

GGG

GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



THE MECHA GENRE ROLEPLAYING GAME

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Introduction	5	Finishing Touches	51
Roleplaying Game?	6	Example of Character Creation	55
Mecha Genre?	6	Mecha Construction	58
The GEIM System	7	Mecha for Everyone	59
The Characters	8	Chassis	60
Gameplay Structure	8	Mecha Attributes	61
Using This Manual	9	Enhancements	62
What you Should Know	9	Systems, the Seventh Attribute	62
Glossary	11	Archetypes	64
Setting Terminology	11	Customizing the Mecha	65
System Terminology	12	Areas	65
Character Creation	16	Upgrades	65
Character Concept	17	Evasive Systems	66
Natures	18	Defensive Barriers	67
Customizing the Character	19	Aid Another	68
Character Attributes	19	Support	68
Attributes by the Rules	20	Special Modes	69
Defense and Plot Armor	21	Alternate Forms	70
Skills	22	Modules	70
Miracles	27	Sub Units	71
Traits	31	Combination	72
Deathblows	34	Features	73
Assets	35	Weapons	74
Anomalies	36	Specific Melee Weapons	75
Equipment	37	Specific Ballistic Weapons	76
Genre Themes and Genre Points	40	Specific Beam Weapons	77
Genre Reason	41	Specific Missile Weapons	78
Genre Typecast	42	Custom Melee Weapons	79
Genre Bane	43	Custom Ballistic Weapons	80
Genre Powers	44	Custom Beam Weapons	81
Default Powers	45	Custom Missile Weapons	82
Common Powers	46	The Personal Touch	83
Champion Powers	47	The Mecha Sheet	83
Trickster Powers	47	Example of Mecha Construction	84
Assassin Powers	48	Playing the Game	88
Scout Powers	48	Intermissions	89
Supportive Powers	49	Scene Sequence	89
Protector Powers	49	Tests	90
Director Powers	50	Advantages and Disadvantages	90
Controller Powers	50	Matches	93

Tension	93	Gygravagnite Type-G	139
Harm and Misfortune	94	The Soaring Dragon Fortress	140
Advanced Combat Circumstances	94	Geography	140
Intermission Scene Example	95	Culture	141
Operations	96	Religion	142
The Briefing	96	Military	143
Zones and Range	97	The Enemy	144
Operation Actions	98	The Mobile Battleship Wagner	146
Offensive Actions	98	Life in the Safe Zones	146
Other Actions	99	The Guerilla Effort	147
Damage	100	Ride of the Valkyries	148
The Core	100	Liberated Areas	149
Terrain	101	Important Targets	150
End of Operation	101	The Gear Armed Forces	151
Operation Turn Example	102	The Clarke Foundation	152
Advancement	103	The Space Colonies	152
Running the Show	105	Culture	153
The Genre Master	106	The Return of the Cryptids	154
Taking it Easy	107	Enter the Foundation	155
Planning Operations	108	The Mission	156
Difficulty and Rewards	109	Having a Field Day	157
The Course of Episodes	110	The Rogue's Gallery	159
Season Length	113	Sample Non-Combatants	159
Arc Structure	113	Sample Allied Grunts	160
Managing Genre Points	114	Sample Allied Rivals	161
The Supporting Cast	115	Sample Enemy Grunts	164
Grunts	115	Sample Enemy Rivals	166
Rivals	116	Sample Enemy Bosses	170
Bosses	116	Running a Hiryu Game	173
Boss Powers	117	Running a Wagner Game	175
Boss Archetypes	118	Running a Clarke Game	177
Boss Weapons	120	Endgame Ideas	179
Enemy Features	122	Topical Index	182
Do it Yourself	123	Sidebars Index	188
Sandboxing	124	Quick Rules Reference	191
The World	128		
A History Lesson	129		
A Brave New World	136		
Sonne, Mond and Sterne	137		
General Equipment	138		

CHAPTER 1



INTRODUCTION

Giant Guardian Generation is an RPG or Roleplaying Game of the anime Mecha Genre, in the following pages you will find the rules to the game, tips to get the most out of it, examples of the game in action and, hopefully, an entertaining read.

Maybe you already know what you're in for being already an avid roleplayer or mecha fanatic, maybe you have something of an idea of what those two are like, maybe all this is new to you and you're free of preconceptions or aren't even sure if you're going to like where this is going to take you. I'd like to think that you will.

Roleplaying Game?

You might have the impression that "Roleplaying" requires you to dress up in outlandish costumes and speak in silly accents, but it is thankfully much less alien than that. To put it in as few words as possible; Roleplaying Games are improvised theater with an element of chance and concrete rules. You can have roleplaying and games separate, but roleplaying games by definition combine both these traits.

Now let's be a bit more specific, because I make it sound simple but you must be still wondering what the heck is up with all those funny looking dice and the pages of numbers and charts.

Roleplaying games are much like videogames in that you have a character, called a **Player Character or PC**, and you will be controlling them as part of a greater story, but there are no limits to how much you can do with your character other than your imagination. Where as in most stories the heroes are forced into doing things that you as spectator (or player, in a videogame) don't want them to do, in a roleplaying game you are in control of everything your character does.

You don't need much to play a roleplaying game, just a pen, paper and some dice. You are not going to need to dress up the part of the characters you will impersonate, and you don't even need a board and pieces.

