

PC Minder II

for Windows
version 2.0.0 beta

Intro

With the release of Runequest Roleplaying in Glorantha (RQG hereafter) it has become necessary for me to do yet another character utility. However, this time I wanted something with a little control, given the high degree of decision based; as opposed to dice based, approach of the new system. In that spirit, the program that you see before you will not “generate” a character. It will not randomly determine anything, which is OK with me personally, as I never cared for the numbers a computer typically gave me. Control is what I seek, while I leave tedium and repetition to the machine that is good at that. What I hope I have accomplished is an application that will take some of the tedious number crunching, page flipping and table referencing out of the process, leaving GMs and players free to focus on the roleplaying aspects of character generation (CharGen).

What PC Minder does...

Conceived primarily as a GM aid for creating, tracking and editing PCs and NPCs, PC Minder can initiate a character, accepting characteristic input, calculate skill category modifiers, add skill bonuses for homeland and occupation and calculate starting weapon abilities for multiple PCs. The primary reference for the program’s action is the core RQG rule book. A number of skill and weapon ability aspects can be edited at will so that the data can “grow” with the character. Characteristics and skills can be changed with the result being applied to all dependent variables, eliminating the need to manually re-figure reams of skills every time there’s a change such as a POW increase. Skills and weapons can also be flagged for future experience roles. These can be saved and reloaded later.

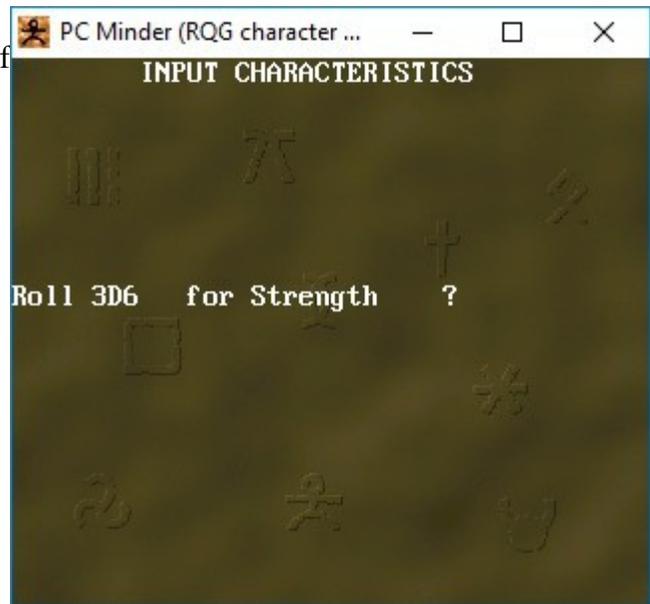
What PC Minder does not...

There is no support for Runes, Passions, family history, cults or other “roleplaying” aspects of CharGen. Such things need the flexibility and personal touch that algorithms don’t really do very well. At this point in its development, PC Minder does not support Elder race characters. This may be addressed in future releases, no promises at this point. PC Minder does not replace dice rolls, it is simply a number cruncher, and not a character “creator”. It should, however, remove some tedium from the process.

Installation

Download the program’s zip file and extract it to a directory of your choice. PC Minder does not tinker with the system registry in any way. The main program is a stand alone executable designed to run under Windows. Compiled under QB64, which has Mac and Linux versions available, it uses some commands that may not function properly under MacOS or Linux. With some minor source code tweaks this could probably be accomplished using QB64 versions that compile for those platforms.

Now we are faced with an input box that has replaced the initial display, heralding the initiation of a new PC. No need to worry, the main display will return after characteristic input. At this point simply enter the seven primary characteristics. Pressing enter advances to each subsequent characteristic in the order of STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, CHA. After pressing the final <enter> things start to get more interesting.



