CHARACTER CREATION
WITH OLIVER & ODIE

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CHARACTER CREATION GUIDE

All too often, as players, we lack a connection to our player characters (PCs) because we are not yet familiar with their emotions, habits and quirks. One of the best aspects of Pugmire, and a common motivation for picking up the book if you know nothing else about it, is the thought of playing not just **A** Good Dog but **Your** Good Dog. In this guide, we'll show you how you can use your real-life pet as a roadmap to creating your character.

For these examples, we are going to use two real-life Good Dogs, **Oliver** and **Odie**. Both are Yorkshire Terriers, though Odie is a mix between a teacup Yorkie and a regular sized Yorkie which gives him some quirks which we will get into later. Both are rescue dogs: Oliver was rescued from a life as a stud dog in a puppy mill when he was 3 and Odie was rescued from an animal hoarder when he was 5.

Meet Oliver

Oliver is now 10 and tends to be the older, more relaxed of the two. He loves finding a sunbeam and falling asleep but he is also suspicious of new people and can be very protective of his owners. However, he is a great judge of character and he can usually tell when someone is kind and safe. Oliver is a very good jumper and can clear baby gates with ease, though he prefers to use that particular ability to get onto warm, soft beds.

Meet Odie

Odie, on the flipside, is a bit younger. He is 8 and due to his lineage, he is very high energy. He loves to play and loves to run. This was an issue in the early days of his adoption because if he sees a door, he will run out of it and up the block. When

he was living with the animal hoarder, he would go unnoticed for weeks at a time so he has gotten to know the dangers of the outside and how to survive in it. This has also given him an independent streak.

Calling

So, as we start with the "Making Your Dog" section on page 41 of the *Pugmire Core Rulebook*, we see the first choice we have to make is a Calling. We can find the descriptions for the various Callings starting on **page 42**.

Given Oliver's protective nature, he is a strong fit for Guardian. Guardians are not only warriors but they are defenders as well. Since Oliver's personality is both suspicious and protective, this Calling fits him well.

Odie, on the other hand, has a high spirited and adventurous personality. For him, the Ratter class seems apt. Ratters dodge and run. They get into places they maybe shouldn't get into and for that, this Calling is a perfect fit for Odie.

Breed

Next, we have Breed. A description of the various Breeds starts on **page 54**. This can be, but does not have to be, based on the dog breed of your pet. For Oliver and Odie, we decided the Companion class fit best. Companions are smaller breeds and tend to be more loving and social.

That said, Oliver could also fit into Herder due to his desire to protect and guide while Odie could also be a Runner due to his high energy and his love for freedom. These Breeds should not be something to limit your choices, but rather more options to best fit your dog's personality and spirit.

Backgrounds

This brings us to Backgrounds. The descriptions for the various Backgrounds starts on **page 62** and defines your character's life up until the moment you began to play them.

For Oliver, this decision is a little more difficult. There is no easy analogy to being a stud dog in a puppy mill that would fit the world of Pugmire. However, it would be close to say he was a Soldier who was captured during a battle and kept by the enemy for a period of three years. This not only helps choose a Background, but fills in a little more of the character's story. Establishing this clarity helps us to understand our character better. Additionally, this background gives him the Skills "Intimidate" to represent his bark at those he is protecting his owners from and "Traverse" to reflect his jumping and climbing ability.

Odie is a little easier – the Free Dog Background suits him to a tee. He lives on no one's leash (in fact, he attacks it when it is put on him) and he wants to be free to have his own adventures.

Ability Scores

Now comes a very different section of character creation – the math part. Some people get daunted by this but we're going to make it easy and relatable to your dog. Don't look at any of the numbers. Instead, think about your dog and rank the following categories based on them: Strong, Quick, Solid, Smart, Clever and Cute. Once you have ranked those words, high to low, in relation to your dog, you can fill in your Ability Scores with the numbers 15, 14, 13, 12 and 10 – the 15 goes in your highest ranked ability and so on. Strong is Strength, Quick is Dexterity, Solid is Constitution, Smart is Intelligence, Clever is Wisdom and Cute is Charisma.

For Oliver, I ranked him as Clever, Cute, Intelligent, Solid, Quick and Strong so he has a 15 in Wisdom, a 14 in Charisma, a 13 in Intelligence, a 12 in Constitution, a 10 in Dexterity and an 8 in Strength.

