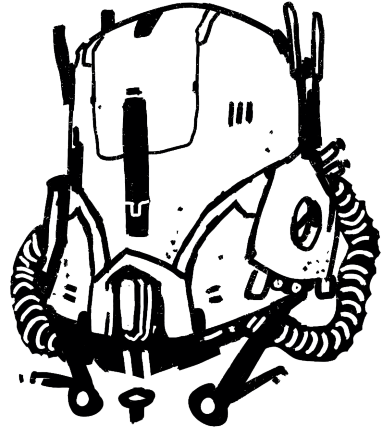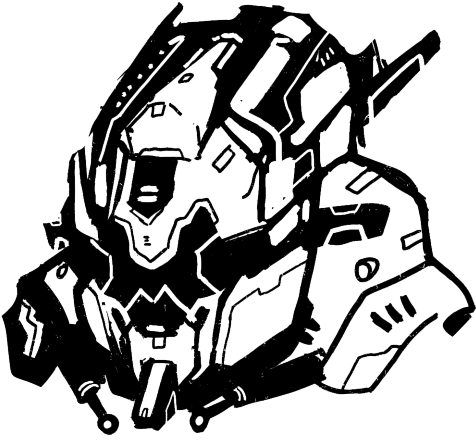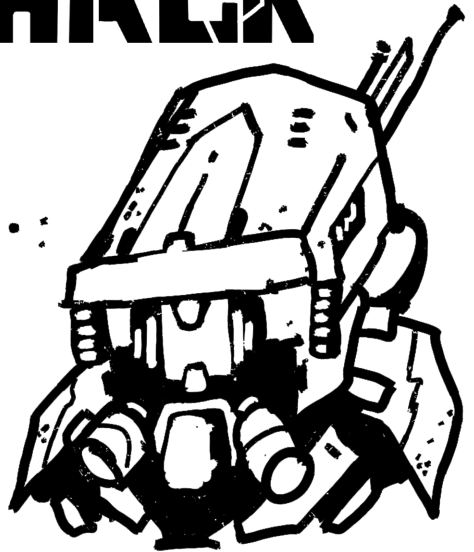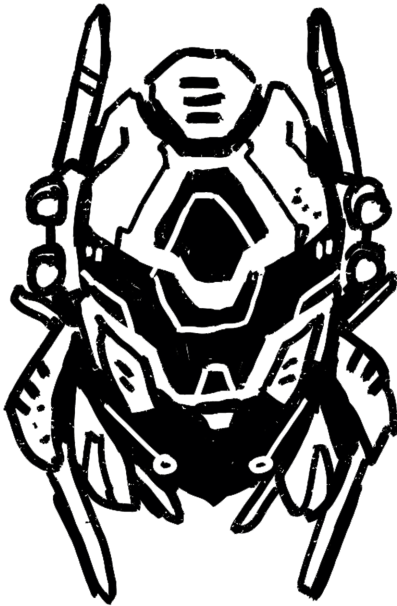# THE MECHA HACK

A ROLEPLAYING GAME OF TITANIC WARMACHINES
BY ABSOLUTE TABLETOP · MADE WITH THE BLACK HACK

THE MECHA HACK

ABSOLUTE TABLETOP
PRESENTS
THE MECHA HACK

A ROLEPLAYING GAME OF TITANIC WARMACHINES
BY ABSOLUTE TABLETOP · MADE WITH THE BLACK HACK

Project Lead: Matt Click

Writing and Editing: Matt Click, Michael Barker, James Kearney, and Tim Kearney

Layout: Matt Click

Original Game Design: David Black

Proofreading: Tealah Hill Click

Art: Brandish Gilhelm (Runehammer)

Additional Playtesting: Lloyd Collins, Darrin Jones, La'Toya Jones, and Chad Knick

Special Thanks: To Robotech, Transformers, Gundam, and MechWarrior for instilling in me a lifelong love of massive robots beating on each other. To Barker, Tim, and James for allowing me to devote a bunch of time and resources to my silly robot game. And to David Black, for creating the frame upon which I have constructed this metal monstrosity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Mecha Hack is a tabletop roleplaying game of titanic warmachines and their intrepid pilots, made with **The Black Hack**. The Mecha Hack is intended to be fast, fluid, and fun, with a focus on cinematic, narrative gameplay derivative of the action-oriented mecha and super robot subgenres. All you need to play are these rules, something to write with, some paper or index cards, and a fistful of dice.

You may also opt to play The Mecha Hack using battle maps and miniatures, but they are not required.

The Mecha Hack uses the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game as its foundation, with important outcomes being determined by rolling a twenty-sided die (d20). Other polyhedral dice are used for rolling damage, repairing mecha, resisting overheating, etc.

In The Mecha Hack, players create their own hulking warmachines, loaded out with armor and weapons, and serve together as pilots on a fireteam. You will battle robotic and monstrous enemies against the backdrop of a war-torn sci-fi world, and prevail or falter as a team.

Build your mecha. Form a fireteam. Drop into the combat zone. It's time to suit up.

THE CORE MECHANIC

The Mecha Hack is a d20-based system with roll-under resolution. Anything that challenges you is resolved by **testing** the corresponding **attribute** with the roll of a d20. If you roll *under* the appropriate attribute, you succeed. If you roll *equal to or over* the corresponding attribute, you fail.

HOW TO PLAY

The Mecha Hack is a complete game, and does not require any other rules in order to play. Rather than creating a character with a species and class, players build their own custom mecha with a **pilot** and **chassis**. The pilot and the chassis are not separate entities, but rather two pieces of a single character, symbiotically linked.

TESTING ATTRIBUTES

In The Mecha Hack, you test attributes in order to overcome obstacles, attack enemies, and avoid damage. While many mundane actions do not require rolls, anything that challenges you is resolved by testing the corresponding attribute. If you roll *under* that attribute, you succeed. If you roll *equal to or over* that attribute, you fail. The attributes are explained in detail below:

- **Power** is tested for strength and attacks. Tests of Power include pushing over a crumbling building, firing a beam rifle at an enemy, or maintaining your footing as an enemy charges into you.
- **Mobility** is tested for speed and avoiding damage. Tests of Mobility include dodging fire from an enemy mortar emplacement, parrying an opponent's beam sword, or moving stealthily through a ruined building.
- **System** is tested for sensors and computers. Tests of System include scanning for hostile combatants, detecting a weak point on a foe, or scrambling enemy communications.
- **Presence** is tested for a pilot's personal resilience and influence on the battlefield. Tests of Presence include intimidating enemies, instilling awe or reverence in allies, or overcoming fear and uncertainty.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

Oftentimes, an attribute test will be modified with either **advantage** or **disadvantage**.

- If you have advantage on a test, you roll two d20s and take the more favorable result.
- If you have disadvantage on a test, you roll two d20s and take the less favorable result.

While advantage and disadvantage often occur because of pilot or chassis abilities, the GM can also choose to reward

advantage or impose disadvantage for a variety of reasons.

While it's technically possible to have multiple instances of advantage or disadvantage, you can never roll more than two d20s at one time. When applied to the same roll, however, advantage and disadvantage cancel each other out.

MODIFYING ROLLS

Though rolling under an attribute is generally all you need to succeed, some tests require additional effort. While performing a particularly difficult task or going toe-to-toe with an exceptionally powerful foe, the difficulty of the test may increase, and an appropriate modifier may be added to the roll at the GM's discretion.

When fighting a powerful enemy, for instance, for every **hit die (HD)** the enemy has above your **level**, you add 1 to every roll you make for any test that would determine the outcome of the conflict. So a level 3 mecha defending against an HD 5 enemy's attack would add 2 to their roll.

ACTIONS

During your turn, you can perform any two **actions**. The available action types are:

- **Move** to a near location.
- **Attack** an enemy in range.
- **Test** an attribute to complete a task.
- **Use** pilot, chassis, or module abilities.

This is by no means a concrete list of actions, but most tasks in The Mecha Hack fall under one of these four categories. It is possible to take the same action twice – but you must also roll your **reactor die**.

Mundane actions, such as communicating with your fireteam or dropping a weapon, can be done as free actions within reason and at the GM's discretion.

ORDER OF ACTIONS

Actions always occur in the order they are written. For instance, this commander ability reads: "As a use action, choose one close or near mecha. They can immediately take a single action that does not count towards their total actions, then your turn resumes." Using that ability would entail taking a use action, choosing a single close or near mecha, allowing them to take an action, then resuming your turn, in that order.

TIME AND TURNS

There are two types of time tracked in The Mecha Hack: **moments** and **minutes**. Moments are used during combat and other fast-paced, action-oriented scenes. Minutes are used when exploring and traveling. A GM may advance the clock as they see fit, and may also substitute minutes for hours, days, or even months, depending on what the mission requires. Generally, one minute equals 10 moments.

TACTICAL DISTANCES			
Range	Actions	Meters	Squares
Close	–	10	1
Near	1	30	6
Far	2	60	12
Distant	3+	90+	18+

MOVEMENT AND DISTANCE

There are four abstract ranges for measuring distance: **close**, **near**, **far**, and **distant**. Close locations can be reached without using a move action. You can move to a near location with a single move action. You can use two move actions to move somewhere far. Anything beyond far is considered distant, and requires three or more move actions to reach.

If you are playing a more tactical game or prefer concrete distances, you can use the Tactical Distances table for reference.

MECHA AND PILOT SCALE

The Mecha Hack uses two separate **scales** for mecha and pilots. If your pilot is outside of their mecha chassis, you must use pilot scale to determine distance and size.

In pilot scale, assume all distances and sizes are only one-tenth of mecha scale. Pilots outside of their mecha do not have access to chassis or module abilities. Pilots cannot damage mecha, and conversely, mecha weapons immediately kill pilots on a hit.

INITIATIVE

When battle breaks out, every mecha involved must roll **initiative**. Each mecha tests their Mobility or System (whichever is higher) – if they succeed, they take their turn before enemies; if they fail, they take their turn after enemies. Both initiative groups – before enemies and after enemies – decide their individual turn order amongst themselves.

HIT DICE

Hit dice (HD) represent a mecha's power level and are determined by their chassis. Enemy hit dice represent an enemy's power level, and determine how much damage they do, and how many hit points they have.

ATTACKING AND DEFENDING

When you attack an enemy, you generally test Power to determine if you hit. When you are attacked, you generally test Mobility to avoid taking damage. Some module abilities or enemy actions (or the GM's discretion) may create exceptions to these rules.

The damage you deal is determined by your chassis, while enemy damage is based on their HD.

To make a melee attack, your target enemy must be at close range. Ranged attacks against close and distant enemies have disadvantage.

OPPORTUNITY ATTACKS

If your mecha is within close range of an enemy and you use a move action to move away from that enemy, the enemy can immediately make an **opportunity attack** against you. Your turn then resumes. The same rule applies to enemies moving out of close range of player mecha. **Hidden** mecha and enemies do not provoke opportunity attacks.

HEAVY WEAPONS

Larger, more powerful weapons like beam rifles, chain guns, and rocket launchers are considered **heavy weapons**, and require two hands to wield. You add 2 to both attack and damage rolls with heavy weapons – they're more difficult to aim, but deal more damage.

