

## Character Development

This is where you can find everything else for creating and advancing your character: appearance, experience, motivation, etc. Midian is designed to have starting characters that have a fighting chance, but have plenty of room to grow. You are not limited in 'life' by your choices (or random rolls) when making your character, nor do you have to play for years to develop your character to where he or she is finally playable.

When you increase your character's level, you may petition the Game Master to increase any skills or other abilities that you have used or practiced sufficiently. The suggested limit of increase is for proficiencies that are used frequently to only go up by one level—possibly two—and for apprentice skills to only increase at every two to four character levels. Attribute points should not be increased by petitioning more than one per level. Other gains may also be had: saving throws, hit points, backgrounds, traits, etc. No part of the character is immune to change and growth.

You may also increase your skills, etc. without going up a level. For example, a blacksmith does not gain experience points from adventuring, but he does get lots of practice with his job-related skills. For instance, you may be required to tend the

farm back at home for several months while your (less than lucky) compatriots are healing up from your exploits. While you are working the fields you are increasing your knowledge of *Agriculture*, and spending time at night reading books about war (increasing *Military History*). The chief difference is that increasing when you gain a level is from experience using your skills, whereas increasing mid-level involves setting aside time to study and practice.

Your character can grow in many ways other than experience, goods, skills, and wealth. Your Game Master may assign *Backgrounds* representing your experiences. New *Contacts*, *Statuses*, *Traits*, *Titles*, or other goodies may also be added. The Game Master may assign these along with experience points at either the beginning or end of a game session.

Having a well thought out character personality profile and history helps both you and your Game Master. The Game Master may even give bonus ranks in skills, traits, backgrounds, even starting experience for a well thought out character. For example, instead of taking a skill just because it gives you an advantage, include how you learned the skill. Details about your teacher or your training may prove useful later in the game, or simply add dimension to your character.

## Orientation

Choose one from the following orientations to customize your character to fit your character concept better. (You could just pick whichever one will help you min/max the character instead, but that would be cheating..)

- ♣ Mental: +2 Knowledge, +1 Wits, +2 Willpower, +1 Awareness, +1 Common Sense
- ♣ Physical: +1 Appearance +2 Strength, +1 Agility, +2 Stamina, +1 Speed

- ♣ Social: +2 Appearance, +2 Personality, +1 Grace, +1 Wits, +1 Awareness
- ♣ Well-rounded: +1 to each attribute in two different categories

Other types of orientation (handedness, sexual orientation) do not affect game statistics. Just choose whatever (or whomever). These are not the only possible dispositions. If you choose to create additional types, you are more than welcome to do so.

## Disposition

Disposition is simply your character's overall outlook. It is how someone who knows you only somewhat will describe your personality. This is often the

first impression that someone has when meeting your character for the first time. Sample dispositions are:

Bitter  
 Fiery temper  
 Friendly & polite  
 Gregarious & joking  
 Jaded-downcasting  
 Jaded-upbeat  
 Judgemental-makes snap decisions  
 Mean & cruel  
 Monotonous

Morbid-depressing  
 Morbid-odd humour  
 Motormouth  
 Pompous & overbearing  
 Sour-frowns a lot  
 Stuck up  
 Sunny-always smiling  
 Total Bastard  
 Indiscernible-neutral expression

## Ethics and Morals

Your moral code is a guideline to how your character will act in a given situation. They are not strict and there are no true penalties for violating your personal code (except perhaps guilt). However, if you do act differently than your stated code;

then your friends might think you are possessed by a demon, replaced by a pod-person, have gone completely out of your mind, or are simply stoned. Your sense of ethical behaviours may be quite simple-even anti-ethical-or could be a highly detailed

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account of every possible situation that may arise. The character sheet includes space for a representative sample of your morals if they are if they are detailed (or you have plenty of space for jokes about your lack of ethics). You can add to your personal moral code later if you like. For example, you are *anti-moral* but later realize that torturing animals is where you draw the line (torturing small children however...) then you can add that to your character sheet in the Morals section. The archetypal ethical codes include:

