

cyberpunk 2020 character creation guide

The vibrant, neon-drenched streets of Night City await, and to truly immerse yourself in the world of Cyberpunk 2020, a compelling character is your greatest asset. This cyberpunk 2020 character creation guide will walk you through every crucial step, ensuring your edgerunner is ready to face the dangers and opportunities of this dystopian future. From selecting your role and defining your skills to crafting a believable backstory and choosing the right cyberware, we'll cover it all. Prepare to dive deep into the mechanics and lore that make Cyberpunk 2020 character creation a rewarding experience, equipping you with the knowledge to build a unique and effective agent of change, or perhaps just a survivor, in the unforgiving landscape of 2020.

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Understanding the Core of Cyberpunk 2020 Character Creation

At its heart, Cyberpunk 2020 character creation is about building a persona that fits seamlessly into the grim, technologically advanced world of 2020. This process is more than just allocating points; it's about weaving a narrative that informs your character's abilities, motivations, and place within the sprawling urban jungle of Night City. The goal is to create an

agent, an edgerunner, capable of navigating the treacherous landscape of corporate espionage, street warfare, and the ever-present threat of technological overreach. Every choice, from the initial role selection to the specific skills and cyberware you choose, contributes to a holistic character that is both mechanically sound and narratively compelling.

The Cyberpunk 2020 system emphasizes a degree of grit and consequence. Your character's strengths are often balanced by weaknesses, and the allure of advanced cybernetics comes with a significant cost to their humanity. This guide aims to demystify the system, providing clear explanations and actionable advice to help you create a memorable character that will thrive, or at least survive, in the unforgiving future.

Choosing Your Role: The Foundation of Your Identity

The Role you choose in Cyberpunk 2020 is the most significant decision you'll make during character creation. It defines your primary function, your specialized skillset, and your general approach to life in the year 2020. Each Role comes with a unique set of advantages and responsibilities, shaping how you interact with the world and the types of jobs you'll be most effective at. Think of your Role as your profession, your calling, or your defining characteristic in the concrete jungle.

The Rockerboy/Rockergrrl

Rockerboys and Rockergirls are the rebels and revolutionaries of Cyberpunk 2020. They use their music, charisma, and stage presence to incite rebellion against oppressive corporations and governments. Their primary skills often revolve around performance, persuasion, and influencing crowds. A Rockerboy's ability to inspire loyalty and dissent makes them a powerful force, capable of rallying the disenfranchised.

The Solo

Solos are the ultimate combat specialists, the mercenaries and bodyguards of Cyberpunk 2020. They are masters of various forms of combat, from street brawls to high-stakes firefights. Their focus is on survival and completing their missions, often with lethal efficiency. If you want to be the muscle, the frontline fighter, or the bodyguard, the Solo role is for you.

The Netrunner

Netrunners are the digital ghosts, the hackers who navigate the treacherous currents of the Net. They can infiltrate corporate databases, steal sensitive information, and manipulate systems with their programming prowess. In a

world increasingly reliant on networks, Netrunners are invaluable for their ability to break through digital defenses and control the flow of information.

The Techie

Techies are the mechanics, engineers, and inventors of Cyberpunk 2020. They can build, repair, and modify almost anything, from weapons to vehicles to complex cybernetic devices. Their expertise is essential for maintaining the advanced technology that permeates society and for creating custom solutions to unique problems.

The Medtechie

Medtechies are the cybernetic surgeons and medical professionals. They are responsible for healing the wounded, repairing damaged cyberware, and even creating new cybernetic augmentations. In a world where life is cheap and injuries are common, Medtechies are vital for keeping people alive and functional.

The Media

The Media are the journalists, broadcasters, and informants who shape public opinion. They uncover truths, spread rumors, and manipulate narratives to their advantage. Their skills in investigation, reporting, and public relations make them powerful players in the information war that constantly rages.

The Lawman

Lawmen, or cops, are the enforcers of order in the chaotic cities. They are skilled in combat, investigation, and apprehending criminals. While often bound by rules, their position grants them access and authority, making them formidable opponents or valuable allies.

The Exec

Executives are the corporate sharks, the business magnates and power brokers who control the flow of money and influence. They are masters of negotiation, manipulation, and strategic planning. Their power lies in their wealth, connections, and ability to play the corporate game.

