# Chapter 2: Characters

In order to play, players need to create game characters. Before starting, players should discuss the setting with the GM and do a little research to make sure how their characters will fit in the world.

The starting point on creating a character is picking a race, defining the character elements, attributes, statistics (stats), skills and feats, rounding him/her with a name and personality traits and finally acquiring some equipment.

So, take a blank sheet of paper or print some character sheets, get pencils and start creating your character!

## Character creation process

Creating a character is a seven-step process.

1. Pick a race.

2. Assign the character element points and adjust the values by the selected race.

3. Calculate the attributes and derived stats.

4. Pick character skills.

5. Pick perks.

6. Select powers (if available).

7. Round up the character equipment, name, personality, background and appearance.

### Race

A lot of races inhabit the world of Warscale, some natural and some magical. Members of a race usually live with their own kind but from time to time some individuals wander away looking for adventures. It is not uncommon to find cities where members of different races mingle and coexist.

**Humans** are ubiquitous and the most abundant race in the world. They are creative and diplomatic and respect life. Humans are the first race with other races evolving from them.

Other races descend from humans, but the magical elements that permeate the world have transformed them. Those races are biased towards their element and have gained some related traits.

**Elves** are a long-lived feline-humanoid race. They are fierce protectors of life and prefer living in places with lots of plants and animals like forests. They are of good disposition but sometimes consider other races as a threat to nature.

**Dwarves** are a race of small but powerfully built humanoids. They are very faithful and protective with their friends and very fond of a good meal, strong ale and music near a fire. Dwarves like keeping records of everything and build cities and structures to last.

**Orcs** are powerful warriors. They are hot-headed, strong and extremely cunning. They are master of weapons and martial arts. Orcs respect strength and live for war.

**Melraki** are a race of extremely charismatic, cunning and manipulative humanoids. They are very charming but their pale wax-looking skin gives them a sick appearance. They are used to get what they want by any means necessary.

**Tritons** are adapted to water. They have supple and strong bodies with bluish skin and a few scales that shine in pearl, green and blue iridescence. Tritons are highly intelligent and value science and truth above anything else. They make excellent tacticians and strategists.

**Sylphs** are light, quick and nimble. They are curious and have an endless desire to explore and adventure. People say there is no place a sylph can’t get into, no matter how secure it is. They make for excellent thieves and awesome musicians. Sylphs are nomads and never settle down.

There are more details on this races on Chapter 3.

### Elements and attributes

Each character is defined by the six elements. Each element receives a value between 0 and 6. This value defines if your character is strong, nimble, smart, witty, resistant or healthy depending on the element.

A value of 0 in an attribute means the character is a newborn.

A value of 1 is equivalent to a 7-year-old kid.

A value of 2 or 3 is a normal, average adult human level.

A value of 4 represents a trained, fit or over average individual like a soldier or outdoorsman.

A value of 5 represent a highly trained, elite military or olympic level individual.

A value of 6 represents the maximum possible human capacity.

Each element defines two attributes and a number of derived stats. The attributes have the same value as the element. For example, if a character has a fire element value of 3, the strength and passion attributes are also considered to have a value of 3.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Attribute** | **Stats** |
| **Air** | **Precision** | **Attack, Defense** |
| **Speed** | **Actions per round** |
| **Death** | **Willpower** | **Magic points, rejuvenate, Death points** |
| **Charisma** | **Devotes, Fanatics** |
| **Earth** | **Durability** | **Natural armor** |
| **Memory** | **Max skills** |
| **Fire** | **Strength** | **Load** |
| **Passion** | **Command** |
| **Life** | **Health** | **HP, Healing, Lifespan, Stamina** |
| **Perception** | **Detect** |
| **Water** | **Intelligence** | **Start skills, Skills per level** |
|  | **Logic** | **Disbelief** |

Write down your element and attribute values, you don’t need to write all the stats only the most relevant like HPs

#### Assigning element points

Player characters are not common stock so their attributes will be higher than a normal human depending on the power level the GM wishes to set for the game.

##### High Adventures

In a high adventure, players should expect to fight armies, monsters, wizards, dragons, maybe destroy unique ring artifacts, but all still within human limits.

Each character starts with 1 point on each one of the 6 elements. Then the player receives 12 points to distribute as he wishes in any element. No element can go over 6.

The number of points allocated with this method is 18 and the average on each element is 3. This is the equivalent of an over the average person.

##### Heroic adventures

In a heroic adventure, player will do as in a high adventure but will also face alien outsider creatures (angels, daemons) and maybe rub elbows with demigods or avatars.

Each character starts with 2 point on each one of the 6 elements. Then the player receives 12 points to distribute as he wishes in any element. No element can go over 6.