- Aberrant**—usually has a well developed personal code (include details) but is twisted and warped: can torture, but not to death; can't kill kids; never attack from behind; and/or "if you don't get caught it wasn't wrong"
- Amoral**—does what feels good
- Anarchist**—dislikes laws & doesn't care much for people, especially those not personally known
- Anti-moral**—likes to do bad things
- Authoritarian**—believes that one should obey those of station within the proper hierarchy; most people are authoritarian to a larger degree than they would like to believe
- Chivalrous**—often follows a 'code of chivalry' these are often detailed so to save yourself work you can just write, for example, "*Chivalrous (Knight-Hospitaller)*"
- Honourable**—always keeps his or her word; often has a well-developed personal code (include details)
- Individualistic**—does what is right by a person, not society; won't necessarily follow unjust laws

**Justice**—fair play; "an eye for an eye;" may be more concerned with punishment than prevention but always keeps everything fair

**Legal**—also called "*Lawful*;" believes that the letter of the law should be upheld

**Machiavellian**—the ends justify the means

**Materialistic**—concerned primarily with worldly gain

**Might Makes Right**—not necessarily evil, may be more of the 'big brother' type

**Moral Conformist**—goes along with whatever the 'community standards' of right are; mostly doesn't want to be thought ill of

**No Set Code**—usually at least *tries* to do right even if there isn't much of a personal system of ethics (can be detailed later as [or if] it develops)

**Principled**—also called "*Scrupulous*;" this person truly has character; believes in upholding the law as well as the common good; upright and honest, but not necessarily nice or kind

**Religious (list church)**—follows the ethical teachings of a certain church (not always a pleasant thought)

**Self-Focused**—has a well developed personal code (include details) & doesn't care about the moral/ethical beliefs of others; holds only to his or her own personal code

**Sociopathic**—quite possibly truly insane & *cannot* tell right from wrong

Combinations of Dispositions and Morals are possible. I.e. you can be *quiet* but have a *fiery temper* when provoked, or be *individualistic* but believe strongly in fair play and *justice*.

## Appearance

How does your character look? Is he an athletic & bronze-skinned; or short, pasty, and dumpy-looking? Your attributes provide a general guide: high Strength could mean that you are tall and stout, or muscular (or both); low Grace means that you have poor posture and walk slouched, or that you just have a funny walk; someone with a high Agility makes steady, sure movements; and of course, Appearance is how good-looking you are... or not.

Your species and ethnic group also help determine how you look. Many Bizzannites are dark-complexioned, and Goths are almost universally pale. Elves are never heavy-set; and where would a Dwarf be without his beard? Eye, skin, and hair colour (and style), all define your appearance.

Style also plays a major role in your appearance. This could be something as simple as always dressing in black or wearing an enormous scarf or you may have a number of gowns and outfits—with well chosen accessories—for any occasion. Some thought does need to go into this. Your burly warrior cannot wear his armour 24 hours a day, or his companions will not want to be downwind of you—not to mention the negative attention you bring from shopkeepers and the local watch. Your style need not be a 3-page composition that you must bore everyone by reading, nor need it be as simple as “the black guy with the big axe.” Your style and appearance should be something that helps you and those you game with visualise your character.

You may be non-descript (essential for some occupations), or truly unique

(particularly with multiple levels of the *Distinctive* trait).

The following is a list of visual characteristics that you may choose:

Bad teeth; Balding; Beer gut; Big but; Birthmark; Completely bald; Different colours in your hair; Distinctive walk; Eye patch; Eyes that are unusual colours (i.e. a black girl with green eyes); Long hair; Nervous habit (i.e. chews nails, or taps on things constantly); Nice hands; Odd textured skin—leathery; Perfect teeth; Scars—acne or other diseases, battle wounds, burn-marks; Scars—inconveniencing or disfiguring; Stripes or unusual patterns of your iris (one or both eyes); Tattoos; Tic (facial or otherwise); Two-toned skin (such as a “farmers’ tan”); Unkempt hair; Unkempt-looking hair (takes forever to get right); Unusual pallor to your skin (very dark or very pale); Very hairy; Well endowed or poorly endowed (use your sick & twisted imagination); White streak in your hair;

Here are some more unusual traits. Note that some of these may indicate mutation or mixed ancestry:

Albinism; Bizarre skin tone (i.e. pale with blue tint, greenish tan); Body piercing; Eyes that are different colours; Feral appearance; Horns (one or more, small); Mohawk or other uncommon hair style; Odd textured skin—baby-butt smooth; Odd textured skin—rough, scaly; Patterned skin (stripes, patches, leopard-like spots); Red eyes; Severe scarring (i.e. ears and nose cut off); Silly walk; Strange birthmarks (blue vines that wind up your arm); Vestigial horns; Yellow eyes;

## Learning Skills

You need not wait until you have gained a new level to learn a skill. While you may gain free skills from advancing in a class, you can learn something new at any point that you have a teacher and the time to learn. In order to teach, one must have the skill at journeyman level or proficiency level V. Possessing the teaching skill allows you to add the result over 15 of the proficiency check to your pupil's Common Sense checks. You can teach yourself, but the time required is automatically doubled, if it is possible for you to learn that skill at all. The Game Master must determine whether you can be self-taught. For example, you can teach yourself how to fire an arrow correctly with enough practice, but you will probably never be able to learn how to speak a dead language that you have never heard before.

