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"Level up" redirects here. For the BBC television program, see [Level Up](#).



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In many RPGs, characters start as fairly weak and untrained. When a sufficient amount of experience is obtained, the character "levels up", or gains a superior level. Such an event usually increases the character's statistics, such as [health points](#) and strength, and may permit the character to acquire new abilities or improve existing ones.

In most games, as the difficulty of the challenge increases, the experience rewarded for overcoming it also increases. As players gain more experience points, the amount of experience needed to gain new abilities typically increases. Alternatively, games keep the amount of experience points per level constant, but progressively lower the experience gained for the same tasks as the character's level increases. Thus, as the [player character](#) strengthens from gaining experience, they are encouraged to accept tasks that are commensurate with their improved abilities in order to advance.

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Typically levels are associated with a **character class**, and many systems will allow combinations of classes, allowing a player to customize how their character develops.

Experience levels fell out of vogue during the late 1980s and most of the 1990s, but began to come back with the 2000 release of D&D 3rd Edition and the [d20 System](#). Some systems that use a level-based experience system also incorporate the ability to purchase specific traits with a set amount of experience; for example, D&D 3rd Edition bases the creation of [magical](#) items around a system of experience expenditure (known as *burning xp*) and also uses a system of feat selection which closely matches the advantages of systems such as [GURPS](#) or the [Hero System](#). The d20 system also introduced the concept of [prestige classes](#) which bundle sets of mechanics, character development and requirements into a package which can be "leveled" like an ordinary class.

Some games have a level cap, or a limit of levels available. For example, no player can currently get higher than level 138 in the online game *RuneScape*. Some games have a dynamic level cap, where the level cap is dependent upon the levels of the average player (so it gradually increases).

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In some systems, such as classic *Traveler*, *Basic Role-Playing* system, *Final Fantasy II* and also in the up and coming *Final Fantasy XIV*^[1], progression is based on increasing individual *statistics* (skills, rank and other features) of the character, and is not driven by the acquisition of (general) experience points. Proficiency of your character is generally acquired through exercising skills in a way you have not used before, for example, using abilities and spells in battle can make you good at using them and unlock more skills for the fruit of your labor. Attacking an target that has higher Defense than usual may add towards getting your character an increase in Strength and the proficiency level of your currently equipped weapon. Getting attacked by a target that has higher Strength than usual may add towards getting your character an increase in Defense and Hit Points (HP). However, if you keep attacking the same targets that are weaker than you then your not really exercising your skills, these types of battles will not normally be beneficial to your skills and attributes as they usually require to be exercised vigorously to be rewarded higher levels of proficiency. All skills and attributes are made to grow through exercised use.

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[clarification needed]

Free-form advancement is a method employed by many modern role-playing systems, such as *GURPS*. It allows the player to select which skills to

https://web.archive.org/web/20100403064932/http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experience_point

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