

Characteristics Establish A Foundation

The physical, mental, and social abilities for Characters are described and defined by Characteristics. These Characteristics are gathered into a six-digit string for easy reference.

Characteristics are foundations for physical, mental, and social activity. Each character has three physical characteristics, two mental characteristics, and one social characteristic (plus an obscure characteristic called Sanity).

Characteristics are Assets in the resolution of Tasks. The characteristics establish the foundation for the resolution of most tasks. A character with a specific skill can attempt tasks that someone without skill is not permitted to try.

CHARACTERISTICS FOR SOPHONTS

Traveller uses fourteen different Characteristics, of which a character uses six. The specific six are determined by the character's race.

Human Characteristics: The six human characteristics are Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing.

Referring To Characteristics

Each characteristic has a name and several ways of identifying it.

Abbreviations. A Characteristic can be abbreviated with its first three letters. Capitalize only the initial letter of the abbreviation. For example, Strength is Str (rather than STR).

Genetic Profile (GP). A Characteristic can use its initial letter in the Genetic Profile.

The GP is a six-letter string (using the initial letters of the characteristics) showing the specific six characteristics for a sophont. For example, the Human GP = SDEIES (Str, Dex, End, Int, Ed, Soc). There is a sophont with GP = SASIIK (Str, Agi, Sta, Int, Ins, Cas).

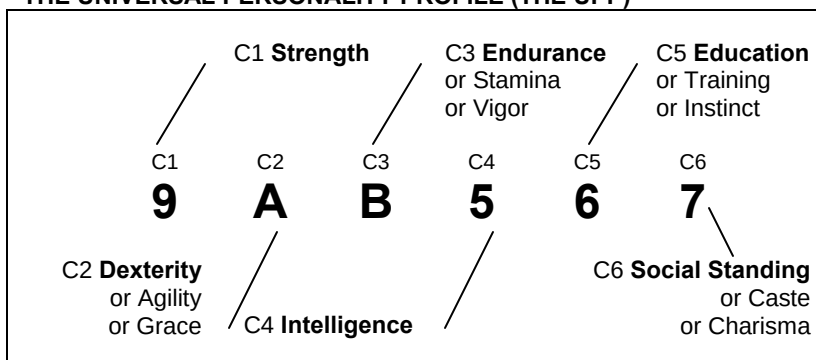
The meaning of letters in the GP is dependent on position (S in position 1 is Strength, S in position 3 is Stamina). Because two characteristics in position 6 have the initial letter C, use K for Caste.

Position Codes (C1 C2 C3 C4 C5 C6).

A characteristic can be identified by its position in the UPP. Use the letter C (for Characteristic) followed by 1 through 6. For example, for all sophonts, C1 = Str.

To avoid confusion between a word's ordinary meaning and its use as a characteristic name (such as Strength and strength), a characteristic may be explicitly referred to in the format Position Code = Characteristic Name. For example, C5 = Training, or C4 = Intelligence.

THE UNIVERSAL PERSONALITY PROFILE (THE UPP)



The UPP shows characteristics as Ehex digits in a six-digit string as a ready reference for the abilities of the character. **Bold** = Human.

CHARACTERISTICS

Possible personal characteristics include:

Char	Abb	Characteristic	H*	Description	GP Letter
C1	Str	Strength	H	physical power and ability.	S
C2	Dex	Dexterity	H	body and eye-hand coordination.	D
C2	Agi	Agility	A	overall body coordination.	A
C2	Gra	Grace	A	overall body-limb coordination.	G
C3	End	Endurance	H	physical resistance to fatigue.	E
C3	Sta	Stamina	A	long-term ability to pursue a task.	S
C3	Vig	Vigor	A	short-term ability to resist fatigue.	V
C4	Int	Intelligence	H	natural ability to think and reason.	I
C5	Edu	Education	H	achievement level of schooling	E
C5	Tra	Training	A	based on cultural heritage	T
C5	Ins	Instinct	A	based on genetic heritage.	I
C6	Soc	Social Standing	H	position in large group hierarchy.	S
C6	Cha	Charisma	A	position in small group hierarchy.	C
C6	Cas	Caste	A	position in genetic group hierarchy.	K

H= Human characteristic (may be in non-humans). If all characteristics are H, the species may be (but is not necessarily) Human. In **Bold**.

A= Analog (non-human) characteristic.

Characteristic Equivalences

Analog characteristics can be related to each other and can often be substituted for each other in tasks and other situations.