The number of points allocated with this method is 24 and the average on each element is 4. This is the equivalent of a highly trained athlete with over average intellectual abilities.

##### Super Heroic adventures

In a super heroic adventure characters go way beyond human limits. Characters are no longer normal humans, they are gods themselves and the adventures may take them to other planets or planes of existence.

Create a heroic character. After that, the player receives 10 additional points to distribute as he wishes in the character elements OR to purchase powers. There is no limit to any element value or power level.

#### Fire element

This element represents the character musculature and brute force and also his strength of character, temper and passion.

The **strength** attribute allows him to handle heavier melee weapons, use heavier armour, deal more melee damage and affects the overall weight the character can carry.

The **passion** attribute defines how committed and passionate a character is for a cause. People will just accept the character commands because he is so sure of himself and projects such strong points of view. Passion also can be used when trying to inspire allies, rally troops or intimidate an opponent.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strength** | | | | | **Passion** |
| **Score** | **Normal Load** | **Light Load** | **Medium Load** | **Heavy Load** | **Power Load** | **Command** |
| **1** | **1** | **2** | **4** | **8** | **16** | **1** |
| **2** | **4** | **8** | **16** | **32** | **64** | **4** |
| **3** | **9** | **18** | **36** | **72** | **144** | **9** |
| **4** | **16** | **32** | **64** | **128** | **256** | **16** |
| **5** | **25** | **50** | **100** | **200** | **400** | **25** |
| **6** | **36** | **72** | **144** | **288** | **576** | **36** |
| **7** | **49** | **98** | **196** | **392** | **784** | **49** |
| **8** | **64** | **128** | **256** | **512** | **1024** | **64** |
| **9** | **81** | **162** | **324** | **648** | **1296** | **81** |
| **10** | **100** | **200** | **400** | **800** | **1600** | **100** |
| **11** | **121** | **242** | **484** | **968** | **1936** | **121** |
| **12** | **144** | **288** | **576** | **1152** | **2304** | **144** |
| **13** | **169** | **338** | **676** | **1352** | **2704** | **169** |
| **14** | **196** | **392** | **784** | **1568** | **3136** | **196** |
| **15** | **225** | **450** | **900** | **1800** | **3600** | **225** |
| **20** | **400** | **800** | **1600** | **3200** | **6400** | **400** |
| **30** | **900** | **1800** | **3600** | **72000** | **14400** | **900** |
| **40** | **1600** | **3200** | **6400** | **12800** | **25600** | **1600** |
| **50** | **2500** | **5000** | **10000** | **20000** | **40000** | **2500** |
| **100** | **10000** | **20000** | **40000** | **80000** | **160000** | **10000** |
| **200** | **40000** | **80000** | **160000** | **320000** | **640000** | **40000** |
| **n** | **n\*n** | **2\*n\*n** | **4\*n\*n** | **8\*n\*n** | **16\*n\*n** | **n\*n** |

**Normal Load**: The character can carry items that add to this total weight in kg as part of his body without feeling any exertion at all. He can wield weapons that add to this total weight but no more than half this weight in a single hand. Clothing and armour is also counted.

Light Load: The character can carry this weight and still do some activities for a long time without feeling tired

Medium Load: The character can carry this weight with some effort. He will need to rest after some minutes.

Heavy Load: The character may carry this weight but will tire quickly after some seconds.

Power Load: The character may pull or push this load for just a few seconds.

**Command:** The number of support characters the character may *directly* command. This can lead to huge army management if chain of command is applied. For example, a general directly commands a number of colonels who in turn directly commands a number of majors who command captains and so on down to the privates.

#### Life element

This element represents the character body health, endurance and how much he is attuned to his senses.

The **health** attribute allows him to withstand more damage before passing out and to stay active for longer periods of time.

The **perception** attribute allows the character to feel the things around him with greater clarity. His senses are sharper and allow capturing small variations in his environment.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Health** | | | | **Perception** |
| **Score** | **HP** | **Healing** | **Lifespan** | **Stamina** | **Detect** |
| **1** | **1** | **1** | **20** | **1** | **2** |
| **2** | **4** | **2** | **40** | **4** | **4** |
| **3** | **9** | **3** | **60** | **9** | **6** |
| **4** | **16** | **4** | **80** | **16** | **8** |
| **5** | **25** | **5** | **100** | **25** | **10** |
| **6** | **36** | **6** | **120** | **36** | **12** |
| **7** | **49** | **7** | **140** | **49** | **14** |
| **8** | **64** | **8** | **160** | **64** | **16** |
| **9** | **81** | **9** | **180** | **81** | **18** |
| **10** | **100** | **10** | **200** | **100** | **20** |
| **50** | **2500** | **50** | **1000** | **2500** | **100** |
| **100** | **10000** | **100** | **2000** | **10000** | **200** |
| **F(n)** | **n\*n** | **n** | **20\*n** | **n\*n** | **2\*n** |

**HP (Hit points):** The amount of damage the character may sustain. A character starts his adventures with this many HPs.

