hidden logic of the universe. For you, the fog of mystery evaporates under the heat of deep, focused inquiry. |
| 6 | Waning Gibbous | +2.5% Scholarship / +2.5% Aura | You are the sage returning from the mountain, carrying heavy truths that demand to be shared. Your presence carries the weight of your knowledge, turning your logic into a quiet authority. |
| 7 | Last Quarter | +5% Aura (Worldly) | You are the shadow at twilight, a presence that lingers in a room long after you have physically departed. You do not need to speak loudly to be heard; your reputation is its own gravity. |
| 8 | Waning Crescent | +2.5% Aura / +2.5% Instinct | You are the dream-walker in the thinning mist, where the world’s influence meets the soul’s deepest echoes. You walk between what is seen and what is felt, a ghost of a memory with a very real touch. |

# III. Vocation & Experience Logic

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10irqAAf_zoF_Lt-IbgKle1cRgcFXf6OU9jXPtPGcYHg/edit?usp=sharing>

Note for our future programming phase. Implementing a search filter or a vocation-matching wizard will be essential to prevent "choice paralysis" given that we're looking at 98 distinct categories.

A "Help" window or a short diagnostic questionnaire (e.g., "Do you work with your hands, people, or data?") can act as a quick-start guide to drill down from the 23 Major Groups to the specific Minor Group they need.

Instead of traditional high-fantasy archetypes (Fighter, Rogue, Mage), character roles are defined by Modern/Real-World Jobs. This creates a grounded or urban-fantasy atmosphere where expertise is derived from professional training.

* The Concept: Expertise is based on what a character did (or does) for a living. These classes determine a character’s skill set, starting equipment, and social standing.
* Mechanical Role: The Vocation provides a "Skill Package" and a "Professional Perk" that influences how the character interacts with the world’s systems.
* Players list jobs and hobbies by duration. These act as weighting blocks for specific attributes and custom skills.
* On the Character sheet the same nomenclature is used as for skills, but there are only 5 titles attached to the levels (ex. 1-skill Novice, 10-skill Master as explained elsewhere)
* The Tiered Vocation Progression (Vocation Novice → Vocation Master) Actual levels are 1-10, however the difference between a level-3-vocation-apprentice (6-7 years) and a level-4-vocation-apprentice (8-10 years) is determined by using the mid point of these ranges. The middle number pushes to the higher level, making moving from a level 4 vocation apprentice to a level 5 vocation journeyman a more rewarding event.
  + **Vocation Novice:** 0–5 Years (Learning the ropes)
  + **Vocation Apprentice:** 6–10 Years (Competent and reliable)
  + **Vocation Journeyman:** 11–15 Years (Deeply experienced; the "Veteran Floor" kicks in, extra skill slot becomes available)
  + **Vocation Expert:** 16–25 Years (High-level specialization Extra skill slot becomes available)
  + **Vocation Master:** 26+ Years (Peak of the profession; "Legendary" status)
    - The "Mastery" Bonus (Years of Service)
  + As you hit higher Tiers in a Vocation, your "Work Engine" becomes more fuel-efficient:
    - Vocation Novice/Vocation Apprentice: Standard Refill.
    - Vocation Journeyman/Vocation Expert: +1 to the Primary Refill (See refill table).
    - Vocation Master (26+ years): +2 to the Primary Refill (See refill Table) and 1 Aura Slot is automatically replenished once per 28-day cycle of consistent work.
  + As the player hits the year-markers we established (0-5, 6-10, etc.), they unlock a "Vocation Perk."
  + The Standard Pattern (Player Choice):
    - Vocation Novice: +1 to a Universal Skill in the Primary Column.
    - Vocation Apprentice: +1 to an Attribute from the Bias list.
    - Vocation Journeyman: Unlock Muscle Memory for a Custom Skill.
    - Vocation Expert: +1 to a second Attribute or a +1 Pool Capacity.
    - Vocation Master: +1 to Aura or the ability to "Teach" (Instruction).