The Fixer

Fixers are the dealmakers, the middlemen who connect buyers and sellers, clients and contractors. They operate in the shadows, brokering everything from illegal weapons to sensitive information. Their network of contacts and their shrewd negotiation skills make them indispensable in the underworld.

The Nomad

Nomads are the outcasts and wanderers of Cyberpunk 2020, often living in nomadic clans outside the major cities. They are skilled in driving, vehicle maintenance, and survival in harsh environments. Their close-knit communities and their independent spirit make them a unique force.

Stats: The Building Blocks of Your Abilities

Your character's statistics are the numerical representation of their innate capabilities and physical attributes. These stats are fundamental to determining your success in various actions throughout the game. They are generated by rolling dice and assigning points, ensuring a degree of randomness and replayability. Understanding how each stat influences your character is crucial for building a well-rounded individual ready for the challenges of 2020.

Body

Body represents your character's physical strength, toughness, and overall resilience. It influences your ability to carry weight, resist damage, and perform feats of strength. A higher Body score means a tougher character, better able to withstand physical punishment.

Intelligence

Intelligence governs your character's mental acuity, reasoning abilities, and problem-solving skills. It is vital for understanding complex situations, cracking codes, and utilizing technology effectively. A sharp mind is a powerful weapon in the world of Cyberpunk.

Cool

Cool reflects your character's composure, nerve, and ability to remain calm under pressure. It influences your effectiveness in social situations where you need to maintain a facade, resist interrogation, and make split-second decisions without panicking.

Empathy

Empathy represents your character's emotional capacity, their ability to understand and connect with others. It is particularly important for social skills and for resisting mental manipulation. It also plays a role in how much cyberware you can install before suffering severe psychological consequences.

Reflexes

Reflexes are your character's hand-eye coordination, reaction time, and agility. A high Reflex score allows for quicker movements, better aiming, and a greater chance of dodging attacks. This stat is critical for combat and any action requiring precise, swift movements.

Technical Ability

Technical Ability measures your character's aptitude for understanding and working with technology, machinery, and crafted items. It is essential for repairing, modifying, and creating technological devices. For Techies and those who rely on gadgets, this stat is paramount.

Luck

Luck represents your character's innate good fortune or predisposition for improbable successes. While not a skill, it can be used to re-roll dice or to improve the odds of success in critical moments. It's the unpredictable element that can turn the tide.

Movement Allowance

Movement Allowance is a derived stat that dictates how far your character can move in a single combat round. It is directly influenced by your Body and Reflexes stats, determining your tactical positioning and ability to engage or disengage from threats.

Run

Your Run statistic is a measure of your character's sprinting speed, indicating how far they can move at a full sprint. This is generally your Movement Allowance multiplied by your Run modifier, allowing for rapid traversal of distances.

Leap

The Leap stat determines the horizontal distance your character can jump. Like Movement Allowance, it is influenced by your physical attributes, allowing for tactical movement over obstacles or between positions.

Lift/Push

Lift/Push represents the maximum weight your character can lift or push. This stat is directly tied to your Body score and dictates your capacity for carrying gear and overcoming physical obstacles through sheer force.

Skills: Defining Your Expertise

Skills are what truly differentiate characters and allow them to specialize. After allocating stats, you will spend skill points to improve your character's proficiency in various areas. These skills cover a broad spectrum of activities, from fighting to hacking to talking your way out of trouble. A well-chosen set of skills will make your character effective in their chosen Role and beyond.

Combat Skills

Combat skills are essential for anyone who expects to face danger. This category includes skills like Handgun, Rifle, Melee Weapon, Dodge, and Brawling. Investing in these skills directly impacts your ability to defend yourself and engage enemies effectively in firefights or close-quarters combat.

Drive/Pilot Skills

For characters who traverse the urban sprawl or the open wastes, driving and piloting skills are vital. This includes skills such as Drive Land Vehicle, Pilot Aircraft, and Pilot Sea Craft. Proficiency here ensures you can get where you need to go, often under pressure.

Technological Skills

These skills are crucial for interacting with the advanced technology of the Cyberpunk world. Skills like Basic Tech, Cybertech, Weaponstech, and Demolitions allow you to repair, build, modify, and use various technological devices, including weapons and cyberware.