UNARMED DAMAGE

When you attack without a weapon, or attempt to use improvised weapons or maneuvers, you deal one damage die lower than your standard damage die. For instance, a mecha with a damage die of d6 would deal d4 damage on unarmed and improvised attacks.

CRITICAL DAMAGE

Remember – the lower your d20 roll, the better. If you roll a 1 on an attack roll, it's a **critical success**, and you can double the damage rolled. Likewise, if you roll a 20 when avoiding an attack, it's a **critical failure**, and you take double damage and must roll your reactor die.

COVER

While in **cover**, you have advantage on Mobility tests made to avoid ranged attacks. If an enemy is in cover, you have disadvantage on ranged attacks against them. Cover can be a crumbling wall, dense wilderness, an asteroid, etc. It is up to the Game Master to determine if you or an enemy has cover.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Battles often occur among ruined cities, thick wilderness, or space debris. Areas of **difficult terrain** require twice as many move actions to move through (so, moving to a near location through difficult terrain requires two move actions). This penalty only applies to the movement spent inside the difficult terrain.
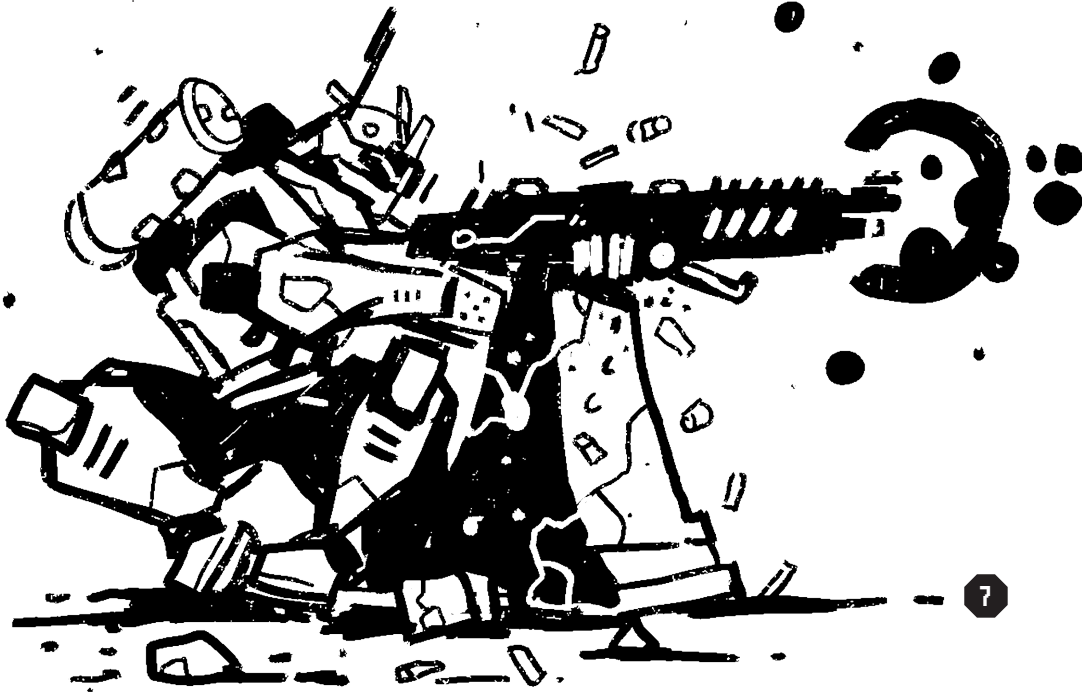
HIDDEN

You can test Mobility to become hidden, at the discretion of the GM. Typically, you will need sufficient cover in order to become hidden. You cannot be targeted by attacks while hidden, but become immediately visible if you make an attack or can no longer reasonably be hidden.

ARMOR POINTS

Your mecha's armor provides protection by reducing incoming damage with **armor points**. Each type of armor, light or heavy, provides armor points. When you're dealt damage, you can choose to spend a number of your remaining armor points to reduce the damage by an equal amount. Once the points are used to reduce damage, you must complete a rest to regain them. If you have no armor points left, you take damage as normal.

REACTOR DIE

The reactor is the heart of your mecha, and many abilities rely on its energy. Your mecha chassis has a reactor die type associated with it. When you take the same action twice in one turn, use certain chassis or module abilities, or take damage from a critical hit, you must roll your reactor die. If the roll is a 1 or 2, your reactor die is downgraded to the next lowest die in the following chain: d20 > d12 > d10 > d8 > d6 > d4.

When you roll 1 or 2 on a d4 reactor die, your mecha becomes **overheated**. Your reactor die remains a d4 until you complete a rest.

OVERHEATED MECHA

An overheated mecha cannot take actions, and has disadvantage on all tests. You skip your next turn to expel heat and cool off, and lose the overheated condition at the start of the following turn.

DISABLED MECHA

When you are reduced to 0 HP, your mecha becomes **disabled**. A disabled mecha cannot take actions until repaired, and automatically fails all tests. Additionally, when you become disabled, you must roll on the Disabled Mecha table to see what occurs – the effects last until you complete a long rest.

DISABLED MECHA	
d8	**Effect**
1	Your sensors are fried. You have disadvantage on System tests.
2	You lose the use of an arm. You cannot use heavy weapons or both hands.
3	You are hobbled. You have disadvantage on Mobility tests.
4	Your targeting systems are malfunctioning. You have disadvantage on attacks.
5	Your comm systems are down. You cannot communicate.
6	You are severely damaged. You have disadvantage on all tests.
7	You take permanent damage. Remove one module. It is destroyed.
8	Your mecha is destroyed and your pilot is ejected.

RESTING AND REPAIRING

You cannot gain more hit points than your maximum, and can never be reduced below 0 hit points. If you regain hit points while disabled, you are no longer considered disabled.

A **short rest**, considered an hour or more, allows you to regain armor points up to your maximum, roll one hit die to regain hit points up to your maximum, and upgrade your reactor die by one step up to your maximum. This represents refueling, making minor repairs, venting excess heat, etc.

A **long rest**, considered eight or more hours, allows you to regain hit points up to your maximum and restore your reactor die up to its maximum. This represents making major repairs or modifications to your mecha and sleeping for a few hours. You can only gain the benefits from a long rest once per day.

GAINING LEVELS

You can improve your mecha by defeating enemies and overcoming obstacles. For every significant milestone reached, you gain one level. This is mostly left to the GM's discretion.

When you level up, your maximum hit points increase by rolling your mecha's hit die. You also roll a d20 for each attribute – if the result is higher than the attribute's current value, that attribute increases by 1.

At levels 3, 6, and 9, you also get to choose a new module for your mecha.

The maximum level for mecha is 10.

BUILDING YOUR MECHA

To create your pilot and mecha, follow these steps:

1. Roll your attributes.
2. Choose a pilot and roll (or choose) a record.
3. Choose a chassis and roll (or choose) a callsign.
4. Choose a starting module.
5. Buy equipment (if you didn't opt for starting equipment).

ROLL ATTRIBUTES

Attributes in The Mecha Hack are generated by rolling 3d6 down-the-line in the following order: Power, Mobility, System, and Presence.

If you roll a 15 or higher on any one attribute, you must roll the next attribute with 2d6 + 3, instead of 3d6. Once all attributes are generated, you may swap two attributes of your choice.

CHOOSE A PILOT

There are four unique pilot archetypes in The Mecha Hack: **commander**, **engineer**, **maverick**, and **quipster**. Your pilot grants bonuses to a handful of attributes, and also includes a single unique ability. Once you've chosen your pilot type, roll for or choose a record.

CHOOSE A CHASSIS

There are four unique mecha chassis in The Mecha Hack: **brawler**, **scout**, **striker**, and **titan**. Your chassis determines your damage die, hit die, reactor die, and weapon and armor proficiencies. It also grants two unique abilities. Once you've chosen your mecha chassis, roll for or

choose your callsign.

CHOOSE A MODULE

Every mecha begins with a module that grants a unique boost or ability. Choose from the list of possibilities to customize your mecha.

BUY EQUIPMENT

If you didn't use your chassis' starting gear, you get 120 **credits**. You can use these credits to buy weapons and armor for your mecha.

COMMANDER

Commanders are natural-born leaders and skilled tacticians. They represent the heart and soul of a fireteam, and lead their allies to victory against all odds.

CAPABLE LEADER

Commanders add 2 to Power and 1 to Presence.

BATTLE TACTICS

As a use action, choose one close or near mecha. They can immediately take a single move or attack action that does not count towards their total actions, then your turn resumes.

ENGINEER

Engineers are top-notch mechanics and mecha medics. They keep their fireteam up and fighting at peak efficiency.

GEARHEAD

Engineers add 2 to System and 1 to Mobility.

QUICK FIX

As a use action, reduce your AP by 1 to restore 2 HP to a close mecha.

MAVERICK

Mavericks are ace pilots with unmatched skill and hard-to-shake troublemaking streaks. They excel in combat, where their reckless nature can be a boon to their fireteam.

ACE PILOT

Mavericks add 2 to Mobility and 1 to Power.

RECKLESS ATTACK

When you make a successful attack, you can choose to reduce your AP by 2 to roll one additional damage die.
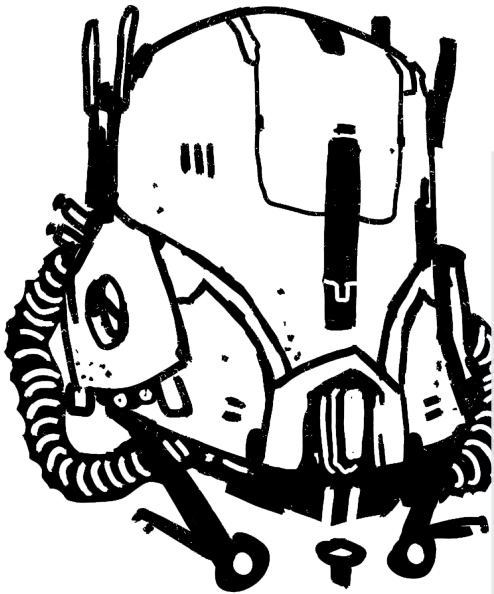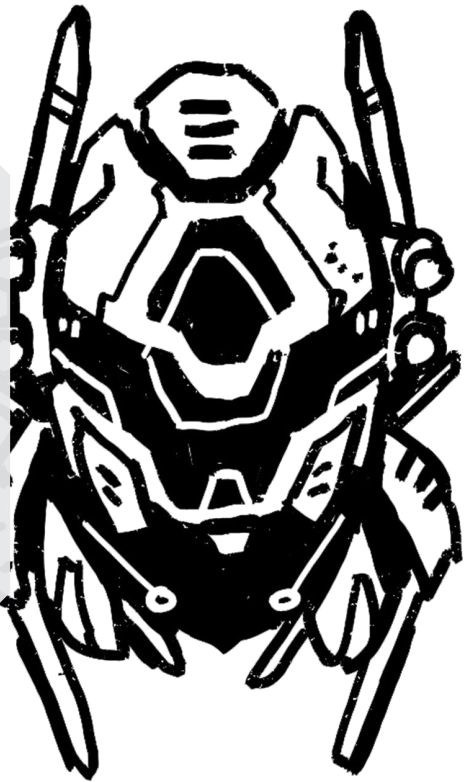
QUIPSTER

At first glance, the quipster's nonchalant demeanor might mark them as the weak link of a fireteam – but their jovial nature belies a deep, heartfelt magnitude that can boost the morale of their fireteam and ensure victory.

