

TRADITIONALIST CHARACTER CREATION



Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Part One: Character Creation Overview.....	4
Step One: Concept and Identity.....	4
Define your concept.....	4
Come up with both a Nature and a Demeanor Archetype.....	4
Create an Avatar & pick its Essence.....	4
Picking a Tradition.....	4
Arete.....	5
Step Two: Select Attributes -.....	5
What are their core competencies?.....	5
Step Three: Select Abilities - What do they know?.....	5
Step Four: Select Advantages.....	5
Backgrounds.....	5
Record your character's Affinity Sphere.....	6
Step Five: Finishing Touches.....	6
Willpower.....	6
Resonance.....	6
Negative Traits.....	6
Derangements.....	6
Merits and Flaws.....	7
Free Traits.....	7
Additional Starting XP.....	7
Part Two: Character Creation Process.....	8
Step One:.....	8
Define the concept.....	8
Nature and Demeanor.....	8
The Avatar.....	9
Picking a Tradition.....	10
Step Two: Select Attributes.....	12
Physical Traits.....	12
Social Traits.....	12
Mental Traits.....	13
Max Traits:.....	13

Step Three: Select Abilities.....	14
Ability Categories.....	15
Ability Specialization.....	15
Abilities for Inheritance of Ashes.....	15
Step Four: Select Advantages.....	20
Backgrounds.....	20
Arete.....	20
Record starting Spheres.....	20
Step Five: Finishing Touches.....	22
Paradigm, Practice, and Instruments.....	22
Willpower.....	23
Resonance.....	23
Negative Traits.....	23
Derangements.....	23
Merits and Flaws.....	23
Free Traits.....	24
Earning Additional Starting XP.....	24
Spending Additional Starting XP.....	24

Part One: Character Creation Overview

The below list of steps is a high-level overview for the making of a well-defined and compelling character. Each area of the Character Creation (abbreviated CC) process is further expanded upon in greater detail later in the document. The five general steps as outlined below are meant to be a guide for initial thoughts and a simple reference for more experienced players.

Step One: Concept and Identity ***Who are they? What are they like?***

Define your concept

This is a high-level idea for *who* your character is. Don't worry about the details yet. Try and keep the initial concept to five words or less. Some examples of concepts are: "modern witch", "physical fitness coach" or "inquisitive academic scholar." Once you have a few words to guide your thoughts, begin to break that initial thought down into more specific details.

Come up with both a Nature and a Demeanor Archetype

Your character's Nature and Demeanor are another one of the fundamental lenses from which they view their perception of the world around them. Oftentimes, a character's Nature and Demeanor will offer potential motivations, give a way to define how a character acts versus what they believe and can offer a few sentences to help shape the core of your character's personality.

Create an Avatar & pick its Essence

Choose an Avatar that reflects your mage's inner guide. Then, select an Essence (Dynamic, Pattern, Primordial, or Questing) to define how that Avatar communicates and the way it pushes your mage toward growth, whether through chaos, structure, instinct, or personal discovery. This relationship shapes your mystic journey.

Picking a Tradition

Select the Tradition your mage trained under—the mystical society whose beliefs, practices, and worldview shaped their path. Each Tradition offers a unique magical paradigm and specializes in a particular Sphere, influencing how your character approaches magic. Your choice will also define your mage's allies, rivals, and place within the broader landscape of Awakened society.

Note

The below steps do NOT need to be done in the order in which they are presented. It is perfectly ok to come up with the Traits your character has *before* deciding who they are. With that said, the concept should still result in a fully rounded "person" whose Traits reflect the past, current wants/needs and future goals of the character.

It should also be noted that the differences for the steps of making a Sorcerer—an individual who practices magick in a more defined and less dynamic way than a Mage—are outlined in Laws of the Hunt Revised.

The Nine Traditions are: Akashic Brotherhood, Celestial Chorus, Cult of Ecstasy, Dreamspeakers, Euthanatos, Order of Hermes, Sons of Ether, Verbena, and Virtual Adepts.

Arete

Arete represents your mage's enlightenment—their ability to perceive and shape reality through magic. It governs the strength and success of your character's magick, as well as the depth of their understanding of the Spheres. All mages begin with one Trait in Arete unless Free Traits are spent to raise it (up to a maximum of 2 for new players in Inheritance of Ashes).

Step Two: Select Attributes - What are their core competencies?

A character's Attribute Traits represent their core competencies and help define what they're good at both naturally and on what they've focused their passions on. Use these to start and get a feel for what your character is good at. If they're a physical fitness coach they'll likely be good at Physical activities. If they're an academic scholar they would likely be focused on their Mental faculties. An occult-oriented modern witch might have focused on using their Social skills to build a coven rather than be focused on purely academic pursuits and knowledge.