The *Hours* listed in the skill description is the base time that it takes to learn a skill. This is total learning time. For example, if you only practice a skill for 2 hours a week, you will be in training for months before you are any good. A guideline for these skills is that 200 hours is about the same amount of time that one course in college requires. You may reduce this base time with successful Common Sense checks (this represents how well you digest information). When you start learning a new skill, you make a Common Sense check and if successful, you reduce the hours listed by 10%; i.e. a 200 hour skill is reduced by 20 hours per success, a 400 hour skill is reduced by 40 hours. You continue to make these checks until you fail a roll. This becomes the time required for the basic block of instruction. If the first check failed, then the time to learn increases by 10%. Continue to roll until you finally succeed.

This increased time is your new base time to learn. The maximum modification is a factor of 2, that is either one-half or double the base time to learn.

Once you know how long each block of instruction will require (whether doubled or cut in half) you must be taught (and practice, practice, practice) for however long the new base time is. After this time learning & practicing, you roll your percentage *Chance to Learn* based on your Knowledge score (this represents how well you retain information). If this roll fails, you must again practice and be taught the (modified) basic block of instruction time to learn the skill. You may then check your *Chance to Learn* again. If it succeeds, wonderful, you have finally learned the skill sufficiently. If you still fail, you need to practice some more. It is possible for someone who picks up things easily but doesn't remember well to have small basic blocks of instruction, but a longer overall time practicing (i.e. high Common Sense but low Knowledge). It is just as possible for someone to have to be taught slowly and patiently, but remembers everything that she is taught (low Common Sense & high Knowledge). There are all kinds of learning styles.

If a skill says "Double learning difficulty," then your *Chance to Learn* is reduced by half. Doubly hard means half the chance.

The Game Master may grant retests or bonuses to the Common Sense check for good learning conditions such as a patient teacher, adequate learning materials, or a study partner. Conversely he or she may

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force retests or inflict penalties for exceptionally poor learning conditions; i.e. being beaten for asking questions, language barrier between you and the teacher, having to study when held by your ankles over a pit of lava, etc.

An example of learning a skill: Amber is attempting to learn a new alchemical formula that requires 60 hours to learn. She does not have a teacher, but does have a copy of the formula. The Game Master allows her to teach herself from her recipe, but this doubles the base time automatically to 120 hours. Amber then makes a Common Sense check to see how well she understands the text. She succeeds 4 times before finally failing a roll—reducing the base time down to only 15 hours (half of 120 is 60, half of 60 is 30, half of that is 15—divide by two for each time she succeeded on the Common Sense check). Amber now rolls for her *Chance to Learn*. She studies for 15 hours, reading the recipe and experimenting in the lab. The first roll fails (by a large margin) and she must now study for another 15 hours. When she succeeds in the roll,

she then knows the skill. Failed rolls require yet another 15 hours of study.

Another example, with more numbers this time: Pat is learning *Run Through* from the Impaler (100 hours to learn). The Impaler makes a skill check with her *Teaching* skill and adds the result (19, which is 4 over the required 15) to her student's Common Sense checks. Pat's effective Common Sense checks that he makes to learn the skill is as though it was 4 higher. Pat fails the first Common Sense check even with the bonus—the time to learn is now 200 hours. He fails the second check—400 hours. He succeeds in the 3<sup>rd</sup> check—the new base time is 400 hours & Pat may now attempt to learn how to shove big pointy things into someone. Unfortunately, he doesn't survive the first lesson as the Impaler lives up to her name. Good thing to because she has better things to do with her time than spend four hours a day, every single day, for over 3 months to teach someone when she can be out practicing for herself.

## Costs for Training

The typical costs for training, from anyone who is willing to teach, is one guilder per hour of training. This does not represent a very qualified teacher, however. This is finding someone (such as a contact) who happens to have some measure of a skill, and is willing to teach you.