**Stamina (Advanced):** The number of activity periods the character can remain active. Read the advanced combat rules.

**Healing:** The character heals this number of HPs each week.

**Detect:** The character may detect a presence or movement that fall under this DR. Detect is not just sight, it may involve other senses like hearing, smelling, tact or even very specialised ones like feeling air pressure, electricity, spiritual presence or magic.

#### Air element

This element represents both the character speed and reaction time; and his movement precision.

The **precision** attribute allows the character to perform more accurate actions, fine motor skills, attacks, balance and dodge

The **speed** attribute allows the character to do more actions in an allocated amount of time.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Precision** | | **Speed** |
| **Score** | **Attack** | **Defence** | **Actions** |
| **1** | **1** | **1** | **0** |
| **2** | **2** | **2** | **1** |
| **3** | **3** | **3** | **1** |
| **4** | **4** | **4** | **2** |
| **5** | **5** | **5** | **1** |
| **6** | **6** | **6** | **3** |
| **7** | **7** | **7** | **3** |
| **8** | **8** | **8** | **4** |
| **9** | **9** | **9** | **4** |
| **10** | **10** | **10** | **5** |
| **20** | **20** | **20** | **10** |
| **50** | **50** | **50** | **25** |
| **100** | **100** | **100** | **50** |
| **F(n)** | **n** | **n** | **n/2** |

**Attack:** The character natural modifier for any attack or action requiring precision (i.e. playing a musical instrument).

**Defence:** The character natural modifier to any active defence action like dodge or parry blows.

**Speed AP Modifier:** The number of extra action points a character has each round to perform actions (read Chapter 6: Movement and combat).

#### Earth element

This element represents the both character resistance to physical damage and his capacity of retaining and remembering different pieces of information.

The **durability** attribute allows the character to ignore some of the damage received.

The **memory** attribute allows him to learn more skills.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Durability** | **Memory** |
| **Score** | **Natural Armor** | **Max Skills** |
| **1** | **0** | **4** |
| **2** | **0** | **8** |
| **3** | **0** | **12** |
| **4** | **0** | **16** |
| **5** | **1** | **32** |
| **6** | **1** | **20** |
| **7** | **1** | **7** |
| **8** | **1** | **8** |
| **9** | **1** | **9** |
| **10** | **2** | **10** |
| **F(n)** | **Floor(n/5)** | **5n** |

**Natural Armor:** A reduction of physical damage received.

**Max Skills:** This is the maximum number of skills the character may learn.

#### Water element

This value represents both how much the character learns from his experiences and how he perceives his environment.

The **intelligence** attribute allows the character to gain more points for skill development each level. It determines how many skills the player starts with and how many he gains every time he goes up one level.

The **logic** attribute allows the character to analyse any situation and determine if he is being fooled or not. Logic gives the player resistance against tricks, charm, manipulation and illusions.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Intelligence** | | **Logic** |
| **Score** | **Start specs** | **Specs per level** | **Disbelief** |
| **1** | **2** | **1** | **3** |
| **2** | **4** | **2** | **6** |
| **3** | **6** | **3** | **9** |
| **4** | **8** | **4** | **12** |
| **5** | **10** | **5** | **15** |
| **6** | **12** | **6** | **18** |
| **F(n)** | **2\*n** | **n** | **3\*n** |

**Starting specialisations:** The number specialisation points the character starts with.

**Skills per level:** The number skills points the character gains every level.

**Disbelief:** The character can automatically dismiss any illusion, con artist tricks, fast talking, flawed logic, and in general, any situation that may trick him which was resolved with a value less or equal than the disbelief stat.

#### Death element

This value represents the character charisma and willpower and how much the character impacts people, animals or even objects around him.

The **willpower** (or **will**) attribute determines how much the character can affect other people, animals, objects and even the laws of nature.