The important thing to remember is that while a character doesn't need to fit a stereotype. You could have a charismatic physical fitness coach, or a scholar who's not afraid to get their hands dirty for scraps of knowledge. Regardless, there should at least be reasons in their history, background, and experiences that has molded them into who they are today.

Step Three: Select Abilities - What do they know?

Abilities are the reflection of specific Talents, Skills and Knowledges a character has acquired through their life. At character creation these Abilities should reflect their *past* experiences. For example, your physical fitness coach would likely have some level of Athletics and Leadership, and maybe some Dodge, Medicine and Academics training if they're licensed. The scholar may have some Firearms training for a concealed carry, but has likely spent the majority of their time studying the various sciences and the other Talents, Skills, and Knowledges to coincide with their job and passions.

Depending on your character's Tradition, your character may get free one or more free Traits to be assigned to specific Abilities. This information can be found in the Tradition Advantage section of their respective Tradition.

Step Four: Select Advantages

Backgrounds

Representing advantages of relationships, circumstances and opportunity, Backgrounds are a measure of a character's internal and external resources. As with Attributes and Abilities, at CC your character's Backgrounds should be based on essential elements of your character's history. During the creation process you'll start with seven free Background Traits to assign.

Record your character's Affinity Sphere

There are nine Spheres, each of which represent a certain element of reality. In game terms they represent a mage's ability to manipulate that aspect of reality. Each Tradition has a heritage of study that covers one Sphere in great depth. It is this heritage that determines your character's Specialty Sphere.

After marking one level in your Specialty Sphere, you will be able to assign an additional five free levels of Spheres to any of your choosing. Note that your maximum level of a Sphere is capped by your character's Arete; in other words, if your Arete is 2, you can only have two levels in any given sphere.

In total, at CC, your character will get six levels of Spheres to spread among the nine Spheres of magick understanding.

Step Five: Finishing Touches

Willpower

Mages often refer to themselves as Willworkers. In game terms this is actually quite literally the capital-T truth. Willpower determines a mage's maximum number of Arete Traits and can be used to boost a spell's power so that it has a greater effect.

Each character starts with 5 Traits of Willpower at CC.

Resonance

All mages have a certain Resonance, which can be thought of as a specific flavor tied to each mage's magick. These individual spins on the magic a mage performs colors their magick subtly when they perform them. The larger amount of Resonance a mage has, the more clearly it can be seen in their Effects

During the CC process a character will be assigned one Dynamic, Entropic or Static Resonance Trait.

Negative Traits

Each Negative Trait taken converts to an additional Free Trait that can be spent later when assigning Free Traits. You may take up to five Negative Traits.

Derangements

Derangements taken at CC give 2 Free Traits up to a total of 2 additional Free Traits; these traits count towards your cap of five Negative Traits.

Merits and Flaws

In addition to Attributes, Abilities and Backgrounds, each of which represent a character's life and experience, characters may have Merits and Flaws which can be found in the MET Laws of Ascension Companion. Merits and Flaws offer characters unique boons and drawbacks which can be used to round out a character concept. They can range anywhere between a major or minor permanent advantage or disadvantage. Merits and Flaws are subject to approval prior to being purchased.

It is highly recommended that you take at least one to two Flaws for your first character.

Free Traits

As the name implies, Free Traits are additional traits that can be used to purchase additional Traits such as Attribute, Willpower and Spheres. The full list and cost for this is outlined in the "Free Traits" section below.

Additional Starting XP

All characters are automatically granted an additional 30 XP after character creation. An additional 10 XP can be earned by submitting each of the following: writing a backstory, completing the "Initial Character Information Sheet", and submission of a completed "Avatar Guide" (totaling a max starting XP pool of 60). Additional information is provided in the Earning Additional Starting XP section at the end of this document.

Part Two: Character Creation Process

Creating a character is, to an extent, the creation of a person. While that character will likely only ever live inside your head, they should have wants and needs that help shape and define who they are. By thinking about how our life experiences shape our real-life abilities, so too should our character's experiences shape the various aspects of their sheet and their portrayal in the game.

Step One:

Define the concept

Having a rough idea of who your character is often is critical to creating a compelling character. An initial concept of five or less words can "jumpstart" the creative process. Remember that you are not your character. Your character can literally be anyone of any background with any religious, political, or world-view. Below is a list of actions that may be useful for further examination of the concept after starting with the baseline five or less word initial concept.