The action takes place in your imagination and you are in charge of narrating it, adding and taking away details much like in any conversation. As long as you have something to write with, paper to write on, at least one die, and a means of communication you can play a roleplaying game.

One of the players will take a special role, that of the **GM or Genre Master**, and will coordinate the game in a more general sense. Think of the GM's role like a triple combination between the banker in Monopoly, the referee of a sports match, and the director of an improvised theater session. The GM is in charge of everything that the other players aren't directing themselves, the GM is in control of the PC's allies and their enemies; they set the stage for everyone else to respond to and play, and are the authority that regulates if the game's rules are being applied fairly.

However, the outcome of the scenes the group will be taking part in is not scripted or purely based on the authority of the GM, instead, everyone uses the rules of the game to steer how it will progress.

Roleplaying Games generally employ dice for this and GGG uses ten-sided dice. Before playing, make sure you own one, two or three **ten sided dice**.

You can get them at any Friendly Local Gaming Store. Just google for one in your area.

Speaking of dice, from now on in the book you'll see that a ten-sided die will be referred to as a 'd10,' such as when instructing you to "roll a d10." Multiple die are referred to by '2d10' (that means two ten sided dice) or '3d10' (three of them) and so on. Sometimes the game will instruct you to roll a 'd5'; that is not a five sided die that you need to go out and buy too, but, instead, a d10 whose result is halved and rounded up.

Some optional charts make use of a d100 - and just like with the d5 - you are not supposed to find one of those for your collection, instead you roll 2d10 having assigned one of them as units and another as tens, with a result of 10 representing a 0, but double tens representing a 100.

Mecha Genre?

That's the real treat of the meal that is **Giant Guardian Generation** - from now on shortened to GGG for everyone's sanity. You must have seen at least one show with Mecha elements for this book to truly speak to you. What the heck is Mecha, you ask? Wikipedia defines Mecha as the Japanese term for fictional robots and vehicles, typically combat oriented, and that's the short story.

The long story is that Mecha are extremely varied, but are generally humanoid, giant and piloted by one or more people. Their purpose ranges from being weapons of war between humans to saviors of humanity against giant monsters from space to embodiments of sleeping ancient gods or even simple disaster relief tools.

But why the use of the Japanese Mecha instead of the more common localized term Mech? Because despite their superficial similarities, Mecha are different from Mechs: Mechs are generally grittier and 'tacticool' in the colloquial tongue, while Mecha generally emphasize drama over realism. Thus, duels between Mecha slowly build up to a climax of dramatic speeches and super attacks instead of being short and brutal, and bitter rivals can duke it out in the middle of a battlefield remaining unmolested by the conflict at large.

That is not to say Mecha can't be realistic. They just generally don't bother too much with realism. There are Mecha shows out there that are surprisingly low on suspension of disbelief or are down to earth with their characterization and plot, instead of bordering on melodramatic. Of course, for every utilitarian bodysuit of armor, there is a galaxy sized robot... But that's the best thing: the Mecha themselves and the Mecha Genre can be whatever you want, you just need to know what that is.

Plus, giant robots are cool.

The GEIM System

The game of GGG uses the GEIM System which stands for Genre Emulation and Immersion Motivating. GEIM emphasizes dramatism over realism, and smooth flow of gameplay over attention to detail. There are many such Systems and other Roleplaying Games out there that serve as wonderful platforms for many kinds of games, from fun hack and slash adventures in the depths of impenetrable dungeons to a deep and meaningful deconstructions of the human condition. GGG happens to be one that specializes in imitating your favorite Mecha anime and manga.

This is because GGG has ingrained Mecha conventions into itself, making sure that nearly anything you've read in a comic or seen on TV is represented in a way that is faithful to the tone of the source material and is simple to understand. This is done while giving as much attention to the robots as to the pilots themselves, ensuring both feel like individual characters of their own, yet greater than the sum of their parts.

Whether you are gunning down bugs in the middle of an alien hive, talking your enemies into surrendering, or just trying to file paperwork properly in the face of mind-breaking tedium, everything is solved one way: the d10. **You roll one (or more, but generally one) d10, add any Modifiers** you have to the roll - a rules manifestation of your PC's skillset - and then **check your result against the Difficulty Number (DN)** of the action you are trying to perform. If your result is equal to or greater than the DN then your action is a Success.

The act of rolling to determine the outcome of a situation is called a **Test**. If you roll more than one die for a Test, then you will be asked to either add the results together or keep the better result, depending on the situation. Some of these Tests will be 'linked' or chained into one another, such as Tests made first to hit a fast-moving enemy and then to check if you've broken past their Mecha's armor, for example. But you always want to roll high; the higher, the better.

Many a time you will have an **Advantage or a Disadvantage to your Tests**, these represent factors that make it easier or harder to succeed without bending the odds too much. **Advantages let you roll an additional d10** at the time of making a Test, and you then **choose the best (higher) result out of the dice rolled**, discarding the rest. **Disadvantages work similarly**, but in reverse, you **roll additional die and keep the worst (lower) result** out of the many presented.

You will get a better glimpse of the game's rules as you start reading the following chapters, but don't worry if some game terms aren't explained right away, by the time you are done with the book everything should be clear.

If you really want to check out a particular rule, check the glossary at the end of this chapter or the quick reference cheat pages at the very end of the book.