We now are greeted by the screen shown below:

All attributes, skill category bonuses and basic skills have been computed from the



characteristics. The characteristics, attributes, category bonuses and hit points are shown in yellow. Skills are initially revealed in green as the skill window, and since there is not room for all skills, it dynamically displays as many of the higher level skills as there is room for. It will also be noted that there are a great many more command prompt choices available than there were previously. These are accessed in the same way as the previous command prompt, only now there is a great deal more to work with. Explanations of the commands are as follows:

- **New** – Initiates a new PC characteristics input, and sets the active display to that PC when completed. There can be multiple PCs in the program at any time. Memory space dependent.
- **Homeland** – Takes the user to the homeland choice display. See page 5.
- **Occupation** – Takes the user to the occupation choice display. See page 6.
- **Weapons** – Starts the weapon choosing process or displays weapons once chosen.
- **Load** – Loads a named previously saved PC from the program’s data directory.
- **Save** – Saves the actively displayed PC to the program’s data directory.
- **Remove** – Deletes the actively displayed PC from memory. Saved files are not affected.
- **Quit** – Stops the program and returns to the system.

Looking just below the top statistics it becomes quickly apparent that something needs to be done about character name, homeland and occupation as indicated by the colorful click points. Clicking on those fields takes you to the dialog displays for the respective functions. The Homeland and Occupation dialogs are also accessible via the command prompt, either by mouse or hotkey.

Typical Workflow

Name

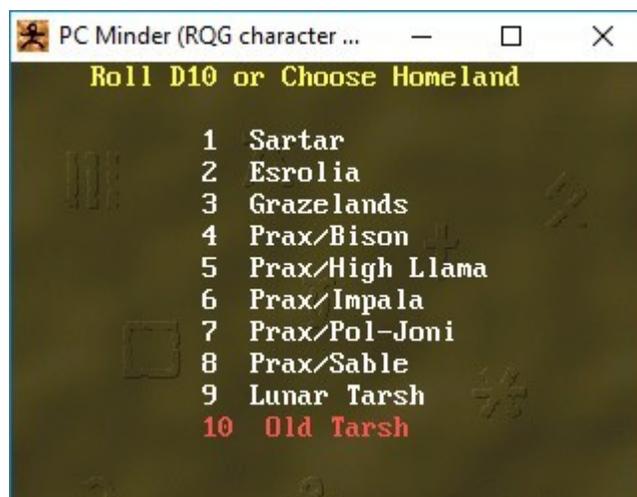
Naming of the PC can be done at any time during CharGen when the command prompt display is active. If not done before, the program will query the user for a name prior to saving the PC. Since PCs are saved by name this is necessary. Names may be up to 15 characters long, which is due to restrictions in display space and has nothing to do with filename restrictions.

The quick and strapping, yet oddly uninteresting fellow in our example, we shall name “Venharl”. After inputting the name, it’s worn proudly in several places, as shown below.

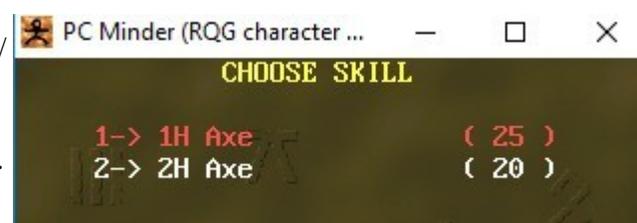


Homeland

Left click on the “Click/Homeland”, or alternatively, click on the **Homeland** choice in the command prompt or press the “h” hotkey to access the homeland choice display. This dialog is a non-keyboard input display, the number index is solely for reference if one wishes to roll the dice for homeland. Each choice will highlight in red letters over black background as the mouse hovers over each one. Click on the appropriate choice. I just rolled a ten so Venharl is from Old Tarsh.



Depending upon the homeland chosen you may be queried to choose between certain skills and/or weapons. Typically the present skill value is displayed with the choices. The exact nature of the choices are dependent upon the homeland of the PC. Simply hover, highlight and left click at each display. For Venharl, we have chosen 1H Axe and a second display has queried for a choice between Composite Bow and Sling.



Having accomplished these inputs we now see that the skill window reflects the changes by displaying the augmented skills in blue. We can see our choices in 1H Axe and Composite Bow clearly have been augmented, whereas the alternatives of 2H Axe and Sling have not. Also, other cultural skills and weapons, appropriate to a resident of Old Tarsh, have also been augmented as per the Old Tarsh bonuses from page 63 of RQG rules.