- Consider reading up a bit on the culture and social environment that shaped your character.
- Define their relationships. Who are they close to, if anyone, and what do those relationships look like? Are they close to people and open about their feelings or are the relationships they maintain cold and professional? Why or why not?
- What was your character's life prior to joining the Traditions? Did they have one? Do they remember it? Has the Traditions been all they've ever known? Do they wish they had a normal life?
- Does the character have any goals or ambitions? What are they? Do they have plans for how to achieve them?

While the above is not by far a comprehensive list, hopefully it offers areas that can help define what a character knows and why, in addition to offer interesting paths for roleplay.

Nature and Demeanor

Just like real life, characters have core values that drive them. Nature and Demeanor represent both a mechanical nature of this and offer an easy starting point for defining a character's core values. You will pick one Archetype each for both Nature and Demeanor.

Nature: A representation of internal drive and desire, Nature forms as a result of strong personal experiences and is a central part of the character that rarely changes, except as a result of extreme trauma. The mechanical advantages, and disadvantages, to a character's specific Nature can be found on page 84 of *Laws of Ascension*.

Demeanor: Demeanor is the means through which the character expresses themselves, a mask offered to the rest of the world if you will. While this can change, and often does, the World of Darkness system has one that each character often fall back to.

Archetypes: Archetypes can be used to express either a character's Nature or Demeanor. Picking a Nature and Demeanor is more than just for flavor; specifically, a character's Nature offers some important mechanical benefits. In *Laws of Ascension* there is a rather large list of Archetypes from which to pick beginning at the bottom of page 84.

The Avatar

I want to make clear that this is a **VERY IMPORTANT** thing to think carefully about. The aspects of your character's Avatar and the choices of its Essence will determine the ultimate magical goals that your mage will feel compelled to pursue. It should reflect the core concepts of who your character is or will become. More importantly, it will play a pivotal role in the growth of your mage as they strive for greater enlightenment and power via moments of challenge and growth called Seekings.

An Avatar is effectively a spiritual guide—though in rare instances an Avatar may be manifested in the “real world”—that helps a mage grow in understanding and power. The way an Avatar guides a mage can take many personas: from that of a patient teacher, a caring parent, to a brute who forces understanding. Whatever role it takes, the connection between a mage and their Avatar is the key to mystic understanding. The stronger it is to you, the more a mage understands.

The form the compulsions and guidance from an Avatar take stem from the Avatar's Essence—the persona of the Avatar itself. There are four common types of Essences: Dynamic, Pattern, Primordial and Questing.

Dynamic Essence

The Dynamic Avatar is chaotic, impulsive, alive with energy and desire. It seeks endless challenge and the birth of new forms.

Pattern Essence

A Pattern Essence prizes order, structure, and balance. These Avatars speak in systems and patterns, and can take the form of mathematical visions, ancestral laws, or cosmic rhythms.

Primordial Essence

The Primordial Avatar speaks in symbols older than language, and moves through instinct, fear, hunger, and awe. This Essence destroys old forms and sows chaos to bring about renewal and rebirth.

Questing Essence

Looking for answers, testing limits, and demanding growth through experience falls under the purview of a Questing Essence. It builds upon a series of experiences to reach some eventual goal.

Picking a Tradition

Mages take on apprentices and teach mystic practices in small groups that propagate their own styles and beliefs. Therefore, your mage likely studied with a Tradition whose beliefs already meshed with his own.

Your character's Tradition will determine their special proficiency with an individual Sphere. It will also determine the sorts of mages that the individual may know, work with or struggle against. Lastly, it influences the character's political position in the society of mages

The modern Traditions are the Akashic Brotherhood, the Celestial Chorus, the Cult of Ecstasy, the Dreamspeakers, the Euthanatos, the Order of Hermes, the Sons of Ether, the Verbena and the Virtual Adepts. Below is a short description of these Traditions and their Specialty Sphere. For their specific Tradition Advantages and Disadvantages, see MET Laws of Ascension for details.

Akashic Brotherhood

"The true science of martial arts means practicing them in such a way that they will be useful at any time, and to teach them in such a way that they will be useful in all things."

— Miyamoto Musashi.

The Akashayana are about the perfection of the body and the pursuit of martial arts. Magic flows from the prowess and pursuit of martial skills, and the unity of mind, body and spirit.

Example: A Karate instructor who learns in the heart of practice and taking punches develops a broader understanding of the world around him and now feels a connection to something bigger yet hard to explain.

Celestial Chorus

"Now let us sing, sing till the power of the Lord comes down"

-Unitarian Hymnal

A tradition of faith and song, that expresses magic through the beauty of music. Music has connected cultures and faiths and served as a high expression of devotion. In that faith is the possibility of connecting to something mystical and supernatural. This is the Celestial Chorus.