The **charisma** attribute is used to determine how many people are completely devoted to the character and how many would even die for him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Willpower** | | | **Charisma** | |
| **Score** | **MP** | **Rejuvenate** | **DP** | **Minions** | **Fanatics** |
| **1** | **1** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **0** |
| **2** | **4** | **2** | **4** | **1** | **0** |
| **3** | **9** | **3** | **9** | **1** | **0** |
| **4** | **16** | **4** | **16** | **2** | **0** |
| **5** | **25** | **5** | **25** | **2** | **0** |
| **6** | **36** | **6** | **36** | **3** | **1** |
| **7** | **49** | **7** | **49** | **3** | **1** |
| **8** | **64** | **8** | **64** | **4** | **1** |
| **9** | **81** | **9** | **81** | **4** | **1** |
| **10** | **100** | **10** | **100** | **5** | **1** |
| **n** | **n\*n** | **n** | **n\*n** | **n/2** | **n/6** |

**MP (Magic Points):** The maximum number of magical energy points the character can use for spell casting. A character starts his adventures with this number of magic points.

**Rejuvenate:** The number of magic points the character recovers each hour until he reaches his maximum MPs.

**Death Points:** The character may suffer this amount of damage AFTER reaching 0 HP before dying.

**Minions:** The number of minions the character may command. The minions will accept any order and provide any favour, even when against their ethics (provided the character gives a decent explanation for his actions). Minions can be acquired as perks.

**Fanatics:** The number fanatics the character can command. Fanatics are minions that will obey any order from the character with no questions asked and will do anything to help and protect the character even at the cost of his life.

#### Comeliness (Optional)

Eventually, every player will ask: how good looking is my character?

Good looks are relative to the culture; some attributes appreciated in one culture may be abhorrent by others.

Besides, a good-looking character may be so dim witted that everyone will walk away a few minutes after meeting the character. And a bad looking character may be so charming that people may overlook any physical defect.

Even if the parents of the character are both very good looking there is always chance in the genetic lottery for something to go wrong.

The player should roll a d6 to determine his comeliness. A value of 1 means a bad looking guy, a 2 or 3 is an average, a 4 is a good looking character, a 5 is a magazine model, a 6 is a world level beauty contest finalist.

The value of the comeliness attribute can be used as a skill check modifier when dealing with the opposite sex. For example, a male musician with Comeliness 5 will have a huge female fan club that will overlook any mistake in his performance.

The GM may limit the opposite-sex comeliness modifier depending on the local values. The character may change clothes, his hair, makeup or do some modifications to match the culture and take some of the modifier back.

If so desired, the player may sacrifice 2 points of comeliness to increase 1 point in any other attribute. This sacrifice can only be done during character creation and can’t take comeliness to less than 1 or any other attribute over 6 (both before race adjustments).

#### Fine tuning (Optional)

During character creation the player may decide to adjust the attributes related to an element. He may lower up to two points in one attribute and increase the other attribute of the same element by the same amount. All the stats related to that attribute are adjusted.

For example, a character has a Fire value of 4. This means both his Strength and Passion have a value of 4. However, the player would like to make the character more a general type rather than a brute warrior so he decides to lower the strength attribute to 2 in order to increase the passion attribute to 5.

This adjustment can only be applied once per element. By doing this adjustments, an attribute can’t go lower than 1.

### Size

Every creature and object in the game has a size in metres. Sizes are organized as:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sz (m)** | **Category** | **Avg Strength** | **Max Strength** | **Base AP** | **Avg Weight** | **Step** |
| **0** | **Tiny** | **1** | **1** | **4** | **2kg** | **0.25** |
| **1** | **Small** | **2** | **3** | **5** | **16kg** | **0.5** |
| **2** | **Medium** | **3** | **6** | **6** | **128kg** | **1** |
| **3** | **Big** | **4.5** | **9** | **7** | **432kg** | **1.5** |
| **4** | **Large** | **6** | **12** | **8** | **1ton** | **2** |
| **5** | **Very large** | **8** | **15** | **9** | **2ton** | **2.5** |
| **6** | **Huge** | **9** | **18** | **10** | **3.5ton** | **3** |
| **7** | **Enormous** | **11** | **21** | **11** | **5ton** | **3.5** |
| **8** | **Gigantic** | **12** | **24** | **12** | **8ton** | **4** |
| **9** | **Monumental** | **14** | **27** | **13** | **11ton** | **4.5** |
| **10** | **Herculean** | **15** | **30** | **14** | **16ton** | **5** |
| **11** | **Monstrous** | **17** | **33** | **15** | **21ton** | **5.5** |
| **12** | **Prodigious** | **18** | **36** | **16** | **27ton** | **6** |
| **13** | **Titanic** | **20** | **39** | **17** | **35ton** | **6.5** |
| **14** | **Humongous** | **21** | **42** | **18** | **43ton** | **7** |
| **15** | **Stupendous** | **23** | **45** | **19** | **54ton** | **7.5** |
| **16** | **Gargantuan** | **24** | **48** | **20** | **64ton** | **8** |
| **32** | **Fantastic** | **48** | **96** | **36** | **512ton** | **16** |
| **64** | **Colossal** | **96** | **192** | **68** | **4kton** | **32** |
| **128** | **Immense** | **192** | **384** | **132** | **32kton** | **64** |
| **256** | **Descomunal** | **384** | **768** | **260** | **268kton** | **128** |
| **n** | **Vast** | **n\*1.5** | **n\*3** | **n+4** | **16\*n\*n\*n** | **n/2** |

A size category is noted as Sz#, for example Sz3 for a size 3.