Features Checklist

So that you don't go in with the wrong mindset, following is a quick list of what GGG presents to the reader. Take note you can make use of as many of these features as you like and adapt others to better suit your tastes, the best Mecha game is one that you and your playing group enjoy, not the one that I or anyone else says is But do take into consideration that this rulebook works better when you give its style a chance and change the least possible.

What you will find in GGG:

- A streamlined Mecha system that is easily adapted to any kind of game.
- Gameplay that emphasizes both a smooth flow of narrative and tactical gameplay.
- Modular mechanics that can be as simple or as complex as the group wants them to be.
- Balance that allows any kind of PC to be just as good a pilot as all the others.
- A setting with three possible game modes, each being evocative of classic and modern Mecha series.

What you will NOT find in GGG:

- Mecha customization requiring enough mathcraft to mimic an engineering simulator.
- Gameplay that prioritizes narrative control over all other mechanics.
- Tables and charts that need to be referenced while playing the game.
- A system for standalone or one-shot adventures, more like a movie than a TV series.
- A miniatures-based combat system. Individual Mecha are too complex to field them in numbers.

Three Rules

Rulings Trump Rules:

Even though GGG is designed to be relatively airtight system in the kind of games it is designed to run, it obviously can't cover for absolutely every possible situation that comes up at the game table, and it is likely that you will at some point find yourself in a scenario where the rules either don't go or where they defy common sense. In these cases, the GM is encouraged to either make a ruling on the spot so as to uphold the spirit of the rules or ignore the rules entirely and declare what happens instead.

To be succinct: If a player finds a rules loop-hole that allows him to get away with something that no one else finds fun and is undeniably silly, the GM has ultimate authority to say "No." Don't be a jerk. That goes for the GM as well.

Specific Trumps General:

Whenever the text of a character's ability contradicts a general rule of the game, the ability wins. Most PCs will have multiple abilities in their sheets that break the rules in some way. Some are very minor examples, but others are the thing that can turn a weak character into a powerhouse.

It is a good general rule to follow that, if a specific rule contradicts a general rule – for instance, an ability that lets them use short ranged Weapons at long ranges – the specific rule wins.

Always Round Up:

There is some math in this game, and there will be a need to halve a few numbers every now and then or take an average of something or other. Every single time you end up with fractions, you round up to the nearest integer. Which is to say, if you need to halve 7 you don't end up with 3.5, nor with 3, but with 4 as the result.

The Characters

The Players will control the PCs, the ones with the large sheets, that in addition to everything everyone else can do will go out and do battle. Unlike most Mecha shows (or manga, or movies, or what have you) there is no clear singular main character.

Instead, the PCs are an ensemble cast that drive the game forward and are in the spotlight roughly the same amount of time each. That is not to say they all contribute to the story in the exact same fashion or that they all have the same role in the game, just that each one's story is just as important as everyone else's.

The rest of the cast are known as Non Player Characters (NPCs) and are, usually, under the GM's control. The role of NPCs is varied, ranging from playing a support role as family, friends, colleagues, protégées, or bosses to being the foils of the PCs as the game's antagonists, taking the part of grunts, nemeses, and ultimate big bads.

Gameplay Structure

Like the shows it emulates, a typical GGG game includes a string of events where characters develop in personality leading to giant robots beating the stuffs out of each other. A Season is the collective name for all meetings when your group plays GGG, while each individual time you and your friends meet up is called an Episode.

A chain of Episodes within a Season that share one or more themes is called an Arc. Arcs are pivotal to GGG as each of them provides a milestone, after which everyone gains a substantial augmentation to their abilities.

Each Episode is divided into Scenes, which work very much like the ones you probably already know of by name. During Scenes, characters engage in one or more activities and proceed to the next Scene when they're done, and so on. Scenes come in two kinds: Operations and Intermissions. The former are the previously mentioned battles involving Mecha and the latter are activities your characters take part of where the focus is on their lives outside of the battlefield.

During Intermissions all the PCs explore their Genre Themes and develop them to become stronger as people and characters, using a stage preset by the GM as a springboard to let their own imaginations provide the direction for the rest of the action that will take place.

During Operations everyone boards their personal Mecha and proceeds to make things explode instead, making use of their stored Genre Points to unleash the full might of a main character's power against their enemies.

Typically an Intermission Scene doesn't last more than ten to twenty minutes, so you can have multiple of them per Episode, and top it off with an Operation to end the meetup with a bang. You can have another Intermission Scene after the Operation to close it off, or you can start in media res and have the Operation first, as long as everyone has had their own fifteen minutes of fame at least once during the Episode.

Your PC and You

This book will switch between second and third person a lot, and will oftentimes refer to your PC as 'you,' the reader. General statements about the rules or aspects of them will use the third person, while specific talk about abilities the PCs themselves may possess will use the second person.

This is a method that most RPGs employ to help you immerse yourself in your character so that portraying them is easier, not because we think you are your character – or that we endorse anyone who thinks that way. While being really into your character is a lot of fun for some, this is but a humble game that is not going to tell you how much you have to invest into it to have some fun with your friends. With that said, do remember that you are to fill your PC's shoes and decide where they go, who they are friends and enemies with, what they hold dear and what they despise.

Using This Manual

The Giant Guardian Generation PDF takes advantage of being in an electronic format, and replaces the traditional tables of contents and indexes with bookmarks, viewable with any modern PDF reading software.