At the end of creation, the "Maintenance Check" determines starting IP, TP, and SP levels:

* Each job should be listed by the number of years and up to 3 can be marked as “Current” so they can contribute to skill pools.
* Former employments are treated as below:
  + Current Vocation: 100% Effectiveness.
  + Previous (0-5 yrs ago): 75% Effectiveness.
  + Legacy (5-10 yrs ago): 50% Effectiveness.
  + Dormant (10+ yrs ago): 25% Effectiveness.
  + Veteran Rule: Skills practiced for 5+ years retain a 10% floor (Muscle Memory).
  + Experience is cumulative. If two jobs share core attributes or skills, the years of experience stack. This is handled by the back-end to simplify the user experience. Once there is a break the above decay rates apply.
  + Example: The Carpenter Cop
    - Mastery: A 15-year Carpenter (Journeyman) becomes a Cop.
    - Year 1 as a Cop: \* They are a Novice Cop (receiving new weights).
    - They are a Secondary Carpenter (keeping 75% of their construction-based Strength/Dexterity/Technique).
    - Year 10 as a Cop: \* They are a Senior Officer (Apprentice/Journeyman).
    - Their Carpentry is now Dormant. They still have the "Veteran Floor" for Maintenance and Technique, but their raw Strength has likely shifted toward the Composure/Alertness required for Policing.
  + We should also take into account "Do you still apply the principles of this skill in your current daily life, even if not professionally?"
    - Yes: Slows the "Decay" rate. If a dormant Mechanic still fixes their own sink, they might retain 25% of their Training Points.
    - No: The pool remains empty until an "Active Habit" is logged in the game tracker.
* Jobs held for less than 6 months, as indicated by a check box, are "Narrative History" (flavor only) and contribute 0% weight to attributes, unless a Technical Credential was earned during that time.
* Hobbies & Side Projects:
  + Capped at Level 3 (Journeyman)
  + Utility Pool: Provides a buffer pool (1–3 points) to offset TP/SP/IP costs for related real life tasks.
  + Growth: Determined by Total Life Hours (TLH) rather than seniority. (e.g., 200+ hours = Level 3).
  + Transition: A side project can transition to a Vocation, triggering a "Custom Vocation Interview."
* **Certifications:**
  + **Learning:** 25% value (+0.25 bonus).
  + **Granted:** 100% value (+1.0 bonus).
  + Expired: Uses standard skill depreciation logic.
  + Could grant a custom skill and 1 point to a standard skill, The level of the skill is determined by the same degradation as a job
* At the end of creation, the player is given 3 Bonus Skill Specializations. These represent your personal flair. As referenced above.

This adds a sophisticated layer of "hidden math" that makes the game feel like it’s actually analyzing the player’s life rather than just letting them fill out a form. The 6-month rule ensures only meaningful life-chapters affect the "Engine," and the back-end skill mapping keeps the UI clean for the user.

### **Weekly Column Refill Logic**

Refill points are earned through vocational labor and are applied to the column (Physical, Mental, Social, or Instinctual) corresponding to that vocation. The total weekly refill is the sum of days worked plus your mastery bonus.

#### **1. Base Calculation (Days Worked)**

Each full work shift or 24-hour cycle completed earns **1 Refill Point**.

* **3 Days Worked** = 3 Base Points
* **5 Days Worked** = 5 Base Points

#### **2. Vocation Mastery Bonus (Weekly Flat Addition)**

Once a character reaches a specific tier in their vocation, they earn a flat bonus at the end of each work week, regardless of how many days were worked (provided at least one shift was completed).

| **Vocation Tier** | **Weekly Bonus Points** |
| --- | --- |
| **Novice / Apprentice** | +0 Points |
| **Journeyman** | +0 Points |
| **Expert** | **+1 Point** |
| **Master** | **+2 Points** |

### **The Refill Formula**

To determine the total points available for a new iteration or in-game rest, use this calculation:

$$Total\ Weekly\ Refill = (\text{Days\ Worked}) + (\text{Mastery\ Bonus})$$

**Examples for Clarity:**

* **The Part-Timer Expert:** Works 3 days. Base (3) + Expert Bonus (1) = **4 Points.**
* **The Full-Time Expert:** Works 5 days. Base (5) + Expert Bonus (1) = **6 Points.**
* **The Full-Time Vocation Master:** Works 5 days. Base (5) + Vocation Master Bonus (2) = **7 Points.**

### **Usage Note**

Points are deposited at the end of the week. They can be used immediately to refill an active character’s pool during an in-game "Rest" or saved to fund the "Evolution" of a future character iteration.

