Converting a 13th Age character into an NPC or a monster

This is a step-by-step guide for converting a 13th Age player character into a non-player character (NPC) or into a monster.

Such a converted NPC/monster can be useful in different situations at your table:

   a) A GM that runs a campaign with irregular table attendance can have each of the players use this guide to convert their player character (PC) into an NPC. When a player misses a session, the NPC version of the character is ready to be run, in battle, by *one of the other players*. This relieves the GM of the burden of downscaling the monsters in the battle, and the GM/players of the burden of coming up with a forced story excuse for why the character was missing from the battle.
   b) If a character, either due to a story twist or to a monster effect, goes mad or otherwise out of control, the GM can temporarily take over the character and run it as a monster.
   c) If a player either leaves the group or decides to retire the character in favor of playing a new one, the GM can decide, based on a story twist, that the character went turncoat, and continue running the character as a (recurring) monster.

Stat block

Use the below 13th Age monster stat block template for the converted NPC/monster. Each of the 15 steps to follow in this conversion guide is identified by number in the stat block template:

[Step 13: Name]

[Step 14: Flavor text]

[Step 1: Level] [Step 2: Role] [Step 3: Type]

Initiative: [Step 4: Initiative]

[Step 9: Main attack]–[Main damage]
> *Natural even hit:* [Special hit effect]
> *Natural even miss:* [Special miss effect]

R: [Step 10: Ranged attack]–[Ranged damage]

C: [Step 11: Close-quarters attack]–[Close-quarters damage]

[Step 12: One-shot special attack] (1/battle)–[One-shot special damage/effects]

Icons
[Step 15: Icon text]

AC: [Step 5: Armor Class]

PD: [Step 6: Physical Defense]   HP: [Step 8: Hit Points]

MD: [Step 7: Mental Defense]

Step 1: Level

The NPC/monster's *Level* is equal to the character's Level.

Once you have a complete NPC/monster stat block for a converted player character, the stat block should only need to be updated (along with the character sheet) when the character goes up a level.

This means that the NPCs/monster stat block will not benefit from incremental advances. Tough luck!

> *2nd level*

Step 2: Role

Instead of one of the 13th Age monster **roles**, use the character's *class*.

> *Wizard*

Step 3: Type

Instead of one of the 13th Age monster **types**, use the character's *race*.

> [HIGH ELF]

Step 4: Initiative

The NPC/monster *Initiative* is equal to the character's Initiative.

> Initiative: +3

Step 5: Armor Class

The NPC/monster *Armor Class* is equal to the character's AC.

AC: 13

Step 6: Physical Defense

The NPC/monster *Physical Defense* is equal to the character's PD.

PD: 13

Step 7: Mental Defense

The NPC/monster *Mental Defense* is equal to the character's MD.

MD: 17

Step 8: Hit Points

The NPC/monster *Hit Points* are equal to the *maximum* HP of the character, so ignore the *current* HP tracked on the original character sheet. On the other hand, just like a monster, there are no recoveries or death saves. When HP reaches 0 or below, the NPC/monster is out of the battle.

a) A character with an absent player is not dead, but is too injured to participate in any other battle this session. Once the player is back, play is resumed as a normal player character with the as-before *current* Hit Points and *current* recoveries tracked on the original character sheet, no matter whether the NPC lost none, some or all HP while the player was absent.

b) A character that went mad or out of control is not dead, but incapacitated for the rest of the battle. Once the battle is over, the player resumes control as above, but the GM may rule that some or all damage taken while mad/out of control will be subtracted from the character's *current* HP.

c) A "turncoat" character with no player is dead, unless the GM is using the optional Meaningful Death rule on page 170 of the core rulebook. If that rule is in effect, the "turncoat" character is only dead if death was also on the table for the *player* characters in that battle. If death was not on the table, the turncoat escapes to make trouble for the group another day! Note that a "turncoat" character operating alone is *not* a "named villain" for the purpose of the Meaningful Death rule; a "turncoat" character works better as a henchman to the named villain.

HP: 28

Step 9: Main attack

1) As the *main attack*, pick the character's best (in terms of either high damage or favorable attack roll) attack that is either a melee attack, a ranged attack, an at-will spell or an at-will power (so *not* a daily or otherwise limited-usage spell/power). Include any *always-on* attack or damage modifier from other character powers in the attack roll/damage. Compute fixed damage (so no damage roll) by averaging the damage dice of the attack, rounding up (since there will be no miss damage).

2) For the **natural even hit** effect of the main attack, pick the character's most interesting or flavorful (so not necessarily the most powerful) special effect that *does not deal any HP damage to the target*. This natural even hit effect can be from any of the character's powers, even limited-usage ones such as class talents, racial powers, feats, per-battle spells/powers, daily spells/powers, flexible attacks or interrupt powers/spells.