Ride	20	Spirit Combat	40	Quarterstaff	30
Swim	25	Spirit Travel	15	Rapier	25
Charm	10	Worship	10	Shortsword	25
Dance	10	Conceal	20	1H Spear	30
Intimidate	10	Craft	25	2H Spear	30
Orate	5	Craft	25	Arbalest	25
Sing	15	Devise	20	Axe, Thrown	25
Spk Tarshite	45	Play Instrument	20	Composite Bow	30
Spk Trade Talk	5	Sleight	20	Crossbow	40
Animal Lore	10	Insight Human	25	Dagger, Throwing	20
Battle	15	Listen	30	Elf Bow	20

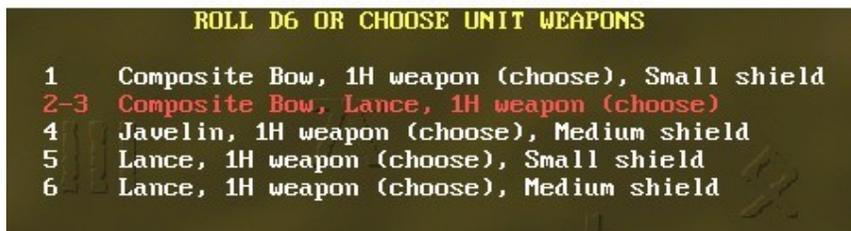
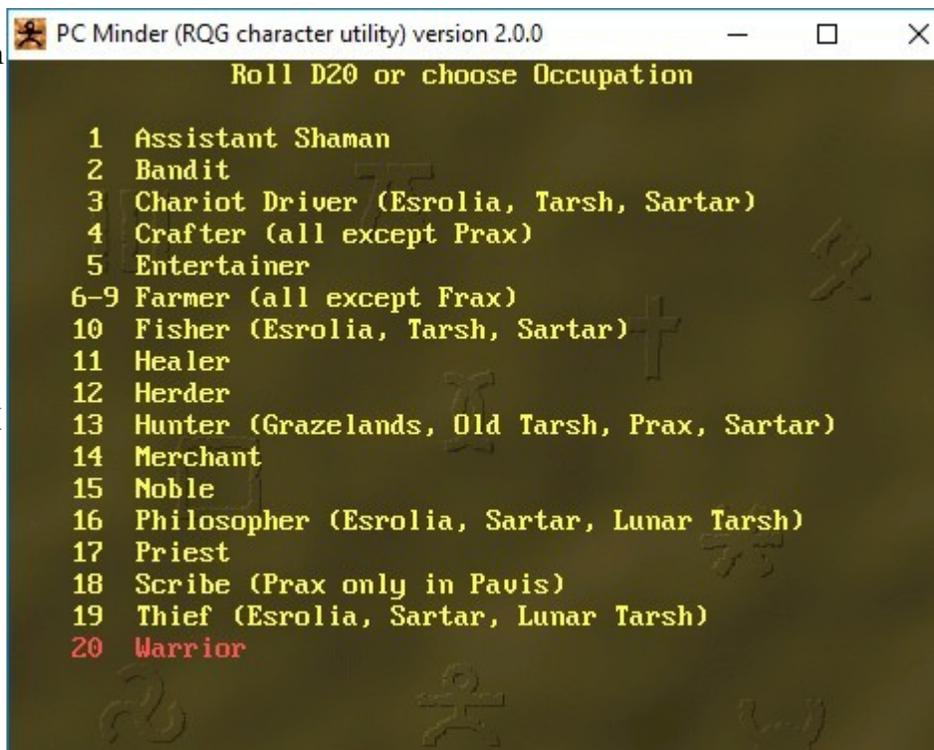
Homeland selection is now done, and “Click/ Homeland” has been removed, to be replaced by the PC’s homeland designation. Now we move on to choosing the character’s occupation. There is always the opportunity in the command prompt display to edit these skill names and values, which will be addressed later, but should probably not be done before additional concerns are addressed. Such as...

