Tips and Tricks For Making Characters

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Introduction

So, you, the reader, probably opened this up hoping to find the holy text of all of the answers in the universe to make a character. This is not that. If you had hoped for that, don't be ashamed; everyone does, but that is just a fantasy. I am not going to tell you the best way in the universe to make a character, or the way to make a character that fits into a bestselling story.

Instead, I'll tell you some tricks that I picked up along the way from, a) reading books and seeing what I hate in characters, and b) what I have researched and found out from other people's experience.

Things to Avoid

1. Tropes, while they may be fun, most of the time they're overdone and are best left unused unless you want the main character or something to have Self-Proclaimed Main Character Disorder, a syndrome I just made up but will continually refer to for the rest of the article. Tropes include:
   a. Can learn to sword fight in 1 week and is already the most bestest and awesomest and sigma-est swordsman in the entire omniverse. (Swords-masters typically take at least 30+ years to be good at it.)
   b. Is evil and mean to everyone but their one true love/besties
   c. Is terrifyingly horrible and evil off camera but whilst on screen/page is the nicest person in existence
   d. Overpowered
   e. And more. These are just the ones that stick out to me the most
2. Mary-sues, Gary-stus, and more. These are usually the most perfect little princess/prince in existence. Symptoms of Mary-sues and Gary-stus include:
   a. They are perfect
   b. They are a goody-two-shoes
   c. They have no flaws
   d. They are inexplicably loved by every single person they meet for no real reason other than the fact that they are the amazingest person in the world
   e. They are very pretty yet are "humble" and say that they're just plain and boring

3. This is my favorite character making flaw to make fun of, partially because it's really funny to read when authors make fun of it, or when I see myself falling for it again. Edgelords. They are the edgiest, coolest, and are the exact opposite of mary-sues/gary-stus. Symptoms of edgelords include:
    a. Everyone in their entire family died and they are the orphan
    b. They have no friends or family; they are just too edgy for that
    c. They dress in all black outfits that are very punk with spikes and have hair that covers up their face that has like red tips
    d. They only wear black leather
    e. They are so emo/depressed and are way too cool for it
    f. They are all entirely flaws that mostly base off of how edgy they are and how they are just too emo to coexist with those who try to bring joy to this world that should only be seen as black and sad and emo.
4. This is not a trope or character type, just basic advice. If you want your reader to read your story, your main character or cast must be likeable. If they are not, your reader will lose interest and probably end up hating or disliking the book. Traits to avoid:
    a. Your character is mean to everyone. No one likes mean people
    b. Evil with no redeemable traits, especially for anti-heros/villain-protagonists
    c. Toxic relationships… I hate reading these so much…

Things to Do

1. Your characters cannot be perfect; that's not realistic. People have flaws, ergo your characters have them too. Without them, they'd basically be a few words on some dead tree pulp/lights on a screen. Flaws include:
    a. Main character syndrome
    b. Narcissism
    c. Selfishness
    d. So selfless to a point where it's stupid
    e. They're dumb
    f. Absolutely obsessed with something to the point where it's creepy
2. While your characters need flaws, they also need strengths, the things they're good at, or else your reader will be extremely bored. But, it is important to note that it's better to be unique about the way you give your characters strengths. An interesting way to do that could be how their strength is also their flaw. Strengths can include
    a. Good at being bad

       b.   Great judgement

       c.   Kind

       d.   Chill

3. Another tip: your characters can't be a piece of cardboard. People have depth; even if it's not much depth. They must have a backstory, which doesn't have to be tragic. They could've had (astonishingly) a happy backstory.

Also-- here's a chart for your troubles

Habits: (bad and good ones!)	Appearance: (hair color, eye color, gender, age)
Fears:	Backstory: (i farted in an elevator next to the queen and then was arrested)…
Decent Relationships: (parents, siblings, friends)	Superstitions: (religion? Small beliefs??)
Bad relationships: (enemies, antagonists, people who they avoid at all costs)	Occupation
Basic mental/emotional state:	Personality:
Favorites: (show, book, color, food)	Least favorites:
Alignment: (optional)	What others think of them: