

# MECHA COMPANIONS

BY PHILIP REED

Stealing a page from the wizard and his familiar, *Future: Mecha Companions* presents rules for the Mecha Synergist, an advanced class that devotes its class features to augmenting the strength and abilities of a companion, sentient mecha. Everything in this PDF, from the new mecha device to the feats, has been specifically written to allow a player to gain and improve a mecha “familiar” – a signature, companion mecha that’s more powerful than baseline mecha designs.

As with all of the releases in Ronin Arts’ Future series, the material in *Future: Mecha Companions* must be approved by the GM before it can be used in a campaign. The information in this particular PDF, and the concept behind it, is likely inappropriate for a lot of campaigns. For those campaigns that include a lot of mecha – and sentient robots – this should be a perfect fit.

Don’t be surprised if, as a player, the first time you encounter a pilot and sentient mecha is in the middle of a game session; in my opinion, the concept of mecha pilots and signature mecha is probably best introduced to the campaign through the use of GMCs.

Special thanks to Mark Gedak for proofreading and useful suggestions that greatly improved this product.

## WHAT’S REQUIRED TO USE THIS PDF?

In order to use *Future: Mecha Companions* you will need the *D20 Modern* roleplaying game, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and the official future supplement, also published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.. You can find both at your favorite

local game store or online at any number of roleplaying game vendors. No other Ronin Arts products are required to use this book.

## FUTURE: DATASTREAM

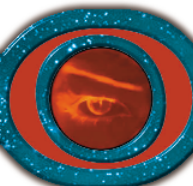
As of the time of publication, Ronin Arts’ *Future: Datastream* subscription service is running, introducing new material for futuristic campaigns five times each week. For more information on the *Future: Datastream*, including subscription information, please visit the official forums at [www.d20projects.com](http://www.d20projects.com).

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philip Reed has been working professionally in the roleplaying game industry since 1995. In that time he has worked for such companies as West End Games, Privateer Press, and Steve Jackson Games. Today Philip spends his days at home running Ronin Arts, writing and designing new games, and reading whatever books interest him at the time. To learn more about Philip Reed – and Ronin Arts – please visit [www.philipjreed.com/php](http://www.philipjreed.com/php) and [www.roninarts.com](http://www.roninarts.com). The approved Ronin Arts fan forum can be found at [www.raforums.com](http://www.raforums.com).



# MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

## COMPUTERIZED ASSISTANT MODULE (PL 7)

A mecha equipped with a computerized assistant module gains partial sentience, turning the machine into an intelligent, aware entity that follows the commands of its pilot. A mecha equipped with this device has a personality, intelligence, and can perform minor actions that assist its pilot (see box).

### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

The following is a selection of possible actions that a mecha equipped with a computerized assistant module could perform. The GM and players are encouraged to expand this list of actions to suit the requirements of their campaign.

- Activate an afterburner system, jetpack, or any other mecha flight system that has an activation requirement of a free action or a move action.
- Use a sensor system to actively scan as described under the appropriate sensor system's description in the future SRD.
- Engage (or switch) an Oracle Targeting System's bonus for its pilot.
- Deploy or retract a tactical shield (if the mecha is equipped with such an item) or activate any other equipped mecha defense system that has an activation requirement of a free action or a move action.
- Use a comm. system, advanced diagnostics, or any other miscellaneous equipment that has an activation requirement of a free action or a move action.

## ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

The mecha gains Intelligence 6, Wisdom 6, and Charisma 6. The mecha's Strength score is equal to the Strength bonus it provides its pilot *plus* one-half its hardness rating (round down) and its Dexterity score is equal to 10 modified by the Dexterity penalty listed in its basic size description in the SRD.

A sentient mecha does not have a Constitution score.

The mecha gains 4 skill points which may be spent on any skills — all of which are considered class skills for the mecha.

## ACTIONS

The mecha may take one move action and two free actions, as ordered by its pilot, each round, on its pilot's turn.

If its pilot is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and if the mecha is still functional, the mecha will take move actions that move itself and its pilot out of danger. The mecha will not engage in combat and will move away from active combat.

A mecha equipped with a computerized assistant module has one less equipment slot.

**Equipment Slots:** 1 (equivalent).

**Activation:** None.

**Range:** Personal.

**Target:** You.

**Duration:** Persistent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**Purchase DC:** 45.

**Restrictions:** Military (+3).

# NEW MECHA-RELATED FEATS

Some of the following feats specifically augment a character's mecha and *not* the character's actual skills or abilities. See the box if a mecha augmented by feats is destroyed.

## AGILE MECHA [MECHA AUGMENT]

You customize your mecha's systems, making it more agile and dexterous than most mechas of its size.

**Prerequisite:** Signature Mecha.

**Benefit:** Your mecha's size penalty to Dexterity is reduced by 2. If the mecha's size penalty to Dexterity was already 0, or any other positive number, the mecha's Dexterity modifier is increased by +2.

**Special:** This feat requires one solid week of game time to implement.

You may select this feat multiple times, each time increasing the decreasing the mecha's penalty to Dexterity by 2 (or, in the event of a positive adjustment, increasing that number by +2).

## BONUS EQUIPMENT SLOT [MECHA AUGMENT]

By tinkering with your signature mecha you expand its available number of equipment slots.

**Prerequisite:** Signature Mecha *or* the Luv My Mecha class feature.

**Benefit:** Your mecha gains one more equipment slot. A bonus equipment slot may be added to any existing location, though the specific location must be selected when this feat is selected. This feat does not give the mecha any new equipment – new equipment must be purchased and installed separately – but only grants the mecha with one bonus equipment slot.

**Special:** This feat requires one solid week of game time to implement.

This feat may be taken multiple times, with the signature mecha gaining a new equipment slot each time.

## WHAT IF A FEAT-AUGMENTED MECHA IS DESTROYED?

Once the character that augmented the mecha gains a new mecha – either through theft, purchase, as a gift, or any number of other in-game methods – that new mecha gains all of the destroyed mecha's feats after one solid week of work (in game time).

## INCREASED MECHA STRENGTH [MECHA AUGMENT]

You work on your mecha's internal systems, boosting its strength beyond the base design's capabilities.

**Prerequisite:** Signature Mecha.

**Benefit:** You increase your signature mecha's equipment bonus to Strength (and thus, its Strength score) by +2.

**Special:** This feat requires one solid week of game time to implement.

You may select this feat multiple times, each time increasing the mecha's equipment bonus to Strength by +2.

## MECHA TOUGHNESS [MECHA AUGMENT]

You devote your time and energy to improving your mecha's hit points.



## ADVANCED CLASS

**Prerequisite:** Signature Mecha or the Luv My Mecha class feature.

**Benefit:** Your mecha's hit points increase by +20.

**Special:** This feat requires one solid week of game time to implement.

You may select this feat multiple times, each time adding +20 to your mecha's hit point total.

## SIGNATURE MECHA [MECHA AUGMENT]

A single mecha has been your companion in so many battles that it has become a signature of

your identity — people instantly think of your mecha whenever they think of you.

**Prerequisites:** Mecha Operation, owned and adventured with the same mecha for over one year.

**Benefit:** Select one mecha that you've piloted for over a year. Any skill checks made when operating, repairing, or otherwise interacting with or using your signature mecha gain a +2 bonus.

**Special:** This feat requires one solid week of game time to implement.

# ADVANCED CLASS

## MECHA SYNERGIST

Part tech geek, part warrior, and part genius, the Mecha Synergist devotes a large part of his experience and time to improving the capabilities of his signature mecha. More than any other tool in his arsenal, the Mecha Synergist relies on his mecha to see him through combat — and the sense of reliance is mutual as the mecha's personality and connection to his pilot grows to the point that

many people consider the two to be a single individual and not two distinct intelligent beings.

This advanced class is definitely not appropriate for all campaigns. The technological requirements limit this advanced class to campaigns set at PL 8 or higher while the overall concept is suitable to very specific types of campaigns. Check with your GM before taking — or planning to take — this advanced class.

TABLE: THE MECHA SYNERGIST

Class Level	Base				Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save			
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Mecha Sentience Boost, Bonus Equipment Slot, Mecha Skill Boost	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Mecha Skill Boost, Luv my Mecha (+1)	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Bonus Equipment Slot, Bonus Feat, Mecha Skill Boost	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Mecha Sentience Boost, Luv my Mecha, Mecha Skill Boost (+2)	+2	+1
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Bonus Equipment Slot, Mecha Skill Boost	+3	+2
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Bonus Feat, Mecha Action Plus, Mecha Skill Boost	+3	+2

Select this advanced class if you want your character to control a sentient mecha that grows in ability. Most of the Mecha Synergist's class features directly benefit the character's signature mecha and not the character himself.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Fast hero basic class to the Mecha Jockey advanced class, though other paths are possible. Since the class also has specific equipment requirements the Mecha Synergist advanced class can be more difficult to enter than most advanced classes. Work with your GM to make gaining the advanced class fit in with the campaign's design.

## REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a mecha synergist, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

**Skills:** Computer Use 6 ranks, Drive 8 ranks, Repair 8 ranks.

**Feats:** Advanced Mecha Operation, Mecha Weapon Proficiency, Signature Mecha.

**Special:** The character's signature mecha may be no larger than huge and must be equipped with a crackerjack neural link and a computerized assistant module.

## CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Mecha Synergist advanced class.

### HIT DIE

The Mecha Synergist gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### ACTION POINTS

The Mecha Synergist gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, each time he attains a new level in this class.

### CLASS SKILLS

The Mecha Synergist's class skills are as follows. Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, street-wise, technology) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 3 + Int modifier.

## WHAT IF THE MECHA SYNERGIST'S SIGNATURE MECHA IS DESTROYED?

A sentient mecha's core programming and experiences are contained within its computerized assistant module – commonly referred to as its brain. The brain's "drive to survive" is determined by its force of personality, as represented by the mecha's Charisma.

Whenever a mecha is destroyed (reduced to 0 or fewer hit points), some brain degradation occurs. Each time its body is destroyed, the mecha suffers a permanent drain of 1 point of Charisma. The brain ceases to function and the mecha "dies" if its Charisma drops to 0 as the result of a permanent ability drain.

If a mecha has at least 1 point of Charisma left after its body is destroyed, its brain can be removed and transplanted into another mecha of the same size and frame. Removing a mecha's brain from a destroyed frame and installing it in a similar but intact frame requires 10 minutes of work (+1 hour for each feat the mecha was augmented with), a mechanical tool kit, and a successful DC 15 Repair check. Not using a tool kit imposes a –4 penalty on the Repair check.

A mecha that gains a new body retains the memories of its previous "life," as well as any previously gained skills or feats. It also retains any previously installed ability score upgrades (through feats of the Mecha Synergist's class features). It does not retain the previous frame's specific equipment (except for the computerized assistant module), as these were all destroyed. The mecha may be returned to its former state in half the time – and at half the cost – as its original equipment and modifications required.

Once the mecha's Charisma is reduced to 0 the mecha dies. If the mecha was feat augmented those augmentations may be transferred to a new mecha (see p. 3).

## ADVANCED CLASS

### CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Mecha Synergist advanced class.

#### MECHA SENTIENCE BOOST

At 1st level, and again at 4th level, the Mecha Synergist puts his energy and experience into improving his signature mecha's abilities. Each time this class feature is gained the Mecha Synergist has 5 points to add to his mecha's attribute scores, dividing those points as the Mecha Synergist sees fit.

#### BONUS EQUIPMENT SLOT

At 1st level, 3rd level, and 5th level the Mecha Synergist tinkers with his signature mecha, adding one equipment slot at each of the stated levels. A bonus equipment slot may be added to any existing location, though the specific location must be selected when the Mecha Synergist gains a level that grants this feature. This class feature does not give the signature mecha any new equipment – that must be purchased and installed normally – but only grants the bonus equipment slot.

#### MECHA SKILL BOOST

At each level the Mecha Synergist's signature mecha gains a number of skill points equal to 2 + Int modifier. These points may be used to improve existing skills or to add new skills (one of which, per level, is a class skill and any other skills added after the first each level is treated as a cross-class skill).

A signature mecha's max skill ranks is equal to the Mecha Synergist's class level +3.

#### LUV MY MECHA

Starting at 2nd level, a Mecha Synergist gains a bonus on Drive, Pilot, and Repair checks when applied to his signature mecha. The same bonus is applied to the Mecha Synergist's attack rolls with the signature mecha's ranged weapons. This bonus is +1 at 2nd level and increases to +2 at 4th level.

If the Mecha Synergist already has the Luv my Mecha class feature (from levels in the Mecha Jockey advanced class), the bonus from this feature stacks with his existing bonus as long as he designated his signature mecha as the mecha he is familiar with (see the future SRD).

### WHAT IF THE MECHA OUTLIVES ITS PILOT?

There are three basic choices for dealing with a sentient mecha that outlives its pilot. Those choices are:

- If a sentient mecha's pilot is killed the mecha is removed from the game completely.
- If a sentient mecha's pilot is killed, and if the pilot had reached 6th level as a Mecha Synergist, the GM can elect to run the mecha as a GMC – the mecha has achieved independent awareness and is now more like a sentient robot than it is a mecha.
- The mecha reverts to its baseline form, losing all feat- and class-related augmentations and advancements. The mecha could remain in the campaign, perhaps becoming the property of another player character, but it is no longer as special as it once was. If the mecha's new owner elects to augment the mecha, and if the GM agrees, the changes could be portrayed in the game as the mecha rediscovering abilities that were lost when its former pilot died.

#### BONUS FEAT

At 3rd level, and again at 6th level, the Mecha Synergist gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Mecha Synergist must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it. Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Agile Mecha, Bonus Equipment Slot, Burst Fire, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Dead Aim, Dodge, Double Tap, Far Shot, Force Stop, Gearhead, Great Cleave, Hair Trigger, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Disarm, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip, Increased Mecha Strength, Mecha Crush, Mecha Fling, Mecha Sweep, Mecha Toughness, Mecha Trample, Mecha Weapon Boost, Mobility, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Shot on the

Run, Skip Shot, Spring Attack, Strafe, Stun Mecha, Thruster Blast, Weapon Focus (mecha weapon only), Whirlwind Attack.

### MECHA ACTION PLUS

At 6th level the Mecha Synergist's signature mecha gains the ability to take attack actions in addition to move and free actions (see the computerized assistant implant on p. 00). The mecha may not take full-round actions. As with its move and free actions, the mecha may only take attack

actions that are ordered by its pilot. The mecha has a base attack bonus equal to one-quarter its Mecha Synergist's base attack bonus (round down) and possesses the mecha weapon proficiency feat.

If its pilot is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and if the mecha is still functional, the mecha will take move actions that move itself and its pilot out of danger. The mecha will attack opponents and obstacles, but only those that directly interfere with its attempt at escape.

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