

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

Improvement	Karma Cost
New Specialization	2
New Knowledge/Language skill	2
New Active skill	4
New Active skill group	10
Improving a Knowledge/ Language skill by 1	New rating
Improving an Active skill by 1	New rating x 2
Improving an Active skill group by 1	New rating x 5
Improving an attribute by 1	New rating x 3
New positive quality	BP Cost x 2
Removing a negative quality	BP Bonus x 2
New spell	5
New complex form	2
Improving a complex form by 1	New rating

(a character who hasn't touched a gun in months should be made to practice a bit before improving Pistols skill)—but each can only be improved once. If the time frame between adventures is longer than one month, gamemasters may increase these allowances as appropriate.

IMPROVING SKILLS AND SKILL GROUPS

In between adventures, players can learn new skills, improve existing ones, or master specializations. Each option costs a certain amount of Karma, and certain limitations apply as to how much a character can improve between sessions.

New Skills

A character can learn a new Active Skill or skill group she doesn't currently possess. The cost is 4 Karma for a skill and 10 Karma for a skill group, which gives the character the new skill (or skill group) at Rating 1. The cost to learn new Knowledge/Language skills is half that of Active skills: 2 Karma.

Improving Existing Skills

Characters may also improve an existing Active skill or skill group by 1. The cost for improving a skill is the character's next skill rating x 2. For example, if a character wants to improve her Pistols from 4 to 5, the cost is 5 x 2, or 10 Karma.) The cost for improving a skill group is the improved rating x 5. For example, improving the Firearms skill group from 4 to 5 is 5 x 5, or 25 Karma.

Improving a Knowledge or Language skill is half the cost of improving an Active skill: the Karma cost equals the improved skill rating.

Characters can only improve skills or skill groups to a maximum of 6, unless they already possess the Aptitude quality for a skill. (Sorry, you can't acquire Aptitude at the same time you try to improve above the maximum.) If a character raises a skill above 6 through Aptitude, the Karma cost doubles.

Skill Groups: If a character improves any skill in a skill group individually instead of improving the group, the remaining skills are treated as individual skills with individual levels from that point—in other words, the skill group no longer exists.

Buying Specializations

Characters may also acquire a specialization to an existing Active Skill or Knowledge Skill that they currently possess. (You cannot specialize on a new skill you're currently learning.) Acquiring a Specialization costs 2 Karma. A character may only know one specialization per skill, and specializations may not be applied to skill groups.

A character that wants to change her specialization in a particular skill may do so at the gamemaster's discretion. In this case, the character pays 2 Karma to learn the new specialization and immediately loses the old one.

IMPROVING ATTRIBUTES

A character can increase Physical or Mental Attributes, Magic, Resonance, or Edge by 1 point at a time. The cost of improving a natural attribute rating is the new rating x 3. For example, if a character wants to improve her Agility from 4 to 5, the cost is 5 x 3, or 15 Karma.

Characters can only improve Physical and Mental attributes up to their natural metatype maximum (6 plus metatype attribute modifiers), unless they possess the Exceptional Attribute quality for that attribute (see p. 78). Magic or Resonance may only be improved up to 6 plus the character's initiation/submersion grade.

Raising a natural attribute may raise the augmented attribute value, up to the augmented attribute maximum (natural maximum x 1.5).

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Karma may also be spent to buy new positive qualities, remove old negative qualities, and learn spells and complex forms, as noted below. Awakened characters may use Karma for initiation (p. 189) and bonding foci (p. 190), just as technomancers may use Karma for submersion (p. 238).

Positive Qualities

If the gamemaster chooses, he can "award" a character with a new positive quality. This should only be done if the quality is appropriate to the character and her recent developments—the character must have worked hard or changed in some way that fits the awarded quality. Some qualities represent a major change, so there should be a good reason for why the character has transformed that way. Players will undoubtedly lobby their gamemasters to "award" them with qualities, but the gamemaster should only award them rarely and after significant effort/events; the gamemaster could even craft an adventure to dramatize the change.

The quality does not come for free, however—the character must pay for the quality at a cost equal to twice the quality's BP cost. If the character does not have the Karma to pay for the quality, any new Karma she earns immediately goes to