Occupation

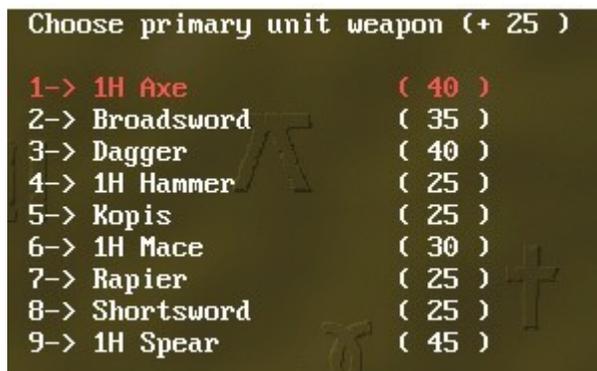
Obviously, occupation is chosen in much the same way. Pressing hotkey “o”, or clicking either the “Click/Occupation” field or the **Occupation** command invokes the occupation dialog. Since our Venharl is a quick and strapping fellow, though not particularly inspiring or communicative, I opt to make him a warrior in lieu of rolling the dice.

As with Homeland choices, the occupation choices will present the user with additional queries. The warrior occupation is particularly complex requiring the choosing of a specific service (as per RQG pgs. 71-73). We chose Light Cavalry for our dexterous Venharl.

With his qualities Venharl should make a decent light cavalry horse archer. In that spirit, with a die roll of 3, he gets unit weapons of Composite Bow, Lance and an additional boost in a 1H weapon.



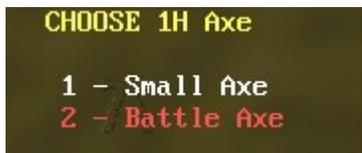
We're still not done yet (told you warriors were complex), there is still the matter of choosing the nature of his primary 1H weapon, which gets a +25% boost, as well as a secondary weapon which gets an additional +20% boost. We chose 1H Axe for the former and Broadsword for the later.



At this point we have completed Venharl's occupational experience and are dumped back into the command prompt display.

Weapons

Hey! Wait just a minute here, didn't we just choose our weapons? Well, yes, in some cases we did, but in others we only chose a weapon category. Here is where we clean up those details, by choosing the "Weapon" command by the typical methods of mouse or hotkey. Venharl has his Broadsword, but there are two possibilities of 1H Axe, and those are Small Axe and Battle Axe. We'll choose the Battle Axe, but WAIT! we're still not done.



As an Old Tarshite, Venharl also received experience in dagger, 1H spear, and thrown javelin use, which as categories, require further specialization. We choose Dagger, Lance (1H spear), and Javelin, Thrown. I won't show these as you likely have gotten the idea by now. Note that some weapons cross categories, particularly those that can be either a melee and a missile weapon. The 1H Spear and Javelin categories are especially prone to this.

Once these bits of housekeeping are done we are greeted by a particularly juicy display:

Venharl		PC 1 of 1			Lt Cav Warrior				
exp	Weapon	SR	-%	Damage	Enc	HP	STR/DEX	C/S/F	ID
[]	1H Battle Axe	6	65	1D8+2	2	8			2
[]	Dagger	7	40	1D4+2	.25	6			6
[]	1H Broadsword	5	55	1D8+1	1	12			9
[]	1H Javelin	5	35	1D6	1	8			31
[]	1H Lance	3	45	1D10+1	3	10			33
[]	Composite Bow	1	55	1D8+1	2	7			38
[]	Javelin, Thrown	1	35	1D10	1	8			47
[]	Large Shield	6	40	1D6	3	16			54
[]	Medium Shield	6	45	1D4	2	12			55
[]	1H Small Axe	7	32	1D6+1	1	6			1
[]	1H Battle Axe	6	65	1D8+2	2	8			2
[]	2H Battle Axe	6	20	1D8+2	2	8			3
[]	2H Great Axe	5	20	2D6+2	2	10			4
[]	2H Dagger-Axe	4	20	3D6	3	10			5
[]	Dagger	7	40	1D4+2	.25	6			6
[]	Parrying Dagger	7	30	1D4+2	.33	8			7
[]	Sickle	6	20	1D6+1	1	6			8
[]	1H Broadsword	5	55	1D8+1	1	12			9
[]	1H Kopis	5	28	1D8+1	1	12			10
[]	1H Rapier	5	28	1D6+1	1	8			11
[]	1H Shortsword	6	28	1D6+1	1	12			12
[]	2H Greatsword	4	20	2D8	2	12			13
[]	2H Rhomphaia	5	20	2D6+2	2	10			14
[]	2H Sickle-sword	5	20	1D10+1	1	12			15
[]	Heavy Cestus	7	40	1D3+2	1	8			16
[]	Light Cestus	7	40	1D3+1	.5	4			17
[]	Claw	7	40	1D4+1	1	0			18
[]	Fist	7	40	1D3	0	0			19
[]	Grapple	7	40	Special	0	0			20