A more qualified teacher (5 or more ranks in the skill & the Teaching skill) will charge 2-3 guilder per hour of training. Specialists, highly-qualified or renowned teachers, or those possessing rare skills,

may charge up to 10 guilders per training hour or more.

The cost of learning a skill may be reduced or eliminated by apprenticing yourself to the teacher. Whether you have reduced or free training—or even receive some small wage—will depend on the work that you do. A beginning apprentice will not be able to produce quality goods until she gets more training & practice. One who is further along will be able to actually help out the master with the goods &/or services provided.

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A professional instructor will have more time available to devote to training your character-figure 8 hours per day. Those that have other duties-such as the blacksmith that you are apprenticing yourself to-may have substantially less time for instruction. This is why an apprenticeship may take years when the skills themselves may be learned within a few weeks.

Here is an example. Anna is learning the Armorer skill from the local smith. She is already an accomplished journeyman blacksmith (a prerequisite skill), and so can be useful around the forge. Knowing how to produce & repair armour is a useful (and lucrative) talent, and the smith is quite skilled in this area, so the cost would

normally be 3+ per training hour, but Anna's usefulness as an assistant alleviates that somewhat. The smith will charge her half the normal cost. The base training time for the Armorer skill is 800 hours, but Anna is a good student and is able to test that time down to only 200 hours. Between actual instruction, and practical hands-on experience, she effectively gets about 4 hours per day of training. This works out to 50 days, or about a month-and-a-half. The 200 hours worth of training will cost her 300 guilder. Since this is all of the money that she had saved, she had better hope that she makes her first Chance-to-learn check..

## Character Journal

Also referred to as *blue-booking*, this is a role-playing technique in which you log your characters actions, particularly out of combat and away from the other players. This allows for character development and solo activity such as learning new skills, maintaining your personal affairs, or running your empire. Things that can simply be written down (either on paper, or on-line such as at [pitas.com](http://pitas.com) or [diaryland.com](http://diaryland.com)) can be run in the 'background' rather than during the main game session. These are things that can be discussed with the Game Master between game sessions, or read at her leisure, so as to not interfere with the other players' game time.

One good use for journals or character logs is when your character is helping to build the world in-game. These are things such as constructing a stronghold, founding an organization, or improving an area. Your Game Master may reward you for

this, especially as it makes her life easier. For example, a simple entry such as, "I have my trusted aide supervise repairing the roadways in my barony," could be rewarded with improved travel-time during your next adventure. Even when outside of your own lands, to continue the example, you may move faster and easier due to your neighbors trying to keep up with you-the quality of your roads makes theirs look bad by comparison.

This technique is especially useful for social interactions. Teachers, family, patrons, employees, minions, neighbors, Contacts, all may be dealt with in this manner. Many of these encounters would be fun to role-play with the Game Master, but others can be noted in your journal. Simple actions, such as instructions or just, "I spend some time with my kids." More complex conversations, that is, anything that involves multiple responses, should be role-played.

## Experience

Experience is an excellent method to chart character growth. It essentially measures the amount of cool things you have done. You may increase your skills and abilities through hard work and practice, or you can develop yourself through the practical exercise known as living. While it is possible to spend 20 years honing your sword-fighting prowess so that you may avenge your father's death, it isn't much fun. The faster and easier method is to gain experience points. The Game Master assigns experience points usually at either the beginning or end of a game session, but

may assign points during play. The advantage of assigning experience at the end is that the events are fresh in your mind, and you are winding down from the game anyway. The advantage of assigning them at the beginning of the next session is that events that the players cannot recall must not have been a growth experience for their characters. Another advantage to the give-out-at-the-beginning method is that it gets the players focused on the game. Regardless of which method the Game Master uses, be sure to remind him or her because they have a bad habit of 'forgetting.'