People Skills

Interpersonal skills are just as important as combat prowess in the cutthroat world of 2020. This category includes skills like Persuasion, Intimidation, Bribery, and Streetwise. Mastering these allows you to manipulate, negotiate, and influence others to your advantage.

Knowledge Skills

Knowledge skills represent your character's understanding of the world, its history, its factions, and its secrets. Skills like Local Knowledge, Corporate Knowledge, and Science allow you to draw upon your education and experience to gain an edge.

Derived Stats: Gauging Your Capabilities

Derived stats are not directly chosen but are calculated based on your core stats and skills. They provide a quick overview of your character's resilience, mental fortitude, and carrying capacity, offering crucial insights into their survivability and limitations.

Hit Points

Hit Points, often abbreviated as HP, represent the amount of physical damage your character can sustain before being incapacitated or killed. Your starting HP is typically derived from your Body and Endurance (a stat not explicitly listed but often implied or a modifier for Body), and can be increased through skills or cyberware.

Humanity

Humanity is a critical concept in Cyberpunk 2020, representing your character's sanity and connection to their organic self. It is directly linked to your Empathy stat. The more cyberware you install, the more Humanity you lose, potentially leading to severe psychological side effects or even a complete loss of self.

Humanity Loss

Humanity Loss is the permanent reduction in your character's Humanity score due to the installation of cybernetic enhancements. Each piece of cyberware carries a Humanity Cost, and accumulating too much can lead to a cascade of negative mental effects, making your character less human and more machine.

Encumbrance

Encumbrance refers to the amount of weight your character can carry comfortably. This is determined by your Body stat and affects your movement and ability to perform certain actions. Exceeding your encumbrance limit can impose penalties on your character's effectiveness.

Lifepath: Forging Your Backstory

A compelling Lifepath is what transforms a collection of stats and skills into a living, breathing character. The Lifepath system in Cyberpunk 2020 uses tables and dice rolls to generate a character's history, defining their personality, family background, significant relationships, and core motivations. This is where you imbue your character with depth and a reason for being in Night City.

Motivations

Understanding what drives your character is key. Are they seeking wealth, revenge, power, or survival? Your motivation will influence the types of jobs you take and the risks you're willing to endure.

Personality

Your character's personality is shaped by their experiences. Are they cynical, idealistic, pragmatic, or reckless? These traits will color their interactions and decisions.

Childhood Environment

Where and how did your character grow up? Were they raised in the glittering corporate towers, the grimy streets, or the nomadic wastes? This environment heavily influences their worldview.

Adolescent Environment

The formative years of adolescence often define a person's path. Did they fall in with a gang, join a corporate internship program, or pursue a life of artistic expression?

Family Background

The nature of your family, whether they were loving, absent, criminal, or

influential, leaves a lasting impact on a character's life and provides potential plot hooks.

Significant People

Who were the important figures in your character's past? Mentors, rivals, loved ones, or betrayers? These individuals can resurface to help or hinder your character.

Values

What principles does your character hold dear? Loyalty, honor, freedom, or profit? These values guide their choices, especially when they are tested.

Lifelong Goal

Every character needs a driving ambition. What is the ultimate prize your character seeks to achieve, and what are they willing to do to get it?

Friends

A character rarely operates alone. Identifying friends provides allies and potential sources of aid, but also potential liabilities.

Enemies

Conversely, who wishes your character ill? Enemies provide conflict and challenge, forcing your character to be resourceful and wary.

Romances

Past romantic entanglements can leave lingering emotional baggage or even create lasting connections that influence future decisions.

Money and Possessions

Your character's starting wealth and key possessions provide tangible assets and can hint at their past status or current circumstances.

Cyberware: Augmenting Your Existence

Cyberware is the hallmark of the Cyberpunk world. These are the mechanical and biological enhancements that push the boundaries of human capability, but at a significant cost to one's humanity. Choosing cyberware is a critical decision, balancing the desire for power and efficiency against the risk of becoming detached from your own identity.

Cyberoptics

Cyberoptics are enhancements for your eyes, offering improved vision, thermal imaging, telescopic lenses, and even combat targeting systems. These can provide a significant tactical advantage in various situations.

