

# A Very Brief MHR Hack for Exalted

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So we all know the premise of Exalted – kung fu demigods doing mythic shit in a world gone bad – is awesome. And we all know the Exalted systems (1e and 2e, since 3e hasn't been released at the time of writing) suck hard. Hence this: a woolly hack for Marvel Heroic Roleplaying (MHR) that will hopefully let you play Exalted using a system that

- copes with variable power levels within a party;
- puts a focus on narrative rather than numbers; and
- is really easy.

I'll admit, this conversion isn't here for mechanical rigour or nailing down exactly how strong you have to be to bench press a yeddim. It's meant to facilitate you and your friends telling mythic stories in the Exalted setting.

You will need:

- A copy of the MHR rules or a good understanding thereof. They're out of print (boo) but they aren't complex, so someone who *has* played the game can fill you in in about five minutes.
- An understanding of the Exalted setting. It doesn't have to be deep or comprehensive, you just have to have a basic idea of what Exalted are, what flavours they come in, etc. I'm going to assume that anyone who's read this far already knows all this stuff – if you don't, it's worth a look! There's a lot of work to do to extract the gold from the filth, but there's real gold to be had.

## The Basics

All the MHR rules work as normal. Actions, scenes, stress, assets, and so on and so forth. About the only change I'd make is to rename the Doom Pool the Loom of Fate. Maybe rename power points as motes or something.

In fact, the only major changes come in character creation. Read on!

## Making PCs

The key thing to remember when making MHR characters is that concept comes first. Before you even start to think about power sets or die sizes, first have a concrete idea of the sort of exalt you want to play.

## Affiliations

In MHR it's important to note whether characters perform better by themselves, with a single sidekick, or on a team. In Exalted this is less of a big deal, and a major indicator of performance is the

Exalt type. So for Marvel Heroic Exalted (MHE) replace Affiliations with Exaltation: this is a single die which stands in for the general potency of your Exalt in all situations.

Exalt Type	Exaltation Die
Young Dragon-blooded	d6
Elder or well-bred Dragon-blooded	d8
Newly exalted celestial	d8
Experienced celestial	d10
Celestial at height of First Age power	d12

Note that these are really just vague guidelines. I'm sure just skimming through that table Exalted fans have come up with a dozen examples that don't fit – and that's fine! When making a PC pick the Exaltation die that seems most in line with the concept you have.

## Distinctions

As normal. Pick three, use them for d8s or d4s, you know the drill.

## Power Sets

All Exalts have two power sets. Building them is pretty open-ended (see guidelines below) but the main rule to remember is that **one power set has to be tied to their exaltation and caste**. Exactly what that means is intentionally vague: one Twilight caste Solar might have a Twilight power set that contains Sorcery, Flight (from a spell or artefact) and Enhanced Durability for a traditional spell-casting Twilight with the Twilight anima power. Another might have nothing but Superhuman Senses and a suite of SFX that cover the creation of assets with that power, for that 'I can kill you with my brain' feel. Both tie into the Twilight niche of hyperintelligence.

The other power set can be anything you want, but should hang together around some sort of theme. Is your character a superhuman martial artist? A great general? A silver-tongued diplomat? If it helps think of one power set as a measure of what the character *is*, and the other as what they *do*.

Within each power set pick 3-5 powers and rate them according to the following guidelines:

- If it's something normal people can't do and you can, give it a d6. This covers stuff like Flight, Mystic Senses, minor shapechanging, etc. Of course you might be *really* good at such a thing, in which case rate it higher, but the real advantage of d6 powers is just that having them lets you attempt things others can't even try.
- If it's something normal people can do but you're really good at, give it a d8. Note that "really good at" is judged by the standards of exalts rather than people – the general 'just being awesome' that comes with exaltation is wrapped up in the Exaltation die.
- If it's something you're notably good at, even among your peers, give it a d10.
- Don't take d12s in anything. From a setting point of view having a d12 in something makes you one of the best in Creation, and it's unlikely that at character gen you're going to be that good. From a mechanical point of view having d12s in your power sets makes a lot of challenges much easier, which warps the game a bit. Just don't take d12s.

Every power set has at least one SFX and at least one Limit. Pretty much all power sets in Exalted should have the Exhaustion Limit (to signify running out of essence) as well as any others that fit but

don't think of that as a hard and fast rule if you have a better idea. For SFX choose whatever seems appropriate but 2-4 is about the right number.

I'll go into a more detailed examination of MHR powers as they relate to Exalted and some sample power sets later on.

