CLASS CREATION GUIDE

One of the neat things about old school games is the simplicity behind the Character Classes. Simple elegance… a progression for Hit Dice, Base Hit Bonus, Saving Throws, and a few other things and BAM… a Character Class. White Lies is no exception to this. But have you ever looked at the Character Classes of a game and tried to decode how the heck they came up with their Experience Point progression? Us too.

NONE OF THIS IS WRITTEN IN STONE!

Like all rules in White Lies, none of these suggestions are any more than guidelines. Feel free to use, modify, or ignore them while making or modifying Character Classes.

So while making the Character Classes for White Lies, we first came up with a system to make them. We weighted how important we felt each component of a Character Class is to an agent's overall performance and ability to accomplish missions. Then we realized balance is an elusive thing that is nearly impossible to nail down; one Admin will run a game with a lot of combat while another will run one with a lot of noncombat action checks… so balancing them was kind-of moot. But we still tried. We built this step-by-step series of menu items to construct our Character Classes, and present it to you here in this document so you might do the same. But before you begin, you should first ask yourself a couple of questions…

NICHE PROTECTION: What niche role should your Character Class fill that is not filled by an existing one? The roles presented in the five default classes aren't going to fill every niche, but you don't want to build a class which takes away the role of one of the existing classes. Whatever you create, it has to have its own role in your game. Niche protection is probably more

important in a spy-themed game than in many others. Most teams of agents consist of several different specialists, each filling a specific role.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Does some other OSR product already have a Character Class that will fit the role you're trying to build? The Swords & Wizardry WhiteBox game has clerics and magic users – are you making one of those? Why reinvent the wheel? White Star has the star knight, alien mystic and brute, and the ambassador classes… and there are many other OSR products out there. Check to see if someone else already built the class you're looking for. It's a growing community and there are a lot of folks with a lot of ideas. Even if you don't use one of theirs exactly, you still might want to read what they put together. It might inspire your own creativity, and that can't hurt, right?

PREPARE

Grab a copy of the Character Class sheet found at the end of this document. It's similar to but not identical to the layout of the Character Classes presented in the core rulebook. Take a moment to consider the Character Class you want to build and follow the steps shown below.

STEP 1: HIT DICE

The first step is to decide the hit point progression for your Character Class. This represents his toughness and resilience and is an important choice. Select one of the following progressions and note the XP Cost for the choice you made. Record the progression on the Character Class sheet.

LEVEL	POOR HD	TYPICAL HD	GOOD HD	EXCELLENT HD
1st	1	1	1	1+1
2nd	1+1	2	2	2
3rd	2	2+1	3	3
4th	2+1	3	3+1	4
5th	3	4	4	5
6th	3+1	4+1	5	6
7th	4	5	6	7
8th	4+1	6	6+1	8
9th	5	6+1	7	9
10th	5+1	7	8	10
	100 XP	**200 XP**	**300 XP**	**400 XP**

STEP 2: BASE HIT BONUS

Base Hit Bonus progression often mirrors the Hit Dice selection, since it's all related to combat experience and toughness. But don't think you have to be so obvious. For example, a stealthy sniper class might have an excellent Base Hit Bonus progression but isn't accustomed to taking hits and infighting, so may not have such a high Hit Dice progression.

LEVEL	POOR BHB	TYPICAL BHB	GOOD BHB	EXCELLENT BHB
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+0	+0	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+2
4th	+1	+1	+2	+2
5th	+2	+2	+3	+3
6th	+2	+3	+3	+4
7th	+3	+3	+4	+4
8th	+3	+4	+4	+5
9th	+4	+4	+5	+6
10th	+4	+5	+5	+6
	100 XP	200 XP	300 XP	400 XP

STEP 3: SAVING THROWS

Saving Throws aren't as expensive, in terms of XP cost. Sure, it's important for an agent to avoid getting stunned, poisoned, deceived, and ambushed… but these values don't differ too much from one another. Your choice should be based on how canny and tenacious your class is, how alert and quick.