Example: Chasidim in song, Monks chanting hymns, to Sufis singing loud qawali—there are many possibilities

Cult of Ecstasy

"Reality doesn't impress me. I only believe in intoxication, in ecstasy, and when ordinary life shackles me, I escape, one way or another. No more walls."

-Anaïs Nin,

Cult of Ecstasy, sex and drugs are one way to get there right? The cult is much deeper than the stereotypes, but still the vision that you can awaken through pleasure is certainly an alluring one...

Example: A drug dealer who expands consciousness with a heroic dose and devotes themselves to the cult.

Dreamspeakers

"That is not an ordinary star, my son. That star is the tear of a warrior. A lost soul who has finished his battles somewhere on this planet. A pitiful soul who could not find his way to the lofty realm where the great spirit awaits us all."

-Laughing Bull

Shamans exist across cultures and traditions. They are mystics and guides that commune with the spirits. In deep communion one may cross over into an awakening. Or the umbra. Depending on what adventure you've gotten yourself into.

Example: A Mystic of a rural tribe sees a vision connecting them to Minnesota and decides to quest to find purpose.

Euthanatos

"The power of death signifies that this real world can only have a neutral image of life, that life's intimacy does not reveal its dazzling consumption until the moment it gives out."

-Bataille

The wheel of life spins. It continues to spin so long as lives perish and return to it. The mages closely connected to death are diverse. Many return the wicked to the dirt, to give them another chance at life. Some connect to wraiths or the shadow lands. Most give off a deathly vibe called Jhor that is terrifying to most.

Example: An assassin who targets evil doers and enemies of ascension.

Order of Hermes

"The excellence of the soul is understanding; for the man who understands is conscious, devoted, and already godlike."

— Hermes Trismegistus

For antinomians, there sure are a lot of rules. A strict rigid society with sub houses and organization the devoted scholars of the order of Hermes sure have turned magic into

something to be researched and studied. Beware of politics, but in the order of Hermes those who grow and learn tend to succeed, but against fierce competition.

Example: A student from a Hermetic school is sent to Minnesota to investigate strange occult occurrences

Society of Ether

"Man's right to know, to learn, to inquire, to make bona fide errors, to investigate human emotions must, by all means, be safe, if the word "freedom" should ever be more than an empty political slogan."

— Wilhelm Reich

Formerly the Sons of Ether (Ladies and Enbies can be etherites, though, get that dirt off your shoulder). In 1904 the Technocratic Union removed the Ether from the Consensus. The SoE moved to the traditions and have since been a fun mix of high technology and scientific method, mixed with pulp novel science and theories that no longer occupy contemporary scientific consensus. It's like Kitab Al-Alacir teaches.....Everything is True.... Anything is Possible

Example: A mad scientist exploring the limits of what Consensus itself will prevent.

Verbena

"I love Nature partly because she is not man, but a retreat from him."

-Thoreau

Witches, Mystics, Pagans, and Neopagans, the Verbena have a holistic view of humanity and nature, seeing life as interconnected and intertwined. This could mean magic from leaves and twigs, to magic emanating from body fluids—or the exchange of them. Nature and life intertwine so deeply that the manifestations for how a verbena could draw from are nearly endless.

Example: A wiccan attempting a spell finds herself at the door of possibility, Awakening with what the pursuit of magic begins to show her.

Virtual Adepts

"The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. The virtual is fully real in so far as it is virtual."

Gilles Deleuze

What if your hacking skills developed to the point that your time in meat space was merely an afterthought. What if you could hack reality itself? The most recent tradition to join—and the most recent group to be kicked out of the technocracy—the VA exist on the cutting edge of cyberpunk, where calculation and precision, and knowing your way around cyberspace are the keys to Awakening.

Example: A young hacker trying to figure out cicada 3301 stumbles upon websites that start offering a real challenge.

Step Two: Select Attributes

A character's Attribute Traits represent their core competencies. These competencies are broken down into three categories; each category is further broken down into three additional areas which reflect the character's capability in more specific defined ways.

At character creation choose seven Traits in your primary Attribute category. Choose five Traits in your secondary category. Choose three in your tertiary category. Divide your initial starting traits among the three subcategories, minimum of one Trait each, for all three of the primary categories.

Physical Traits

As a generalization, Physical Traits are a reflection of a character's brute strength, ability to move quickly or nimbly and how much punishment, both from combat and environment, they can endure.

Dexterity: This Trait governs how swift, sure-of-foot, and nimble you are. It's good for dodging attacks, leaping and firing ranged weapons.

Strength: This Trait describes how much power your body can bring to bear. It's good for close-combat fighting and feats of strength.

Stamina: This Trait tells how long you can endure exhaustion and damage. It's good for shrugging off blows in combat.