For example, the C2 characteristics Dexterity, Grace, and Agility substitute for each other at half value. A sophont with Grace attempting a task for Dexterity would use half-Grace. A character required to use an analog Characteristic is almost always working at a disadvantage.

CHECK CHARACTERISTIC

Easy Check

1D =< Characteristic

Check

2D =< Characteristic

Hard Check

3D =< Characteristic

Characteristics provide a simple mechanism (the Check <Characteristic>) for resolving situations:

The Check. Select an appropriate Characteristic and roll 2D against that characteristic: a result equal to or less than the characteristic gives success; any other result gives failure.

To avoid recurring use of a character's high characteristic, a character cannot use a characteristic again until two other characteristics have been used. If only one specific Characteristic is appropriate; each successive use of the Characteristic rolls with Mod -1.

Easy Checks and Hard Checks. For very easy tasks, roll 1D; for very hard tasks, roll 3D.

For example, Aia Resteff 68A999 is loading cargo on a Free Trader. One especially large container is blocking a floor access panel. She puts her shoulder to the load and tries to move it. The Referee says Check-Strength. The player rolls 2D (=7 which is greater than Aia's Strength-6; it fails). She can't try again immediately, so instead of pushing, she tries rocking the container. The Referee says Check Dexterity. The player rolls 2D (=7, which is less than Dexterity-8; the container moves).

Mods. The Check can be enhanced (or degraded) by circumstantial Mods. For example, Check Str - Weather, or Check Dexterity - Slippery Surface.

PHYSICAL VS. MENTAL VS. SOCIAL

Characteristics may be **Physical**, **Mental**, or **Social**. Each character has three Physical characteristics, two Mental Characteristics, and one Social Characteristic.

Physical Characteristics C1, C2 and C3

The physical characteristics are Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Grace, Agility, Stamina, and Vigor.

All characters have Strength.

There are three different characteristics for fine physical activity: Dexterity (for humans), Agility, and Grace. Each represents a slightly different physical approach.

There are three different characteristics for resistance to fatigue: Endurance (for humans), Stamina, and Vigor. Each represents a slightly different ability.

Mental Characteristics C4 and C5

The mental characteristics are Intelligence, Education, Instinct, and Training.

All sophonts have Intelligence.

There are three different characteristics for learning: Education (for Humans), Training, and Instinct.

Social Characteristics C6

The social characteristics are Social Standing, Charisma, and Caste.

There are three different characteristics for position in social hierarchy: Social Standing (for Humans), Charisma, and Caste.

The Obscure Characteristics CS and CP (or CΨ)

There are two obscure characteristics: Sanity and Psionics.

Every character has both Sanity and Psionics, although they are not generated until needed.

Why Different Characteristics?

The different characteristics allow players to create sophonts with slightly (or not-so-slightly) different abilities. When a character is called upon to use a characteristic which

he does not have; he can use the analog he does have at half value (usually; there are some exceptions).

For example, a character with Dexterity has to do a task with Agility: he can use his Dexterity at half value (round fractions up).

C1 STRENGTH

Strength (abbreviated Str). Strength is physical power and ability. Strength is the ability to apply physical force or to carry loads (loads for strength are expressed in kilograms).

Every character has Strength.

Using C1

Strength is the characteristic that governs Load and Burden.

Load And Burden. **Load** is the weight (technically it is the mass) of all objects carried by person. **Burden** is the perceived load after all modifications. If Burden does not exceed Str in kg, there is no penalty.

Burden (in the QREBS system) may modify the effective weight or mass of some objects (devices, equipment, weapons). The QREBS Burden modifier may increase or decrease load. Thus the Burden modifier creates Burden by increasing or decreasing Load.

Carrying. A character can routinely **carry** a Burden equal to Strength in kilograms for an unlimited period of time. He can carry a double Burden but functions with C2 minus 2 and C3 minus 2 until the Burden is shed. He can carry a triple Burden but functions with C2 minus 4 and C3 minus 4 until the Burden is shed.

Transferring. Transfer is the temporary movement of a Burden from one place to another (often a process of lift, walk a short distance, and drop). A character can **transfer** a Burden of 5x Strength. Transfer is limited to C3 in minutes every hour for Endurance, every half hour for Stamina, and every two hours for Vigor.

Lifting. A character can **lift** a Burden of 10x Strength for under one minute.

Dragging. A character can **drag** a load of 20x Strength for under one minute.

