Beginner Guide

# Make a character

## Background

The first step to make a character in DNA is to decide who you were before the mutation. Were you a mercenary who volunteered for an enhancement programme? Were you grown in a test tube with your mutation in mind? Were you a civilian caught in the wrong place at the wrong time?

## Traits

Once you have decided who you were before the mutation you can allocate points into your base stats.

All beings have eight main stats called traits.

**Strength:** This determines how strong your character is

**Constitution:** How tough your character is

**Discipline:** How controlled your character is

**Intelligence:** How smart and academic a character is

**Sense:** How perceptive of the world around them a character is

**Will:** A characters resolve in who they are and their beliefs

**Charm:** How a character interacts with other beings in the world

All players start with 10 points in each of these stats. For context, a human that is average in a stat will have a score of 20 and a human that is at the peak of that stats would have a score of 30. The cap for these stats is 100.

## Point Allocation

Each player starts with 100 points they can allocate to their traits. During this phase the traits have a cap of 50. Once you reach 50 in a stat you can no longer allocate points into it.

## Proficiencies

Once you have allocated points into your traits you can select your proficiencies. As well as the 8 traits, there are a collection of skills that your character can become proficient in. These help make your character who they are, so think about their background and what proficiencies they may have. You get two proficiency points to allocate. This could be proficiency in two skills or expertise in one. The skills are:

| Athletics | This involves climbing, swimming using your strength |
| --- | --- |
| Intimidation | Impose your presence upon someone to intimidate them |
| Force | Lifting heavy objects, turning stiff cogs |
| Acrobatics | Performing flips, walking along a rope |
| Precision | How accurate you can be such as performing surgery, sleight of hand |
| Stealth | Remaining undetected |
| Endurance | Your ability to keep going; running for a long time, torture |
| Resistance | Resistance to toxins and fumes |
| Tech | Interacting with computers, hacking |
| Science | Chemicals, physics, sciency stuff |
| Investigation | Looking for clues to find information |
| Perception | Looking around and spotting things, not making connections! You can see the glimpse of gold but you do not infer why |
| Insight | Reading people and understanding their intentions |
| Deception | Lying to people, hiding your true intentions |
| Persuasion | Convincing someone to agree with you without lying |

**If you are proficient in a skill, you gain +15 that skill when making a check. If you are an expert, you gain +30.**

### Weapon Proficiencies

You also get to pick one weapon proficiency. This allows you to always get the proficiency bonus for that weapon type.

| **Marksmanship** |  |
| --- | --- |
| Short range | Pistols, shotguns |
| Med range | Automatic Rifles, Bows |
| Long range | Snipers, Lasers |
| Melee | Knives, Bats, Tasers |

**If you are proficient with a weapon, you gain the proficiency bonus when rolling to hit with that weapon. If you are an expert, the proficiency bonus is doubled.**

## Mutation

Now is the time to pick your mutation. This will affect your base stats and determine what abilities you develop throughout the game. If a mutation gives you a proficiency you are already proficient in you gain expertise. If you are already an expert, tough.

The mutations are:

### Psionic

A mutant strain that excels in exerting their will over others. Telepathy, mind control and manifesting their energy are some examples of the Psionic’s powers.

**Strike:** Intelligence **Might:** Will **Evade:** Intelligence

**Stat Bonus:** +10 Int

**Proficencies:** Investigation, Insight

**Gene Pool:** 2d10 + 2

### Nova

A mutant strain that can shape a battlefield. Barriers, telekinesis and singularities are some examples of the Nova’s power.

**Strike:** Sense **Might:** Will **Evade:** Sense

**Stat Bonus:** +10 Will

**Proficencies:** Force, Endurance

**Gene Pool:** 4d4 + 3

### Wraith

A being of darkness, melding with shadows and draining life force are features of this class.

**Strike:** Discipline **Might:** Constitution **Evade:** Discipline

**Stat Bonus:** +10 Discipline

**Proficencies:** Stealth, Intimidation

**Gene Pool:** 3d6 + 2

# The Dice System

Mutagen uses a variety of dice for different situations.

## Checks, Success and Failures

When making skill checks a **d100** is used (or **two d10s**).

A roll can be broken down into four different results

**Failure:** The character fails their attempted action

**Success:** The character succeeds at their attempted action

**Hard Success:** The character succeeds in a greater capacity or gains a small boon

**Critical Success:** The character succeeds in the best way possible or gains a bigger boon

The level of success is determined by the trait being used.

**Failure:** You roll a number higher than trait being used

**Success:** You roll lower than the trait used

**Hard Success:** You roll lower than half the trait used

**Critical Success:** You roll lower than a quarter of the trait used.

**Example:**

Matt is making a roll using his Intelligence trait to barter with a merchant. This trait has a value of 80. Therefore, to succeed, he needs to roll less than an 80. To get a hard success will require less than 40, and to get a critical success is less than 20.