A creature is considered to be a size equal to the next size he can’t comfortably fit. It doesn’t have to be a perfect match but he should adequately fit.

Here are some examples of different creatures and sizes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Size** | **Name** | **Example** |
| **0** | **Tiny** | **Rats, cats, small dogs.** |
| **1** | **Small** | **Human child, goblins, medium dogs** |
| **2** | **Medium** | **Humans, big dogs** |
| **3** | **Big** | **Lions, tigers, bears, cow, hatchling dragon** |
| **4** | **Large** | **Walrus, horses, ogre, bull** |
| **5** | **Very large** | **Rhinoceros, sharks, orca, giraffes, drake** |
| **6** | **Huge** | **Elephants** |
| **7** | **Enormous** | **Tyrannosaurus, stegosaurus, giants** |
| **8** | **Gigantic** | **Hill Giants, young dragon** |
| **16** | **Gargantuan** | **Whales, giant squids, dragon, brontosaurus** |
| **32** | **Humonguous** | **Old dragons** |
| **64** | **Inmense** | **Leviathan** |
| **256** | **Descimunat** | **Battleship, titan** |

Creatures smaller than tiny size (like insects) are considered as -1 size when taken individually. However, those creatures usually come as swarms so its collective size will have a dimension, attack and damage as a single entity that depends on the size of the swarm.

**Size (Sz):** This is the approximate maximum size in metres for a creature of this size category.

**Category:** A name for the size category. For reference purposes only.

**Average Strength:** A creature of this size has this strength attribute on average.

**Max Strength:** A creature of this size has a maximum strength attribute equal to this value.

**Base AP (Advanced):** Any action from a creature with this dimension costs this number of APs as a base. For example, throwing a punch costs 6APs for a Sz2 human while it will cost 10APs for a Sz6 huge creature like an elephant. For simplicity, all rules in this book consider the medium size as the base and 6APs the base action cost.

**Weight:** The maximum weight to expect for an object in this size category.

**Step:** The distance a creature covers in a single step (walking stride). For example, a medium creature covers 1m per step while a large creature covers 2m per step.

### Skills, perks and powers

As characters grow and develop, they will improve their skills and knowledge. The skills, perks and powers system is used to represent their particular areas of expertise.

#### Starting skills

All characters receive the *Language* skill at level 10 plus the *Speaking* specialisation on the common language plus the *Speaking* and *Reading-Writing* specialisations on a language of their choice. Common language common language is the language used by all the characters all over the world.

A character also receives 6 x Intelligence character points to acquire skills. The player may assign any number of points to any skill or perk but no more that half the points to a single skill or perk.

#### Further skill development

Warscale does not restrict how the characters grow. Players are free to mix and match skills that seem more adequate for their character development. However, it may not be wise to just randomly pick skills as this may lead to a less powerful character. Players should focus on some skills and reinforce those with related perks and, if possible, powers.

Chapter 4 has more detailed character paths but here are some examples:

**Bards** are keepers of tales and songs. They know how to reach to people emotions and how to bring a tear or a laugh from the audience. Bards will benefit from musical instruments, perform, acting, fast talking and rhetoric. Also, picking a couple flashy magical spells will help on their performance allowing for some special effects.

**Clerics** are devoted to some greater entity. They try to teach the values from their faith to the heathen. Clerics will benefit with deep knowledge of history and religion. The *Rhetoric* skill is also very useful during philosophical and theological discussions and to guide their flock. Clerics have to learn rituals (spells) as part of their studies.

**Fighters** are experts in weapons and war. Fighter characters will focus on weapon or accuracy skills. They will also specialize on particular weapons or armour and add to their life and resilience attributes.

**Paladins** are warriors devoted to a cause (not necessarily religious, not necessarily good). They are committed to the values of that cause and will try to uphold those values wherever he goes. Paladins benefit from weapon skills, diplomacy and some knowledge of magic.

**Rogues** are people of the world. They make their living using some questionable ethics. Depending on the type of rogue he may be a fast talking con artist, a burglar, an expert breaking locks, moving silently or climbing walls, or maybe a street pick pocket that relieves his customers of excess gold.