LOVABLE OAF

Quipsters add 2 to Presence and 1 to System.

INSPIRING SPEECH

As a use action, choose a close or near mecha. They can choose to gain advantage on a single test made before the start of your next turn.

RECORD		
d10	**Record**	
1	I'm the sole survivor of a horrific battle.	
2	I used to serve in an enemy faction, but defected.	
3	Though I've seen countless battles, I have yet to make a confirmed kill.	
4	I'm an amnesiac. Much of my past is missing – but I remember how to fight.	
5	My family was collateral damage in a battle.	
6	I've been forced to fight since I was a child.	
7	A loved one of mine is fighting on the other side of this war.	
8	I have yet to see combat outside of a training simulator.	
9	I once took pity on an enemy and let them live.	
10	I'm infamous for my ruthlessness in combat.	

BRAWLER
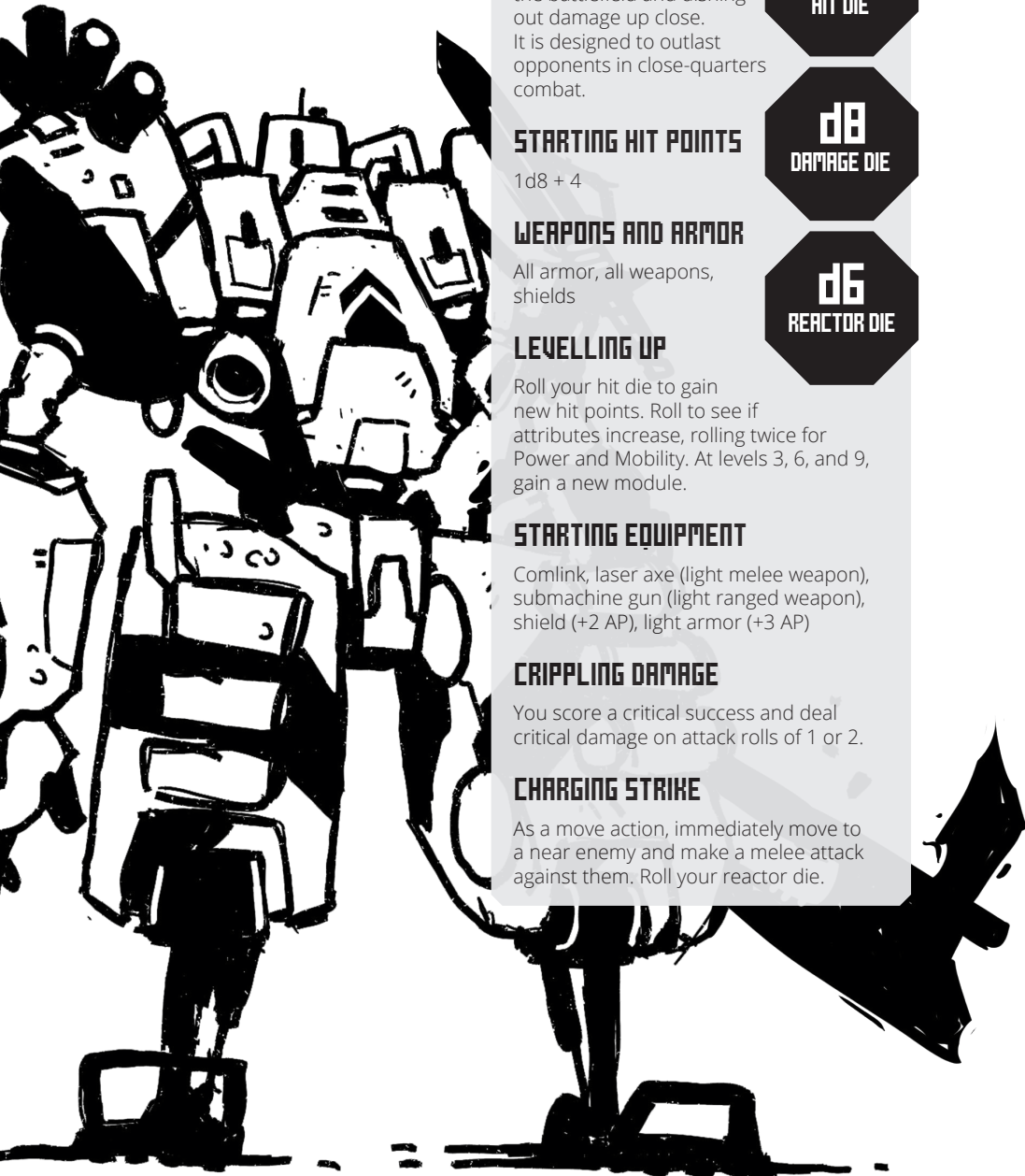
The brawler chassis excels at closing the distance on the battlefield and dishing out damage up close.
It is designed to outlast opponents in close-quarters combat.

d8
HIT DIE

d8
DAMAGE DIE

d6
REACTOR DIE

STARTING HIT POINTS

1d8 + 4

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

All armor, all weapons, shields

LEVELLING UP

Roll your hit die to gain new hit points. Roll to see if attributes increase, rolling twice for Power and Mobility. At levels 3, 6, and 9, gain a new module.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Comlink, laser axe (light melee weapon), submachine gun (light ranged weapon), shield (+2 AP), light armor (+3 AP)

CRIPPLING DAMAGE

You score a critical success and deal critical damage on attack rolls of 1 or 2.

CHARGING STRIKE

As a move action, immediately move to a near enemy and make a melee attack against them. Roll your reactor die.

SCOUT

The scout is a light, quick mecha chassis, excelling at concealment and hit-and-run tactics. The scout can use its cloak generator to become hidden even without the use of cover.

d6
HIT DIE

d6
DAMAGE DIE

d6
REACTOR DIE

STARTING HIT POINTS

1d6 + 4

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Light armor, light weapons, shields

LEVELLING UP

Roll your hit die to gain new hit points. Roll to see if attributes increase, rolling twice for Mobility and System. At levels 3, 6, and 9, gain a new module.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Comlink, dagger (light melee weapon), revolver (light ranged weapon), light armor (+3 AP)

AMBUSH

You have advantage on attacks made while hidden, and deal 1d6 additional damage.

CLOAKING FIELD

As a use action, activate your cloaking field and become hidden. Roll your reactor die.
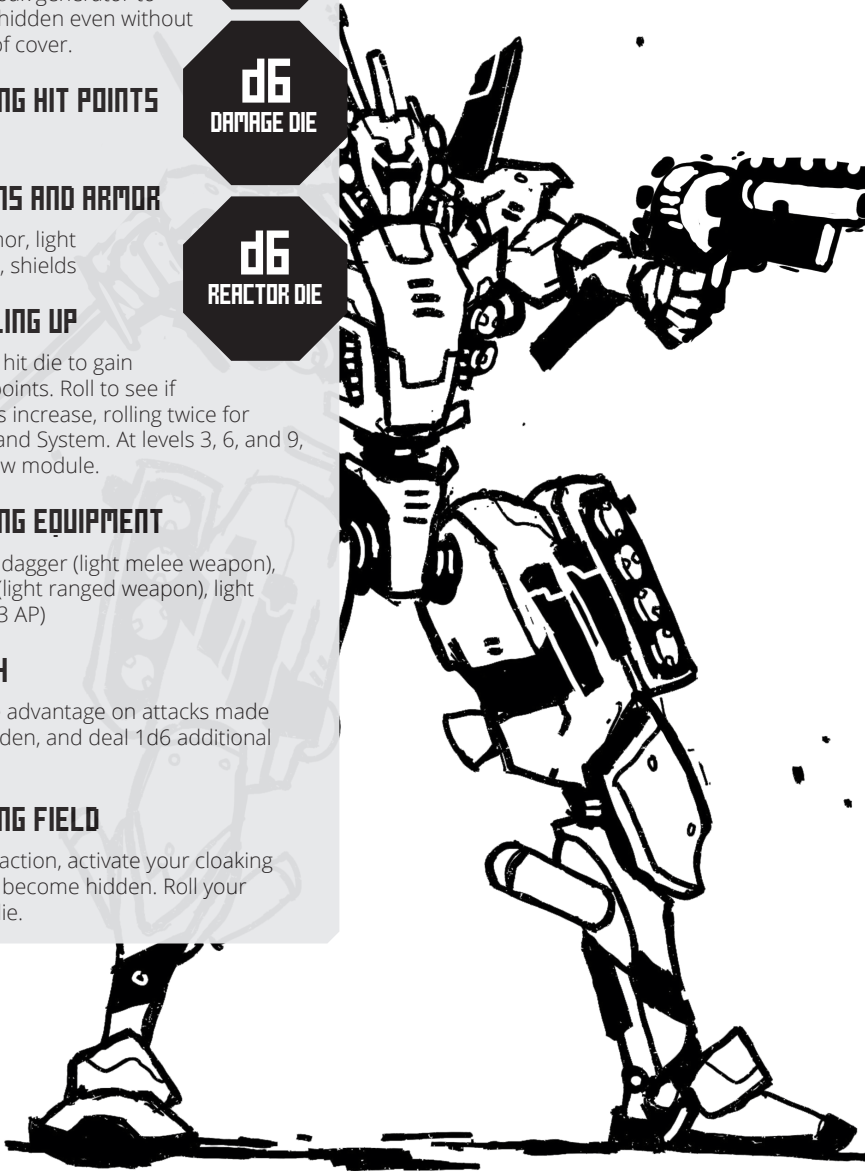
STRIKER
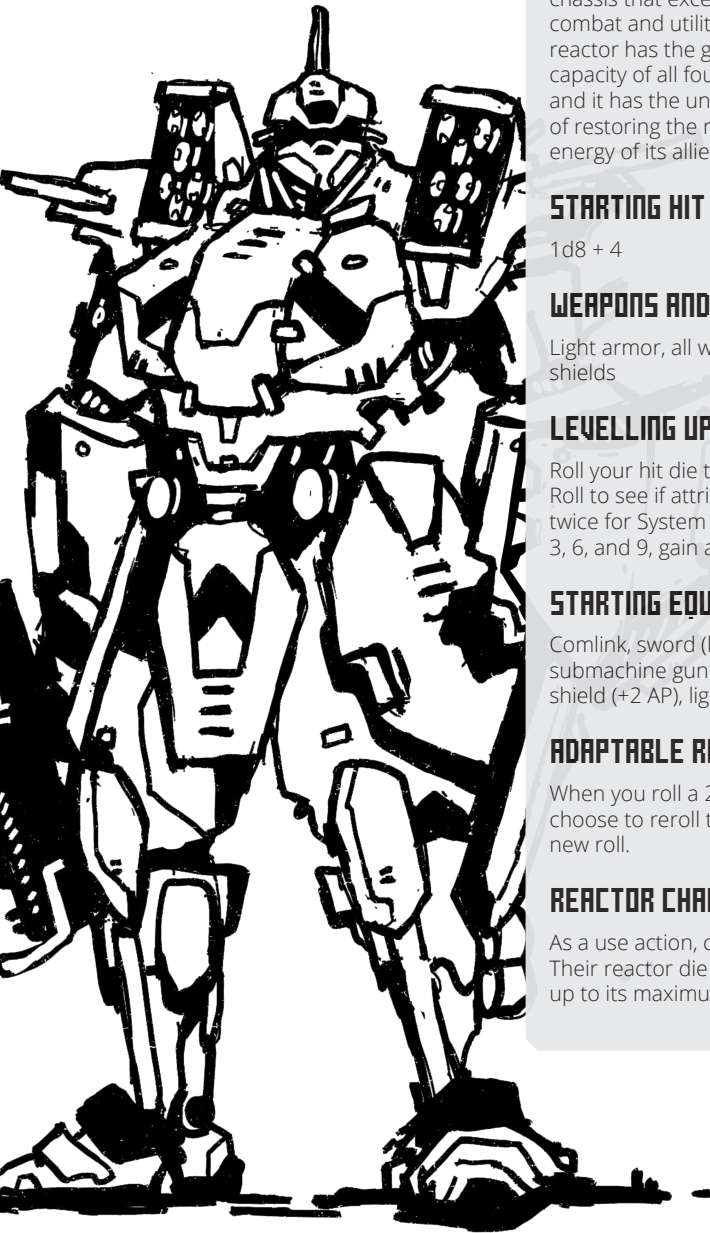
The striker is a well-rounded, balanced mecha chassis that excels in both combat and utility. Its reactor has the greatest capacity of all four chassis, and it has the unique ability of restoring the reactor energy of its allies.