3) For the **natural even miss** effect of the main attack, pick the character's most interesting or flavorful (so not necessarily the most powerful) special miss effect that *does not deal any HP damage to the target*. This natural even miss effect can be from any of the character's attack powers, even limited-usage ones such as per-battle spells/powers, daily spells/powers, flexible attacks or interrupt powers/spells. If there is no such miss effect among the character's attack powers, just skip the natural even miss effect altogether.

4) Give a flavorful name to the main attack. Invent a new name for the attack, or use the name that fits best from among any of the character's powers.
   (An already re-named/re-skinned 13th Age power that fits the character is perfect!)

> **R: Ray of Frost +6 vs PD**–11 cold damage [from best at-will spell]
> *Natural even hit: Teleport to a nearby location you can see* [from racial power]
> *Natural even miss: You take damage equal to the target's level* [from other spell]

Step 10: Ranged attack

Skip this step if the main attack (step 9) is already a ranged attack, spell or power that provokes opportunity attacks. (So you either do step 10 or step 11.)

As the *ranged attack*, pick the character's best (in terms of either high damage or favorable attack roll) ranged weapon attack. Include any *always-on* attack or damage modifier from other character powers in the attack roll/damage. Compute fixed damage (so no damage roll) by averaging the damage dice of the attack, rounding up (since there will be no miss damage).

Name the ranged attack after the weapon used.

Step 11: Close-quarters attack

Skip this step if the main attack (step 9) is already a melee attack, close-quarters spell or close-quarters power that does not provoke opportunity attacks. (So you either do step 10 or step 11.)

As the *close-quarters attack*, pick the character's best (in terms of either high damage or favorable attack roll) melee weapon attack. Include any *always-on* attack or damage modifier from other character powers in the attack roll/damage. Compute fixed damage (so no damage roll) by averaging the damage dice of the attack, rounding up (since there will be no miss damage).

Name the close-quarters attack after the weapon used.

> **C: Staff +2 vs AC**–7 damage [from best melee attack]

Step 12: One-shot special

For the *one-shot special*, pick the character's best (in terms of either high damage, favorable attack roll or favorable effect) special power from among the character's limited-usage powers, such as class talents, racial powers, feats, per-battle spells/powers, daily spells/powers, flexible attacks or interrupt powers/spells. The one-shot special *can* be a defensive power that buffs the character and/or allies. Disregard any condition for triggering the power; it's once per battle, as the only attack during that round. If the special power requires an attack roll, also include any extra damage/effect that triggers off the (natural) result of the attack roll, including any miss damage/effect. If the special power deals HP damage, compute fixed damage (so no damage roll) by averaging the damage dice of the attack, rounding up.

Even though the one-shot special is a limited-usage power, *do not track usage on the original character sheet*. A returning player should resume play with an as-before character sheet (as-before HP and as-before powers).

Give a flavorful name to the one-shot special. Invent a new name for the special, or use the name that fits best from among any of the character's powers.

(An already re-named/re-skinned 13th Age power that fits the character is perfect!)

> **R: Acid Arrow (1/battle) +6 vs PD**–22 acid damage and 5 ongoing acid damage [from best daily spell]
> *Miss: 5 ongoing acid damage*

At this point, all the mechanical parts of the stat block are in place and ready for combat, including a main attack, a backup weapon attack and a one-shot power. All that's left to do is the flavor part of the stat block.

The example stat block in this conversion guide is a conversion of this pre-generated 13th Age character:
http://site.pelgranepress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/High-Elf-Wizard-lvl-2-v3.pdf

> *2nd level Wizard* [HIGH ELF]
>
> Initiative: +3
>
> **R: Ray of Frost +6 vs PD**–11 cold damage
> > *Natural even hit: Teleport to a nearby location you can see*
> > *Natural even miss: You take damage equal to the target's level*
>
> **C: Staff +2 vs AC**–7 damage
>
> **R: Acid Arrow (1/battle) +6 vs PD**–22 acid damage and 5 ongoing acid damage
> > *Miss: 5 ongoing acid damage*
>
> ## AC: 13
>
> PD: 13   **HP: 28**
>
> MD: 17

Step 13: Name
Use the character's *name* to head the NPC/monster stat block.

Step 14: Flavor text
Below the name, let your creativity shine with a *flavor text* for the NPC/monster that captures the essence of the character. Find inspiration in the One Unique Thing, the Backgrounds, the Icon Relationships and the character's powers. A badass quote that the NPC/monster could yell at enemies in battle is perfect!

Step 15: Icon text
At this point, you're done, and this last step is optional.
But if the character has a strong Icon Relationship that could even affect behavior during combat, feel free to note particulars as *icon text* in the NPC/monster stat block.