**Magicians** are experts in magic. They devote themselves to research and learn ancient words of magic that allows them bend the natural laws of the world to their will. Wizards will benefit from languages, reading/writing, diplomacy and history but will probably devote their efforts to access higher spell levels.

#### Elements and skills

Skills are related to an attribute. Fire skills are related to physical activity. Life skills are related to nature and survival. Air skills are related to precision, movement, dexterity and music. Water skills are related to engineering, planning and logic. Earth skills are related to practical knowledge and crafting. Death skills are related to charm, manipulation and acting.

Skills benefit from a higher value on the related attribute.

#### Perks

Perks are special abilities that grant permanent benefits to the players or allow them to perform actions not available to all characters and new ways to use the character skills. A few example of things perks can grant are higher life total, special combat moves, more actions per turn, more mana, specialize in using a tool or weapon and more.

#### Powers

Powers are abilities completely out of reach of normal individuals. Powers grant things like flying, tough skin, night vision, unnatural lifespans, super strength among others.

A few races grant some powers during creation. Depending on the campaign the DM may allow picking some powers.

There is more information on skills, perks and powers in Chapter 4.

#### Magic

Some perks allow players to tap his internal magical energy reservoir (MPs) and allow learning magical spells. In order to learn spells a character has to study from a master, research them in ancient books or receive them from their gods after learning the proper rituals.

Magic is described in detail in Chapter 7: Magic

### Equipment

Characters need some adventuring equipment. Warriors need swords; wizards need books; thieves need lock- picking tools.

Equipment is expensive so the character needs money, and better quality equipment costs even more money.

You can read more about money and equipment in Chapter 5: Equipment.

### Personality

A player should describe the character personality. Is he merry? Is he grumpy? Does he take himself too seriously? Will he jump to protect people or hide first during any dangerous situation? Is he pedantic? Is he elitist?

During the character creation, players should try and define an initial personality for their characters. Later, during the story, the characters may change, good guys may become the bad guys, bad guys may join the good guys to fight a common enemy. Personality changes are part of the game.

Some characters may have some restrictions. Clerics or paladins have some benefits that usually depend on following their cause or deity ethos. Should they break their oaths then the GM is free to punish the character by removing some perks, powers or spells. The character may opt to go into quest for atonement, or maybe another higher entity will take the character under its wing.

The GM should be careful into allowing characters with too wildly different ethics into the same party as this may break the party union.

#### Elements and personality

If the player is unsure of his character personality use his character highest element values as a guide.

Fire characters have a personality that fluctuates as much as a burning flame. They are passionate, easy to become enraged or to fall in love. They are vengeful and of easy laugh. They can pick a fight in a bar then buy a round for everyone the next minute. They love war and destruction but can be caring and tender. They are used for his commands to be carried away.

Earth characters are stubborn. They are keeper of old secrets that they will transmit only to worthy successors. They are skilled artisans and smiths able create majestic structures and objects build to last. They love their homes and will fight fiercely to protect their country. They love crafting and building things.

Water characters are always learning new things. They are usually bound to a life quest to solve a mystery and seeking some lost knowledge. They love designing complex structures and devices.

Life characters are highly attuned to nature. They love open spaces full of living things. They prefer staying out of cities and dislike technology.

Death character’s willpower makes them charismatic and manipulative. They can charm other people with a smile and small talk and then use them as pieces in a intrigue game. They value loyalty and family relations.

Air characters are wanderers. They will stay at one place only for some time, but there is something that calls them to visit the next town, climb the next mountain and explore the next dungeon. They are tricksters with little respect for law and order.

### Background

The player also needs to write down some story for the character. How old is he? Where he comes from? Why is he adventuring? The GM may decide to reward a good story with some extra character points or maybe a power or maybe some family heirloom weapon to help rounding the character background.

### Appearance

Is the character tall or short? Light or thick boned? Fair or dark skinned? Is he blonde, redhead or black hair?

Each race will provide some information on how a typical member of the race looks. Take the general information for the race and then add some personal touches. Draw a picture or download an image to give other players an idea of the character.

### Round up

After all this values are defined and written down in a character sheet, it’s time to think about a good name for the character. There are many fantasy name generators in the web.

### Character creation example

A player decides to create Belgar, a dwarven warrior with some degree of magical affinity so he decides to push the character strength and willpower a bit higher. The GM decides the campaign with be of heroic proportions so the 24 points are distributed as:

Fire 6 (Strength 6, Passion 6)

Life 4 (Health 4, Perception 4)

Earth 5 (Durability 5, Memory 5)

Air 3 (Speed 3, Precision 3)

Water 4 (Intelligence 4, Logic 4)

Death 4 (Willpower 5, Loyalty 2)

This values includes the +2 bonus to the Earth attribute for dwarves.