Social Traits

Indicating how good a character is at various social activities, Social Traits encompass things like leadership, seduction and subterfuge.

Charisma: This Trait tells how personable and friendly you can be. Use it to charm people and to give persuasive speeches.

Appearance: This Trait governs how well you can impress people with your appearance. Use it to seduce, intimidate or inspire others.

Manipulation: This Trait describes how well you get what you want out of people. Use it to deceive people and work political angles.

Mental Traits

A character's Mental Traits encompass competences like being able to solve enigmas, notice danger and investigate an area for leads or how quick a character can think on their feet.

On the road again...

In *Inheritance of Ashes*, we use an optional rule for how Attributes work by capping them based on a character's Arete.

To help balance out the fact that other games might not utilize a similar rule, characters based in *Inheritance of Ashes* will be able to buy all Attributes up to the traditional cap of 10 + Arete.

Please note that these additional traits must be bought with XP and will NOT be able to be used in *Inheritance of Ashes*.

Intelligence: This Trait describes your education and mastery of knowledge. Use it to recall esoteric facts and solve puzzles.

Perception: This Trait tells how attentive you are to the world around you. It's good for noticing hidden, unusual or notable clues.

Wits: This Trait governs how creative and quick-thinking you can be. It's good for outsmarting others and finding unexpected solutions.

Max Traits:

A character's maximum Traits in each Attribute category depend on their Arete and whether the category is primary, secondary, or tertiary. The maximums are calculated as follows: primary is 10 plus Arete; secondary is 10 plus Arete minus 1; and tertiary is 10 plus Arete minus 2.

Step Three: Select Abilities

Unlike Attributes which represent a broad generalization of a character's aptitude, Ability Traits represent specific capabilities or talents that a character might learn. These Abilities, overall, are able to be broken down into three specific areas, each with different mechanics in regards to how they are handled if a particular Ability hasn't been purchased or trained.

The first step for assigning Abilities is to allocate any free Traits from your Tradition Advantage. Next, assign your 5 "floating" Ability Traits to any Ability that you feel fits your character's concept; no more than three of the five Traits may be assigned to a single Ability in this stage.

It is recommended that players pick five Abilities that make sense for their character's life history, training, Tradition, and personal predilections, then assign each Ability a single Trait. While you'll get a chance later in the process to add more points to your character's Abilities, this can help you put a focus on the five things the character is best at and/or those five things which have a strong influence on the character's life and personality.

Ability Categories

As mentioned above, Abilities are broken down into three mechanically different categories. While all considered "Abilities" the mechanical differences are meant to represent a character's ability to improvise; improvising is defined as the attempted use of an Ability which a character does not possess at least one Trait.

The three categories are Talents, Skills and Knowledge.

Talents: Defined as inborn affinities refined by practice, Talents should reflect a character's natural tendencies and life-honed gifts. There is no penalty for not having an Ability in this category when improvising.

Skills: A Skill reflects something that a character has learned to do by a combination of practice, natural aptitude and/or formal education. If a character lacks the appropriate Skill being called for, and has no appropriate substitution, they may still attempt the challenge but must reduce the Attributes being bid by 1 to reflect the added difficulty and lack of aptitude.

Knowledges: Certain Abilities demand learning. These Traits reflect things that a character understands on an intellectual level. Without the proper Knowledge, your character may not even attempt to roll for certain Knowledge-based feats.

Ability Specialization

Each Ability represents a character's proficiency within that specific Talent, Skill or Knowledge. Sometimes though, a character becomes more than a master by further developing a more highly concentrated subset of an ability. Ability Specializations represent that additional mastery.

After the fourth Trait of a Talent, Skill or Knowledge is purchased, you may then purchase an Ability Specialization. While not as broad as the Ability itself, specializations can give the extra edge in specific situations, turning a failure into a success.

To specialize, a single point of Experience needs to be expended. A single, narrow field of expertise related to the Ability is picked and added as a note on the character sheet. As a specialization is meant to represent a narrow area of focus, taking a specialization in *Firearms: Guns* would not be acceptable nor would taking a specialization in *Survival: Outdoors*; Appropriate examples for these two categories are *Firearms: Assault Rifles*, *Firearms: SMGs*, *Survival: Temperate Forests* or *Survival: Arctic*.

When bidding Traits, if the Ability Specialization is applicable to the challenge, add one additional Trait to the number of total Traits you are bidding.