## Specialties

Take up to four specialties of your choice at the Expert level. You can trade two Expert specialties for a single Master specialty, but you can only do this once. If you have Sorcery in your power sets you must also take the Thaumaturgy specialty at some level.

Because of the different setting, the specialties have changed as well. For MHE use the following list:

Acrobatic	
Combat	Covers weapons, martial arts, etc.
Commerce	Replaces Business – covers trade, traders, buying and selling
Lore	Replaces Science – covers knowledge of the way the world is
Medicine	
Menace	
Nature	Replaces Vehicle – animals, plants, that sort of thing, also covers riding
Networks	Replaces Crime – it's all about who you know
Psych	
Savant	Replaces Tech – covers knowledge of the First Age, ancient magitech, etc.
Thaumaturgy	Replaces Mystic – covers magic, demons, dealing peacefully with gods, mortal sorcery, and so on
Warfare	New – covers large-scale smackdowns

## Milestones

Milestones are the most difficult part of MHR character creation because they need to be tailored to the character. I've made up some samples for generic Solars to give you a sort of idea, but this is really where you're going to need to come up with your own material.

Note: This is where you want to bring in the Great Curse if you can. You can either create a milestone specifically to grant XP when the character behaves like a rampaging asshole or you can try to work it in with their other milestones for a more subtle approach.

### Dawn Caste Warmaster

1 XP	When you call for people to unite to achieve a greater goal.
3 XP	When you give orders to your followers in battle.
10 XP	When you raise a great army to defend something precious or smash something that stands in your way.

### Zenith Preacher

1 XP	When you offer spiritual advice.
3 XP	When you speak out for your cause in the face of serious consequences.
10 XP	When you make a great personal sacrifice in the name of the Unconquered Sun or when you abandon the path in favour of furthering your own power.

### Twilight Scholar

1 XP	When you solve a problem with your intellect rather than your brawn.
3 XP	When you learn something significant you didn't know before.
10 XP	When you reveal a grand artefact, project, concept or truth to the world, or when you decide that people don't need to possess or know such things and bury or destroy it.

### Night Caste Prowler

1 XP	When you gain entry to somewhere you aren't supposed to be.
3 XP	When you bypass an opponent with stealth but leave them unharmed.
10 XP	When you expose yourself to bring an unpleasant matter to light, or when you allow it to continue in order to keep your secrecy.

### Silver-Tongued Eclipse

1 XP	When you make an alliance.
3 XP	When you break the terms of an alliance but manage to keep the alliance intact.
10 XP	When you either perform a great service for an ally, ensuring your mutual bond forever, or when you betray them in the most permanent and unforgivable way.

## Detailed Commentary

If you've read this far you've read everything you need to play. Get to it. What follows is a series of vague ramblings on the crossovers of powers from MHR to Exalted (and some other odds and ends) that may or may not help you make characters. It's not necessary reading at all.

## The Best Advice

Remember that MHR is a self-correcting system in a lot of ways. You don't need to sweat exact balance or anything like that. There are a number of ways to simulate any number of things, but in the end it doesn't matter – do what feels right at the time and it'll all work out more or less okay.

## Powers

### Attack Powers

Attack powers are pretty common in MHR, because superhero comics tend to involve a lot of blasting things with cosmic energy or carving them up with katanas or what have you. They're less common in Exalted. It's generally assumed that any exalt is at least moderately capable with martial arts or carries a knife or short sword or something – exalts with Combat Expert or Combat Mastery are even more broadly dangerous – so regular weapons don't qualify as attack powers. That said, you can use attack powers to cover a variety of things that fit with the Exalted setting.

- Daiklaves and the like are d8 weapons. If the power set the daiklave is in has the Gear Limit (and it's totally okay as far as I'm concerned to have the limit only apply to certain powers in a set) then you might find yourself disarmed or otherwise in a position where your blade is not accessible. If not, then you've got a daiklave that can disguise itself, or you know the charm that lets you store it Elsewhere, or some other way of ensuring it's always available.
- Bigger weapons don't necessarily carry bigger dice – it's assumed that a grand goremaul's slower speed is wrapped up in the same die as its ability to paste just about anything in a single hit. For bigger weapon dice you want *fancier* weapons – daiklaves with long histories, master-crafted weapons from the First Age, etc.