The player decides Belgar will be a solitary type so (after getting the GM approval) he decides to lower the loyalty attribute to 2 in order to increase the willpower to 5 allowing for more magical power.

The player also writes down the Long Life and Low light vision powers granted to the dwarves.

The player gets 6 x Intelligence character points for a total of 24 character points.

The player wants Belgar to use a war axe so he assigns 6 points to the *Melee weapon (Axe)* skill, 2 for Weapon Specialization (Axe) and 2 for *Weapon Mastery* on his own axe. So he spent 10 points on his weapon of choice.

The player also wants Belgar to use chain armour so he uses 3 points to pick the *Armour use* and *Armour specialization* perks.

Belgar wants to be able to attack airborne creatures so he assigns 3 points to *Ranged weapon (Crossbow)* as well so he can have a secondary weapon.

Two more points are used to get the Appraise skill as Belgar loves gemstones and would like to trade them.

Belgar has a knack for magic but the player decides to focus on dwarven preferred magic so uses 2 points to pick the *Name of the Stone* perk.

Then he decides to pick a couple spells. Belgar is a warrior so the player decides to assign 2 levels to the *Dispel Magic* spell in order to cancel other magic, 1 levels to the *Caltrops* spell and 1 level to *Summon earth creature.* Given he is a dwarf; all those earth spells gain 1 more level automatically.

All character points are assigned so now its time to get some equipment. The player requests the GM to buy a steel battle axe and steel chain mail. Then he writes down his personality and background and then he is ready to start adventuring.

## Character Advancement

As players adventure they will fight monsters, solve mysteries, save the day and become the heroes of the land and that comes with some rewards of money and experience.

Money allows buying more and better equipment while experience allow players to improve their character skills which in turn with help facing bigger enemies and survive more critical situations.

Each time a situation is solved, the GM will award some experience points (XP). Players should keep track of those experience points in order to compute their character level.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Required XP** | |
|  | **Quick** | **Slow** |
| **1** | **0** | **0** |
| **2** | **10** | **50** |
| **3** | **40** | **200** |
| **4** | **90** | **450** |
| **5** | **160** | **800** |
| **6** | **250** | **1250** |
| **7** | **360** | **1800** |
| **8** | **490** | **2450** |
| **9** | **640** | **3200** |
| **10** | **810** | **4050** |
| **11** | **1000** | **5000** |
| **12** | **1210** | **6050** |
| **13** | **1440** | **7200** |
| **14** | **1690** | **8450** |
| **15** | **1960** | **9800** |
| **16** | **2250** | **11250** |
| **17** | **2560** | **12800** |
| **18** | **2890** | **14450** |
| **19** | **3240** | **16200** |
| **20** | **3610** | **18050** |
| **F(n)** | **(n-1)\*(n-1)\*10** | **(n-1)\*(n-1)\*50** |

The DM should pick one of the two tables at the beginning of the game. Use the Quick table to allow the characters go up one level each game session (an average of 4 playing hours per level). This makes for faster progress and let players feel the character advancement from lower to higher levels.

The Slow table makes the campaign to go on for longer, allowing players to discover the full benefit of their perks and learn to use them properly. This will allow one level every 5 sessions.

To go at another pace take this as a rule of thumb. Multiply the number of sessions per level up you prefer by 10 (i.e. level up every 2 sessions is 2x10=20). Use that value in the formula in the table.

### Encounter levels

An encounter occurs when a character faces a situation that opposes the progress of the adventure. It may be a monster, a trap, a puzzle, a request, or in general anything that should be solved by using skills.

A weak encounter is one that has almost no chance of harming the character in any way or poses no real challenge to overcome. Success is guaranteed 90% of the time. For example, a 19th level character in full plate armour and a magical sword against a rat is hardly a contest.

A small encounter occurs when the characters face a small opponent or a minor problem. A minor problem is when the characters have a low chance to be harmed or a high chance of success. Success is guaranteed 75% of the time. For example, 4 characters fighting one single opponent of the same level; or a thief facing a lock with a DR less than half of his total lock picking skill.

A medium encounter is one where the sides are fairly balanced. Basically the characters on each opposing side are around the same in number and level. Success is guaranteed 50% of the time.

A hard encounter is one where the opponent is relatively more powerful than the heroes. Success is guaranteed 25% of the time. For example, 4 monsters per character in the party of about the same skill level.

A very hard encounter is one where the opponent is definitely more powerful than the heroes. Success is guaranteed 10% of the time.

