

BOOK ONE: CHARACTERS

CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION

Cepheus Engine characters are rarely beginners fresh from the farm. There is no reason not to play a young and inexperienced character if you like, but since a broad range of skills is important to success in the game most players will want their character to be a little more experienced in the world.

All characters begin at the age of majority, typically 18. Having generated characteristic scores and background skills, the character should begin serving terms in his or her chosen career. Each 4-year term spent in a career gives the character more experience in the universe, generally in the form of skills. Generate the results of each term before proceeding to the next. At the end of a period of service, characters roll for benefits gained upon “mustering out” (i.e. leaving the service). They may then begin adventuring.

This chapter provides complete instructions for the generation of twenty-four distinct career paths.

Character Creation Checklist

1) Characteristics

- a) Roll your six characteristics using 2D6, and place them in order on your character sheet.
- b) Determine characteristic modifiers.

2) Homeworld (Optional)

- a) Determine homeworld.
- b) Gain background skills. Character gains a number of background skills at Level 0 equal to 3 + their Education modifier. The first two have to be taken from your homeworld (based on the world’s trade codes or law level); the rest are taken from the education list.

3) Career

- a) Choose a career. You cannot choose a career you’ve already left except Drifter.
- b) Roll to qualify for that career, as indicated in the description of the career. If this is not your first career, you suffer a –2 DM for every previous career in which you have served.
- c) If you qualify for this career, go to step 4.
- d) If you do not qualify for that career, you can enter the Drifter career or submit to the draft. You may only enter the draft once.

4) Basic training

For your first term in your first career, you get every skill in the service skills table at level 0.

For your first term in subsequent careers, you may pick any one skill from the service skills table at level 0.

5) Survival

Roll for survival, as indicated in the description of the career.

If you succeed, go to step 6.

If you did not succeed, you have died. Alternately, events have forced you from this career. Roll on the mishap table and go to step 10 (you do not receive a benefit roll for this term.)

6) Commission and Advancement

- a) You begin as a Rank 0 character.
- b) If your career offers a Commission check and you are Rank 0, you can choose to roll for Commission. If you are successful, you are now Rank 1 in your chosen career. Choose one of the skills and training tables and roll on it for an extra skill. Take any bonus skills from the ranks table for this career.
- c) If your career offers an Advancement check and you are Rank 1 or higher, you can choose to roll for Advancement. If you are successful, your Rank improves by one in your chosen career. Choose one of the skills and training tables and roll on it for an extra skill. Take any bonus skills from the ranks table for this career. You can roll for Advancement in the same term that you succeed in a Commission roll.

7) Skills and Training

- a) Choose one of the Skills and Training tables for this career and roll on it. If you gain a characteristic improvement as a result, apply the change to your characteristic score immediately. If you gain a skill as a result and you do not already have levels in that skill, take it at level 1. If you already have the skill, increase your skill by one level.
- b) If your career does not have a Commission or Advancement check, you may roll a second time, choose one of the Skills and Training tables for this career (which may be the same or different from the first table chosen for this term.)

8) Aging

- a) Increase your age by 4 years.
- b) If your character is 34 or older, roll for aging.

9) Re-enlistment

- a) Roll for re-enlistment. If you fail, you must leave this career. If you roll a natural 12, you cannot leave this career and must continue for another term, go to step 5.
- b) If you have served a total of seven terms or more in character creation, then you must retire, go to step 10.
- c) If you wish to continue in this career, go to step 5.
- d) If you wish to leave this career, go to step 10.

10) Benefits

If you are leaving the career, roll for benefits. A character gets one Benefit Roll for every full term served in that career. You also get extra benefit rolls if you reached a higher rank.

11) Next Career

If you're leaving your current career and your total number of terms in character creation is less than seven, you may go to step 3 to choose a new career or to step 12 if you wish to finish your character.

12) Buy starting equipment

Purchase your starting equipment and, if you can afford it, possibly a starship.