Creating Adventurers

This page describes the simple methods used to create adventurers for use in the game HAT. The method is meant to be evocative, and to also allow players the freedom to build the kind of character they wish. Unlike the source game D&D, there are no rigid classes. Instead there are rigid rules that are loosely decoupled from the fiction, giving the player the power to shape them as they wish.

The process itself is as simple as one, two, three: Choose Traits, Determine Scores, and Get a Story. However, before we get to that, you must understand the most basic part of the game: the trait.

Traits are King

Characters are a collection of traits, each of these a word or phrase that says something about the character themselves. For example, Strength, Blitz, and Dwarf are all traits. Each trait is defined by its type and substance. The type is always one of the following: Attribute, Ability, or Aspect. The substance is how the trait works in the rules.

- **Attribute**: These are gross traits that describe the character in general. While there are special ones, and they can be created by the player, there is a basic set: Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Each attribute has a Modifier and Adjectives as its substance.
- **Abilities**: These are the most specific of traits, meaning they are narrow in application. The question of whether an Ability applies to a situation is totally in the hands of the GM. Each ability has Adjectives and Clauses for its substance. There is a set of many Standard Abilities in HAT available for use, our you can construct them using the Ability Construction Set.
- **Aspects**: Things that aren't specific like Abilities, or gross traits like Attributes, fall into the category of Aspects. This means it ends up as a sort of catch-all for traits that don't fit into either of the other two categories. Aspects include things like character Histories, Creeds, Beliefs, Legends, and so on. You can create your own Aspects with the help of the GM, or use any from the Known Aspects list on this page. Aspects have a special type of substance called Usurp meaning when they apply you work with the GM (without rolling) to see how they impact the fiction.

Traits can't possibly describe everything about a character. We solve this by using the rule of assumption. Assumption is a process by which we assume a character has quality X if no trait sets that quality. Here are the qualities which are handled by assumption:

- **Race**: The character is human.
- **Age**: The character is neither young or old, but somewhere in the middle.
- **Wealth & Resources**: The character is broke and is a wanderer.
- **Standing**: The character has no important friends outside family.
- **Equipment**: The character starts out with basic equipment, but nothing of note.

Outside of this, characters are defined by the details you create in the fiction as the game unfolds. We call this the character's Story. This begins with a rough outline of who the character is, and how they appear at a glance. As you play you will extend their Story with more details, giving them depth.

1: Choosing Traits

Normally all starting adventurers will get five traits of the player's choice. If the GM would like more impressive starting adventurers, they may raise this to seven traits. Giving ten traits would be the upper limit, denoting some truly powerful adventurers. If you want to compare it to the old D&D, figure five traits is a level one character, and adding each is like adding two levels.

Some traits have restrictions, and these must be respected when choosing them. Most commonly this is **solo**. When a trait belongs has solo, you may only have one of that trait unless it specifically says otherwise. So if you take a trait wit the restriction of solo:race, you may not take another trait with solo:race unless it says you may combine it. The other common restriction is when a trait **requires** a quality given by another trait. For instance, the ability Dungeon Delving requires the character to have the quality Dwarf, given by the Dwarf aspect trait.

All traits have a secondary purpose in the game. Each type modifies the scores of a character when you select it. If you select an Attribute trait for instance, your adventurer will start with more HP. This is how that works:

- **Attribute**: Each time you take an attribute for your adventurer, they gain +5 HP.
- **Ability**: Each time you take an ability for your adventurer, they gain +1 AC.
- **Aspect**: Each time you take an aspect for your adventurer, they gain +2 Additional.

This means you can "game adventurer creation" in order to gain a specific type of character in play. You do this by focusing your choices to end up with a specific amount of HP, AC, and Additional in mind. However, this isn't required to make the game work, as you will see as you play. In addition, many traits adjust scores too. For example, Constitution gives an additional +2 HP, meaning its worth +5+2 = +7 HP.

2: Determine Scores

Each character starts the game with two primary scores: HP and AC, plus three or more Additional scores to compliment them.

The **HP** score starts at 5, adjusted for the traits taken.

The **AC** score starts at 5, adjusted for the traits taken.

Additional scores start at 0, and are adjusted up from there. The three normal additional scores of an adventurer are: **Acumen**, **Stunt**, and **Trick**. Traits however may provide more of them to the adventurer. Starting adventurers assign five points between all Additional as they see fit, our use them to raise trait modifiers (no more than +3 per trait).

3: Get a Starting Story

This can be as simple as a nickname and a rough idea of who the adventurer is, like: *John, the sword-swinging braggart*. However it can be more ornate, and include more history of the character, as the GM and player wish. These details are known as the starting Story of the adventurer, and will be

expanded upon as the game goes on. You could view this as growing list of features of the character, and you want those, because when they shine in play the GM will award you more XP. These in turn lead to more Story and eventually Advancements which give the character more or improved traits.

General Attributes

There are six general attribute traits, which are described here:

- **Strength**: *class:str;* Strength and smashing. Start with a modifier of +2. Pick one Adjective for this trait.
- **Dexterity**: *class:dex;* Speed and footing. Start with a modifier of +1. Pick one Adjective for this trait. +1 AC.
- **Constitution**: *class:con;* Toughness and surviving. Start with a +3 modifier. +2 HP.
- **Intelligence**: *class:int;* Intellect and thinking. Start with a +2 modifier. Pick one Adjective for this trait.
- **Wisdom**: *class:wis;* Knowledge and understanding. Start with a +3 modifier. +2 Additional.
- **Charisma**: *class:cha;* Charm and socializing. Start with a +1 modifier. Pick two Adjectives for this trait.