Abilities for Inheritance of Ashes

The below list, while not fully comprehensive or exhaustive, consists of a well-rounded selection of Abilities appropriate for the Inheritance of Ashes' game space and where they can be found—see the parentheses for references. Typically, when a challenge is being called by a ST the below list is what will be referred in regards to bidding Traits. If you, the player, has an Ability that you think would be better suited for the task or wish to go about solving the problem a different way, don't hesitate to inform the ST running your scene; ultimately it is the ST's call in regards to what Ability/Attribute is requested/used for a challenge, however, if you don't tell us what's on your sheet we likely won't know what to ask for or what you could possibly substitute.

If you wish to have something added to your sheet that isn't on the below list please let staff know so we may discuss it with you. Additional information on the use of these Abilities can be found in the [Inheritance of Ashes Abilities Supplement](#).

Talents

Acting ((MET LoA Comp))
Alertness ((MET LoA))
Animal Ken ((LoH Rev))
Artistic Expression ((M20 - Core Ability))
Athletics ((MET LoA))
Awareness ((MET LoA))
Blatancy ((M20 - Secondary Ability))
Brawl ((MET LoA))
Cooking ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Dodge ((MET LoA))
Empathy ((MET LoA Comp))
Expression ((MET LoA))
Flying ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
High Ritual ((MET LoA Comp))
Intimidation ((MET LoA))
Intrigue ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Intuition ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Leadership ((MET LoA))
Lucid Dreaming ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Negotiation ((MET LoA Comp))
Networking ((MET LoA Comp))
Newspeak ((MET LoA Comp))
Scrounging ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Streetwise ((MET LoA))
Subterfuge ((MET LoA))

Skills

Archery ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Assessment Analysis ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Biotech ((MET LoAComp))
Blind Fighting ((MET - Dark Epics))
Crafts (For more information see the "[Example Weapons/Equipment and Item Creation/Crafting Rules](#)" document in the house rules) ((MET LoA))
Disguise ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Drive ((MET LoA))
Energy Weapons ((MET LoAComp))
Escapology ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Etiquette ((MET LoA))
Fast-Draw ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))

Firearms ((MET LoA))
Heavy Weapons ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Helmsman ((MET LoAComp))
Hypertech ((MET LoAComp))
Interrogation ((MET LoAComp))
Jetpack ((MET LoAComp))
Jury-Rigging ((MET LoAComp))
Martial Arts ((M20 - Core Ability))
Meditation ((MET LoA))
Melee ((MET LoA))
Performance ((MET LoA))
Power-Brokering ((MET LoAComp))
Psychology/Psychoanalysis ((MET LoAComp))
Repair ((LoTH Rev))
Research ((M20 - Core Ability))
Riding ((M20BoS - Secondary Ability))
Scrounge ((LoTH Rev))
Security ((MET LoAComp))
Stealth ((MET LoA))
Survival ((MET LoA))
Technology ((MET LoA))
Torture¹ ((MET LoAComp))

Knowledges

Academics ((MET LoA))

- Anthropology ((Guide to the Technocracy))
- Ethnology ((Guide to the Technocracy))
- Fine Arts ((Guide to the Technocracy))
- History ((Guide to the Technocracy))
- Logic ((Guide to the Technocracy))
- Philosophy ((Guide to the Technocracy))

Area Knowledge ((M20 - Secondary Ability, pg. 298))
Belief Systems ((TBD))
Computer ((MET LoA))
Cosmology ((MET LoA))
Cryptography ((MET LoAComp))
Demolitions ((MET - Dark Epics))
Enigmas ((MET LoA))
Finance ((M20 - Secondary Ability))
Investigation ((MET LoA))
Law ((MET LoA))
Law Enforcement ((MET LoAComp))

¹ While we allow this Ability, note that scenes involving this skill will require SPECIFIC consent via all parties or will be run via FTB/narration.

Linguistics ((MET LoA))

Lore ((MtAComp - Secondary Ability))

- Ascension War
- Changeling
- Demons
- Faeries
- Ghosts
- Mage
 - Disparate
 - Traditions
 - Akashic Brotherhood
 - Celestial Chorus
 - Cult of Ecstasy
 - Dreamspeakers
 - Euthanatos
 - Order of Hermes
 - Sons of Ether
 - Verbena
 - Virtual Adepts
- Technocracy
 - Iteration-X
 - NWO
 - Progenitors
 - Syndicate
 - Void Engineers
- Marauders
- Spirits
- Umbra
- Vampires
- Werewolf

Media ((MET LoAComp))

Medicine ((MET LoA))

Occult ((MET LoA))

Pharmacopeia/Poisons ((M20 - Secondary Ability))

Pilot ((MET LoAComp))

Propaganda ((MET LoAComp))

Science ((MtAREv))

- Aeronautics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Astronomy ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Biology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Biopsychology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Chemistry ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Computer Science ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Cybernetics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))