C2 DEXTERITY OR AGILITY OR GRACE

C2 is the characteristic which addresses fine physical activity.

Dexterity (abbreviated Dex). Dexterity is body and eye-hand coordination, or fine touch control.

Agility (abbreviated Agi). Agility is overall body coordination. Agility is often (but not exclusively) associated with flyers.

Grace (abbreviated Gra). Grace is overall body-limb coordination. Grace is often (but not exclusively) associated with swimmers.

C2	If The Task Calls For		
	Dexterity	Agility	Grace
	Use Dex x 1	Use Dex / 2	Use Dex / 2
	Use Agi / 2	Use Agi x 1	Use Agi / 2
	Use Gra / 2	Use Gra / 2	Use Gra x 1

Using C2

The C2 characteristic is used in balance, accuracy (in throwing or weapons use), and in fine manipulation.

Balance. When a character risks losing his or her balance, Check C2.

Accuracy. When a character throws something at a target, Check C2.

Fine Manipulation. When a character attempts fine manipulation (operating very small controls, inserting detailed parts into a mechanism), Check Dexterity.

C3 ENDURANCE OR STAMINA OR VIGOR

C3 is the characteristic which addresses fatigue and resistance to fatigue.

Endurance (abbreviated End). Endurance is personal determination and physical resistance to fatigue.

Stamina (abbreviated Sta). Stamina is personal determination and long-term ability to pursue a task. Characters with Stamina have greater long-term resistance to fatigue, and are in some ways superior to those with Endurance.

Vigor (abbreviated Vig). Vigor is personal determination and short-term ability to resist fatigue. Vigor is an inferior alternative to Endurance. Characters with Vigor have lower resistance to fatigue.

C3	If The Task Calls For		
	Endurance	Stamina	Vigor
	Use End x 1	Use End / 2	Use End x 2
	Use Sta x 2	Use Sta x 1	Use Sta x 2
	Use Vig / 2	Use Vig / 2	Use Vig x 1

Using C3

The C3 characteristic determines the length and effectiveness of a character's Personal Day, a character's need for sleep, and his ability to perform tasks.

Exhaustion and Fatigue. When a character engages in physically exhaustive work (running a great distance; moving heavy loads), Check C3.

Sprints. For short distance running, Check Vigor.

Long Distance Running. In a continued running situation, Hard Check Endurance.

C4 INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence (abbreviated Int) is the natural mental ability to think, reason, and to use logic.

Every character has Intelligence.

Using C4

The Intelligence characteristic allows a character to be smarter than the player (or less smart than the player). There are times when a **player** has a **character** who is smarter than he is (or a **player** has a **character** who is less intelligent than he is).

Solving Puzzles. When a character is confronted with a puzzle, Check Intelligence. The game master manipulates this basic process to reflect harder puzzles, simpler situations, or other complications.

C5 EDUCATION OR TRAINING OR INSTINCT

C5 is the characteristic which addresses learning and the ability to acquire and use long-term information.

Education (abbreviated Edu). Education is learning based on achievement level of schooling. Education is an equivalent level of schooling (although not necessarily attendance at a school).

Education is also a supplement or an alternative to Intelligence. In **Traveller**, they are decoupled: they are unrelated, and it is possible for a very intelligent person to have a low Education (or a very high Education person to have a low intelligence).

Sophonts with C5 = Education can be taught skills and knowledges in the traditional Educational environment. The governing skill for the Educational environment is Teacher.

Training (abbreviated Tra). Training is learning based on behavior modification. Training is a predisposition to the learning process based on cultural heritage.

Sophonts with C5 = Training learn poorly in the Educational environment; they prosper in special Training courses adapted to their needs. The governing knowledge for the Training environment is Trainer.

Instinct (abbreviated Ins). Instinct is an inborn complex of behaviors comparable to acquired learning. It is based on genetic heritage.

Sophonts with C5 = Instinct function poorly in the Education or Training environment and cannot use those institutions (they increase skills through experience).

C5	If The Task Calls For		
	Education	Training	Instinct
	Use Edu x 1	Use Edu / 2	Use Edu =4
	Use Tra / 2	Use Tra x 1	Use Tra =4
	Use Ins = 4	Use Ins = 4	Use Ins x 1

Using C5

The C5 characteristic indicates the sum of an individual's abilities available in support of intelligence.

Finding Basic Facts. When a character is confronted with a need for basic facts: Check Education. The game master manipulates this basic process to put the correct information at the disposal of the characters.