LEVEL	POOR ST	TYPICAL ST	GOOD ST	EXCELLENT ST
1st	16	15	14	13
2nd	15	14	13	12
3rd	14	13	12	11
4th	13	12	11	10
5th	12	11	10	9
6th	11	10	9	8
7th	10	9	8	7
8th	9	8	7	6
9th	8	7	6	6
10th	7	6	6	6
	100 XP	150 XP	200 XP	250 XP

STEP 4: SAVING THROW BONUS

Each Character Class should have something he's particularly good at surviving. You should either choose two specific types of things the class avoids well (such as explosions, stun, interrogation, deception, etc.) and each will receive a +2 bonus. Alternatively, you can consider the bonuses of the Transporter and Infiltrator classes, in which case a bonus of only +1 is provided but to all Saving Throws related to what they do well.

OPTION	BONUS	XP	NOTES
None	+0	0 XP	Equally good (or bad) at all Saving Throws.
Role-Specific	+1	50 XP	Applies to all Saving Throws while performing the role-specific task of this class.
Threat-Specific	+2	100 XP	Applies only to two specific types of threats.

STEP 5: WEAPON TRAINING

You can choose one of the following options to describe the combat training appropriate to your Character Class. If you wish, you can create your own weapon training list and come up with an appropriate XP value.

SELECTION	XP	NOTES
Poor	100 XP	Knife, revolvers, semi-automatic pistols, Tasers, grenades, and shotguns
Typical	150 XP	One-handed melee weapons and thrown weapons, revolvers, semi-automatic pistols, Tasers, bows, crossbows.
Good	200 XP	Knife, revolvers, semi-automatic pistols, Tasers, grenades, submachine guns, and any weapon mounted to/fired from a vehicle.
Excellent	250 XP	Trained in the use of all weapons.

Why do we list revolvers, semi-automatic pistols, and Tasers instead of just saying "All pistols?" It's because of the Taser. Many people might question whether or not it would count as a pistol. So we got specific. Get it?

STEP 6: ARMOR TRAINING

Now you must select what type of armor agents of your Character Class are trained in wearing. Unless there is a compelling military reason, heavy body armor is seldom trained. Note that it's also possible to have a Character Class with no armor training, though such an agent should truly avoid getting into a fight! When describing weapon and armor training, summarize them in the section of the Character Class sheet labeled "Combat Training."

SELECTION	XP	NOTES
Poor	50 XP	No armor training.
Typical	100 XP	Light armor training only.
Good	200 XP	Light or Medium armor training.
Excellent	300 XP	All armor training.

STEP 7: SKILL TRAINING

One of the most important ways to differentiate the role of your Character Class is to specify one or more types of action checks the class receives a +1 when performing. This bonus increases at 4th and 8th levels to +2 and +3 respectively, so they will become very good at these types of action checks.

You can use the Areas of Training listed in the Supplemental Training section to choose your bonuses. That's the easiest way to do it. The table below shows the XP cost based on the number of Areas of Training you give your Character Class.

TRAINING	XP	NOTES
Poor	100 XP	2 Areas of Training
Typical	200 XP	3 Areas of Training
Good	300 XP	4 Areas of Training
Excellent	400 XP	5 Areas of Training

One unique way to allow players to create custom Character Classes without otherwise using this system is to allow them to swap out Areas of Training provided by a Character Class with ones of their choice. This can result, for instance, in Eliminators who don't have any training in Demolitions or Strategy & Tactics but might be experts at Acrobatics and Stealth.

STEP 8: SPECIAL ABILITIES

In addition to everything else, each Character Class presented in the core White Lies rulebook has a specific special ability. This ability normally progresses with level, such as the Confiscator's backstab that lets you add your level to damage rolls. The type of bonus provided by your class helps determine the XP cost of that ability.

Although the core rulebook lists only one ability for each class, you're not limited to that. If you want to provide more than one special ability feel free; just add the XP cost for each ability together.