For Odie, he was ranked Quick, Cute, Solid, Smart, Clever and Strong so he has a 15 in Dexterity, a 14 in Charisma, a 13 in Constitution, a 12 in Intelligence, a 10 in Wisdom and an 8 in Strength.

We aren't done yet, though, because each Breed gives an Ability Score Bonus of two points. For Companions, this bonus is applied to Charisma so both dogs now have a Charisma of 16. Now that we have our final numbers, we can record

them on our sheet in the yellow circles under each Ability.

Now we need to record the modifiers above each of those circles. The modifiers will determine how much you add or subtract to your rolls during gameplay, but your Guide can help with that when you get to playing the adventure. For now, use the chart on the lower left-hand corner of **page 64** to fill out your modifiers.

Finally, we need to determine which abilities are our character's Primary Abilities. This is really simple – find your Calling on the chart in the lower right-hand corner of **page 64** and fill in the bubbles next to those abilities in the Saving Throws section of your sheet. Oliver has Charisma and Strength for Guardian. Odie has Constitution and Dexterity for Ratter. More on this later.

Stamina Points

Stamina points represent the amount of hurt a dog can take before they fall unconscious. This is determined by their calling plus their Constitution modifier. Since Oliver is a Guardian, he gets 10 points plus his Constitution modifier, which is 1. Therefore, he has 11 Stamina Points. Odie is a Ratter so he gets 8 Stamina points plus his Constitution modifier which is 3, so he has 11 points as well.

Both dogs also get Stamina Dice. These dice primarily will be used to gain back lost Stamina in the game. They are based on the dog's calling, so Oliver's Stamina Dice is a d10 per level (so just one right now!) and Odie would have a d8.

Proficiency Bonus

The Proficiency Bonus depends on the dog's level. In this case, both dogs are Level 1 so will start with +2 Proficiency bonus that can be used in the ways stated on **page 65** of the Pugmire Core Rulebook.

Skills

In this section, we are really going to tie what is on the character sheet with your existing dog. Skills represent the things your dog does well, usually through practice. You get the Skills listed in your dog's Background and you can choose two of the Skills in your dog's Calling. These chosen skills should reflect your dog's personality or any quirks they may have.

For example, Oliver gets both Intimidate and Traverse from his Soldier Background. These fit him perfectly since Intimidate is used to scare people off, which he tries to do in real life every time someone comes to the door. And Traverse is a skill for running and jumping, which Oliver does very well as we discussed above. So now I am just left with choices in his Calling, Guardian. The list on **page 67** of the *Pugmire Core Rulebook* gives me eight to choose from: Balance, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Notice, Search, Sense Motive, Sneak, Survive and Traverse. Two of those are Skills he already has and since Pugmire works off of having a Skill or not having a Skill, doubling up would not make much sense.

Oliver is very perceptive. He can hear someone trying to get into the house or a car door closing outside. I choose Notice for him to best represent this ability. He is also a great judge of character. He can tell fairly quickly if you are someone who should be trusted or not. In this way, I choose the Skill of Sense Motive to show how good he is at sniffing out troubling people.

For Odie, the Free Dog Background has given him Know Nature and Survive. This ties back to why we chose the Background in the first place – Odie spent a lot of time running away and getting lost so he's very good at living in the outdoors and also at avoiding enemies and tracking down food. Of course, in Pugmire that will be more about the forests and fields than the trailer parks and alleyways but the analogy works for the character. So, we then have 8 choices for Ratter: Balance, Bluff, Notice, Perform, Persuade, Search, Sense Motive, Sneak, Steal and Traverse. Like Oliver, Odie is keenly aware of things going on around him so he gets Sneak, the same as Oliver. One difference between the dogs is while Oliver can feel people out and be cautious, Odie trusts

everyone implicitly. He is, however, very good at convincing people to give him things – toys, treats, scritches...so we're going to transfer that to the sheet by giving him the Persuasion Skill.

Tricks

One of the last things we're going to choose for our Good Dogs is Tricks. These come from your Background, Breed and Calling. Since Oliver and Odie are both Companion Breeds, they both get their first Trick for free: Puppy Dog Eyes. Their Calling give them separate free Tricks. For being a Guardian,

Oliver gets Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor, Medium Armor, Heavy Armor and Shield. He can also choose either Fighting Style or Inspiring Word. While he is a Guardian, Oliver is a wise old man at heart, so instead of the more martial Fighting Style, he's going to get Inspiring Word. Finally, since Oliver has a Soldier Background, he gets Rank Has Its Privileges for free.