d8
HIT DIE

d8
DAMAGE DIE

d8
REACTOR DIE

STARTING HIT POINTS

1d8 + 4

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Light armor, all weapons, shields

LEVELLING UP

Roll your hit die to gain new hit points. Roll to see if attributes increase, rolling twice for System and Presence. At levels 3, 6, and 9, gain a new module.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Comlink, sword (light melee weapon), submachine gun (light ranged weapon), shield (+2 AP), light armor (+3 AP)

ADAPTABLE ROBOTICS

When you roll a 20 on a test, you can choose to reroll the die. You must use the new roll.

REACTOR CHARGE

As a use action, choose a close mecha. Their reactor die improves by one step, up to its maximum. Roll your reactor die.

TITAN

The titan is a heavily armored mecha chassis, relying on thick steel and brute force to outlast the enemy. They excel at absorbing damage and protecting their allies.

d18
HIT DIE

STARTING HIT POINTS

1d10 + 4

d6
DAMAGE DIE

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

All armor, all weapons, shields

d6
REACTOR DIE

LEVELLING UP

Roll your hit die to gain new hit points. Roll to see if attributes increase, rolling twice for Presence and Power. At levels 3, 6, and 9, gain a new module.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Comlink, chaingun (heavy ranged weapon [+2 attack and damage]), heavy armor (+5 AP)

KINETIC ABSORBERS

If a close mecha would take damage, you can choose to take that damage instead.

ENERGY SHIELD

As a use action, choose yourself or another close or near mecha. Roll your reactor die. Once at any point before the start of their next turn, the mecha may roll 1d4 and reduce incoming damage by the result.

\	CALLSIGN	
d20	**Forename**	**Surname**
1	Breaker	Alpha
2	Wing	Zero
3	Dagger	Heavy
4	Gladiator	Epoch
5	Crimson	Ethos
6	Hunter	Mammoth
7	Phobia	Midnight
8	Viking	Paragon
9	Saber	Raven
10	Vortex	Crusader
11	Tanker	Lucifer
12	Nomad	Danger
13	Vulcan	Zenith
14	Colossus	Harmony
15	Oracle	Jigsaw
16	Jester	Eon
17	Viper	Fathom
18	Prophet	Horizon
19	Voodoo	Romeo
20	Paladin	Echo
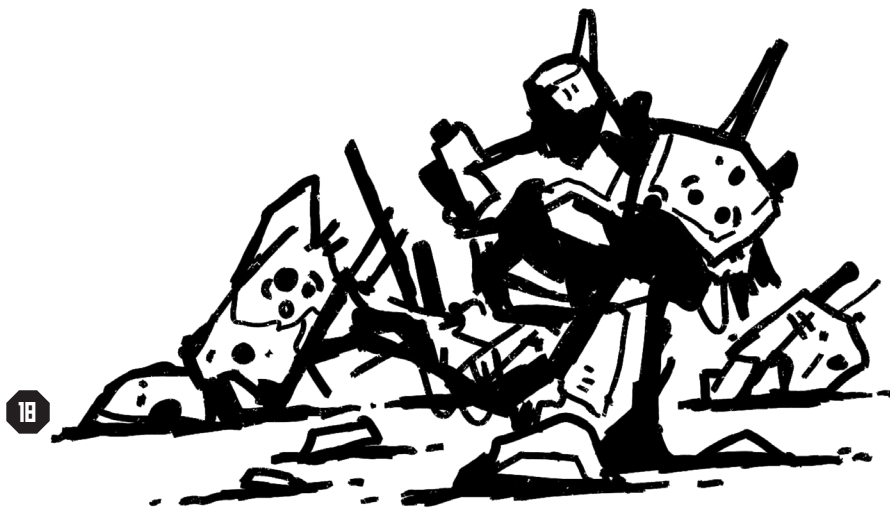
MODULES

Modules represent powerful add-ons or upgrades for your mecha. You choose one module when you create your mecha, and gain new ones at levels 3, 6, and 9. Some of the modules grant passive bonuses, while others need to be activated by using actions and/or rolling your reactor die. You cannot have more than one of the same module unless otherwise specified.

CREATING CUSTOM MODULES

To create modules beyond the ones presented in this section, consider the following:

- What purpose does the module serve?
- Is it offensive, defensive, or utility?
- Is it active or passive? If active, what kind of action does it require?
- If it deals damage, is that damage in-line with existing modules and weapons?
- Does it require rolling your reactor die to use?

Answering these questions should enable you to create countless awesome modules for your mecha. Draw inspiration from your favorite mecha properties, use existing modules as a foundation, and work with your Game Master to develop the module you envision in your head.

OFFENSIVE MODULES	
Name	**Effect**
Chest Beam	As an attack action, test Power. If you succeed, one close enemy takes 1d8 damage and is pushed to near range. Roll your reactor die.
Grappler	As a use action, test Power. If you succeed, deal 1d4 damage to a near enemy, and pull them into close range. Roll your reactor die.
Missile Barrage	As an attack action, test Power. If you succeed, deal 4d4 damage, divided as you choose between enemies at near or far range. Roll your reactor die.
Quake Generator	As an attack action, test Presence. If you succeed, deal 1d6 damage to 2 close enemies and push them to near range. Roll your reactor die.
Siege Mode	As a use action, enter siege mode. Roll your reactor die. You add 2 damage to all ranged attacks, but have disadvantage on Mobility tests and cannot move until you take a use action to exit siege mode.
Static Cloud	As a use action, test Mobility. If you succeed, deal 1d4 damage to 2 close enemies and become hidden. Roll your reactor die.
Targeting Array	As a use action, test System. If you succeed, gain advantage on your next attack against an enemy. Roll your reactor die.

DEFENSIVE MODULES	
Name	**Effect**
Barricade Mode	As a use action, enter barricade mode. Roll your reactor die. You reduce incoming damage by half and provide cover to yourself and close mecha, but have disadvantage on Mobility tests and cannot move until you take a use action to exit barricade mode.
Exothermic Plating	When you are dealt damage by a melee attack, you can choose to deal 1d6 damage to that enemy. Roll your reactor die.
Nano Shroud	As a use action, regain 1d4 armor points. Roll your reactor die.
Particle Barrier	As a use action, create an area of cover big enough for 2 mecha. The barrier lasts until you dismiss it or use this module to create a new one. Roll your reactor die.
Reflective Shielding	When you are dealt damage by a ranged attack, you can choose to deal 1d6 damage to that enemy. Roll your reactor die.
Retractable Shield	You can wield a shield that doesn't require hands to use.
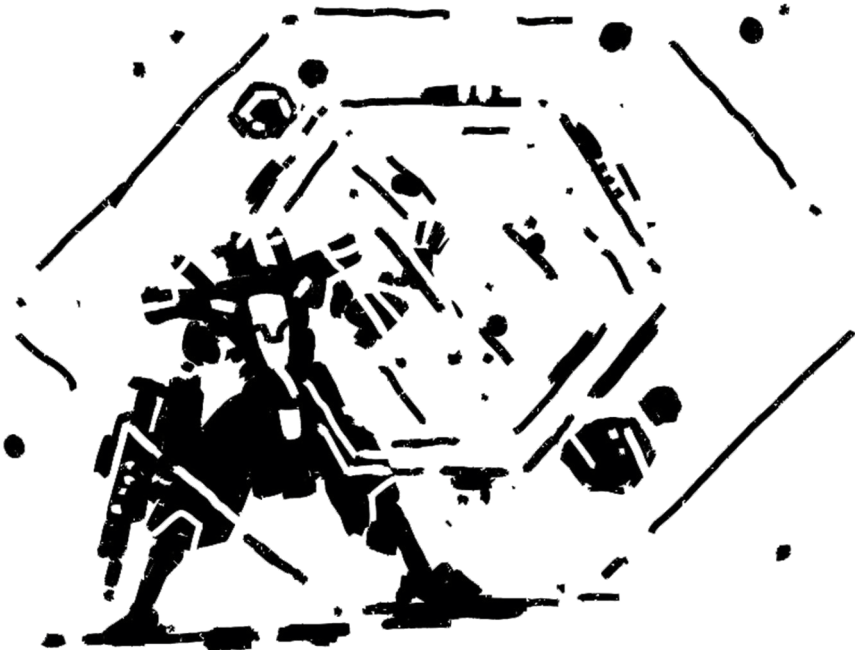
UTILITY MODULES	
Name	**Effect**
Booster Sprint	Move twice with a single move action. Roll your reactor die.
Frag Mines	As a use action, plant a mine. Roll your reactor die. On your turn, as a use action, deal 1d6 damage to all enemies within close range of the mine. The mine is then destroyed.
Jump Jets	As a move action, move instantly to a far location without provoking opportunity attacks and ignoring difficult terrain. Roll your reactor die.
Rocket Fists	You roll your standard damage die for unarmed and improvised attacks.
Sentry Turret	As a use action, drop an immobile sentry turret. Roll your reactor die. On your turn, as a use action, test Power to deal 1d6 damage to an enemy within close or near range of the sentry turret. If you roll a 1 or 2 on the damage die, the sentry turret runs out of ammo after it deals that damage.
Shoulder Hardpoint	You can mount a ranged weapon on your shoulder that doesn't require hands to use.
Super Reactor	Increase your reactor die by one die type.
Vehicle Mode	As a use action, enter vehicle mode. Roll your reactor die. You ignore difficult terrain, have advantage on Mobility tests, and reduce all movement by 1 action. You cannot attack until you use a use action to exit vehicle mode.
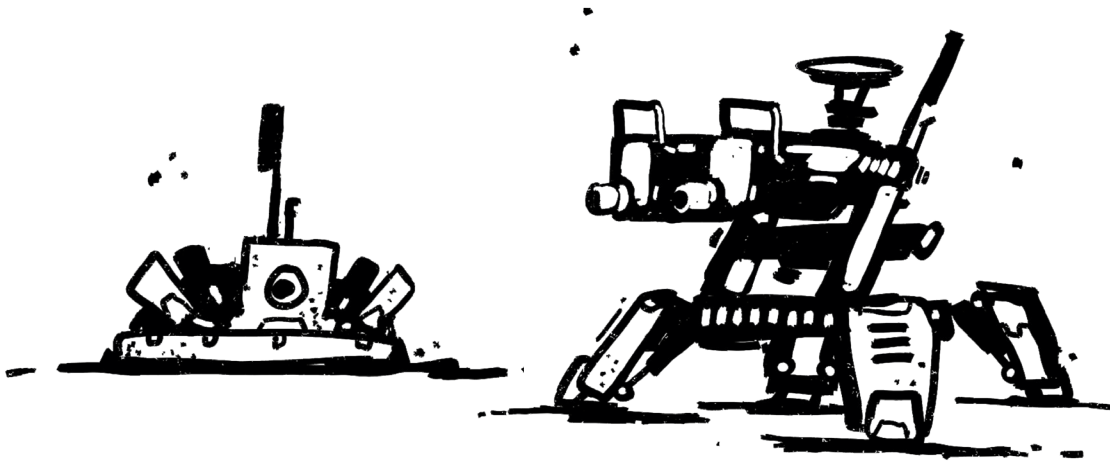
EQUIPMENT