hover and left click to edit, any key or right click to exit,

The upper “green” display lists the weapons that our PC has received training or experience in. The lower “grey/green” display shows the full list of all common weapons and the ability that Venharl would have in any of them. This lower display may be scrolled through with the mouse wheel. As we play the mouse around this screen it becomes apparent that we can change various parameters. We’ll discuss these functions in the Editing section. In the meantime, pressing any key or right clicking the mouse will return us to the main skill screen, and we can return here at will now by clicking **Weapons** or typing “w”.

Editing

From the main command prompt display, left click any where within the skill display area. You should be greeted by the skill editing screen.

At this point experience check flags can be set in the check boxes on the left, skill names may be edited and skill values altered by left clicking on the appropriate field. The entire list is scrolled through as noted in the bottom bar, by hovering over the directional arrows that appear top and bottom when necessary, or slowly by using the mouse wheel. Editable fields highlight on mouse-over. Simply left click to add and remove experience flags or set insertion cursors for editing names and values. Name editing applies to all skills but is highly useful for setting specific languages, customs, crafts, etc. Some of these skill names will be set preemptively by the experience choices.

Notable is the increment counters on the right, which advance each time a skill is altered and are a debugging leftover that I didn’t find objectionable and decided to leave there. It gives a bit of history at a glance, but is otherwise extraneous. Two blank ‘freebie’ skill slots are included at the bottom.

Base	SR_3	Head	5	Stealth.....	10	Old Tar
				PC	1	of 1
						Lt Cav
[]	1	Boat		15	x	0
[]	2	Climb		50	x	0
[]	3	Dodge		34	x	0
[]	4	Drive Chariot		15	x	0
[]	5	Jump		51	x	0
[]	6	Ride		55	x	2
[]	7	Swim		25	x	0
[]	8	Act		0	x	0
[]	9	Art		0	x	0
[]	10	Bargain		0	x	0
[]	11	Charm		10	x	0
[]	12	Dance		10	x	1
[]	13	Disguise		0	x	0
[]	14	Fast Talk		0	x	0
[]	15	Intimidate		10	x	0
[]	16	Intrigue		0	x	0
[]	17	Orate		5	x	0
[]	18	Sing		25	x	2
[]	19	Spk Tarshite		45	x	0
[]	20	Spk Trade Talk		5	x	1
[]	21	Spk Other 2		0	x	0
[]	22	Alchemy		0	x	0
[]	23	Animal Lore		10	x	0
[]	24	Battle		45	x	1
[]	25	Bureaucracy		0	x	0
[]	26	Celestial Lore		10	x	0
[]	27	Cult Lore		10	x	0
[]	28	Tarshite customs		30	x	0

left click to edit, any key or right click to exit,
 er fast scrolls, mouse wheel slow scrolls

Venharl

Notes on skill editing

- Certain skill names will automatically be altered during the Homeland and/or Occupation process. Languages and customs will typically be set in this way.
- It is highly recommended that editing be postponed until all experience and weapons choices have been made first. Such preemptive edits may alter the experience process as sorting and choosing algorithms frequently use the skill names for reference indexing.
- Be sure of any skill percentage changes you make as there are no restore points. Skills may be edited “down”, but the data has no memory of prior states.
- The aforementioned “increment counter” is not affected by skill changes that result from changes in characteristics, such as POW gains or DEX training. Characteristic changes effect all skills and weapons globally. Only previous experience and user edits of individual skills will change increment counters in those skills.
- Dodge and Jump, being special cases that start out characteristic dependent, may under rare circumstances experience a “ratchet” effect. Such as when some slight experience gain is offset by a downward change in DEX. Once experience is received, a DEX change will not remove it. Of course that poor devil needs all the help he can get so I left that bug in. ;) Manual edits will override this.