A player may elect to move up to five modifier points between attributes as they wish during adventurer creation. This means they can reduce Constitution to 0 and raise Strength to +5, and so on. Each time a player earns an attribute in play via advancement, they may move two modifier points as they wish.

There are several extended general attributes, but note the class they hold so they may not collide with basic attributes.

- **Mighty**: *class:str;* Incredible strength. Start with a modifier of +4.
- **Sagely**: *class:wis;* Amazing Knowledge. Start with a modifier of +5. +1 Additional.
- **Stunning**: *class:chr;* Impressive looks and charm. Start with a +3 modifier. +2 Additional.
- **Hearty**: *class:con;* Fantastic toughness. Start with a +4 modifier. Increase HP draft by 1.

Standard Abilities

There are many, many abilities in HAT, but these are the standard ones only. This is a trimmed set for starting adventurers and once they are playing, they get access to all the available Ability Traits. For now though, pick from these for your adventurer or create a custom one with the kit.

- **Brawl**: The adventurer has mastered some unskilled combat moves. Add the Adjective: Unrefined to combat moves as the player wishes.
- **Blitz**: The adventurer has developed some speed in combat. The player may trade any action type (move, minor, standard) for a move or standard battle action.
- **Smash**: The adventurer has gained impressive attack strength. The player may add the Adjective: Brutal and one level to attack battle actions for the cost of 1 HP.
- **Graceful**: The adventurer has learned how to leverage speed and mobility in battle. The player may exchange dexterity for any normal attack using strength. They may also elect to pay 1 HP to apply dexterity in addition to strength for a normal attack.
- **Steady**: The adventurer can pace themselves and conserve energy. The player may spend

their minor action to recover 2 HP.

- **Hard**: The adventurer has strengthened their mind and body against injury. The player should reduce any injury taken by the adventurer one each time an injury is taken, but never below one.
- **Refexes**: The adventurer can honed their combat reflexes. The player may pay one less to soak an attack with HP than it would normally cost (e.g. paying 3 HP to soak a level 4 attack).
- **Footwork**: The adventurer uses space to their advantage. When the adventurer moves back a step from battle, they may spend their standard action as a second draft.

Known Aspects

There a multitude of aspects in HAT, but these are the known ones only. This is a trimmed set for starting adventurers and once they are playing, they get access to all the available Aspect Traits. For now though, pick from these for your adventurer or create a custom ones with the help of the GM.

- **Elf**: *class: race*; The adventurer is an Elf, gains the quality: Elf. They may add two to dex modifier (if available) or two to additional instead. In addition, they may Usurp the rules for the cost of 2 HP when the GM allows them to perform a stunning feat of physical prowess and earn a level result effect as the GM picks.
- **Dwarf**: *class: race*; The adventurer is a Dwarf, gains the quality Dwarf. They may add two to con modifier (it available) or three to HP instead. In addition, they may Usurp the rules for the cost of 1 HP when the GM allows to make an impressive battle move, earning a level result effect as the GM decides.
- **Genuine Faith**: *class: nature*; The adventurer has real faith, gains the quality: Cleric. They gain the score: Faith and two more Additional points. They may Usurp the rules for 2 HP and let any other player re-roll a roll by calling upon their God for assistance if the GM allows. Wis + Faith forms your prayer rolls.
- **Magical Nature**: *class: nature*; The adventurer has magic, gains the quality: Magic-User. They gain the score: Occult and four more Additional points. Choose a central score for this magic, one of: int, chr, or Acumen. Magic rolls are that score plus Occult.
- **Thief's Instinct**: *class: nature*; The adventurer has a thief's instinct, gains the quality: Thief. They gain the score: Artifice. +2 Trick. They may Usurp the rules from 1 HP and gain a Condition or apply a Condition to others given they have more trick than them by doing something underhanded and sneaky as the GM allows.
- **Fighting Spirit**: *class: nature*; The adventurer has an unstoppable fire for battle, gains the quality: Fighter. They earn +1 Additional each time they take an ability that enhances a battle roll (e.g. Brawl, Smash, Graceful - it must affect a battle/combat roll directly). +2 Stunt, +2 HP.
- **Elemental Prayer**: *requisite: Cleric*; The cleric has the ability to control the elements with their prayers. They begin with two such prayers and can Usurp the rules when between encounters to create new such prayers given they can spend the XP.
- **Celestial Prayer**: *requisite: Cleric*; The cleric has the ability to control the celestial forces with their prayers, though this is a dangerous endeavor. They begin with two such prayers and can Usurp the rules when between encounters to create new such prayers given they can spend the XP.
- **Basic Magic**: *requisite: Magic-User*; The magic-user has the ability to cast basic, simple magic. They begin with two such magics and can Usurp the rules when between encounters to create new such magics given they can spend the XP.
- **Dangerous Magic**: *requisite: Magic-User*; The magic-user has the ability to cast complex but dangerous and tricky magic. They begin with two such magics and can Usurp the rules when

between encounters to create new such magics given they can spend the XP.

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