### **I. The 6-Month Filter (The "Friction" Rule)**

If a job starts and ends in the same year, the system asks for the specific duration.

* **Under 6 Months:** The job is listed as **Narrative History**. It appears on the "Resume" for flavor but contributes **0% weight** to Attributes and provides no Tier progression.
* **Over 6 Months:** The job is promoted to **Functional History** and follows the standard recency weighting.
* **The "Credential" Exception:** If the "Technical Credential/Certification" box is checked, the player gets the **Accomplishment XP burst** (the one-time bonus) regardless of the job's duration. The knowledge was codified, even if the job didn't last.

If a job has overlapping skills, the associated skills do not depreciate, they build

**The Rule:** Your "Level 42" character is the sum of all your previous vocations.

**The Transfer:** If you spent 5 years in Retail (weighted for **Empathy**), and then move to Emergency Medicine (also weighted for **Empathy**), the years of "Empathy-focused work" simply continue to stack.

**The Result:** You walk onto the ambulance with a high "Social/Empathy" score already established. You don't need a tag to tell you that—your Attribute scores and your "Resume" history already prove it.

* **Step 1:** Compare **Job A** (Police) to **Job B** (QA).
* **Step 2:** Identify shared Skills
* **Step 3:** Apply the **Synergy Bonus**. The years spent in Job A are added to Job B *only for those specific skills*.
* **Step 4:** If no skills overlap (e.g., Retail Clerk to Oil Rig Driller), the skills remain isolated and subject to the standard **Recency Decay**.

Example Task template

| Field | Description | Example: TripleTen QA Study |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity Name | The specific real-world task. | QA Engineering Coursework |
| Pillar Affinity | Which XP bucket does this fill? | Mental |
| Pool Recharge | Which 10-point tank does this refill? | Scholarship (SP) |
| XP earned | "Duration (Hours) x Difficulty x (10) = Total Earned" |  |
| The "Logic Bridge" | What in-game skills does this improve? | Analysis, Software Testing, Logic |

This is what the "Other" form or the manual entry form looks like now:

| Field | Input Type | Function |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Vocation Name | Text | Identifying the role. |
| Duration | Date Range  (year-year) | Triggers the 6-Month Filter and Recency Weighting. |
| Pillar Affinity | Dropdown | Mental, Physical, Social, or Instinct (XP routing). |
| Core Attributes | Multi-Select (Max 3) | Attributes that receive the Tier Weighting. |
| Technical Credential? | Checkbox | If checked, opens a field for the "Accomplishment" XP. |
| Primary Column | Radio Button | Which tank (IP, TP, SP) this job refilled. |

### XP Logic

Leveling with XP is for after the initial character creation process. This does not overlap with the age based character creation process.

#### **The "Pillar" XP Pools**

Instead of one big "Level" for your whole character, you have three separate EXP buckets tied to your **Pillars**:

* **Physical EXP:** Earned from Physical Maintenance (Gym, labor, hiking).
* **Mental EXP:** Earned from Mental Maintenance (Reading, QA work, Ham radio theory).
* **Social EXP:** Earned from Social Maintenance (Leading a team, community service, teaching).
* When a Pillar bucket (like Physical) hits a threshold, the player chooses which attribute in that pillar to increase.
  + Example: You’ve been hitting the gym. You earn enough Physical EXP for a level-up. You can choose to put that into Strength (Power), Dexterity (Control), or Fortitude (Stamina).
  + Intensity Level,Definition (Weekly),Character Impact
    - Maintenance,1–2 Days/Week,"Keeps the ""Engine"" from rusting; prevents skill decay."
    - Consistent,3–4 Days/Week,Building a habit. Provides a steady stream of Standard XP.
    - Dedicated,5–7 Days/Week,"Lifestyle shift. Provides Premium XP (Multipliers) and faster
    - If you are **"Dedicated"** (5+ hours a week), you might gain +2 or +3 across different attributes by the time your birthday rolls around.