Cyberaudio

Cyberaudio implants enhance hearing, allowing for advanced sound filtering, amplification, and even encrypted communication. These are invaluable for spies, detectives, and anyone needing to process auditory information discreetly.

Cyberlimbs

Cyberlimbs, such as cybernetic arms, legs, or even a full torso replacement, grant enhanced strength, speed, and durability. They can be fitted with hidden weapons or tools, offering immense versatility.

Internal Cyberware

This category includes a wide range of implants designed to improve internal bodily functions, such as artificial organs, enhanced cardiovascular systems, or neural processors that boost cognitive abilities.

Specialized Cyberware

Specialized cyberware covers more unique enhancements, like grappling hook launchers integrated into arms, retractable blades, or even advanced stealth systems. These are often custom-made and highly sought after.

Cyberware and Humanity Loss

It is paramount to remember that every piece of cyberware has a Humanity Cost. This cost is deducted from your character's Humanity score, and

accumulating too much can lead to detrimental psychological effects, such as personality changes, loss of empathy, or even full cyberpsychosis. The game mechanics enforce a careful balance between augmentation and maintaining one's sense of self.

Gear and Equipment: Arming Yourself for Survival

Beyond skills and cyberware, your character's equipment is crucial for their effectiveness and survival. This includes weapons, armor, tools, vehicles, and personal electronics. The choices you make here will directly impact your ability to handle different situations, whether it's a gunfight, a hacking attempt, or a daring escape.

When selecting gear, consider your Role, your skills, and the types of missions you anticipate undertaking. A Solo will prioritize firearms and body armor, while a Netrunner might invest in high-end cyberdecks and hacking tools. Fixers will focus on communication devices and transportation, while Techies will need a comprehensive toolkit. Remember that money is often a limiting factor, so prioritize wisely and think about future upgrades.

Final Touches: Personality and Appearance

With the mechanical aspects of your character creation complete, it's time to focus on the final, but equally important, details: personality and appearance. While not directly tied to stats, these elements bring your character to life and make them memorable. Consider your character's demeanor, their mannerisms, their voice, and their overall style. Are they stoic and reserved, loud and boisterous, or sleek and professional? Their clothing, hairstyle, and any visible cybernetics or tattoos all contribute to their unique identity in the visually saturated world of 2020.

Think about how your character presents themselves to the world. Their appearance can be a tool, a warning, or a disguise. A well-developed personality will inform their interactions, their choices, and their reactions to the events that unfold. This is your chance to make your edgerunner truly your own, ready to carve out their niche in the neon-drenched streets of Night City.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the most important thing to consider when creating a Cyberpunk 2020 character?

The core of your character is their 'Role.' This defines their primary

function in the cyberpunk world (e.g., Solo, Netrunner, Techie). Your Role heavily influences your skills, abilities, and place within the Night City ecosystem. Choosing a Role that excites you is paramount.

How do I balance my character's stats (Attributes) in Cyberpunk 2020?

Attributes are your raw capabilities. Consider what your chosen Role relies on most. A Solo will need high Reflexes and Combat Ability, while a Netrunner will prioritize Interface and Logic. Don't neglect 'Empathy' for social interactions and 'Cool' for resisting fear and intimidation. It's about finding a functional balance, not necessarily maxing out everything.

What are 'Skills' and how do they differ from 'Attributes'?

Attributes are your innate potential, while Skills are learned proficiencies. An Attribute like 'Dexterity' might be high, but you still need to invest points into specific Skills like 'Handgun' or 'Melee' to use it effectively in combat. Think of Attributes as your raw ingredients and Skills as the recipes you use.

How many 'Lifepath' questions should I answer for my Cyberpunk 2020 character?

While the Lifepath section offers numerous questions, aim for at least the core ones that flesh out your background, motivation, and immediate circumstances. You don't need to answer every single one, but enough to give your character depth and a starting point for their story.

What's the deal with 'Cyberware' and how much should I get?

Cyberware enhances your capabilities but comes with a cost – 'Humanity Loss.' More powerful cybernetics mean more humanity lost, which can lead to 'Cyberpsychosis' if not managed. Start with essential cybernetics that complement your Role and consider the trade-off between functionality and your character's mental well-being.

How do I create a 'Drive' or motivation for my Cyberpunk 2020 character?