- Several charms function like attack powers: Glorious Solar Saber, that one that lets Solars shoot golden death rays from their forehead, Alchemical laser charms, and if there isn't a charm that lets fire aspects shoot blasts of flame there should be.
- Supernatural martial arts also function like attack powers, in that they increase the lethality of attacks. It's entirely possible to have Golden Tiger Style d8 and break that out in fights.
- Supernatural levels of skill with certain weapons could also be written as attack powers. A Solar could know the Invincible Sword Style d10 or (less interesting) Solar Archery Charms d8, which would increase their combat power but retain the option of running out of motes via the Exhaustion Limit.

### **Durability**

Enhanced Durability is pretty common among exalts, thanks to the ubiquity of Ox-Body charms, supernatural martial arts, certain anima powers, and the availability of artefact armour. Go hog wild.

### **Elemental Control**

Elemental Control is thematically appropriate to Dragon-blooded and elementals but not really other types of exalt. Most terrestrials will top out at d8 in an appropriate control (if they have it at all), with a few dedicated ones reaching the giddy heights of d10. Elemental Control may also make an appearance in a Sorcery-related power set, representing magical command of the elements, bound elementals, etc.

If you're willing to get a bit esoteric you could try giving Sidereal exalts a power of Fate Control which works in a similar way, reflecting their ability to tweak things just so.

### **Intangibility**

Intangibility is another rare one in Exalted. Ghosts have it, some gods and elementals, and it's plausible for Lunars or (less common) water-aspected Dragon-bloods to have it at the d6 level.

### **Invisibility**

Invisibility is a useful stand-in for Stealth charms. Anyone who pulls in supernatural aid for their sneaking about could justifiably have Invisibility.

### **Mimic**

Mimic isn't going to show up much in Exalted outside the province of some gods. Although a supernatural martial artist might be able to mimic their opponent's fighting styles, or perhaps a Night caste could steal someone else's abilities. It's possible, just not common.

### **Movement Powers**

Movement Powers are unlikely to appear outside of a few niches, but quite common within those niches. Speed or Leaping might appear in the power sets of the right kind of exalt, and water-aspects are known for their Swimming ability. Flight and Teleportation are almost non-existent in Exalted without Sorcery or artefacts. (The difficulty of travel is one of the setting assumptions.)

### **Psychic Powers**

Direct mind-control-style Psychic Powers are extremely rare in Exalted. As usual, the first place to look for them is in Sorcery power sets or the portfolios of strange gods. Air-caste dragon-bloods may sometimes manifest Telepathy d6, or dragon-bloods who have gone through rituals of sworn

brotherhood might manifest Telepathy at the d8 level between themselves. Mind Control is slightly more common in the form of the silver tongue of the Eclipse caste and other supernatural socialites.

Animal and Plant Control is much more common – exalts of almost all types are known to communicate with animals at the lower levels of the power, while Lunars are often much better at it. Wood-aspected Dragon-bloods are, of course, the archetypal plant communicators.

### Reflexes

Enhanced reflexes are common among exalts of all kinds – improved physical capabilities are just one of the perks of being Chosen.

### Resistance Powers

Not much in Creation is directly resistant to Mind Control or Sorcery – perhaps some demons or gods might exhibit a natural resistance to being bound. That said, some exalts – notably Zenith caste Solars and Earth-aspected terrestrials – exhibit a superhuman willpower that often keeps them going in the face of mortal insults as well as mortal wounds.

### Senses

Sense powers come in two kinds: the ability to sense something that normal people can't, usually rated at d6 (Mystic Senses d6); and the ability to just see, hear, etc. *better* (Enhanced Senses d8+).

Enhanced and Superhuman Senses (d8 and d10) are relatively common among exalts, especially those of a sneaky or intellectual bent.

### Shapeshifting

Using magic to effect disguises is quite a common ability among exalts, so shapeshifting can often be found among Night castes and other prowlers at the d6 or d8 levels. Lunars are the unparalleled masters of shapechanging – all of them can do it at least at the d8 level, and many improve their skills to d10.

### Size-Changing Powers

Size-changing is extremely rare in Exalted. Lunars sometimes learn it to d8 as an adjunct to their shapeshifting powers, but other than that it is the province of gods and monsters.

### Sorcery

Sorcery covers Exalted sorcery – and necromancy – and is extremely powerful. A sorcerer cannot have a die in Sorcery larger than their Exaltation die; its power is limited by the nature of the exalt wielding it, but also by the number of spells they know and the cunning with which they deploy them. Unlike in core MHR, Sorcery *can* be used to inflict stress directly (Death of Obsidian Butterflies, anyone?). Characters interested in summoning demons or building necromantic war machines should pick up the Constructs SFX.

In Exalted Sorcery is slow and hugely powerful, especially at the Solar circle. In MHR it's just as fast as everything else because of the less-strict nature of timing in this system.