An impossible encounter is when there is no way for the party to defeat the opponents using skills. They will have to use other special means or run for their lives.

Note that if the characters somehow manage to flee an encounter then they still receive some XP just for surviving.

The DM should give a ranking for each encounter depending on each situation.

### XP awards

There are many ways to award XP the players. The GM may pick one that fits his style or he might invent his own award style. Here are some suggestions:

#### Award on each skill use

This modality awards each character on his personal actions. A character gains 1 XP each round he uses skills, successfully or not to solve a situation. It doesn’t matter if the character engages in combat, casts a spell, heals a character, picks a lock, etc. Only 1 XP per round will be awarded regardless of the number of actions. If the player casted 20 spells in 20 rounds then he will gain 20 XP, but if he attacked 30 times in 10 rounds he will get 10 XP. Players won’t receive XP the rounds they do nothing.

The first condition is that the attempt must be meaningful for the progress of the adventure. If the character picks the pocket of an innocent passer-by then he gets no XP, but if the pick attempt allows the character to get a key to the prison where the princess is being held for ransom then he gets the XP.

The second condition is that the opponent or situation is of medium or higher difficulty. Any lower and this method won’t provide XP.

Note that if in the party there are high and low powered characters, the low powered characters may just win XP while the high power characters won’t.

This mode is good as it encourages the players to use their skills to solve situations.

#### Award on party collaboration

This mode rewards the players on how well they play as a team. When the party faces an opponent all the characters must be contributing in any way they can in order to overcome the common problem.

Just be aware that each character can contribute in any way they can. Fighting a monster from the front rank, casting defensive spells, tending wounds, solving a riddle, anything that helps the party to succeed as a team deserves to be rewarded. If a character is just doing nothing to help the other members of the party and just promoting his own agenda, then he does not receive XP.

Example, a thief opening a lock that will allow the party to escape a trap gains the same XP as the warrior holding some zombies back thus providing time for the thief to open the lock.

If another character just stands there doing nothing useful, he does not gain the same XP as the front warrior or the thief. Some bards may just gain XP by singing some encouraging tunes thus providing morale bonuses to the party.

If a character decides to work things for his own personal advantage, he is not awarded the XP for the main encounter, however he might get awards for some individual action. For example, four members of the party are fighting a troll while the thief decides to go apart and open a chest in order to gain access to a treasure. When the encounter is over the four members of the party fighting the troll will receive the XP for the encounter but the thief will receive the XP for opening the chests, if any. Consider it a secondary encounter for the thief.

The following rewards are suggested (level is the character level):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Situation** | **XP** |
| **Weak encounter** | **0** |
| **Small encounter** | **1 x level** |
| **Medium encounter** | **5 x level** |
| **Hard encounter (boss battle)** | **10 x level** |
| **Very hard encounter** | **20 x level** |
| **Character runs away** | **x0.2** |

#### Award on roleplaying

Some GMs prefer rewarding on how the players identify and bring their characters to live. So the characters might be rewarded on their real acting skills.

This can be a lot of fun but not all players feel comfortable with roleplaying so do not overdo it. Also, there is no clear way to quantize the award. The GM is free to award as many XPs as he sees fit.

#### No XP tables

The GM’s may opt to discard experience tables altogether and directly award a level every time a small adventure in the full campaign is finished. So, in the long campaign to destroy a magical ring throwing it in the fiery volcano; leaving the character hometown and arriving to the first village will grant the players one level. After every important encounter or big scene, the GM may decide to award the players with new levels to prepare them for what comes next.

This method is better when the GM want the players focusing in the story instead of having them looking for a monster to defeat in order to get the few XP they require to get to their next level.

### Gaining a level

Every time a character attains a new level, he receives some character points that should be used to buy new mental and physical skills for the character.

There are detailed rules on how to use the skills points in Chapter 4: Paths, skills and feats.

## The party

In order to face greater odds, the characters gather in parties. A party is a union of characters brought together by destiny, fate, luck, or whatever reason. They are together and the longer they can hold together they will become more powerful.

There is something magical that happens when characters gather in a party. They learn to read each other and have some kind of rudimentary telepathic connection allowing them to share thoughts and feelings immediately even without talking.

In game terms it means that characters can communicate optimal combat actions and movement plans to each other with just a look or a single word. They can even communicate in a long range, but the amount of information passed depends on the GM.

This link is an inherent power of all the player characters. All other characters are controlled by the GM and don’t have this kind of benefit.

In real life terms, the players are going to talk and discuss combat plans and actions anyway. This will happen anytime even in the middle of a battle and the GM will hardly be able to avoid it. So just call it telepathy between characters and make it part of the campaign.