Chapter One: Introduction is what you're reading right now and there really isn't much to say about it. Just keep in mind that there is a glossary at the end of it in case you want to check out what a specific term means.

Chapter Two: Character Creation is where things start to get going, the chapter will guide you through the steps required in order to make a PC.

Chapter Three: Mecha Construction meanwhile is about creating a giant robot for your PC to ride. Your Mecha is a character of its own right, so it gets a whole chapter to itself just like Characters do.

Chapter Four: Playing the Game contains the rest of the game's proper rules that everyone needs to know. In there you will find what Characters can (or cannot) do and the same for the Mecha.

Chapter Five: Running the Show on the other hand is for the GM to learn inside out. Other Players may read it, of course, and they will probably find it very useful indeed! It just isn't expected of them.

Chapter Six: The World describes in detail three scenarios for setting a game, all taking place in the same world and each with their own characteristics.



System Requirements

Here is the list of things that you will need to play GGG at the table, in addition to at least one copy of this book...

- Two or more friends to play with.
- At least one d10 for each person. One per player and another for the GM.
- Copies of the PC and Mecha Sheets, one for each player.
- Pencils, an eraser, and paper to take down notes.

...While this is the optional but recommended list of things you want to have.

- A quiet place where you won't be disturbed.
- Three to five hours to play at your own pace.
- Snacks and drinks, such as chips and sodas.
- Index cards to pass notes with.

What you Should Know

It should be noted that, as a default, the manual assumes you will be playing either using the provided world setting or one much like it. The examples of the various rules and how they translate to the in-game fiction will sometimes borrow from content that will be exclusive to the world presented in chapter six. You should feel free to reinterpret what a specific rule represents at your convenience should that be the case.

Rules text sticks to generic terms such as Pilot or Mecha, but the descriptions of what said rules might represent in the game world will refer to them as Avatars and Gears, respectively.

That said, here is a brief summary of what the world in Chapter 6 is like: Humanity is in conflict against not one but two groups of mysterious beings not of this world, and not only that, but against itself as well.

At the center of it all is Gygravagnite or Element G, the power source for the Gears that make the setting's Mecha as well as most of everyday appliances.

The extraterrestrials known as the Outsiders seem to have taken an interest in it and systematically hunt down any settlements or sources of Gygravagnite worldwide.

The United Earth Federation and their Gear Armed Forces were no match to them, and before facing extinction they chose to help them shut down civilizations worldwide and keep a tight leash on humanity.

Only the Revolutionary Unified Front stands up against them, thanks in no small part to the technological marvels that are the Mobile Battleship Wagner and the Hiryu Soaring Dragon Fortress, years ahead of the rest of the world.

Meanwhile the few space colonies remaining are facing the threat of the Cryptids, creatures that are born seemingly through spontaneous means and assimilate their environments into themselves, then proceed to do the same with everything in their way. The Clarke Foundation both studies and opposes them, with their own brand of biological Gears.

An Example of Play

To get you in the mood for the rest of the book, here is a typical game session of GGG. Even if this book appears intimidating with all these endless pages of rules, through the rest of the book there will be examples of play made using the world setting presented in this book. In this one, the example is a simple initiation to roleplaying for one of the players and everyone warming up. There is no battle against filthy xenos or infiltration of enemy bases in this example. The PCs are simply test pilots just now being introduced to each other.

The players, their PCs and Mecha are:

- Ingham, the GM;
- Ryu, as Jeff Gons the test pilot of General Z;
- Raymond, playing Blade Farran, at the helm of the Black General;
- Maya, owner of Maria DeSir and her Gran DeSir.

Ingham: This will be your first scene all together, so let's have you three meet for the first time. Within an hour of arriving to the Far West Gygravagnite Research Institute by helicopter, in your case Jeff, or by plane as it is for you, Blade, you two are met by a bearded man in a lab coat and a woman that appears to be about your age at the airport. You've seen him in the news and heard enough to know he's the reason you are here.

Professor Tendo clears his throat. "Hello, I'm Professor Tendo and I am in charge of this place.

This here is Maria DeSir. She will be your acting captain and squad leader." He'll offer a handshake. Maya, introduce Maria.

Maya: I'm a tall and long haired brunette with blue eyes and dressed in casual clothes. Maria gives a small wave, "Hi," and will also extend a hand.

Raymond: Blade has tanned skin of matching black eyes and hair, with the face of someone who is very serious by nature. He's in BDUs and is clearly well-toned. "I'm Blade Farran, pleased to meet you." He shakes Maria's hand firmly but loose enough.

Ryu: Okay, my go. Jeff is excited and a bit nervous, I guess. He's in a shirt and jeans, and is another brunette too, with short spiky hair. He'll greet the professor and captain. "I'm Jeff Gons but just call me Jeff." He'll also give Blade a hand trying to make friends.

Raymond: What is his shake like?

Ryu: Um, lax I think.

Raymond: Blade has a **strong** grip with him.

Ryu: Ow. Jeff doesn't show it but he didn't like that much.

Raymond: Good. Ingham, does that count for the development of my Theme as Rival?

Ingham: Not yet, bully him some more later and we'll see if you get points.

Raymond: Will do.

Ryu: Hey, you don't have to put it like that! And... I'm kind of new to this. Um, am I supposed to be acting when speaking in character?

Maya: You don't have to do more than speak in character to act out your PC. Don't worry if you're the shy type, though do try to loosen up! No one is going to eat you.