Matt rolls a 37. This is a hard success, he lowers the price of his purchase by 10 plasma. Had he only got a success, the GM may have only given a discount of 5 plasma and had he rolled a crit success the GM could have given an even greater discount or permanent discount at the shop.

## Contests

Contests also use a **d100** dice.

Some abilities or actions require a contest between two beings. In this event, the necessary traits will be stated.

Both characters will roll a **d100** to determine their success. To win the contest, a being must get a level of success higher than their opponent. On a tie, the dice are rerolled until someone wins. If someone gets a 1 they automatically win, a 99 loses automatically.

**Example:**

Ellie wants to break free of a grapple. She must make either a STRENGTH or DISCIPLINE roll against her captors STRENGTH.

She has a DISCIPLINE of 64 and uses that. The captor has a STRENGTH of 52. They roll and Ellie rolls a 72 (failure) and the captor rolls a 53 (failure). The success levels match so they reroll. This time Ellie rolls a 29 (hard success) and the captor rolls a 34 (success). Ellie has a success level higher and therefore breaks free.

## Combat

### Attacking

When a character rolls to attack an enemy a **d20** is used.

To calculate the total attack value, a **d20** is rolled, then the character **strike** value is added to the roll. After that any additional bonuses are applied. This is the total attack value.

**Example:**

Matt rolls to attack. He rolls a d20 and gets an 11. Then he adds his strike of 4 resulting in 15. Finally he is proficient with his weapon and gets a +2 bonus. The final total attack is 17.

### Weapons and Abilities

Weapons and abilities can use a variety of dice to calculate damage, ranging from **d4**s to **d12**s. All weapons and abilities will specify what dice they use.

# Skill Checks

If the GM believes a skill check is required they will ask you to make that skill check. They may have already determined an associated trait to go with the skill or it is up to the player to let the player know which trait they wish to use for the check.

**Example:**

Matt and Ellie each want to persuade a merchant to lower prices. The GM tells them to make a Persuasion skill check and asks how they want to carry out the persuasion.

Matt explains how he is flattering the merchant and will use CHARM to roll the skill check.

Ellie lets the GM know that she is using her knowledge of the product to barter so will use INTELLIGENCE to make the roll.

The GM decides that these are acceptable uses of the traits and the players can make the rolls.

**Example:**Ellie wants to search a desk for files. The GM determines she should make an Investigation check. Ellie wants to use CONSTITUTION to search for the files as it is her highest stat and says she will apply it by searching endlessly and ‘enduring’ on.   
  
The GM determines that this is not a suitable application of the trait and says she must use a different one. Ellie then says she is going to use SENSE to search, keeping an eye out for key words as she scans the files. The GM allows this and she can make the roll.

**There is no absolute pairing between skills and traits. It is entirely up to the GM to decide if the application of a trait is appropriate for the given skill.**

## Bonuses and Penalties

If the GM believes that an action is particularly easy or difficult, they may add a bonus or penalty to the skill check. Typically +/- 10 is moderately easy/difficult, +/-20 is significantly easy/hard and +/-30 is extremely difficult/easy.

**Example:**

Lucy wants to Evade security lasers and is making an Acrobatics (DISCIPLINE) check. They are state of the art lasers so the GM imposes a -20 penalty Lucy’s DISCIPLINE stat. She has a DISCIPLINE of 63 which now becomes a 43 for the roll. She rolls the d100 and gets a 56. Whilst this would normally be a success, because of the penalty she fails and triggers the security system.

# Combat

## Turn Time

In combat each character has a turn. **A turn lasts 5 seconds** and characters can perform any actions that fit within that time. Different actions have different time costs so it is up to the player to decide which actions they wish to spend their time on.

The majority of actions a player can take cost 2s. These actions will be discussed further but some examples would be to *aim, hunker down or fire a weapon.*

## Turn Order (Initiative)

To determine the turn order of combat, beings go in the order of their **initiative trait**.

The initiative trait is either the Discipline or Sense trait and it is up to the player what their character uses.

Certain equipment and abilities can give bonuses to a character’s initiative trait when determining initiative.

**Example:**

Matt has a DISCIPLINE of 65 and a SENSE of 32 so will use his DISCIPLINE for his initiative.

Lucy uses her SENSE of 71 as her initiative.

A bandit is using a DISCIPLINE of 54 but is wielding a dagger that gives +15 to his initiative resulting in a total of 69 for his total initiative.

This means the turn order will be Lucy, bandit, Matt.

**When every being has had their turn, the turn order loops back around to the start.**