Weapons and armor in The Mecha Hack are handled abstractly and narratively. A light ranged weapon, for instance, could be any number of things – from a revolver to a submachine gun – but mechanically they all work the same. Similarly, armor could represent thick steel plates, a reflective coating of alien metal, or energy shields.

LIGHT AND HEAVY WEAPONS

Light weapons include things like beam swords, laser axes, revolvers, and submachine guns. Light weapons can be wielded with one hand. Heavy weapons include things like plasma polearms, beam rifles, and rocket launchers. They add 2 to their attack and damage rolls, and require two hands to wield.

PROFICIENCIES

While wielding a weapon you are not proficient with, you have disadvantage on all attack rolls with that weapon. If your mecha is outfitted with armor you are not proficient with, you have disadvantage on all tests made to avoid damage while wearing that armor.

WEAPON QUALITIES

Some weapons have additional benefits and effects. These are represented by weapon qualities. It's rare to start out with a weapon upgraded by a quality, but they can often be scavenged from fallen enemies or created with enough time and resources.

CONSUMABLES

Consumable items can be used a single time before they are lost. These items can often be scavenged from fallen enemies.

BASIC EQUIPMENT		
Item	**Cost**	**Notes**
Comlink	10	Communicate with fireteam and other allies
Light Melee Weapon	20	One-handed
Heavy Melee Weapon	50	Two-handed; +2 attack and damage
Light Ranged Weapon	40	One-handed
Heavy Ranged Weapon	100	Two-handed; +2 attack and damage
Light Armor	40	+3 Armor Points
Heavy Armor	70	+5 Armor Points; disadvantage on Mobility tests to become hidden
Shield	25	One-handed; +2 Armor Points

WEAPON QUALITIES	
Name	**Notes**
Arc	When you damage an enemy with this weapon, you can choose to roll your reactor die. If you do, the enemy loses its next turn.
Chainblade	Melee only. When you damage an enemy with this weapon, you can choose to roll your reactor die. If you do, roll and deal your damage a second time.
Corrosive	When you damage an enemy with this weapon, that enemy takes 1d4 additional damage at the start of its next turn.
Deadly	You can choose to reroll your damage die with this weapon, and must take the second result.
Plasma	This weapon's damage cannot be reduced by armor or shields.
Quick	Light only. You deal unarmed damage with this weapon, but can make two attacks with it using a single attack action.
Sniper	Ranged only. If you do not use a move action, you have advantage on a single attack on the same turn.
Thrown	Light melee only. You can attack near enemies with this weapon, which returns to your hand immediately after the attack.
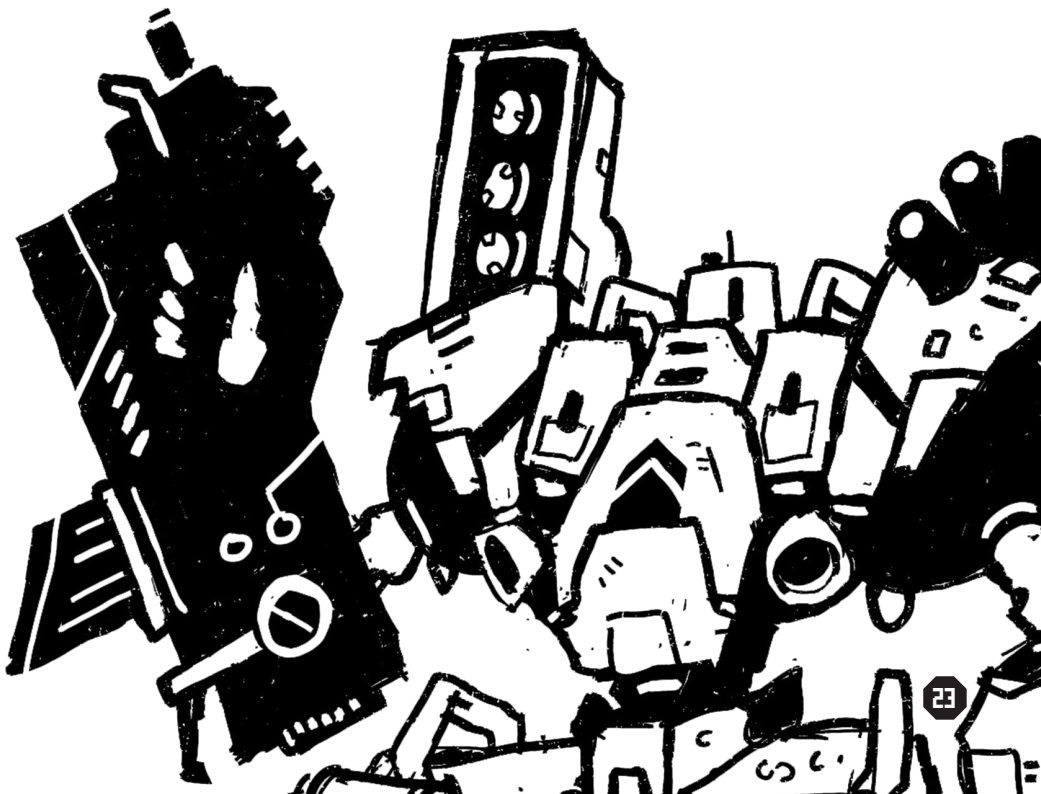
CONSUMABLES		
Item	**Cost**	**Notes**
Boost Kit	100	As a use action, activate the boost kit. You regain 1d4 armor points and upgrade your reactor die by one step (up to its maximum).
Explosive Rounds	60	As a use action, load explosive rounds. Your ranged attacks deal an additional 1d6 damage until your reactor die is downgraded.
Grenade, Arc	50	As an attack action, test Power to deal 1d4 damage to 1 near enemy and 1 other enemy close to it. Enemies dealt damage by this attack lose their next turn.
Grenade, Frag	40	As an attack action, test Power to deal 2d6 damage to 1 near enemy and 1 other enemy close to it.
One-Shot Module	125	You recreate the effects of any one module of your choice that requires an action. You or the GM must choose the module when you acquire this item.
Repair Nanites	50	As a use action, restore 1d4 + 1 HP to yourself or another close mecha.
Scouting Drone	80	As a use action, deploy a scouting drone. It lasts for 1 minute and is automatically destroyed if attacked. You can perceive through it for the duration, and use move actions to move it on your turn.
Sensor Jammer	50	As a use action, you and 1 other close or near mecha become hidden.

ENEMIES

Presented in this chapter are some example enemies for your players to contend with. The fireteam might battle enemy mecha, armored tanks, or even monstrous alien entities. It's easy to reskin these foes, or mix and match their abilities to create entirely new enemies.

ENEMY ACTIONS

On their turn, enemies can move and make one attack, as listed on their statblock.

ENEMY STATBLOCKS

Enemy statblocks all contain similar information, designed to be easily referenced in the heat of battle.

Name and HD: At the top of the statblock, you'll find the enemy's name, followed by its HD (which also dictates its average damage and how much HP it has).

Flavor Text: A brief description of the enemy and its armament.

Traits: Enemies have traits that grant passive bonuses like increased armor.

Attacks: Each attack has a name; followed by which attribute it is tested against; how many mecha it can target, and at what range; and finally, damage and effects.

Recharge: Some attacks indicate a "Recharge," which means you must roll a d6 on the start of that enemy's turn to determine if the attack is available.

TOUGHER ENEMIES

To present a real challenge, increase an enemy's HD, which will up both its HP and average damage output (see the Enemy Damage and HP table), as well as the difficulty of tests made against it. You can also include actions or passive traits from other statblocks to make a solo enemy more challenging.

ENEMY DAMAGE AND HP		
Enemy HD	**Damage**	**Max HP**
1	1d4	8
2	1d6	16
3	1d8	24
4	1d10	32
5	1d12	40
6	2d6	48
7	2d8	56
8	3d6	64
9	2d10	72
10	2d12	80
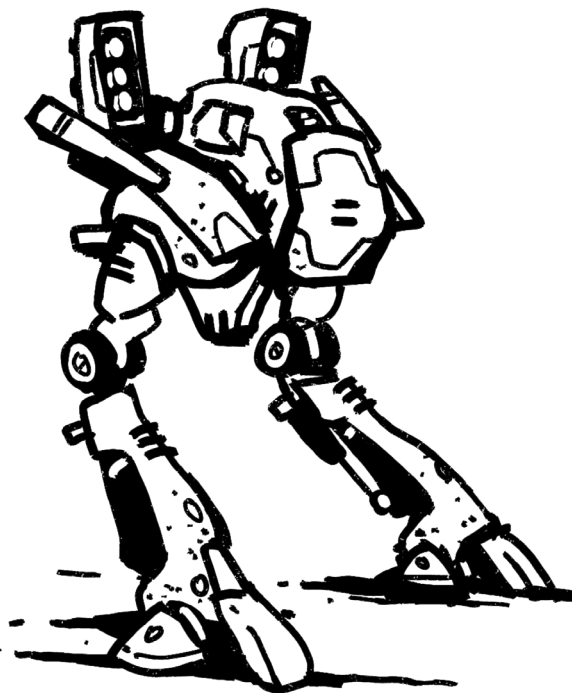
JUMP-POD

Bipedal mecha with guided missiles and powerful limbs for hopping.

Leap	Reach far locations in one move
Beam Spitters	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 1d4 damage
Guided Rocket Pods	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 near targets, 1d6 damage

KAIJU SPAWNLING

Fledgling alien monstrosity, newly hatched and ravenously hungry.

Acidic Blood	Deal 1 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Rending Claws	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d6 damage
Dorsal Spines	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d4 damage

LABOR BOT

Heavy construction mecha with fading paint and rusting joints.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 1
Fists	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d4 damage
Welding Beam	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d4 damage

MECHA RECRUIT

Standard-issue, off-the-assembly-line infantry mecha with a basic loadout.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 1
Shield Bash	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d4 damage
Submachine Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d6 damage

MECHA SNIPER

Military mecha outfitted with active camo, hefting a long-range beam rifle.

Active Camo	Disadvantage on System tests to spot this enemy
Sharpshooter	Deal 1d4 additional damage to far enemies
Bayonet	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d4 damage
Long-Range Beam Rifle	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d6 damage

ANTI-MECHA HOVERTANK

Heavily armed and armored hover tank designed to combat mecha.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 1
Hover	Ignore difficult terrain
Armor-Piercing Cannon	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d8 damage
Chain Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d4 damage

FRONTIER PATROL MECHA

Lightly armored military mecha, fully outfitted for ranging on the frontier.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 1
Laser Axe	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d6 damage
Machine Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d6 damage

KAIJU DRONE

Building-sized alien monstrosity of alien origin; it emits a beam of energy from its maw.

Acidic Blood	Deal 1 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Rending Claws	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d6 damage
Maw Beam	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d8 damage
Thundering Roar	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Presence, 1 close or near target, roll reactor die

MECHWALKER

Spider-like mechanical menace, which braces itself to fire its immense thunder cannon.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 1
Beam Spitters	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d6 damage
Thunder Cannon	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d10 damage

SALVAGER BERSERKER

Junker mecha, haphazardly welded together; wields vicious melee weapons.

Frenzied	Deal 1d4 additional damage to close enemies
Plasma Axe	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d6 damage
Throwing Axes	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d6 damage

HEAVY CONSTRUCTION BOT
HD 3

Massive labor mech with heavy armor and incredible power output.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 2
Fists	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d10 damage
Welding Beam	*Attack:* Power, 1 near target, 1d6 damage

ION EMPLACEMENT
HD 3

Large ion cannon, insanely accurate even at great range.

Immobile	Cannot move
Barricaded	Provides cover to close allies
Point-Defense Turret	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 1d8 damage
Ion Barrage	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 far or distant targets, roll reactor die

KAIJU BARON
HD 3

Hulking alien monstrosity with a maw big enough to crush mecha.

Acidic Blood	Deal 2 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Crushing Bite	*Attack:* Power, 1 close target, 1d10 damage
Maw Beam	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d8 damage
Thundering Roar	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Presence, 2 close or near targets, roll reactor die

MECHA ACE
HD 3

Fully outfitted, battle-worn mecha piloted by an ace.

Ace	Can move and make two attacks
Beam Sword	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d8 damage
Beam Rifle	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d8 damage
Flashbang	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 close or near targets, gain disadvantage on next test

MECHWALKER DISABLER
HD 3

Specialized spider-mech designed to knock out enemy mecha.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 2
Beam Spitters	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d8 damage
EMP Blast	*Attack:* System, all close or near targets, roll reactor die

AEON MECHA

Alien-enhanced, bleeding-edge mecha with energy weapons.

Energy Shields	Reduce incoming damage by 1d4
Beam Sword	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d10 damage
Beam Spitters	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 near targets, 1d8 damage

ANTI-MECHA STRIKE TEAM

Squad of foot soldiers outfitted with power armor, armed with mecha-killing weapons.

Active Camo	Disadvantage on System tests to spot this enemy
Vulcan Cannons	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 1d8 damage
Plasma Grenades	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d10 damage and roll reactor die

FAST-ATTACK HOVERCRAFT

Fast, armored hovercraft designed to outmaneuver mecha.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 2
Hover	Ignore difficult terrain
Chain Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d8 damage
Tow Cables	*Attack:* Power, 1 close target, lose next turn

JUMP-POD HEAVY

Bipedal mecha with heavy armor, outfitted with clusters of rockets and grenades.

Leap	Reach far locations in one move
Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 2
Grenade Cluster	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d8 damage
Guided Rocket Pods	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 near targets, 1d10 damage

SALVAGER VANDAL

Junker mecha cobbled together from spare parts, with antennae broadcasting a hack signal.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 2
Submachine Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 1d10 damage
Hack	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, all close or near targets, roll reactor die

FRONTIER PATROL SERGEANT
HD 5

Heavily armored military mecha that directs its allies on the frontline.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 3
Commander	Close and near allies add 1d4 damage
Laser Axe	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 1d12 damage
Machine Gun	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 near targets, 1d10 damage
Flashbang	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 close or near targets, gain disadvantage on next test

ION DISRUPTOR INSTALLATION
HD 5

Large cannon with bleeding-edge arc generators, designed to disable mecha from a distance.

Immobile	Cannot move
Barricaded	Provides cover to close allies
Point-Defense Turret	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 2d6 damage
Ion Barrage	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 3 far or distant targets, roll reactor die

JUMP-POD FIELD COMMANDER
HD 5

Bipedal mecha splashed with war paint, armed with missile pods.

Leap	Reach far locations in one move
Commander	Close and near allies add 1d4 damage
Beam Spitters	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d8 damage
Guided Rocket Pods	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 2 near targets, 1d10 damage

KAIJU TYRANT
HD 5

Massive alien monstrosity with bat-like wings and razor talons.

Acidic Blood	Deal 2 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Flying	Ignore difficult terrain; reach far locations in one move
Ripping Talons	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close target, 1d12 damage
Maw Beam	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d12 damage
Piercing Screech	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Presence, 2 close or near targets, 1d6 damage and roll reactor die

ANTI-MECHA DESTRUCTION SQUAD
HD 6

Squad of foot soldiers outfitted with power armor, trained to destroy mecha on foot.

Active Camo	Disadvantage on System tests to spot this enemy
Jump Packs	Ignore difficult terrain
Vulcan Cannons	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close or near target, 1d8 damage
Plasma Grenades	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Mobility, 2 close or near targets, 1d10 damage and roll reactor die

SALVAGER THUNDERER
HD 6

Patchwork mecha with sparking, tentacle-like appendages.

Shock Armor	Deal 1d4 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Galvanic Tendrils	*Attack:* Mobility, 3 close or near targets, 1d10 damage
Constrict	*Attack:* Power, 1 close target, 1d8 damage and lose next turn
Core Surge	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, 3 close or near targets, roll reactor die

SALVAGER GUNSHIP
HD 7

Well-armored, patchwork gunship gliding on salvaged ion harrier engines.

Troop Carrier	Can lift and carry 2 allies
Flying	Ignore difficult terrain; reach far locations in one move
Vulcan Cannons	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 near or far targets, 2d6 damage
Ion Harpoons	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Power, 2 close or near targets, 1d8 ongoing damage for 1d4 moments

SIEGE MECHA
HD 7

Heavily armored mecha outfitted with massive siege cannons.

Thick Plating	Reduce incoming damage by 4
Slam	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 2d6 damage
Bombardment	*Attack:* Mobility, 3 near or far targets, 2d8 damage
Charging Shot	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Mobility, 1 near target, 2d10 damage

ABOMINATION

A teleportation experiment gone awry – part mecha, part kaiju, it eats reactors to survive.

Energy Shields	Reduce incoming damage by 1d6
Bone Axe	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 2d8 damage
Rocket Elbow	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near target, 2d6 damage
Consume Core	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Power, 1 close target, roll reactor die twice

KAIJU STALKER

A lithe, gangly kaiju with a fanged maw and barbed tail.

Acidic Blood	Deal 3 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Active Camo	Disadvantage on System tests to spot this enemy
Barbed Tail	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 2d8 damage
Caustic Spit	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 2d8 damage
Grapple	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Mobility, 1 near target, 1d12 damage and pulled close

ROGUE COMMANDER — HD 9

Decorated war hero turned vigilante, with dark armor and firm convictions.

Commander	Close and near allies add 1d4 damage
Greatsword	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 close target, 2d10 damage
Darkmatter Rifle	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 1d12 damage and roll reactor die
Compelling Speech	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Presence, all close or near targets, lose next turn

SALVAGER HYDRA — HD 9

Titanic, cobbled-together mecha with multiple limbs and heads.

Regenerating	Regains 1d8 HP every turn
Hydra Slam	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close targets, 2d10 damage
Plasma Breath	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 near or far targets, 2d8 damage
Gravitic Shift	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Power, all close or near targets, 1d12 damage and roll reactor die

EXPERIMENTAL MECHA ZERO — HD 10

Cutting-edge mecha with alien tech and an ace pilot.

Ace	Can move and make two attacks
Energy Shields	Reduce incoming damage by 1d8
Dual Chainswords	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close targets, 2d10 damage
Chest Beam Cannon	*Attack:* Mobility, 1 near or far target, 2d12 damage
Expel Energy	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* System, all close or near targets, 2d10 damage and roll reactor die

KAIJU OBLITERATOR — HD 10

Unreckonable monstrosity from beyond our world, sent to consume and destroy.

Acidic Blood	Deal 4 damage to close enemies after taking damage
Rending Claws	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 close targets, 2d12 damage
Maw Beam	*Attack:* Mobility, 2 near or far targets, 2d12 damage
Consume	*Attack (Recharge 5-6):* Power, 1 close target, drop to 0 HP

GAME MASTER TOOLS

Game Masters running The Mecha Hack will find tools in this section to help prep missions and objectives for their fireteam. In addition to the enemies presented in the previous chapter, you should find plenty of ideas and inspiration for a multitude of different missions.

Also included are a variety of optional and add-on rules and mechanics, which add more depth and dynamism to your Mecha Hack sessions.

MECHA MISSIONS

Mecha are warmachines, first and foremost – designed specifically to endure and excel in combat. But their missions are diverse and varied – from escorting fuel transports, to recovering alien artifacts, to defending cities from monstrous kaiju. Use the following tables to randomly roll a mission for your mecha to undertake, or simply draw inspiration for your own unique operations.