Raymond: Or they shouldn't. Some groups may not take kindly to those who don't know the secret handshake.

Maya: If people started biting each other during play, I'd be pretty intimidated too.

Ingham: Ahem. Professor Tendo motions towards a nearby black car, and a suit opens one of the doors for you. "Come on, I'll tell you about this island and show you around the base as we get there."

Ryu: "Oh, but we just got these." Jeff holds up a visitor's pamphlet.

Maya: Maria grins. "Those are all wrong, what we're going to show you is not in a pamphlet."

Glossary

Setting Terminology

Avatar: The name given to the pilot of a Gear to distinguish them from the pilots of aircraft, and the act of piloting is known as Enacting, though some still refer to them to as pilots or drivers colloquially and misname enacting likewise.

Board: The acronym for the Broad Operations Assessment and Reaction Device, and sometimes called 'AI Drone' in place of their abbreviated name: a Board is a war machine entirely controlled by a computer and supervised by an officer who oversees a group of them at once.

Clarke Foundation: The organization in the space colonies tasked with investigating Cryptid Activity.

Cryptid: The unifying term for the strange creatures seen in the Far West Archipelago, suspected to be behind the disappearances and the outbreak of illnesses in Neo Easter II and other areas before the arrival of the Outsiders.

Far West Archipelago: A chain of islands that rose from the pacific in the years after the Ring of Fire Tragedy, it is currently the heart of the resistance opposing both the UEF and the Outsiders.

Gear: An abbreviation of General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robot that replaced the original name in all but the most technical of texts. The one true war machine that maximizes an individual soldier's potential.

Glory: The UEF's next-gen line of Gears, of which only a few exist and most are assigned under a single squad to hunt down and destroy the resistance's Wagner.

Gygravagnite: Usually called Element G or by the specific form it takes after being processed and refined, Gygravagnite is a self-replicating mineral which is highly radioactive and unstable, and a crucial element to the technology in the new world.

Hiryu: A small chain of three islands west of the Outsider mothership. It is the new capital of the Far West Archipelago after it declared its independence from the UEF, as well as the first and last defense line stopping the Outsiders from wrecking havoc on the rest of Asia.

Gear Armed Forces: The UEF's primary army, almost entirely consisting of Gears and support for them, it is strongest in the American continent where Boards are less prolific.

Outsiders: The Alien presence that wiped out most of the spacenoids and got the UEF to surrender in barely over a day, these giant monsters occasionally leave their mothership at Neo Easter II to analyze and tear apart mankind's Gygravagnite-based creations.

PsAICon: The revolutionary thought-interpretation method used by Gears to allow an Avatar a level of control over their machine almost as perfect as the one over their own body.

Revolutionary Unified Front: The RUF, or simply 'the Guerilla', is a group with the goal of taking the UEF's totalitarian regime down and counterattacking against the Outsiders instead of living in fear.

Ring of Fire Tragedy: The event that shook the foundations of the world in 2027, though attributed to an impact event, many other theories circle about these days.

Safe Zone: The cities built by the UEF to keep the civilians where they could see them and to stop them from standing up against the Outsiders. There's only a handful per country, resulting in a very unhealthy lifestyle inside their tightly packed Sanctuary District ghettos.

Soaring Dragon Fortress: The base of operations for the Hiryu's guerilla efforts, producing top of the line Gears capable of standing up to individual Outsiders.

Solar Space Alliance: The primary rival of the UEF before they were decimated by the Outsiders, the few remaining colonies of the Verne cluster keep to themselves and don't meddle in the affairs of Earthnoids or their inscrutable rulers.

Subjugation: The time period in which the Battle of the 23 Hours, the surrender to the Outsiders, and the reorganization of UEF territory took place.

United Earth Federation: The organization that replaced the UN as a peacekeeping organization in favor of a more 'hands-on' approach to maintaining order and protecting their space elevator, and the current rulers of the Earth Sphere with their headquarters being in Boston.

Verne Military Police: The Colonies' other, actually official, Gear-using peacekeeping organization.

Wagner, Mobile Battleship: The world's first flying airship, sporting such technologies unseen before such as true Anti-Gravity, intelligent AIs, and forcefields. It is the RUF's flagship and continually runs itself ragged causing maximum interference in North America.

System Terminology

Action: Something a character does that takes up a considerable amount of time, of which they can only do one per Turn. Actions usually require Tests.

Advantage: A circumstance that can be internal or external that gives a character better chances of success at a Test, allowing them to roll an additional die and keep the better result of the two rolls.

Ally: Any other character or Unit that is friendly to yours. You may designate who is and who is not your Ally at will for the purpose of abilities that depend on it.

Area: Where Upgrades and Weapons are allocated to or held by a Mecha. If an Area is Maimed, all Upgrades and Weapons stored in it stop working.

Attribute: Name of the numerical statistics that define a Character or a Mecha's basic abilities - Fitness, Intellect, Empathy for Characters, with the Mecha having Evasion, Armor, Energy, Threshold, Accuracy, Penetration and Systems.

Chassis: The source of a Mecha's Attributes, or the initial statistics that define what it can and can not do before further modifications to it are made.

Damage: What happens to a Character or Mecha when their Defenses don't suffice to hold Enemies at bay.

Defense: Collective name for the numerical statistics that measure a Character's ability to resist harmful influences.