Odie is up next and in addition to his Puppy Dog Eyes from being a Companion, he gets Simple Weapon Aptitude and Light Armor Aptitude for his Calling being Ratter. As a Ratter, he also gets to choose between Precise Attack or Second Wind. Something funny about Odie is how he tires himself out. He has boundless energy for a very limited amount of time and then he is usually found napping on the couch or in a dog bed. But when he does have that boundless energy, he has the uncanny ability to nip the cuff of someone's jeans or paw at their foot in such a way to trip them. For this reason, the Precise Attack Trick will go on his sheet to represent his real-life talent. Finally, for being a Free Dog, Odie has Respected By Strays. He knows the other dogs who run free and happy.

Rucksack

The Rucksack section begins on **page 80** of the Pugmire Core Rulebook. We will not explore it here since it is all equipment and those aren't things you would typically tie back to your existing pet. However, if your dog has a favorite toy, maybe put it on a crest on their armor or their shield. Their favorite snack can be something they have with them to eat. Anything to show that this character is really your Good Dog at home.

Oliver loves carrots – they are his favorite treat. So, I am going to make sure that when I get him travelling rations, they have a good supply of carrots in them. Odie has a stuffed monkey that he is obsessed with and he will sleep with it. My character of Odie, as well, has a stuffed monkey. He keeps it in his bedroll and will never let anyone see that he has it.

Defense, Initiative and Speed

The last three numbers we need to fill in on our sheet are for Defense, Initiative and Speed. You dog's Defense is equal to ten plus their Dexterity modifier. For Oliver, this is 10 and for Odie this is 14. Initiative is equal to the Dexterity modifier so Oliver would have 0 and Odie would have 4. Speed is the same for all dogs – 30 feet per turn, unless they drop to all fours in which case it is 40 feet per turn.

Be sure to read the paragraph describing your dog's armor, as well as any spells or aptitudes when you fill out your sheet to make sure there are no modifiers to these three traits.

Personality Traits

Finally, we are going to make sure that we have a good understanding of our dog, both in the real world and on the sheet. Personality Traits are three questions that are different for every dog. They reflect the dog's fears, hopes and dreams in the world of Pugmire. This is where using your real-life dog will help guide your adventures moving forward.

The first statement is **Ideal**: *"What is most important to me is..."*.

For this, the dogs are vastly different. Oliver is the personification of a Guardian. He is the dog that sleeps at my feet so he is closer to the door if intruders come in. For that reason, I am going to finish his Ideal sentence with "...protecting my loved ones".

Odie, on the flipside, loves to run unimped-

ed more than anything. He hates being in the kennel or really even having doors closed to him. His time in the house is spent exploring and when he can go out in the yard, it's hard to get him back in. For this reason, his Ideal sentence ends with "... running free whenever I want".

The second statement is **Bond:** *"I am inspired by my bond to..."*.

Oliver is definitely the one of the two to protect and nurture Odie. He cleans him, guards him (even from himself) and will come to his aid immediately. In this way, Odie is one of the loved ones Oliver was referring to in his Ideal statement. For this reason, I finished Oliver's Bond statement with "...my brother, Odie".

Odie, however, steals Oliver's toys and is quick to get mad at him. He is unpredictable and even his bond to his owner can't be counted on 100 percent. The best conclusion to his Bond statement that I could think of is "...the wild". This covers a lot more than just nature.

The last of the Personality Traits is the **Flaw** statement. This starts *"No matter what, I just can't..."*. This gives us a unique opportunity to get into our character's heads and tie those fears back to our pets. As we discussed, I changed both the dogs' real-life pasts to better fit within the world of Pugmire. This is the best way to bring those things into your character in the form of their flaw. For Oliver, who I changed the background involving life in a puppy mill with being a captured soldier. To follow up with this, I chose to finish his Flaw statement with "...forget those who hurt me".

Odie has a theme – freedom. He talks about running and being wild. But despite all that, Odie always comes home. He gets out of the house or yard and he will run, just like he did when he lived with the animal hoarder. But while he used to stay out for days in those conditions, he always comes back within minutes to his house, hid bed and his brother. To reflect this, we can show Odie's weakness for his brother by saying "... running from my feelings".

So now we have completed both the dogs' sheets and they are ready for the world of Pugmire! Please feel free to use them both in your world – they would love to play with new Good Dogs!

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