ABILITY	XP	NOTES
Poor	100 XP	Extremely limited, usually non-combat, specific advantage not scaled by level. An example might be a +1 to perception-related action checks when alone and unencumbered. Or a special ability which can only be used once per day such as the Dodge ability possessed by a Professional Fighter adversary.
Typical	150 XP	Specific but helpful advantage not scaled by level. An example might be a +1 to all Initiative rolls. Or maybe a +2 to Movement rate. Or maybe a specific but highly useful ability which may only be used once per day, such as the Dirty Fighting ability of a Street Fighter adversary.
Good	200 XP	A non-combat-related advantage which scales by level. An example might be some type of gear which is granted for free each level (such as the Transporter's vehicle upgrades) or some kind of descriptive roleplaying advantage which scales with level (such as an Investigator's network of informants).
Excellent	250 XP	A significant or persistent combat-related advantage which is scaled by level. A specific example is the powerful Combat Machine ability possessed by an Eliminator. Another example might be a martial artist themed class who receives a specific progression of Wuxia abilities as they progress in level.

STEP 9: PRIME ATTRIBUTE

Select a Prime Attribute for your Character Class. This shouldn't be difficult. It's just one of the six abilities most appropriate to the class. For instance, the Investigator specializes in finding clues and therefore Wisdom is the obvious choice. The Eliminator is a bad ass combat machine and Strength is the obvious choice (though Dexterity could have been another obvious choice). An agent must have at least a 9 in the score of a Prime Attribute to choose it as his Character Class.

STEP 10: WRAPPING THINGS UP

Now it's time to finalize things. First and foremost, give your Character Class a name on the provided sheet. Describe the class in the space provided in a short paragraph – taking into account the types of professions often recruited as a member of that Character Class and describing the nature of the role that class has on a team of agents.

Sum up the XP value of all the steps of this process. Record this as the XP value needed to achieve 2nd level. The cost of the 3rd level will equal twice the XP cost of the 2nd, and so on through 10th level.

Now share your creation with the world. Share if for free online or you're your Character Class alone or bundled with other fun content. The OSR community is vast and productive, and would enjoy seeing what you put together.

APPLY COMMON SENSE TO YOUR CHARACTER CLASS

This process works fairly well, but may not work in all cases. You may not even agree with the method I used to balance these Classes and their abilities. It's your game after all!

If you build a Character Class and discover that the cost is monstrously high, it might be a clue you need to cut back some of the abilities you gave it. It might also just be a sign that it SHOULD be that high.

But also consider the possibility that the system as designed just didn't do a good job of representing your concept and adjust accordingly.

RECREATING THE CORE CLASSES

You can actually recreate all the classes from the core White Lies rulebook and their XP values work properly.

CONFISCATOR

HD	300 XP	Good Progression
BHB	200 XP	Typical Progression
ST	150 XP	Typical Progression
ST Bonus	100 XP	+2 to Two Specific Threats
Weapons	150 XP	Typical Selection
Armor	100 XP	Typical Selection
Skill	300 XP	Good (4 Areas of Training)
Special	200 XP	Good (Backstab)
	1,500 XP	

ELIMINATOR

HD	400 XP	Excellent Progression
BHB	400 XP	Excellent Progression
ST	200 XP	Good Progression
ST Bonus	100 XP	+2 to Two Specific Threats
Weapons	250 XP	Excellent Selection
Armor	300 XP	Excellent Selection
Skill	100 XP	Poor (2 Areas of Training)
Special	250 XP	Excellent (Combat Machine)
	2,000 XP	

INVESTIGATOR

HD	100 XP	Poor Progression
BHB	100 XP	Poor Progression
ST	250 XP	Excellent Progression
ST Bonus	100 XP	+2 to Two Specific Threats
Weapons	100 XP	Poor Selection
Armor	200 XP	Good Selection
Skill	200 XP	Typical (3 Areas of Knowledge)
Special	200 XP	Good (Network of Informants)
	1,250 XP	