Archetype: The fundamental Upgrade present in a Mecha that separates it from all others. Every Mecha has one such Upgrade (assigned to its Core at no Cost) and may get further ones by spending UP.

Difficulty Number (DN): The value you check against to see whether your Test succeeds or not. Results depend on whether you meet it or not, and by how much.

Disadvantage: A circumstance that makes it considerably harder for any character to perform Tests, a Disadvantage forces a character to roll twice on a Test and take the worst result of the two dice rolled.

Genre Theme: One of the three running motifs that a PC has and develops through the course of the Episodes, awarding them Genre Points when they meaningfully contribute to the game - the types are Reason, Typecast and Bane.

Duel: When two opposing Units are entrenched in close quarters combat, making it considerably harder for anyone else to attack either of them without harming the other by mistake.

Enemy: Any other character or Unit that opposes yours; you may designate anyone else as an Opponent at any time. Try not to be too much of a traitorous prick.

Enhancement: An improvement to a Mecha's basic starting Attributes.

Experience Points (XP): A measure of a PC's growth as a character. A PC gains XP at the end of an Episode and for every time they gain XP they also receive the same amount of PP and UP.

Genre Master: The game's arbiter, a player with the special role of directing the supporting cast, intervening when there are rules disputes, and keeping the game flowing from one Scene to another.

Genre Points: PCs and the strongest of NPCs possess Genre Points, which add to a Character's Defenses and Initiative, in addition to serving as fuel for Genre Powers during Gear Operations. Once a Genre Point is spent, it is gone, but you refresh them at the beginning of every Episode and for good roleplaying.

Genre Powers: A Genre Power is a unique and powerful ability that requires Genre Points to use, because of this they are anything but commonplace.

Initiative: A character or Unit's place within a given Round's order, with the highest Initiative going first and progressing down to whoever has the lowest.

Intermission: A collection of Scenes that do not involve the use of Gears by default. Though they may do so, they are not planned with Gear combat in mind.

Maim: The disabling of a Gear's Areas to nullify the Upgrades and Weapons it holds. You may choose to Maim an Area when you cause another Gear's Threshold to be reduced to 0, and you choose which Area. The Core may not be Maimed unless it has ejected first.

Match: A Scene in which characters are competing with each other via Opposed Tests, either because it has been engineered to happen that way or the Scene simply turned out that way.

Move: The act of moving a Zone when you take your Action, you must Move before doing the Action proper, and if you cannot take an Action this Turn you cannot Move.

Nature: One of the four archetypal character temperaments available to choose during Character creation, a Nature will provide your PC with an array of bonuses to all Attributes, Plot Armor and a selection of Genre Powers to choose from - the Prodigy, the Ace, the Coordinator, or the Professional.

Non-Player Character (NPC): A bit of a misnomer, since the character is controlled by the GM, but it is different enough from 'real' PCs to warrant a simple distinction.

Operation: A Scene revolving around combat between multiple Gears.

Pilot Points (PP): An abstraction of what a character has learned, how much they have trained, and their general improvement over the course of the Episodes. You spend PP to purchase Attributes, Skills, Defenses and Traits for a PC.

Player Character (PC): A character that is controlled by a player as their extension inside the game.

Plot Armor: A character's security blanket. Plot Armor has three Layers, and their gradual loss places a character closer to meeting a grim fate.

Range: A measure of a weapon's effective area of influence.

Scene: A short time period enough to cover one plot point, or a transition between two plot points. Usually Scenes end when the PCs move from one location to another, a dramatic entrance or departure takes place, or there is a 'timeskip' between events.

Round: The period of time that covers everyone getting a Turn going by the Initiative order. Once everyone has had a Turn, the current Round ends, Tension increases by 1, and a new Round begins. The duration of abilities measured in Rounds is from the perspective of the user, for instance: An effect that lasts one Round ends at the beginning of the user's next Turn, not when Initiative is reset and Tension increases.

Skill: A character's theoretical and practical know-how of an individual subject, measured by their Skill Rank. Skills come in Amateur, Adept, Expert and Master Ranks.

Tension: A bonus to Tests made during Matches and Operations that is equal to the number of Rounds that have transpired thus far, and a bonus to offensive Tests, and representing the wear and fatigue of constant combat.

Terrain: A given section of the battlefield during an Operation, divided into Zones, it may or may not have unique properties that play a role in helping or complicating those within it.

Test: The act of rolling 1d10 plus modifiers (if any) against a given DN, usually requiring an Action. There are many different kinds of Tests, but the majority of them are of the same three basic types - Skill Tests, Opposed Tests and Extended Tests.

Trait: A particular characteristic of a PC that is important enough to warrant a representation by the rules but is neither an Attribute, Skill or Defense.

Turn: Any one character's chance to do something with their Actions during a Round, as assigned by the Initiative order. Turns are divided in Phases to help the character's controller make decisions and conceptualize what occurs in them.

Unit: Used to refer to both a Pilot and their Mecha as a single entity in the game rules.

Upgrade: A single ability possessed by a Mecha, usually defensive in nature and bending the general rules of the game at least a little. Upgrades can only be bought at the beginning of a new Episode Arc or during the Mecha's construction.

Upgrade Points (UP): An abstraction of how a Mecha is augmented through the course of the Episodes. You spend UP to purchase Upgrades and Enhancements for your Mecha.