- Electronics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Engineering ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Forensic Pathology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 288))
- Genetics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Geology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Hypermathematics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Mathematics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Metallurgy ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Paraphysics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Phylogeny ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Physics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Psychodynamics ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 289))
- Psychology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 290))
- Psychopharmacology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 290))
- Psychoprojection ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 290))
- Sociobiology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 290))
- Xenobiology ((M20 - Core Ability, pg. 290))

Subdimensions ((MET LoAComp))

Theology ((LotH Rev))

Unconventional Warfare ((M20 - Secondary Ability))

Vice ((MET LoAComp))

Step Four: Select Advantages

Backgrounds

Assign your seven free Background Traits to any combination of Backgrounds that reflect your character's history, relationships, and resources. Backgrounds are a great way to mechanically represent your mage's past experiences—such as long-standing ties to their Chantry, mystical tools passed down through generations, favors owed by other Awakened, or spiritual patrons who guide them. Allies, Mentors, Nodes, and Arcane are just a few examples of how your character's legacy and connections can shape their journey.

For a comprehensive list of Backgrounds see the [Backgrounds Guidelines](#) document.

Arete

The mage's enlightenment, mystical insight and awareness of magic combine to form his Arete. A young Initiate most often has only a single Arete Trait. With time, experience and Seekings, the mage can improve their rating in this Trait.

Your mage's Arete determines the success or failure of most of their magick. It also is the limit of how much of the Spheres the character can comprehend. A mage cannot learn a Sphere level above the character's total Arete Traits.

Unless you spend Free Traits at character creation, your mage starts the game with only a single Arete Trait. **A first-time player's Arete is capped at 2 in Inheritance of Ashes.** Regardless, you cannot raise Arete above three Traits by spending Free Traits.

Record starting Spheres

There are nine Spheres, each of which represent a certain element of reality. In game terms they represent a mage's ability to manipulate that aspect of reality. Each Tradition has a heritage of study that covers one Sphere in great depth. It is this heritage that determines your character's Specialty Sphere.

The affinity Spheres for the various Traditions are:

- Akashic Brotherhood: *Mind*
- Celestial Chorus: *Prime*
- Cult of Ecstasy: *Time*
- Dreamspeakers: *Spirit*
- Euthanatos: *Entropy*
- Order of Hermes: *Forces*
- Sons of Ether: *Matter*
- Verbena: *Life*
- Virtual Adepts: *Correspondence*

After marking down your free level of your Specialty Sphere, you will then assign an additional five free levels to any Spheres of your choosing. Note that your maximum level of a Sphere is capped by your character's Arete; in other words, if your Arete is 2, you can only have two levels in any given sphere.

In total, at CC, your character will get six levels of Spheres to spread among the nine Spheres of magick understanding.

Step Five: Finishing Touches

Paradigm, Practice, and Instruments

Magick is not merely a set of spells—it's a direct expression of the mage's belief about how the world works. The Traditions understand that reality is shaped by conviction, meaning that a character's Paradigm, Practice, and Instruments aren't just flavor—they're the spiritual and philosophical backbone of their magic.

Together, these three elements form the Focus: a unified framework through which a Tradition mage interprets the world and enacts change upon it.

Paradigm

The Paradigm is your mage's core belief about how the universe functions. Is reality a dream? A divine construct? A program running on a higher machine? This belief is more than just a worldview—it's the lens through which your mage channels their power. Every Effect your character attempts should, in some way, make sense within the logic of their Paradigm. A

Dreamspeaker might view reality as shaped by spirits, while a Hermetic may believe in immutable laws of universal correspondences.

When choosing a Paradigm, consider:

- What is the nature of reality?
- What causes things to happen?
- What forces does your mage believe they're calling upon—or becoming?

Practice

Your Practice is the method by which your mage enacts their Paradigm. It's the system or discipline they've trained in—what they've learned to do in order to make magick work. While two mages may both believe in divine will, one might express it through ascetic meditation while another chants verses from sacred texts. Examples of Practices include High Ritual Magick, Shamanism, Martial Arts, Yoga, Hermetic Invocation, or Alchemical Transmutation.

The Practice serves as a structure that grounds your mage's understanding and implementation of their beliefs. It also informs which types of Instruments they're likely to use.

Instruments

Instruments are the tools your mage uses to apply their Practice and express their Paradigm. These can be physical items—like prayer beads, ritual daggers, or incense—or symbolic behaviors and routines, like dance, code-writing, fasting, singing, or complex equations. Instruments help your mage focus their will and refine their intention.

A new character must begin with at least seven Instruments that they commonly use, ideally spanning a range of Spheres and situations. Seven is both a symbolic number and a useful one—helping ensure the mage's focus is broad enough to handle a variety of magical tasks. Over time, as a mage's Arete (Enlightenment) grows, they may gradually move beyond needing some of these tools, but in the beginning, Instruments are a vital part of performing magick.