Editing and working with weapons

The process is essentially the same in the Weapons display. Experience checks can be set and removed, weapon names modified, skill levels altered and hit points reduced and restored. One particularly useful feature was added to this routine in that when the mouse hovers over a weapon skill a number track appears under the heading C/S/F. This gives the critical, special and fumble chances for that weapon skill. This is not an edit unless the left mouse button is clicked.

CHA- 8 Base SR_3 Head 5 Stealth..... 10 Old Tarsh									
Venharl									
PC 1 of 1									
Lt Cav Warrior									
exp	Weapon	SR	-%	Damage	Enc	HP	STR/DEX	C/S/F	ID
[]	1H Battle Axe	6	65	1D8+2	2	8			2
[]	Dagger	7	40	1D4+2	.25	6			6
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[]	1H Javelin	5	35	1D6	1	8			31
[]	1H Lance	3	45	1D10+1	3	10			33
[]	Composite Bow	1	55	1D8+1	2	7		3/11/99	38
[]	Javelin, Thrown	1	35	1D10	1	8			47
[]	Large Shield	6	40	1D6	3	16			54
[]	Medium Shield	6	45	1D4	2	12			55
[]	1H Small Axe	7	32	1D6+1	1	6			1
[]	1H Battle Axe	6	65	1D8+2	2	8			2
[]	2H Battle Axe	6	20	1D8+2	2	8			3
[]	2H Great Axe	5	20	2D6+2	2	10			4

Editing any previously base weapon will set its modified state and move it to the upper list. As with skill editing, the data has no restore point memory. Once a weapon attack/parry skill has been modified, it will remain in the upper window from that point. Be sure that this is desired before saving the character to disk. All edits must be saved to disk to be permanent, edits are not automatically saved. If any edits are mistakenly done, the PC can be reloaded, provided the mistake was not saved. It is possible that with extreme use the lower full weapon display would disappear altogether, but since most PCs will stick to weapons they know and possess, this should not happen often in play.

When editing a weapon in a category, the program checks other weapons in that category and automatically sets those weapons skills to half percentage, if they are not already higher. Since this is not technically experience in those skills, no modified flag is set and the boosted weapons will not clutter the upper display, but the skill will be changed in the lower weapon display.

Weapon hit points may be edited to reflect damage in combat. Once changed to a damaged level, the particular weapon hit point display will display in blue until such time as it is repaired or replaced. This feature is based upon the RQG weapon tables and is not designed to reflect differences in rune metal weapons. A higher number can be entered, but damaged states will not show until the damage goes below the normal bronze level.



Hit Point Display

The right side of the display incorporates a location hit point diagram. It is anticipated that a mouse based routine for handling location damage will be added in future version releases, but it a simple point display at this point.

Loaded List

The yellow bounding box below the hit location diagram is the list of loaded PCs. This box will resize dynamically to a maximum of 15 PCs, whereupon additional PCs will require scrolling of the list. This can be accomplished either by using the mouse wheel or the up/down arrow keys of the keyboard. As noted earlier, the maximum number of PCs is a function of available system memory and is an indefinite value. To change an active PC, just left click on the desired name and the display will change to show that PCs statistics.



Batch Operations

Since loading individual PCs into the program can be an incredibly tedious process, the addition of batch operations has greatly streamlined the interface. The user can create the list of PCs and then by clicking “Batch Save” on the lower right, or typing ctrl-S, the user can give a identifying name to the entire list. It should be noted that an extensive list will require some processing time to save all the data.

Later, by choosing the “Batch Load”/ctrl-L, and typing the identifying name, the list of PCs can be reloaded. This process is generally much quicker than the save operation and saves a great deal of work when dealing with long lists. A “sample” batch is included with download.



Finally...

PC Minder is a beta release. Every effort has been made to insure that it functions properly, but errors are always possible, in fact they are probable, particularly in a work of this complexity. If you experience any such issues, you can bring them to my attention via Facebook's Runequest group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RuneQuest/>

Attention to user: Andy Wessel

Good luck, and happy gaming.

Developed with

QB64 version 1.2 available at www.qb64.org

Acknowledgments:

Thanks to the folks at www.qb64.org/forum for their kind help and advise on various coding issues, and also to the folks at Chaosium for bringing back a classic game.