MISSION GENERATOR			
d10	**Enemies**	**Objectives**	**Locations**
1	Guerilla insurgents	Eradicate hostiles	Ruined city
2	Rebelling laborers	Defend objective	Dense wilderness
3	Militant faction	Escort transport	Old battlefield
4	Mecha mercenaries	Reconnaissance	Blasted desert
5	Military deserters	Recovery and rescue	Abandoned docks
6	Mechanized bandits	Destroy vital resources	Mecha graveyard
7	Weaponized drones	Halt invading forces	Lunar colony
8	Alien kaiju	Cause a diversion	Derelict battlecruiser
9	Well-outfitted imperials	Provide reinforcements	Coral reef
10	Unknown alien mecha	Capture enemy leader	Asteroid field

MISSION OPENERS	
d6	**Opener**
1	Dropping directly into action from high orbit.
2	Approaching stealthily under cover of night.
3	Warping in with experimental teleportation technology.
4	Rising to action from below using abandoned tunnels.
5	Wading through dark water to avoid detection.
6	Scrambling to battle – your base of operations is under attack.

| MISSION HAZARDS	
d10	**Hazard**
1	Disgruntled laborers – test Presence to calm their ire
2	Laser trip mines – test Mobility to avoid them or take 1d6 damage
3	Falling debris – test Power to deflect it or take 2d6 damage
4	Deserting mecha recruits – test Presence to gain their loyalty
5	Enemy bombardment – test Mobility to seek cover or take 2d8 damage
6	Magnetic activity – test System to recalibrate your sensors
7	Incorrect intel – the mission begins with an enemy surprise attack
8	Explosive shockwave – test Power or take 2d6 damage
9	Neutral faction – test Presence or stand down to avoid conflict
10	EMP wave – test System or roll your reactor die

MISSION COMPLICATIONS	
d10	**Complication**
1	You are betrayed by a former ally.
2	The enemy has the codes needed to hack your mecha.
3	Innocent bystanders are caught in the crossfire.
4	A third, unknown faction enters the fray.
5	An experimental weapon is activated.
6	A competing faction vies for needed resources.
7	Enemy bombardment deals damage from afar.
8	You receive a distress call from an ally outside of your mission area.
9	Fog or smoke fills the area, making it impossible to see without sensors.
10	Flammable resources makes crossfire explosive and deadly.
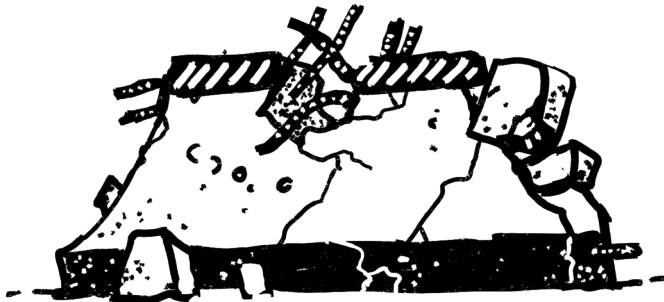
MISSION ENVIRONMENTS	
d8	**Environment**
1	Desert – soaring dunes, cracked earth, sprawling plains
2	Space – derelict battlecruisers, asteroid fields, drifting moons
3	Underwater – coral reefs, shipwrecks, low visibility
4	Urban – ruined buildings, clogged streets, soaring towers
5	Volcanic – flowing lava, crumbling rock, impending eruptions
6	Wilderness – dense foliage, rushing rivers, rolling hills
7	Polar – deep crevasses, avalanches, frozen lakes
8	Lunar – enormous craters, low gravity, no atmosphere

ENEMY TACTICS	
d10	**Tactics**
1	Stick to cover, favoring ranged weapons. They retreat when approached.
2	Favor speed and ferocious melee attacks, charging into close range.
3	Turtle up, fortifying a defensive position and utilizing difficult terrain and cover.
4	Utilize flanking and pincer maneuvers.
5	Move frequently, spreading out to avoid clumping together.
6	Flank incessantly, repeatedly seeking weaknesses.
7	Fight ferociously without regard for their own well-being.
8	Hit-and-run attacks, continuously striking and retreating.
9	Utilize deadly economy of movement, every action measured and lethal.
10	Lay traps and waylays, drawing enemies into ambushes.

LOOT			
d8/d6	**1-2**	**3-4**	**5-6**
1-2	Frag Grenade	Heavy Weapon	Shield
3-4	Arc Grenade	Sensor Jammer	Scanning Drone
5-6	Repair Nanites	Explosive Rounds	Heavy Armor
7-8	Boost Kit	One-Shot Module	Light Weapon w/ Quality

REROUTING POWER

In many mecha properties, the "last ditch effort" action sometimes means the difference between victory and defeat. Optionally, you can allow your players to reroute power while disabled. To attempt to reroute power, a player may roll their reactor die while disabled. On the result of the highest number on the die, they can take a single action. After this action, they immediately become disabled again and cannot reroute power again until completing a long rest.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

The environment itself can often be a deadly enemy. Flames, acid, and other environmental hazards may result in damage, which can be used strategically by mecha and their enemies. When using environmental hazards, the following optional rules may apply:

- Specify the area of the environmental hazard. Mecha and enemies entering the area immediately take 2d6 damage.

- While in the area, on each of their turns, each mecha or enemy within the area takes 2d6 damage.

SKILL CHALLENGES

Skill challenges require multiple tests to complete – typically three to five successful tests before an equal number of failed tests are accrued. Critical successes (natural 1s) count as two successes. Likewise, critical failures (natural 20s) count as two failures.

Sometimes, a skill challenge will require multiple different tests. For example, mecha escaping a plummeting battlecruiser might face a skill challenge requiring Power to break through bulkheads, Mobility to dodge flaming debris, System to divert power to the engines, and Presence to convince the stubborn crew to evacuate.

BOSS FIGHTS

Boss fights are a staple of the mecha genre. In The Mecha Hack, running a single enemy against a full fireteam can often lead to the fireteam rolling right over them, due to the sheer number of actions they can take. For a truly challenging boss fight, consider using the following optional rules:

- Bosses get two turns per moment – they act once after the first initiative group, and again after the second.

- Bosses get armor points equal to twice the number of mecha in the fireteam.

- Bosses get tougher the longer you fight them – after being reduced to half their total hit points, their damage die increases by one step.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Game Masters may wish to consider the extent of collateral damage in mecha battles, especially in heavily populated urban areas. When battling in areas with civilians and occupied dwellings, the following optional rules may apply:

- Specify a limit to the number of buildings that can be destroyed before the mission fails.

- Each building has 10 HP and 10 AP. Enemy attacks targeting buildings automatically hit.

- When making attacks, if a mecha rolls a natural 20, they instead deal their damage to a nearby building.

MECHA CREWS

Rather than a single pilot per mecha, you can opt to run a super robot team with two or more pilots to a chassis. When running a game with multiple pilots commanding the mecha, the following optional rules may apply:

- A mecha with multiple pilots gets the attribute bonuses of each pilot, and access to the abilities of each pilot.

- A mecha can take one action, plus as many actions per moment as it has pilots, keeping in mind that it must roll its reactor die when taking the same action twice (so a mecha with two pilots would take three actions).

- If there are multiple players commanding the mecha, they must strategize together to plan their actions. When a pilot's actions lead to tests or reactor die rolls, that pilot's player should make the roll. If it's nebulous, the commander should make the roll.

PILOT MISSIONS AND DOWNTIME

The Mecha Hack focuses on the giant robots – but that doesn't mean the struggles of the pilots inside are any less important. Many mecha properties place great importance on the characters inside the mecha, and for GMs and players wishing to capture that feel, consider the following:

- While bearing in mind the rules of pilot and mecha scales, pilots and mecha share attributes. Power can be used to attack and overcome, Mobility to sneak and dodge, System to perceive and hack, Presence to persuade and deceive, etc. Pilots can undertake missions of their own, sans mecha chassis, and face all new challenges unaided by their titanic warmachines. Weapons use the same damage dice, albeit at pilot scale.

- During downtime between missions, pilots can make modifications to their mecha – how involved or complex is up to the Game Master. GMs can allow pilots to swap out modules with a week of downtime and with the necessary resources to do so. Pilots can also attempt to scavenge or craft new weapons, using the Weapon Qualities table in the Equipment section as inspiration.

LODESTAR ALPHA

While The Mecha Hack is completely setting-agnostic, and can be utilized to tell stories of all kinds against a variety of backdrops, you can opt to use the pre-built science-fiction setting of Lodestar Alpha to easily drop into a one-shot game or campaign. Pair this lore with the roll tables found in the Game Master Tools to easily create a multitude of sessions without the need to build your own setting.

OVERVIEW

Lodestar Alpha is a war-torn science-fiction setting, where armies of mecha battle for control of a distant, alien star system. The advanced mecha of the Aeonic Primacy square off against the bulky and worn exosuits of the Terran Collective and the mechanized knights of the Neo Dominion. Meanwhile, an ancient alien threat, the Voidmaw, strike out from an unknown network of tunnels and portals. The fate of Lodestar Alpha seems grim – but intrepid pilots and their powerful mecha stand strong against the tides of war.

HISTORY

Ages ago, the humans of a dwindling Earth sent three massive colony ships through a space-time fissure on the outer edges of the Solar System. Two of those ships survived the trip and arrived in a far-flung star system with habitable worlds and unknown constellations.

Those early Terran colonists uncovered ancient alien technology that allowed them to develop the mighty reactors that would power the backbone of their culture – the mecha. These massive, mechanized exosuits built the cities and settlements of a new home spread throughout the livable planets and moons surrounding the newfound yellow giant star, which would come to be known as Lodestar Alpha.

The colonists lived in relative peace for centuries, united under the rule of a noble clan called the Neo Dominion. Then, without warning, the third colony ship arrived through the space-time rift, several centuries late. Commanding unfathomable alien technology, these newcomers called themselves the Aeonic Primacy, and immediately set to work conquering and subjugating the people of Lodestar Alpha. Though human, the Aeons were alien in their methods and motives, and they quickly overpowered the militarized forces of the Neo Dominion through the use of an ancient portal system called the Verilian Tunnels.

But the common people of Lodestar, banding together under the moniker of the Terran Collective, retrofitted their labor mecha for warfare – and resisted. Now, the loyal remnants of the Neo Dominion, the ragtag rebels of the Terran Collective, and the alien invaders of the Aeonic Primacy clash for control – and from beneath them, something ancient and sinister awakens. The war for Lodestar Alpha has begun – and only one faction can claim victory!

FACTIONS

The Aeonic Primacy: Referred to as Aeons, this empire of lost human colonists has recently invaded the Lodestar Alpha system and wages war against the Terran Collective and Neo Dominion for power and resources. They are commanded by a mysterious entity known only as the One-Mind. Lost for centuries in unknown space, the Aeons wield advanced alien tech like beam weaponry and energy shields. Their sleek and mobile mecha, which resemble insects and arachnids, are more numerous and advanced than either the Collective or Dominion can muster. Using the extra-dimensional Verilian Tunnels to quickly overwhelm any opposition, victory seems assured for the Aeons – were it not for the ancient enemy they inadvertently released…

The Terran Collective: Known simply as Terrans, these ragtag freedom fighters are made up of the laborers and common people of Lodestar who wish to drive out the Aeonic invaders and reclaim their home. They were united by Thea Node, a tough-as-nails military tactician and former laborer who helped build and maintain mecha. Terran mecha are derived from old construction and harvesting tech, appearing bulky and thrown-together – but in reality, they are scrappy, reliable,
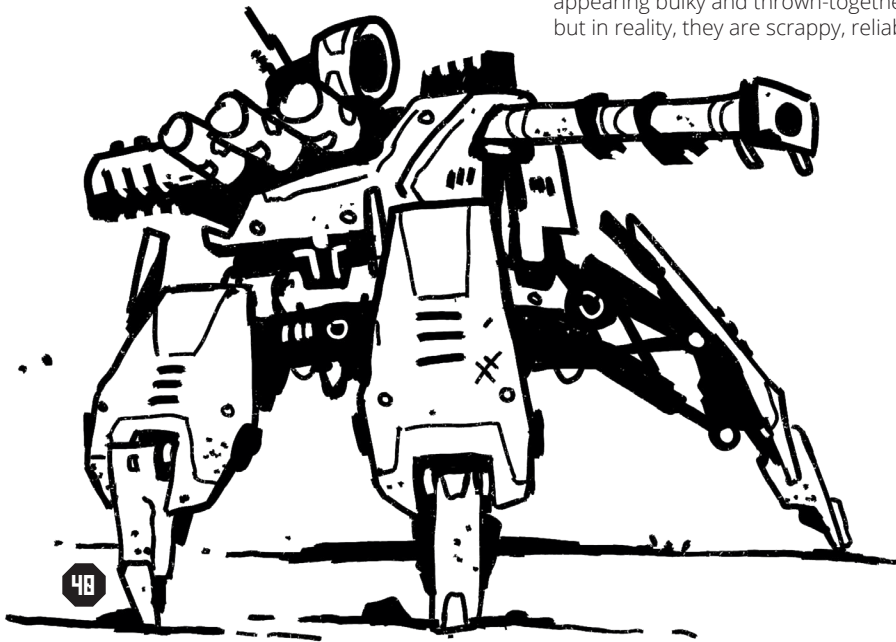
and adaptable. Where the Aeons wield beam weapons and energy shields, the Terrans prefer good ol' ballistic weapons and heavy armor.