Substituting Edu, Tra, and Ins. Training and Education substitute for each other at half value. Ins can be substituted for Edu or Tra with a value of 4. For tasks that require Instinct, Edu or Tra may be used with a value of 4.

Instinctual Reactions. A character with Ins, confronted with a task that requires Edu or Tra reacts instinctively.

For easy tasks, Easy Check Instinct.
 For Average tasks, Check Instinct.
 For Difficult tasks, Hard Check Instinct.
 For tasks beyond Difficult, roll the number of dice for the task.

Instinct provides a time advantage. A character who succeeds in a task using Instinct completes it **before** anyone else attempting the task using Edu or Tra.

Instinctual Skills and Knowledges. Sophonts with C5 = Instinct receive a native store of three instinctual skills or knowledges (but not talents) with a skill level equal to C5 Instinct.

C6 SOCIAL STANDING OR CHARISMA OR CASTE

C6 is the characteristic associated with a character's place in society.

Social Standing (abbreviated Soc) is social position in large group hierarchy. Social Standing indicates social class and the level of society from which the character comes.

Charisma (abbreviated Cha) is position in small group hierarchy. Charisma reflects a relative social relationship between members of a small group. A low Charisma individual will defer to and follow the leadership of a high Charisma individual.

Caste (abbreviated Cas) is position in genetic group hierarchy.

C6	If The Task Calls For		
	Social	Charisma	Caste
	Use Soc x 1	Use Soc x 2	Soc not used
	Use Cha / 2	Use Cha x 1	Cha not used
	Use Cas = 4	Use Cas = 4	Use Cas x 1

Using C6

The C6 characteristic governs social interactions.

Bluff. When conducting a plausible bluff (getting past a guard; convincing a clerk) in general society. Check Social Standing. If the target of the bluff has C6= Charisma, Check Charisma.

Living Costs. C6 determines the cost to that individual for basic living. C6 times Cr100 equals the typical cost of monthly support (food, clothes, lodging, basic entertainment). But, if C6= Caste, use half C6.

Nobility. Nobility is the expected noble rank held by an individual based on Social Standing.

Characters with Soc are participants in the widespread social structure of the universe, which includes granted or inherited titles of nobility to those with higher values of Soc. Characters with Cha are at the fringes of the Nobility system: their equivalent Soc equals Cha / 2. Characters with Cas do not participate in the Nobility system; they are culturally or genetically dismissive of such rank, and generally ignore it or seem unaware of it. In the rare event that a character with Cha or Cas receive a Noble rank, it is noted as a skill.

The first step in the Nobility is A = Gentleman (Gentlewoman, Gentleperson, Gentlesophont). Although technically not Noble, Soc = A represents an awakening awareness of the Noble structure and of the potential to be a member of the Nobility.

Baronet and Baron. A character elevated to Soc = C is initially a Baronet. The next increase in Soc remains C but the title increases to Baron.

Viscount and Count. A character elevated to Soc = E is initially a Viscount. The next increase in Soc remains E but the title increases to Count.

The Disruptive Effects of Charisma. Charisma is an alternate to Social Standing. Basically, characters with Charisma squabble and challenge each other in a way that persons with Social Standing do not.

Characters with Cha automatically defer to the leadership of others with higher Cha. Because Cha acknowledges Soc as double Cha, it generally defers to the leadership of others with higher Soc.

A character with Charisma within 2 of another character with Charisma may (but is not required to) challenge the other: if the challenge succeeds, the challenger rises in Cha and the loser has Cha reduced.

To Challenge Charisma.

Difficult (3D) < Characteristic

Opposed (2). Resolves the Challenge in one task.

Challenger selects Characteristic (must be the same for both). Losers reduce Cha by -1. If Challenger is the winner, his Cha increases to opponent's former Cha.

To Rechallenge Charisma.

Difficult (3D) < Characteristic

Opposed (2). Resolves the Rechallenge in one task.

Loser immediately re-challenges, selecting a different Characteristic. Losers reduce Cha by -1. If Challenger is the winner, his former Cha is restored and increased +1.

The Isolative Effects of Caste. Characters with Cas are generally oblivious to the position in the social hierarchy outside their own species. They pay proper attention and deference to those with higher Cas within their species, and generally treat anyone with any value of Soc or Cha as an equal or inferior.

Characters with Caste are socially inept (if one tried a bluff, he uses Check Social Standing with a value of 4 and is unlikely to succeed).

