

Ways to Use XP in The Magnus Archives RPG

Immediate Benefits (1 XP)

- Reroll any die roll, even if it wasn't your own. Keep the better result.
- Refuse a GM Intrusion, preventing the complication.
- Initiate a Player Intrusion, creating your own twist or benefit in the narrative.

Short- and Medium-Term Benefits (2 XP)

- Gain a short-lived or location-specific skill (e.g., trained in using a specific type of system).
- Gain a story-justified, scenario-limited ability (e.g., temporary gear or resistance).
- Get skill training that applies when revisiting a specific area or context.

Long-Term Benefits (3 XP)

- Contact: Gain a significant NPC ally.
- Home: Establish a secure personal residence.
- Title or Job: Receive a role with status, responsibility, or narrative power.
- Wealth: Gain sufficient funds to ignore basic expenses.

Character Advancement (4 XP each)

To advance to the next tier, purchase four different benefits (each once per tier):

1. Increase Capabilities: Add 4 points across your stat Pools.
2. Move Toward Perfection: Increase one Edge by 1.
3. Extra Effort: Increase Effort score by 1.
4. Skill: Become trained in a new skill or specialized if already trained.

Other Advancement Options (4 XP)

- Add 2 to your recovery rolls.
- Choose an additional Focus Ability (Tier 3+).
- Gain an extra Type Ability from your character type.

Character Arcs

- Start a new arc: 1 XP (after character creation).
- Complete a step in an arc: Gain 2 XP.
- Climax of arc: Gain 4 XP on success, 2 XP on failure.
- Resolution of arc: Gain 1 XP.

GM & Player Interactions

- GM Intrusion: Player gains 2 XP, gives 1 XP to another player.
- Refuse a GM Intrusion: Costs 1 XP.
- Player-awarded XP: Players may distribute XP to others for roleplay, ideas, or help.

Combat Summary – The Magnus Archives RPG

INITIATIVE & TURN ORDER

- At the start of an encounter, each player rolls Speed for initiative.
- Compare to the highest NPC level 3 (target number). Act before, with, or after NPCs accordingly.
- Once set, the order repeats each round unless the GM calls for reroll due to major changes.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

- Each character takes 1 action per round (attack, move, help, activate ability, etc.).
- Players always roll the dice--attack and defense included.

ATTACKING & DEFENDING

- Attacks are d20 rolls vs. the opponents level.
- Use Might for melee, Speed for ranged or defense, Intellect for some abilities.
- Effort, skills, and assets can ease or hinder tasks.

DAMAGE & EFFECTS

- PCs take damage as Stress. 4+ is a serious injury.
- Rolling 17 or 18 adds +1/+2 damage. 19 grants a minor effect. 20 grants a major effect.
- Natural 1 = GM intrusion (complication).
- NPCs have health equal to their level -- No Stress track.

AREA ATTACKS & SPECIAL CASES

- Area attacks: attacker rolls once, affects all targets in range vs. each targets difficulty.
- Distractions, taunts, and cooperative actions can alter defense or draw attacks.
- Taking cover eases defense rolls. Surprising foes eases attack rolls.

DEADLINESS & THEMATIC NOTES

- **The game is deadly:** 2 failed defenses can mean death.
- Running, hiding, surrendering, and clever solutions are encouraged over combat.
- **Combat is not the focus**--fear and survival are.

Consequences of Stress in The Magnus Archives RPG

Penalties from Stress

- Every 3 points of Stress becomes 1 Stress Level.
- Each Stress Level hinders all actions by 1 step.
- With 4 or more Stress Levels, additional levels count as serious injuries.
- Eventually, Stress can lead to death.

Using Stress as a Resource

- A character in a tense situation can burn 1 Stress Level to ease a single task.
- This removes the hindrance but triggers a GM intrusion to escalate tension.
- Cannot be used defensively and only in tense situations.

Long-Term Impact of Supernatural Stress

- Track full Stress Levels gained from supernatural sources.
- If a character accrues 10 such levels over time (even if reduced), they are 'touched' by the Entities.
- This allows access to supernatural Type Abilities and Avatar options.

Psychological and Physical Breakdowns

- High Stress can hinder actions by 34 steps, effectively incapacitating the character.
- Characters may be advised to flee or seek help when Stress becomes overwhelming.

Recovery from Stress

- 1 hour of rest reduces Stress by 3 points (1 Stress Level).
- Rest is also used to recover stat Pools and ascend the damage track if injured.