Weapon: The offensive counterpart to Upgrades. Weapons are pretty self-explanatory and are all unique in some fashion, each having their own Range, Areas it can be allocated to, bonuses to Accuracy and Penetration, and so on.

Zone: An abstraction of the distance that a Mecha can move in a single Turn.



It has been a long time since then, so I don't remember all of what I should. I regret that. But I couldn't risk writing down then what I want to tell you now. At the time, I was a young man. I just wanted an opportunity to make my name somewhere, and get away from the whole mess with my life and livelihood intact. I had always hoped that some day, somehow it would come out on its own. That they would tell you themselves, or that someone else would break the story to the world. But it never happened.

So I'll tell you myself. Because it's been too damn long, and if they want to kill me they can get in line. Cancer. I knew it was coming. Gave me longer than I expected. When I die, this shouldn't die with me.

My aunt on my father's side was Henrietta Tallman. That name doesn't mean much anymore, but in her day she was an accomplished physicist and metallurgist. In 2039, she had published a paper on theoretical high-energy environments, and the equally theoretical materials they could create. I never read it.

But when the biggest discovery of the century happened in 2043, she got a phone call and was off to the FWA. My father had been an honest man, but not a very successful one. Henrietta's position on the Gygravagnite research team pulled our whole family up out of the gutter. I guess I owe her for that, even if I was too young to remember.

And then 2045 happened, and she was gone. It was all so sudden, and my father didn't take it well. But we had been left well off, and benefited greatly from her will.

Years later, I graduated with a degree in African Studies and set out into the world. There was some property down in the United Pacific, just outside of Manila, that had passed on to us in Henrietta's will. We had used it as a vacation home once or twice, and father had always been looking for a reason not to sell it. So I moved into it in the summer of 2066, and started looking for work in the United Pacific.

You have to understand. We had been in the house maybe 4 times since my aunt died. It was very well hidden. I only found it by accident when I was setting rat traps, 4 months after I moved in. It was a safe.

Of course, the first thing I thought of was how valuable it was. How this little bit was worth more money than the safe could even hold. I never even thought about the risk involved, or what had happened to the man it was named after.

The real problem was the book. My Aunt's journal.

I thought that it might contain some stale but important research notes, taken from one of the original researchers firsthand. I thought that this might be worth just as much as the Gygravagnite, maybe more to the right buyer. I was right. God, I wish I wasn't.

I read the journal. More skimmed than read, I should say. I was looking for parts related to her Gygravagnite research, to make sure there was something worth selling in it. I was a dumb kid who didn't have the physics or metallurgy background to understand half of the stuff she talked about. I didn't know.

But I remember enough of it. I remember that one of her friends at the research labs was a Russian Neurosurgeon. I wish I had written down the name. Started with an R, I think. I had thought it strange that a Neurosurgeon had been called in to study rocks.

I remember reading that my aunt's friends had disproved the meteor impact that everyone thinks caused the Ring of Fire Tragedy. Something to do with distribution patterns. It worries me that people still don't know about that.

The strangest part was the last entry. I know what you think when you hear that, like it's going to end with her stopping mid-sentence and with there being blood on the page. There is nothing like that.

But she talks about Gygravagnite being... wave something. It knows when you are looking at it, and how you are looking at it, and it changes. It changes based on how you feel when you look at it, even.

I didn't believe a word of it. I thought the journal was worthless. If I had gotten half a chance, I might have even thrown it away.

But then the suits came. It only took them maybe five hours after I finally opened the safe. They showed up, told me that the contents of that safe were a matter of national security and made it clear in no uncertain terms that I was never to think of it again.

I was scared. Even now, the timing seems just so damn strange. That stuff had been sitting in that house for years, and they had never come for it. But the moment I opened it up, it's like they knew. Which makes me sound like a crazy old man, but it's what I believe.

Anyway, I was pretty shaken at the time. I tried to go back to my normal routine but... the fact that they came for the book made me think that it might not be so bogus after all. And after a week, I couldn't shake the feeling that someone was watching me, or going through my house when I was not home.

I didn't feel safe anymore, so I started looking for someplace else. And the more I looked, the more it hit me what the contents of my Aunt's journal really meant. How much the government was really keeping from us. I didn't feel safe on Earth anymore, so I sold the house and moved up to space the first chance I got.

A lot of people wanted on to the space colonies in those days, but I managed to buy my way up to work as a custodian on Lagrange 2 for a while. I eventually found better work, and then the SSA happened, and things went on from there. I never did go back to Earth since then. Not even for a day.

Looking back, I feel guilty for keeping this all to myself up until now. It's been a long 60 years since 2066, so it's not I like didn't have the time.

Looking back on everything that has happened in the last 20 years, and all the lives that have been lost, I can't help but feel that maybe if I had told the world what I knew sooner things might have gone differently...

I just wish I knew more to tell.

CHAPTER 2



CHARACTER CREATION

Character Concept

Unless you are going to be the GM, to play GGG you will need to create a Player Character. All Player Characters pilot Mecha, no matter whether you pilot for honor, duty, or love and regardless whether your aptitude comes out of your endurance, psychic powers, or DNA you need to keep this constant in mind: your character will sortie to participate in Mecha combat.

Check with your GM every now and then when working on character creation to confirm if the character will fit the game he intends to run like a glove or if you should consider making some changes to make it a better experience for you and the rest, and do not hesitate to ask the GM or other players for help if you are unsure of something.