The Neo Dominion: The Neos, loyal remnants of the former rulers of Lodestar Alpha, are scattered and dwindling, but still refuse to surrender. Ruled by the exiled Prince Ilyn Acharis, the rightful heir to the throne of Lodestar, the Neos and their remnant knights are convinced of their right to rule, and fight tirelessly against their new oppressors as well as the rebellious Terran Collective. Neo mecha are ornate and intricately designed, often adorned with sigils and decorated armor. Neo mecha march proudly to war flying the banners of their monarch, bearing the emblem of House Acharis on their gleaming shields.

The Voidmaw: Disturbingly little is known about the Voidmaw, except that these primal creatures have one aim: to devour. The ancient scourge of Lodestar Alpha, the Voidmaw have begun spilling from the rekindled portals of the Verilian Tunnels, following their reactivation at the hands of the Aeonic Primacy. The Voidmaw vary vastly in size and shape – some standing as tall as a man, others dwarfing skyscrapers. But they all share the common traits of being formidable, plentiful, and nearly unstoppable in a fight. With tentacles, jaws, and claws, the Voidmaw present a growing threat to the Aeons, the Terrans, and the Neos in equal measure.

LOCATIONS

Aeon Prime: Once the great seat of the Neo Dominion, this temperate world was transformed almost overnight when the dropships of the Aeonic Primacy scorched it from orbit, then invaded with legions of advanced mecha through the Verilian Tunnels beneath the surface. Now, the alien technology of the Aeons runs throughout the planet like glimmering veins, and their cities grow like tumors.

Slipstar: The moon-base of the Terran Collective, dotted with habitation-domes
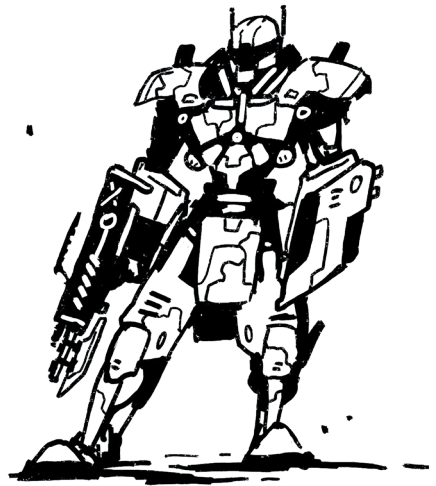
that provide breathable air, livable gravity, and active agricultural tracts to every Terran soldier and citizen. Built on a moon shattered and cracked, Slipstar is protected by a handful of CK-90 anti-cruiser cannons – experimental weapons colloquially referred to as "cruiser killers" for their ability to knock ships from orbit with plasma-wreathed explosive shells. Life on Slipstar is tough, but the people live free – and the broken moon is thankfully devoid of Verilian Tunnels.

Fortress Husqvarna: The floating space fortress of the Neo Dominion, the seat of the exiled Prince Ilyn Acharis, and the last stand for the knights that still serve the old rule. This massive installation houses a legion of Neo mecha, ready to be deployed with highly-trained knight pilots at a moment's notice. Fortress Husqvarna boasts an advanced, glimmering energy shield, adapted from stolen Aeon tech, that safeguards the rightful heir of Lodestar Alpha and his followers.

Verilian Tunnels: This ancient, endless network of subterranean tunnels allows for almost instantaneous travel between the worlds of Lodestar Alpha through the use of extra-dimensional portals. It is also the hive of the Voidmaw, sealed away eons ago to spare Lodestar of their scourge. The Aeonic Primacy reopened these tunnels to ensure their control of Lodestar Alpha – while also inadvertently unleashing the ancient beasts.

OGL

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

- Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement

- The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

- Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

- Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

- Representation of Authority to

Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

· Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

· Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

· Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

· Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

· Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

· Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

· Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

· Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

· Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

· COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
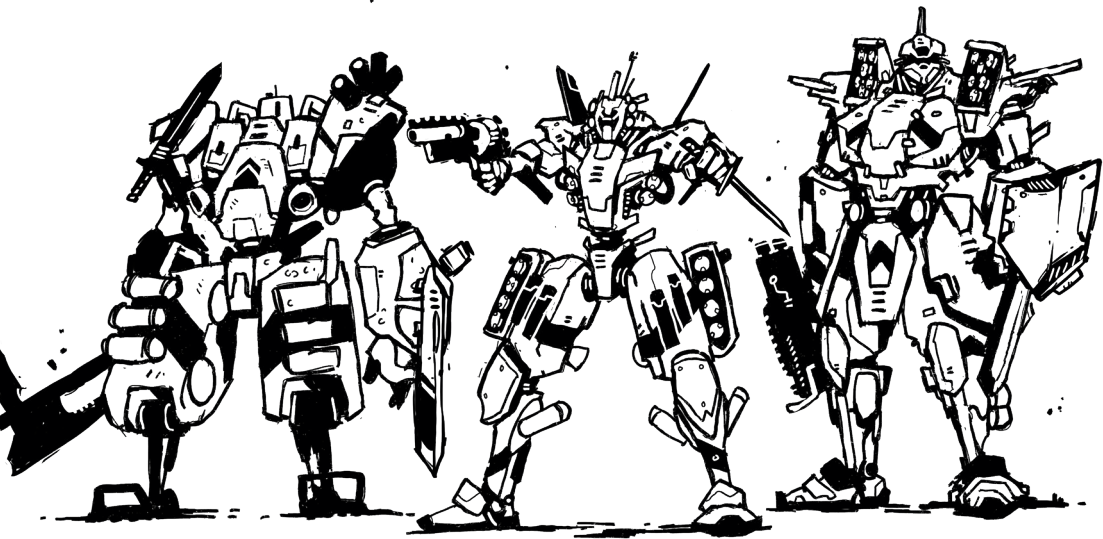
THE MECHA HACK
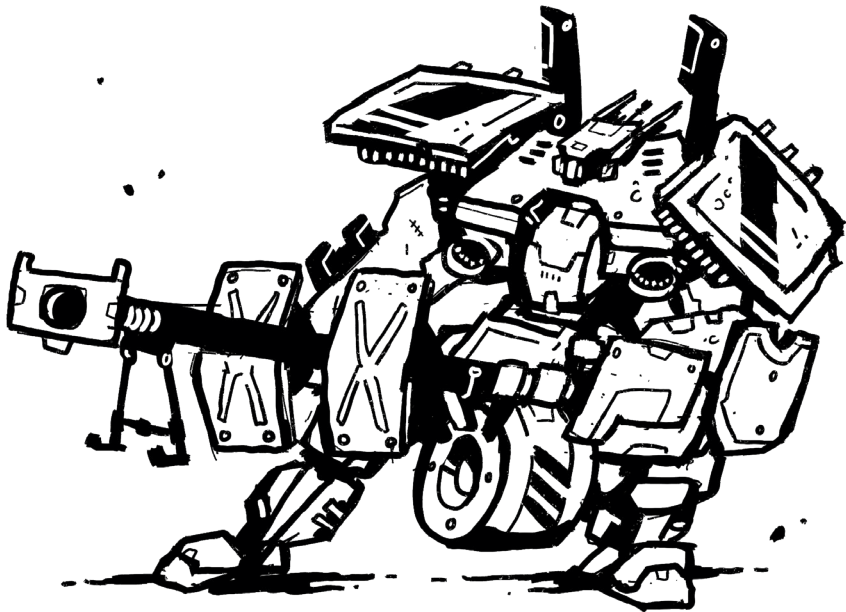
CALLSIGN

PILOT

/ ARMOR POINTS

/ HIT POINTS

CHASSIS

LEVEL

POWER

HIT DIE

DAMAGE DIE

REACTOR DIE

MOBILITY

PILOT ABILITY

CHASSIS ABILITIES

SYSTEM

EQUIPMENT

PRESENCE

MODULES

THE MECHA HACK

PLAYER AID

MAKING A TEST

Roll a d20:

- **Success:** rolling *under* the corresponding attribute.
- **Failure:** rolling *equal to or over* the corresponding attribute.
- Critical Success: 1; Critical Failure: 20

DISTANT

FAR

NEAR

CLOSE

ON YOUR TURN

Take any **two actions**:

- **Move** to a near location.
- **Attack** an enemy in range.
- **Test** an attribute to complete a task.
- **Use** pilot, chassis, or module abilities.

If you take the same action twice, you must **roll your reactor die**.

You can do any number of mundane actions.

DISTANCE

- **Close** locations don't require a move action to reach.
- **Near** locations require 1 move action.
- **Far** locations require 2 move actions.
- **Distant** locations require 3 or more move actions.

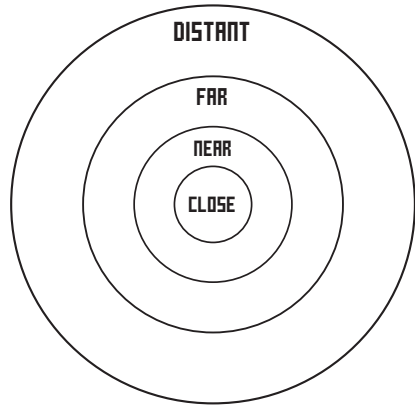## REACTOR DIE

You must roll your **reactor die** when:

- You take critical damage.
- You take the same action twice.
- An ability directs you to.
- The GM directs you to.

If you roll a 1 or 2, downgrade your reactor die to the next lowest die.

If you roll a 1 or 2 on a d4 reactor die, you are **overheated**.

OVERHEATED

- You cannot take actions.
- You have disadvantage on all tests.
- You skip your next turn.

DISABLED

- You cannot take actions until repaired.
- You automatically fail all tests until repaired.
- You must roll on the Disabled Mecha table.

ARMOR POINTS

When you take damage, you can choose to spend a number of APs to reduce that damage by an equal amount. APs regain after a rest.

GAMEPLAY TIPS

Seek cover from ranged attacks. Utilize both actions every turn. Try to avoid rolling your reactor die more than once per turn. Don't forget to use support and utility abilities. Strategize together!