### Stamina

Another common ability among Exalted.

## Strength

Excessive strength isn't as common among exalts as it is among superheroes, but it still exists and is even fairly common.

## Stretching

Stretching is vanishingly rare in Exalted outside of artefact fighting chains, a few freaky Abyssals, and Lunars who like tentacles, and even they don't normally go beyond d8.

## Transmutation

Transmutation is also incredibly rare outside of Sorcery. Some gods have powers of petrification or similar and a very few dragon-bloods might have the d6 ability to impart their elemental nature to other objects.

## Sample Power Sets

These are generic examples of what an exalt-type power set might look like. Bear in mind these are one way I'd do it – there are plenty of other ways, so you should stick to what works for you.

### Dawn Caste

ENHANCED DURABILITY D8	INVINCIBLE SWORD STYLE D10
ENHANCED STRENGTH D8	ENHANCED REFLEXES D8
<i>SFX: Melee Excellency:</i> Step up or double a Dawn Caste die against a single target. Remove the highest rolling die and add 3 dice for your total.	
<i>SFX: Five Swords Fight as One:</i> Add a d6 and keep an effect die for each additional target.	
<i>SFX: Heavenly Guardian Defence:</i> Spend 1 PP to ignore physical stress or trauma from a single attack.	
<i>SFX: Well-Armed:</i> Add a d6 to your dice pool for an attack action and step back the highest die in the pool by -1. Step up the effect die by +1.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Dawn Caste power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Zenith Caste

ANIMAL CONTROL D6	SUPERHUMAN DURABILITY D10
ENHANCED WILLPOWER D8	SUPERHUMAN STAMINA D10
MIND CONTROL D6	
<i>SFX: In The Face of Great Evil:</i> Add a die from the Loom of Fate to one or more actions. Step it up for each action, then return it.	
<i>SFX: Priest:</i> Whenever using a Zenith Caste power to inflict mental stress on a god or elemental, add a d8 and step up the effect.	
<i>SFX: Leader of Mortals:</i> Whenever using a Zenith Caste power to create an asset that reflects your devout followers, step up the effect die by one.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Zenith Caste power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

Note: The Mind Control represents the Zenith's supernatural charisma, not telepathic 'mind control'.

### Twilight Caste

SORCERY D10	MYSTIC SENSES D6
ENHANCED DURABILITY D8	MIND CONTROL D8
<i>SFX: Summoner:</i> Add a d6 and step up the effect die by +1 when using Sorcery to create assets related to things you have summoned to aid you.	
<i>SFX: Healing:</i> Add Enhanced Durability to your dice pool when helping others recover stress. Spend 1	

PP to recover your own or another's physical stress or step back your own or another's physical trauma by -1.

*Limit: Exhaustion:* Shut down any Twilight Caste power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.

*Limit: Untamed Forces:* Whenever using Sorcery in a dice pool, opportunities are generated on dice that roll 1 or 2.

### Night Caste

SUPERHUMAN REFLEXES D10	INVISIBILITY D8
ENHANCED SENSES D8	LEAPING D6
<i>SFX: No Wall or Lock Can Stand:</i> Spend a PP to arrive in any scene – you just broke in, or were in disguise as an item of furniture, or hiding behind the servants as they move about, or something similar. This can achieve the implausible but not the impossible.	
<i>SFX: Other People's Secrets:</i> When using a Night Caste power to inflict mental stress, add a d6 and step up the effect die.	
<i>SFX: Seven Shadow Evasion:</i> Spend a PP to reroll any reaction pool using a Night Caste power.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Night Caste power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Eclipse Caste

MIND CONTROL D10 (Note: Again, this is superhuman persuasiveness rather than actual mind control.)
<i>SFX: Web of Diplomacy:</i> When using an Eclipse Caste power to create a complication related to a prior diplomatic agreement with the subject, add a d8 and step up the effect die. (You always count as having a prior diplomatic agreement with fair folk, demons, gods and elementals thanks to the Eclipse anima feature.)
<i>SFX: All Part Of My Cunning Plan:</i> Before using Mind Control in a dice pool, move your mental stress to the Loom of Fate and step up Mind Control by +1 for that action.
<i>SFX: Versatile:</i> When using Mind Control in a dice pool, it can be split into 2d8 or 3d6 if you wish.
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Eclipse Caste power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.

