

The extra point of Perseverance is mainly for the extra hit point, but Carl decides it can also provide the first hint of the more admirable side that will eventually shine through.

The first thing that makes Carl consider the extra point in Ingenuity is purely mechanical – it will help if he decides to learn some lightning spells, meanwhile making his Quickness easier to improve – but the same thinking that went into his unexpected choice of Lore as one of his skills plays a part here too.

For now he doesn't need mp for anything, but he flags Presence as a trait he'll want to work up later on if the opportunity presents itself.

Step 5—Equipment

Storm's GM has told him to use the default of 200 starting gil. Chainmail and a spear are the first obvious things to purchase and will cost 110 gil, leaving 90. In an early hint of the lightning theme he eventually wants to adopt, he splurges on a Lightning Seed, a lightning-based alchemical bomb, spending another 60 on this item. He adds a couple of javelins to his starting layout for 24 gil, and has now spent 194, leaving 6 – just enough for a single night's stay at a decent inn. It's not too hard to see what would motivate him to seek the fortunes that can be gained from adventuring!

Step 6—Quirk

Carl considers skipping this optional step, but decides to give it a shot. He thinks a bit more about the kinds of pulp heroes that inspired Storm, and how there often seems to be some unspoken understanding among them. Carl calls his GM and they create a quirk they call "Warrior's Code" over coffee.

Fellow men of action will tend to recognize Storm as a kindred spirit, and there might be a certain friendliness and respect there even when they are nominally Storm's enemies, so long as all concerned follow a few basic principles of honour. This can provide useful information or even the occasional unexpected ally, but it also means Storm may from time to time be honour-bound to fight trials by combat and other difficult battles that might not be in his or the party's best interests. Over the course of the campaign, the GM establishes that this is part of a widespread tradition some cultures have of settling disputes through combat between small groups of champions, and it becomes an important part of the campaign's plot.

Step 7—Character Sheet

Because this is the first character Carl has created, he decides to set the cheat sheet aside and go through the more detailed explanations in *A Guided Tour of the Character Sheet* on page 32 of this book. As he reads each section, he copies or calculates the relevant information from the notepad he's been using to the correct part of Storm's character sheet.

To see how this step ended up working out, you can find completed character sheets for Storm and eight other characters in the *Handouts* folder.

Levelling Up

When you have accumulated enough experience points, your level increases by one the next time you take a night's rest. (The GM can rule that this only requires a breather, not a night's rest. These two types of rest are discussed in chapter 4.) This is referred to as "gaining a level" or "levelling up".

Each time you level up, you receive the benefits listed below. Levels divisible by 6 (6, 12, 18, and so on) are called milestone levels and give you greater benefits than other levels. Each level up makes you more effective, sometimes by a little, sometimes by a lot. Your level thus serves as a rough measure of how powerful your character is.

Level Up Benefits

Each level up benefits you in four ways. The darker-coloured text gives the benefits you get at most levels; the normal text below each step gives further notes, including how that step changes at milestone levels.

1. hp (and Toughness): You gain the number of hit points specified in your class description (3, 4, or 5).

Remember to update your Critical number as well.

At milestone levels, you gain hp equal to this number *or* your perseverance, whichever is better. In addition, at these levels, your toughness increases by 1. This has no immediate effect, but means you get more hp if your perseverance later increases.

2. mp (and Energy): Your mana pool increases by the amount specified in your class description (2, 3, or 4).

At milestone levels, you gain mp equal to this number *or* your presence, whichever is better. In addition, at these levels, your energy increases by 1. This has no immediate effect, but means you get more mp if your presence later increases.

3. Destiny: You gain 4 Destiny. Then you may spend Destiny to capture nodes on the Destiny Wheel and/or Defence Web.

You don't have to spend all your Destiny as soon as you get it. But, you can only have 4 Destiny banked at any one time, so if you have 5 or more in total you *must* spend Destiny until you're left with 4 or less. Any Destiny you have left at the end of this step is banked and can be used the next time you level up.

At milestone levels, you can sell back one ability from your class's Destiny Wheel or Defence Web. Do this as the *first* part of this step, just before (and in addition to) gaining 4 Destiny for this level. More detailed rules for this are found below.

4. Skills: You gain 2 skill points. Then you may spend skill points to capture nodes on the Skill Tree.

You don't have to spend all your skill points as soon as you get them, but you can only have 3 banked at any one time, so if you have 4 or more in total you *must* spend skill points until you have 3 or fewer. Any skill points you have left at the end of this step are banked and can be used the next time you level up.