#### **The "Intensity" Multiplier (The Payout)**

When a player logs an activity, the formula would be:

$$\text{Duration (Hours)} \times \text{Difficulty (1-10)} \times \text{Base (10 XP)} = \text{Total Earned}$$

Example Table

| Hours | Low Difficulty (2) | Mid Difficulty (5) | High Difficulty (8) | Mastery/Peak (10) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 Hour | 20 XP | 50 XP | 80 XP | 100 XP |
| 2 Hours | 40 XP | 100 XP | 160 XP | 200 XP |
| 4 Hours | 80 XP | 200 XP | 320 XP | 400 XP |
| 8 Hours | 160 XP | 400 XP | 640 XP | 800 XP |

* **Maintenance Example:** 1 hour of "Routine" gym time (Difficulty 3) = **30 XP**.
* **Improvement Example:** 1 hour of "Intense" Python coding (Difficulty 8) = **80 XP**.

### **The Objective Difficulty Scale (1–10)**

This scale removes the "I'm having a bad day" subjectivity and replaces it with **System Requirements**.

| Level | Difficulty Descriptor | Objective Physiological/Mental Marker |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1-2 | Passive | You could do this while watching TV; requires almost no focus. |
| 3-4 | Routine | You can do this "in your sleep" due to habit, but you can't be distracted. |
| 5-6 | Active | Requires 100% focus; you cannot hold a conversation while doing this. |
| 7-8 | Stressful | Causes physical strain (sweat/heavy breathing) or mental strain (headache/frustration). |
| 9-10 | Max Effort | Cannot be sustained for more than an hour; requires a "recovery period" afterward. |

If we want the "Birthday Ascension" to feel earned, the thresholds need to reflect a year of actual life.

**Where does that put you?** If we use the tiered thresholds, that 27k XP is enough to push a Mental Attribute (like **Ingenuity**) from a **6 to an 8** in a single year, or maybe spread it out to move **Wisdom, Perception, and Ingenuity** all up by +1.

**The Rule of Mastery:** The higher your attribute, the "thicker" the XP requirement. It should be easy to become "Average" (Level 5), but it should take several years of "Dedicated" streaks to reach "Elite" (Level 9).

Achievement XP score: Project Hours x Difficulty x Aura Score = XP Burst

| Refill Type | Amount | Trigger / Condition | Availability |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Vocation Drip | +1 Point | Completion of a standard 24-hour cycle or work shift. | Next Session Start |
| Escrow (Earned) | +1.5 Points | 1 hour of high-intensity real-world work (Difficulty 7+). | Post-Rest / Next Session |
| Aura Slot | +2 Points | "Burn" 1 Aura Slot | Immediate (In-Session) |
| Temporal Drift | +1 to +5 Points | 8+ day hiatus (Passive Sharpening). | Upon "Thawing" Snapshot |
| Milestone Burst | +5 Points | Completion of a major life project (e.g., finishing a certification). | Next Session Start |

\*\*I need to create a system like this for the Skills as well, possibly mixing in the Attributes to the equation somehow

\* The Skill Tier Progression

I think this goes here:

Activity form?

| Field | Input | Internal Game Logic |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity Name | e.g., TripleTen Final Project | Identifies the task. |
| Linked Attribute | e.g., Ingenuity (Mental) | Routes the XP to the correct "Bucket." |
| Frequency | Maintenance vs. Improvement | Maintenance refills Pools; Improvement builds the Attribute. |
| Accomplishment? | Yes (Improvement Event) | Triggers a Milestone Bonus upon completion. |
| Difficulty (1-10) | e.g., "8" | Acts as the XP Multiplier (Intensity). |

# IV. The Attribute & Ability System (Engine vs. Fuel)

**CRITICAL RULE:** Ability Pools (IP, TP, SP) are used **ONLY** for in-game actions. Real-life work does **NOT** drain these pools; it only refills them.