### Air Aspect

LEAPING D6	ENHANCED REFLEXES D8
INVISIBILITY D6	ENHANCED SENSES D8
LIGHTNING BLAST D8	
<i>SFX: Mobile:</i> Spend a PP to reroll any roll using an Air Aspect power.	
<i>SFX: Five Winds Blow as One:</i> If a pool includes an Air Aspect power, you may replace two dice of equal size with one +1 step higher.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Air Aspect power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Earth Aspect

ENHANCED DURABILITY D8	EARTH CONTROL D6
SUPERHUMAN STAMINA D10	FIVE DRAGON STYLE D8
ENHANCED WILLPOWER D8	
<i>SFX: Unbending:</i> Spend a PP to ignore all mental stress or trauma from a single attack, or to remove a complication dealing with fatigue, exhaustion or attrition.	
<i>SFX: Five Dragon Fist:</i> When making a physical attack, add a d6 to the pool and step down the highest die. Step up the effect die by +1.	
<i>SFX: Bulwark:</i> When using Earth Control to make assets, add a d6 and step up the effect die.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Earth Aspect power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

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### Fire Aspect

SUPERHUMAN REFLEXES D10	TWIN-SWORD STYLE D8
ENHANCED SPEED D8	FIRE CONTROL D6
<i>SFX: Burning Aura:</i> On a reaction against a physical melee attack, inflict physical stress with your reaction die or spend a PP to step it up by 1.	
<i>SFX: Burn Bright, Burn Short:</i> Add a die from the Loom of Fate to one or more attack actions. Step it up for each action, then return it.	
<i>SFX: Don't Think, Act:</i> Before taking an action, step up or double a Fire Aspect power. If the action fails, add a die equal to the normal level of the power to the Loom of Fate.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Fire Aspect power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Water Aspect

SUPERHUMAN STAMINA D10	INTANGIBILITY D6
ENHANCED STRENGTH D8	SWIMMING D8
SHAPESHIFTING D6	
<i>SFX: Adaptable:</i> If a pool includes a Water Aspect power, you may combine two dice of equal size into a single die +1 step larger.	
<i>SFX: Fluid:</i> Water Aspect powers may be split down into 2 dice at -1 step or 3 dice at -2 steps.	
<i>SFX: Impeding the Flow:</i> When using a Water Aspect power to create a complication, add a d6 and step up the effect die by +1.	
<i>SFX: Aquatic:</i> If you use a liquid-based scene distinction as a d8 in conjunction with a Water Aspect power, step up the distinction to a d10.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Water Aspect power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Wood Aspect

ENHANCED STAMINA D8	PLANT CONTROL D8
<i>SFX: From Death, Life:</i> Before taking an action, spend a PP to include the highest dice on the Loom of Fate in your pool. When the action is done step down the die and return it.	
<i>SFX: Healing:</i> Add Enhanced Stamina to your dice pool when helping others recover stress. Spend 1 PP to recover your own or another's physical stress or step back your own or another's physical trauma by -1.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Wood Aspect power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Full Moon

SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH D10	SHAPESHIFTING D8
SUPERHUMAN STAMINA D10	LEAPING D6
SUPERHUMAN DURABILITY D10	
<i>SFX: Unchained Fury:</i> Add a die from the Loom of Fate to one or more attack actions. Step up the die by +1 for each action; return it to the Loom when you're done.	
<i>SFX: Unyielding Might:</i> Before taking an action including a Full Moon power, move your physical stress to the Loom of Fate and step up the Full Moon power by +1 for this action.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Full Moon power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### Changing Moon

SHAPESHIFTING D10	SUPERHUMAN REFLEXES D10
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INVISIBILITY D8	ENHANCED STAMINA D8
INTANGIBILITY D8	
<i>SFX: Trickery:</i> Whenever creating an asset relating to how you've tricked someone, add a d6 to the pool and step up the effect.	
<i>SFX: Adaptable:</i> Spend a PP to add a complication you are currently suffering from to your dice pool for one action.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any Changing Moon power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	

### No Moon

SORCERY D8	ENHANCED STAMINA D8
MYSTIC SENSES D6	SHAPESHIFTING D10
<i>SFX: Tribal Wisdom:</i> Before taking an action, spend a PP to include the highest dice on the Loom of Fate in your pool. When the action is done step down the die and return it.	
<i>SFX: Area:</i> Add a d6 and keep an extra effect die for every additional target.	
<i>SFX: Healing:</i> Add Sorcery to your dice pool when helping others recover stress. Spend 1 PP to remove your or someone else's physical stress, or step back your or another's physical trauma by -1.	
<i>Limit: Exhaustion:</i> Shut down any No Moon power to gain 1 PP. Recover power by activating an opportunity or during a Transition Scene.	