CS SANITY

Every character has an obscure and usually unreferenced characteristic called Sanity. Characters do not generate Sanity until it is first called for by the referee and the situation.

Sanity is the ability to make reasonable, sound use of the mental characteristics. By extension, low levels of sanity express a disconnect between the perceptions of the character and reality.

Universal Structure. All sophonts generate Sanity with 2D.

Recording Sanity. Sanity is not normally indicated in references to a character. When necessary, it is stated independently as CS=N or San=N. The value should be stated in Ehex.

Using CS

Sanity may be reduced when a character is confronted by a crisis. Reductions are permanent, but Sanity may be regained through counseling or with drugs.

Sanity is Reduced by Crises. When characters encounter Crises (battles, extreme stress, environmental situations, psionic attacks, drug interactions, and others), there is the chance that Sanity will be reduced.

Check Sanity. Failure reduces Sanity -1.

Sanity Zero indicates Insanity. When Sanity is reduced to Zero, a character is subject to an automatic Mod (= Flux; rolled new with every use) for every use of Intelligence and

C5= Education or C5 = Training (but not C5 = Instinct) and the task becomes Uncertain (1D).

The Effect of Counselling. Sessions with a Counsellor (generally using Counsellor skill) may increase Sanity.

The Effect of Drugs. Drugs exist which prevent reductions in Sanity. Drugs also exist which may increase Sanity.

Sanity Is Genetic. Record the first Die of San as the genetic D.

CP PSIONICS

Rarely: CΨ

Every character has an obscure and usually unreferenced characteristic called Psionics (abbreviated Psi). Characters do not generate Psionics until it is first called for by the referee and the situation.

Psionics is the capability to use Psionic Abilities.

Universal Structure. All sophonts generate Psionics with 2D +3 - Life Stage. A character tested in infancy for Psi rolls 2D +3. Characters are more likely to be tested in adulthood: a human character at age 18 (Life Stage 3) rolls 2D +3 -3.

Recording Psionics. Psionics is not normally indicated in references to a character. When necessary, it is stated independently as CP=N or Psi=N. The value should be stated in Ehex.

Psionics Is Genetic. Record the first Die of Psi as the genetic D.

Using CP

Psionics is an obscure characteristic which remains unknown to the character until it is awakened by a suitable mentor or experience.

WHY ALL THESE DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS?

The traditional six characteristics Str Dex End Int Edu Soc were created to reasonably and accurately reflect human characters, and this information was compiled in an easy-to-read Universal Personality Profile. As **Traveller** progressed and evolved, it established alien / non-human / sophont races who had various alternate characteristics. The K'kree established Caste as an alternative to Social Standing. The Vargr established Charisma as an alternative to Social Standing. The Hivers established Curiosity as an alternative to Social Standing (Curiosity has since been transformed into a Personal). **Traveller: The New Era** created evolutionary alternatives to the original characteristics: Agility for Dexterity, Constitution for Stamina; it also provided characters with both Charisma and Social Standing.

Traveller's treatment of characteristics establishes a range of logical physical, mental, and social characteristics and makes them compatible with each other. The basic scheme is this:

Humans continue to have their traditional characteristics: Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing (plus Sanity). It is possible for a non-human to have the same characteristics as a human. It is also possible for non-humans to have alternate characteristics to reflect differences in the physical, mental, and social makeup of the aliens.

For example, a sophont may have Grace instead of Dexterity. The basic task to use a pistol calls for Dexterity; the sophont resolving the task must use Grace (at half value) and has a lesser chance of succeeding. There are steps that the alien can take to help: be cautious; acquire more skill; use a pistol with a high Ease-Of-Use. But in general, the alien is at a disadvantage attempting the task.

Continuing this example, Grace is the controlling characteristic for Swimming. The sophont uses Grace at full value in Swimming tasks; a human performing the same task is forced to use Dexterity (at half value) and has a lesser chance of success when compared to the sophont.

What Does This Mean?

Analog characteristics support three concepts in **Traveller**:

Interstellar society is human-dominated. The characteristics most often used in common tasks are the ones humans have; sophonts with the alternate characteristics are at a disadvantage trying most of the tasks available in interstellar society.

The challenges of the universe are met by many different abilities. There are situational advantages to the alternate characteristics. Sometimes, the best characteristic is a non-human one; the right person in the right place has an advantage.

The universe is a rich decision making environment. Many choices and many alternatives give both the players and the referee an opportunity to choose between them, which make for more interesting and more exciting adventures.