The Snapshot/Escrow system

* The "Master Profile" stays in the app, but is used in specific settings via Snapshots.
* The Freeze: A snapshot saves your status in a specific story or campaign, allowing you to stay in a "cliffhanger" while your real-life self continues to evolve.
* Temporal Drift: If a campaign is on hiatus for more than 7 days (day7, no bonus, day 8 starts first bonus), you can deposit 1 point into your active pools (+1 per 7 days) to represent passive sharpening. MAX 5
  + The "Spillover" Hierarchy: 1. Points must first go to your Primary Vocational Column. 2. Once the Primary is at 10/10, points spill over into your Secondary or Tertiary columns. 3. If all columns are 10/10, any remaining Drift points are forfeited.
* Going to work for a full shift (or a productive block for self-employed/custom vocations) provides a Standard Refill to the Master Character sheet, not the snapshot. These points are available only once the character gets to rest in game or a new game is started and a new snapshot is created
  + Primary Column Refill: +1 Points Per shift (added at the end of the week).
  + Secondary Column Refill: +1 Point (Weekly).
  + Logic: Even if you are a QA Engineer (Scholarship), you still have to navigate social office politics (Training) or trust your gut on a bug (Instinct), just at a lower intensity.
* Evolution XP: Granted immediately to the "Bank" for use on your birthday.
* Ability Pools: significant real-world tasks refill spent IP/SP/TP. These points are "Escrowed" until the next session or an appropriate in-game rest period.
  + Hours x Difficulty x 10=Xp earned
* The "Maintenance Audit" Rule
  + To keep the game honest, the App/Tracker shouldn't just take the player's word for it.
  + The Verification: Players can log a photo of the "output" (a photo of the 3D print, a screenshot of a completed QA module, a GPS map of the hike).
    - These pictures/verifications can be validated by a story master and do not need to be validated internally
  + The Reward: Verifying a task grants the standard refill, but "streaks" (doing the same task 3 days in a row) might grant a small "Momentum Bonus" to the Evolution XP.

### **Internal Logic Note: Precision & Rounding**

* **The High-Precision Core:** The backend must calculate all percentages, efficiency nudges, and fractional growth (e.g., from small tasks) to at least two decimal places. This prevents "math rot" over long-term play.
* **Mechanical Rounding (0.5):** For the purpose of resolution checks, pool drains, and active math, the system rounds to the nearest half-point. This preserves the "weight" of small bonuses (like the 5% Zodiac nudge) without requiring the player to track tiny fractions.
* **Visual Rounding (1.0):** The UI displays attributes as whole numbers to maintain the classic RPG aesthetic and prevent "sheet fatigue."

\* The Attribute/Skill Scale

\* Aura (The Emergency Reserve)

\* The Aura Flare (Luck Formula)

\* The Tri-Pool System (Instinct, Training, Scholarship)

# V. Resolution & Economy

**The initial Roll:** Roll = 1d10 + Attribute (1–10) + Skill Tier (Skill Novice 1 – Skill Master 5)

| Skill Tier | Bonus | Narrative Weight |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Novice | $+1$ | Basic understanding; prone to errors but knows the goal. |
| Apprentice | $+2$ | Competent; can handle standard tasks without supervision. |
| Journeyman | $+3$ | Professional; the logic/muscle memory is second nature. |
| Expert | $+4$ | Specialist; capable of handling complex or rare edge cases. |
| Master | $+5$ | Authority; performs at the peak of human or technical capability. |

* **The Push:** Spend **Pool Point** to add **+2** to the roll result (decided post-roll).
  + This cost 1 pool point for using the skill’s associated pool, and 2 points to use a different pool (must have a narrative reason, for example a research task is related to physical due to the stamina needed for long research projects, but if you are researching in a field you are not familiar with, that may move to mental, or if you have to do research by talking to people in the witness pool of a crime scene, that would be social)
* **Critical Results (Applied AFTER Push):**
  + **Natural 10 (Flow):** Succeed + Refill 1 point to the pool.
  + **Natural 1 (Strain):** Succeed/Fail + Drain 1 point. If the pool is at 0, a narrative penalty is imposed by the Story Master.
* **The DC Scale:** Simple (5), Routine (10), Challenging (15), Expert (20), Legendary (25)
* **Opposed Checks:** Attacker vs. Defender; Defender wins ties. Features a "Push Auction" for high-stakes contests.\* The 1d10 Core Loop

### **Interpreting the Spread for DCs**

This spread shows exactly why this system is more grounded than a d20 system. Because the attributes and skills have so much weight, a "Skill Master" is mathematically incapable of failing a routine task, while a "Skill Novice" simply cannot achieve "Legendary" feats without an **Aura Burst**.