Your Drive is what pushes your character forward. It could be revenge, wealth, justice, survival, or even a simple desire to escape. Connect your Drive to your Lifepath and Role. A good Drive provides immediate goals and long-term aspirations, making your character more engaging.

What's the difference between 'Style' and 'Fashion' in Cyberpunk 2020 character creation?

Style is about your character's overall aesthetic and how they present themselves to the world. Fashion refers to specific clothing and gear choices that contribute to that style. Consider how your character's style reflects their Role, personality, and the subculture they belong to.

How important is 'Money' (Eurodollars) during character creation in Cyberpunk 2020?

Eurodollars are crucial for purchasing gear, weapons, cyberware, and even lifestyle upgrades. Your starting cash will dictate your initial capabilities and how prepared you are for the dangers of Night City. Carefully allocate your starting funds based on your character's needs and priorities.

Can I create a character that doesn't fit neatly into a specific Role?

While the game is built around Roles, the beauty of Cyberpunk 2020 is its flexibility. You can certainly create hybrid characters or characters with unconventional skill sets. However, understanding the base Roles will give you a strong foundation to build upon and ensure you have a clear focus for your character's abilities.

Additional Resources

Here are 9 book titles related to Cyberpunk 2020 character creation, each beginning with :

1. The Weaver's Gambit: Crafting Your Legend in the Neon City

This guide delves deep into the art of building a compelling Cyberpunk 2020 character from the ground up. It explores the nuances of selecting a Role, defining your motivations, and weaving a rich backstory that fits seamlessly into the gritty world of Night City. Expect detailed breakdowns of skills, attributes, and how to make them truly sing.

2. Chrome & Conduit: A Player's Handbook to Cyberpunk Archetypes

Explore the diverse cast of characters that inhabit the Cyberpunk 2020 universe with this essential resource. It provides in-depth profiles and creation tips for iconic roles like the Rockerboy, Solo, and Netrunner, offering insights into their skills, gear, and place in society. Perfect for players looking to jumpstart their next persona.

3. Echoes of the Street: Forging Identity in a Dystopian Future

This book focuses on the narrative and roleplaying aspects of Cyberpunk 2020 character creation. It guides you through developing unique personality traits, flaws, and connections that bring your character to life beyond mere

stats. Learn how to imbue your creation with the grit, cynicism, and occasional spark of hope that defines the genre.

4. Netrunner's Blueprint: Designing Your Digital Ghost

Dive into the intricate world of Netrunning with this specialized guide. It offers comprehensive advice on creating a potent netrunner character, from selecting the right cyberdeck and programs to optimizing your ICE-breaking capabilities. Understand the virtual landscape and how your character navigates its dangers.

5. The Gearhead's Compendium: Arming Your Cyberpunk Persona

Equip your character for survival in the dangerous streets of Cyberpunk 2020. This book provides a detailed look at weapons, armor, cyberware, and vehicles, along with guidance on how to integrate them effectively into your character build. Make sure your chosen persona is ready for any firefight or infiltration.

6. Corporate Ties: Building Characters with Influence and Intrigue

For those who prefer the boardroom to the back alley, this guide focuses on creating characters with connections to the powerful corporations of Cyberpunk 2020. It offers strategies for building characters with corporate backgrounds, influence, and the potential for high-stakes espionage. Explore the darker side of ambition and power.

7. The Nomad's Path: Crafting a Wanderer's Destiny

Embrace the open road and the freedom of the badlands with this character creation guide for Cyberpunk 2020 nomads. It details the skills, attitudes, and vehicles crucial for surviving outside the city's confines and forging your own path. Discover how to create a character defined by resilience and loyalty.

8. Street Samurai's Edge: Mastering Combat and Cybernetics

Become a master of lethal efficiency with this guide dedicated to creating street samurai and combat-focused characters. It covers the best cybernetic enhancements, weapon proficiencies, and tactical approaches to excel in the violent confrontations of Cyberpunk 2020. Hone your deadly skills and dominate the battlefield.

9. The Fixer's Deal: Negotiating Your Character's Future

This book explores the art of creating a fixer, a master of connections, information, and negotiation in the world of Cyberpunk 2020. Learn how to build a character who thrives in the gray areas, brokering deals and manipulating events from the shadows. Master the subtle arts of persuasion and influence.

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