INFILTRATOR

HD	100 XP	Poor Progression	
BHB	100 XP	Poor Progression	
ST	100 XP	Poor Progression	
ST Bonus	50 XP	+1 all Saves under Role-Specific Condition	
Weapons	250 XP	Excellent Selection	
Armor	300 XP	Excellent Selection	
Skill	400 XP	Excellent (5 Areas of Training)	
Special	200 XP	Good (Cover Identities)	
	1,500 XP		

TRANSPORTER

HD	200 XP	Typical Progression	
BHB	300 XP	Good Progression	
ST	150 XP	Typical Progression	
ST Bonus	50 XP	+1 all Saves under Role-Specific Condition	
Weapons	200 XP	Good Selection	
Armor	100 XP	Typical Selection	
Skill	300 XP	Good Selection	
Special	200 XP	Good (Gear Head)	
	1,500 XP		

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

Each of these Character Classes originally had additional abilities. Two more each. They were static abilities that didn't scale with level (unlike their main special abilities). One of the most difficult things for us was condensing the creations down to simplest terms, to allow for the right level of old school information balanced by old school flexibility.

So in the end we dumped all but the most prominent ability for each class. We're pretty happy with how they turned out, but your opinions may differ. With the descriptions listed above, you can tweak the core classes however you see fit.

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

We originally had two more Character Classes in this game. Through play test we found the two to be either redundant or just not fun enough. Maybe you could do a better job with them and make them.

HACKER

We had a Hacker Character Class that specialized in computers, security systems, and technician activities. But it just wasn't fun for our test group to play. He wanted to get in control of a security system but once he did the player sat around making one action check after another to open automated doors for people, disable laser detection arrays, or loop camera feeds on request by the other players, who were sneaking around, searching for clues, taking out guards, and basically having all the fun. If we tried to bring the hacker into the action, he was woefully unequipped to handle himself because his just wasn't in combat. In the end we just gave the Investigator computer training and decided a remote hacker was more of a support role and was therefore best left up to an NPC. Prove us wrong, because we'd love for there to be a fun and functional Hacker class.

PROTECTOR

We originally had a Protector class as well. It focused on durability and Saving Throws, and melee and unarmed combat. It was basically a martial artist, able to kick all that butt while being able to apply medical assistance to those in his care, or take bullets for those he's sworn to protect. We liked it – but we decided it was redundant. It was a butt-kicker, and with the selection of certain Supplemental Training options was easily just an Eliminator. We still think it would be fun to have a martial arts specialist in the game, maybe something akin to the fighting monk Character Classes common to some editions of old school roleplaying games. But we omitted it from this game and decided it best to keep complex classes for supplements. Maybe you'd like to take a crack at making the martial artist bodyguard class.

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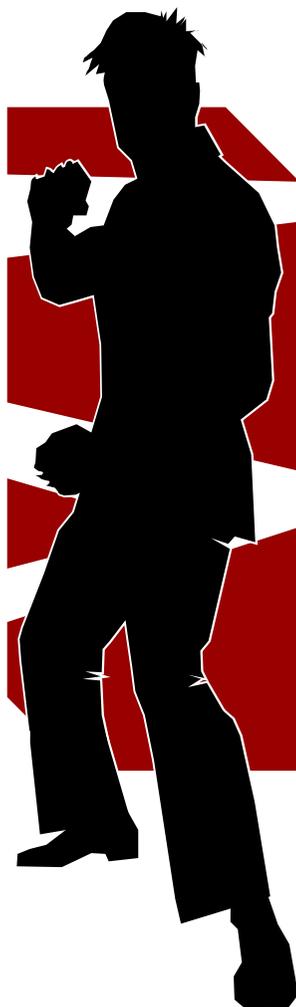
CHARACTER CLASS

COMBAT TRAINING

SKILL TRAINING

PRIME ATTRIBUTE

SAVING THROWS

EXPERIENCE TABLE

LEVEL	XP	HD	BHB	ST
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				
6th				
7th				
8th				
9th				
10th				

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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