Here is how a Storyteller would set the **Difficulty Class (DC)** based on these numbers:

* **DC 5 (Simple):** Almost impossible to fail unless you have a 1 in an attribute and are untrained.
* **DC 10 (Routine):** A professional (skill Journeyman/Mid-Attr) succeeds on a roll of 1. A skill Novice with low attributes succeeds 50% of the time.
* **DC 15 (Challenging):** This is the "Professional Standard." A skill Journeyman with a mid-tier attribute succeeds 50% of the time.
* **DC 20 (Expert):** Requires specialized knowledge. A skill Journeyman can only hit this on a roll of 10 or with a peak attribute. A Skill **Expert** or Skill **Master** hits this regularly.
* **DC 25 (Legendary):** The "Impossible" task. Only a Skill **Master** with a **Peak Attribute (10)** can hit this, and only by rolling a 10.

### **Observations for the System**

1. **High Floor:** Notice how the skill **Master (Peak)** has a minimum result of **16**. This reflects real life—a vocation master technician doesn't just "forget" how to do their job because they had a bad day (roll of 1); they still perform better than a lucky skill novice.
2. **Aura Utility:** If a DC is 25 and a player only has a 22 maximum, they can use their **Aura Safety Net** to bridge the gap. It makes the Aura feel like a true spiritual push.
3. **The "Middle" is Tight:** Most gameplay will happen in the **12–18** range. This makes every $+1$ bonus from a skill tier feel like a major promotion.

### **Character Creation: The 4-Stage Process**

To get to those percentages, the programming will follow these four stages:

#### **Stage 1: The Bio-Data (The Multiplier)**

* **Input:** Current Age, Zodiac Sign
* **Calculation:** (Age - 15) = Total Creation Points.
* **Result:** This sets the "pool" that will be filled by the following stages.

#### **Stage 2: The Vocation & Avocation History (The Foundation)**

We ask for a list of Jobs and Hobbies and their duration. This influences where skill points are placed

* **Logic:** Each year in a specific field adds a weight to specific Attribute/Skill pairs.
* *Example:* "I was a Mechanic for 10 years." \*\*This is an example and does not represent the final system
  + Weighting:\*\*This should be percentages +10 Strength, +20 Dexterity, +20 Ingenuity, +30 Training: Maintenance.

#### **Stage 3: The 20-Question G.O.A.T. Test (The Nuance)**

* 20 questions, 4 answers each, 2 attributes per answer
* For each question, we will design the four answers to cover different "Pillars" or "Approaches." For example, one question might look like this:
  + Answer 1: Physical / Mental (The "Practical" approach)
  + Answer 2: Social / Worldly (The "Relational" approach)
  + Answer 3: Mental / Social (The "Analytical" approach)
  + Answer 4: Physical / Instinct (The "Reactionary" approach)
  + By rotating these pairings, the final percentages will be a highly accurate "DNA profile" of how that player has spent their life.

The Challenge of Drafting

To keep the representation equal, we would need to ensure the "Attribute Pairs" are rotated. For example, you wouldn't want Strength to always be paired with Fortitude; you’d want it occasionally paired with Composure or Ingenuity to see the different ways a player applies their power.

#### **Stage 4: The Weighing & Finalization**

The system takes the sum of weights from Stage 2 and 3, turns them into percentages, adjusted by the Zodiac Sign, and applies the Stage 1 point pool to generate the final 1–10 numbers.

Notes:Python is going to be the primary programming language for this app due to its strong logic handling and readability. But the exact coding will take place much later.

Current TO DO list:

* GOAT style questions
* Vocation list revisit to check key words
* Design character sheet for printing
* Eventually start on coding
* Examine how a low level novice differs from a high level novice in vocation and if we should reduce it from a 10 point system to a 5 point system
* Examine how we can reclassify skills instead of using the Novice…master nomenclature