You are free to create new Instruments or combine existing ones with Storyteller approval, as long as they make sense for your character's overall concept. Hybrid focuses are also possible—for example, a Virtual Adept who integrates chaos magick into their hacking rituals, or an Akashic who combines meditation with bone-setting techniques.

Willpower

Mages often refer to themselves as Willworkers. In game terms this is actually quite literally the capital-T truth. Willpower determines a mage's maximum number of Arete Traits and can be used to boost a spell's power so that it has a greater effect. Rules for what Willpower Traits can be spent on can be found in *MET Laws of Ascension* on pages 117-118.

Each character starts with 5 Traits of Willpower at CC.

Resonance

All mages have a certain Resonance, which can be thought of as a specific flavor tied to each mage's magick. These individual spins on the magic a mage performs colors their magick subtly when they perform them. The larger amount of Resonance a mage has, the more clearly it can be seen in their Effects

During the CC process a character will be assigned one Dynamic, Entropic or Static Resonance Trait. These represent emotional and magical resonances unique to each individual mage. An expanded explanation can be found starting on page 119 of *MET Laws of Ascension*.

Negative Traits

Each Negative Trait taken converts to an additional Free Trait that can be spent later when assigning Free Traits. You may take up to five Negative Traits.

Derangements

Derangements taken at CC give 2 Free Traits up to a total of 2 additional Free Traits; these traits count towards your cap of five Negative Traits.

Merits and Flaws

You must have Storyteller permission to take Merits and Flaws.

Merits

At CC you may purchase Merits at cost, up to seven Traits worth of Merits total, with Free Traits. Once past the first seven Traits of Merits, the cost to purchase a Merit with Free Traits increases to twice the Trait value listed; after CC, Merits may be purchased with XP at twice the cost of the Trait value listed in the Merit's description.

Flaws

During the CC process, Flaws may be taken for additional Free Traits, to a total of seven Free Traits. In the case you gain a new Flaw in the course of play, you will not be granted new free Traits to spend, even if your character did not take Flaws up to or exceeding the seven Trait cap at CC.

Free Traits

A character has a default of five starting Free Traits. Additional Free Traits can be earned by taking Negative Traits, Derangements or Flaws at CC.

Free Trait Costs

- One Free Trait buys an additional Attribute Trait.
- One Free Trait buys an additional Ability Trait.
- One Free Trait converts to an additional Background Trait, subject to Storyteller approval.
- Two Free Traits grants you an additional Arete Trait. You cannot raise that rating above a total of three Arete Traits in this manner, though. A first-time player's Arete is capped at 2 in Inheritance of Ashes.

- Three Free Traits can be converted to an extra Willpower Trait, to a maximum of 10 permanent Willpower Traits.
- Three Free Traits allows you to learn the first level of any Sphere, subject Storyteller approval.
- Free Traits may be spent on Merits. For additional information see the “Merits” section at the bottom of the preceding page.

Earning Additional Starting XP

All characters are automatically granted an additional 30 XP after character creation. An additional 30 XP, for a total starting XP pool of 60, can be earned by writing a backstory (minimum 1 page double spaced for 10 XP), completing the “Initial Character Information Sheet” for another 10 XP, and submitting a completed “Avatar Guide” for the last potential 10 XP.

Each draft of the backstory will be given an XP value based on the quality and length; if not full value is awarded, a total of up to three backstories may be submitted for revised Additional XP earning. With the initial starting XP, no more than half of the XP earned may be spent on Merits and/or Spheres.

Spending Additional Starting XP

New Attribute Trait — One Experience per Attribute Trait.

New Ability Trait — One Experience per Ability Trait.

New Background Trait — One Experience per Trait with Storyteller approval.

New Sphere — Four Experience Traits for Initiate or Apprentice level; eight Experience Traits for Disciple or Adept level; 12 Experience Traits for Master level. **These costs increase to five/10/15 for Spheres other than your specialty Sphere.**

New Arete — Four Experience per Trait (A first-time player’s Arete is capped at 2 in Inheritance of Ashes. All new characters are capped at Arete 3).

New Rote — One Experience Trait for each Sphere level used in the rote.

New Specialization — One Experience Trait in an Ability you have at least four Traits in.

New Willpower — Three Experience per Trait.

Buy Off Negative Trait — Two Experience per Trait.

Buying Merits — Merits may be purchased with XP at twice the cost of the Trait value listed in the Merit’s description.

Buy Off Flaws — A flaw may be removed from a character’s sheet at twice the cost of the Trait value listed in the Flaw’s description.