

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Adventurers who manage to survive the perils of the New Earth can expect to improve in their skills and abilities. Most wanderers demonstrate a striking capacity for picking up new skills and improving old ones... possibly since the less gifted among them don't survive long enough to demonstrate their lack of aptitude.

Characters are awarded *experience points* by the GM for pursuing meaningful goals. Groups that seek to accomplish something important to at least one of their members receive a certain amount of experience points each session whether or not their efforts are actually successful. Even failure can be educational, provided the PCs are able to survive their reverses.

Goals should be objectives that are appropriate to the characters' power and influence. Hardened wasteland warriors who spend their time summarily executing petty bandits will not receive the same reward as those valiant souls who attempt feats more in line with their personal prowess.

Once a character has earned enough experience points to gain the next character level, they immediately gain the benefits of the new level, including additional hit points and skill points. Actually learning new skills, however, requires some source of training.

GAINING HIT POINTS

When a character goes up in level, they gain an additional hit die of hit points. The player rolls both it and their existing hit dice to determine their new total. Their Constitution modifier is applied once for each level of the character. Thus, a 4th level Slayer with a +1 Constitution modifier who has just attained 5th level rolls 5d6+5 to determine his new hit point total.

If the new total is less than the old, the character retains the old hit point total. A character's hit points never go down when they rise in level.

After ninth level, characters gain a flat number of bonus hit points at each level, though they still continue to re-roll their hit dice each time they advance. Constitution modifiers do not add to these bonuses.

GAINING SKILL POINTS

When a character rises in level, they gain additional *skill points*: 4 for any Speakers or Scroungers, and 3 for Slayers and Survivors. These points may be saved for later use or spent in learning new skill levels. A skill must be learned from the beginning, so a character who wanted to buy level 2 in a skill belonging to their class would need to spend 1 + 2 + 3 = 6 skill points, and train each level in order. A class' skills are listed on the page describing that class.

A character's skill level is limited by their character level; a PC's maximum level in a skill is equal to 1, plus their level divided by 3, rounded down. A level 4 character can thus have a skill at a maximum of level 2 (1 + 4/3, rounded down).

SKILL POINTS PER LEVEL

<i>Class</i>	<i>Skill points/level</i>
SPEAKER OR SCROUNGER	4
SLAYER OR SURVIVOR	3

SKILL LIMITS AND COSTS

<i>Skill Level</i>	<i>Min. Char. Level</i>		<i>Skill Point Cost</i>	
	<i>Level</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Other</i>
0	1	1	1	2
1	1	2	2	3
2	3	3	3	4
3	6	4	4	5
4	9	5	5	6
5	12	6	6	7
6	15	7	7	8

A character must have a trainer to improve a skill. The trainer must have the desired level of expertise both in the skill to be taught and the Instructor skill. Finding these trainers is relatively simple for common skills, but more esoteric ones might require lengthy searches. A few Old Terran instructional devices can impart education even without a living trainer, though the side effects can sometimes be deeply unpleasant.

LASTING GLORIES

Experienced and far-famed wastelanders are precisely the sort of heroes that lesser men and women seek as leaders. Even a dedicated loner is likely to pick up a few followers and minions, simply out of their expectation that anything their patron can't defeat would have certainly eaten them anyway. It is to be expected that a PC's courageous deeds might win them pleas for leadership from communities that owe them their continuing existence.

It's never mandatory that an adventurer should seek rulership or political influence in the wastelands. Heroes who prefers to wander onward to new frontiers can earn further fame and advancement just as they please. Still, most experienced parties will eventually need to have some sort of home base, if only to protect the vast caches of Old Terran wealth they've scavenged over their careers.

Keep your mind open to the possibilities as you and your comrades venture across the blasted New Earth. There are rules for founding and managing settlements given in the Groups chapter, and existing communities may well desire your hero's strong arm to protect them. This desolate world has a desperate need for heroes, and if your PC shows the mettle that befits a king, don't be surprised if others seek to offer up a crown.