## Suggested experience point awards:

Playing in character: 100-300 points  
 Clever use of skills or abilities (per usage): 20-100 points  
 Gamesmanship (limiting table talk, helping newer players): 100-500 points  
 Organization in game (interacts with the game world well): 100-300 points  
 Organization out of game (character sheet together & legible, shows up on time, remembered dice bag): 50-200 points  
 Heroic action (per action): 100-1000 points  
 Clever or quick thinking plan: 100-500 points  
 Clever insight, reasoning, or judgement: 50-200 points  
 Defeating a minor enemy, obstacle, trap, or problem (threat relative to the players): 10-50 points  
 Defeating a moderate enemy, obstacle, trap, or problem (threat relative to the players): 50-200 points  
 Defeating a major enemy, obstacle, trap, or problem (threat relative to the players): 200-500 points

Defeating an epic-level enemy, obstacle, trap, or problem (threat relative to the players): 500-10,000 points  
 Miscellaneous cool actions (swinging from a chandelier, using a ladder as a weapon, jumping up on a table in a fight): 10-250 points  
 Remembering something when prompted (plot hooks): 250 points  
 Remembering something that the Game Master forgot (names of people & places): 200 points  
 Remembering something that the Game Master was trying to forget: 0 points  
 Being a Lost Souls Pack member (per game session): 250 points  
 Participating in Pack events that evening: 50-300 points  
 Just being in a game run by a Game Master in the Lost Souls: 50 points  
 Bribing the Game Master (4 basic food groups—nicotine, caffeine, alcohol, cholesterol): 10 per cigarette (50 for a clove), 2000 or more for quality liquor

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Bribing the Game Master (cash or undisclosed "favours"): negotiable  
 Contributing to the delinquency of a minor (in game or out): 5-25 points  
 Showing cleavage or other interesting skin: 50-1000 points

Bringing someone to game that shows cleavage or other interesting skin: half of 'cleavage points' awarded  
 Knowing the proper name of the loop-strap on the bottom of Thor's hammer: 10,000 points

## Experience Chart

This measures how far along your character's experience growth is. The chart is for *total character level* rather than just class level. For example, you could be a 2<sup>nd</sup> level apprentice wizard / 4<sup>th</sup> level rogue, but your total character level might be 6<sup>th</sup>. When you gain a new level, you must choose one of your classes to advance. Continuing the above example, when the character had a total of 18,000 points she would choose to increase either her wizard level to 3<sup>rd</sup>, or

her rogue level to 5<sup>th</sup>. When you gain a level, your hit points go up by two. Every even-numbered level you gain a +1 to any one type of saving throw, and every third level you automatically gain an attribute point of your choosing. Remember to petition the Game Master to increase your skills each time that you gain a level, and also remember that you do not have to advance a level to gain new skills—or improve old ones.

2 <sup>nd</sup>	1000	15 <sup>th</sup>	81,000	28 <sup>th</sup>	328,000	41 <sup>st</sup>	744,000
3 <sup>rd</sup>	2000	16 <sup>th</sup>	94,000	29 <sup>th</sup>	354,000	42 <sup>nd</sup>	783,000
4 <sup>th</sup>	4000	17 <sup>th</sup>	108,000	30 <sup>th</sup>	381,000	43 <sup>rd</sup>	824,000
5 <sup>th</sup>	6000	18 <sup>th</sup>	123,000	31 <sup>st</sup>	409,000	44 <sup>th</sup>	865,000
6 <sup>th</sup>	9,000	19 <sup>th</sup>	139,000	32 <sup>nd</sup>	438,000	45 <sup>th</sup>	907,000
7 <sup>th</sup>	13,000	20 <sup>th</sup>	156,000	33 <sup>rd</sup>	468,000	46 <sup>th</sup>	950,000
8 <sup>th</sup>	18,000	21 <sup>st</sup>	174,000	34 <sup>th</sup>	499,000	47 <sup>th</sup>	994,000
9 <sup>th</sup>	24,000	22 <sup>nd</sup>	193,000	35 <sup>th</sup>	531,000	48 <sup>th</sup>	1,039,000
10 <sup>th</sup>	31,000	23 <sup>rd</sup>	213,000	36 <sup>th</sup>	564,000	49 <sup>th</sup>	1,085,000
11 <sup>th</sup>	39,000	24 <sup>th</sup>	234,000	37 <sup>th</sup>	598,000	50 <sup>th</sup>	1,132,000
12 <sup>th</sup>	48,000	25 <sup>th</sup>	256,000	38 <sup>th</sup>	633,000	51 <sup>st</sup>	1,180,000
13 <sup>th</sup>	58,000	26 <sup>th</sup>	279,000	39 <sup>th</sup>	669,000	52 <sup>nd</sup>	1,229,000
14 <sup>th</sup>	69,000	27 <sup>th</sup>	303,000	40 <sup>th</sup>	706,000	53 <sup>rd</sup>	1,279,000

Points are cumulative; add 50,000 points for each additional Experience level beyond 53<sup>rd</sup>.