Before all the mechanics comes the PC's Concept, that is, a single phrase describing the core of your character. This phrase needs to describe who he is and what he does, such as "Royal Secret Agent" or "Charismatic Antihero." You don't get lyrical or go overboard with details, but shouldn't make it too simplistic either. This means that "Genius" is just as bad as "Fifteen Year Old Girl With a Physics Ph.D that Always Wears Blue, has Bleached her hair Blue, has Blue Lipstick, and Laughs Way Too Loud at her own Jokes." Instead of all that, use something like: "Eccentric Girl Genius."



Since PCs are, by default, Pilots or Avatars, they don't need to make piloting part of their concept. Only include piloting in the phrase if you want it to be a very important part of what makes the character themselves, such as for instance "Cocky Experienced Ace Pilot" or "Carefree Wandering Mecha Repairman."

Above all, it has to be a concept that you want to play with for a while and won't regret later. All PCs grow and change over time but you will be playing with yours as-is for a while so put some thought into it for convenience's sake.

A Concept can be spot-on or perhaps somewhat open-ended. Both have their own pros and cons so don't feel bad if yours looks like it is too short or too long, just avoid making it too much like the 'bad' examples above.

A PC concept is not a science - it does not even have a mechanical impact on your character, but it is supposed to help you focus your creative energies from their creation until their retirement and it gives the GM and other players a hint of what to expect from your PC.

Player's Block

If you're stumped for Concepts, take a look at the following list of examples. Don't just use them as they are, but instead take them as inspiration and give them your own twists until you find something you are satisfied with:

- Cocky Experienced Ace Pilot
- Aloof Big Brother Figure
- Aristocratic War Hero
- Bratty Spoiled Nerd
- Carefree Wandering Mecha Repairman
- Rebellious Combat Junkie
- Charismatic Antihero
- World's Most Powerful Cyborg
- Dutiful Modern Samurai
- Eccentric Girl Genius
- Angry Space Marine
- Grizzled Old Veteran
- Hapless Everyday Salaryman
- Party to a Larger Conspiracy
- Power-Mad Technowizard
- Military Brat
- Royal Secret Agent
- Prettiest Face on TV
- Robot Ninja Maid
- Silver Tongued Cultist
- Captain Mom
- Unwilling Conscripted Pacifist
- World's Ninth's Wealthiest Person
- Optimist Young Prodigy
- Scientist in a Strange Field

Natures

Even though all PCs are made unique, characters from the Mecha Genre tend to hail from the same roots: the brash youngster full of potential, the smartass who works better alone, the mentor figure hardened by years of experience, and the team sweetheart that keeps the group together.

These four recognizable terrible stereotypes of cardboard-cut personalities are the building foundations from which more complex characters spring from, and as such they are present as temperamental templates for you to create a unique character that suits your style, under the name of Natures.

Natures have different base characteristics from each other and provide your PC with a starting advantage over others in their specialties. Although PCs from all Natures may excel at all activities they set their minds to training in, their Natures will serve as a helpful starting point, granting benefits in the form of a bonus to their starting Attributes. Choose one of the following four Natures for your character:

The Prodigy

You have a happy-go-lucky optimistic and practical take on life that makes you easy to get along with. People may say that you're impetuous and disorganized, but you like to think that you're a free spirit, unpredictable and good at improvising.

As a Mecha Pilot you have staying power and a powerful offense, with an assortment of tricks up your sleeve to guarantee that you have the right tool for the job at hand. They favor the Champion and Trickster Genre Packages.

Prodigy Attributes:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
6	2	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
2	6	4

The Coordinator

You are a person of profound idealism and a mind set towards the deeper matters of life. You are a person of faith and imagination. Sometimes you are referred to as naive or overly sensitive but you are intrinsically positive and like people. And people like you for that.

As a Mecha Pilot you are always looking out for the wellbeing of others and keeping them away from harm, as well as enabling them to perform better than they would on their own. They favor the Supportive and Protective Genre Packages.

Coordinator Attributes:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	4	6
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	2	6

The Ace

You are an independent, analytical mind capable of complex strategical thought with an utilitarian mindset. There is nothing you cannot do if you set your mind to it. Now if only you had those mysterious so-called 'people skills' in your ever expanding toolset you'd be perfect.

As a Mecha Pilot you emphasize strategy and surgical precision in your attacks, developing a counter to your enemy's style then swiftly moving in for the kill. They favor the Assassin and Scout Genre Packages.

Ace Attributes:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	6	2
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
6	4	2

The Professional

Your hard work and dedication makes you a great asset to many a team, and you are only demanding from others because you yourself are so reliable. Others may call you inflexible or even boring, and you often wish these people placed as much importance into teamwork and responsibility as you did.

As a Mecha Pilot your specialty are stratagems that encourage teamwork and team cohesion under your leadership, as well as tricks that disable or mess with the enemies' own plans. They favor the Director and Controller Genre Packages.

Professional Attributes:

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	4	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	4	4

Customizing the Character

Once you have a Nature, the next step is to customize it to your liking by selecting **Attributes, Plot Armor, Skills and Traits**, all of which help you resolve conflict during Intermissions. **All PCs start with 30 Pilot Points** (or PP) these serve as a form of currency outside of the game proper that may be spent however you wish as the Player to grant them additional talents and further separate them from the norm, by spending these points you may purchase bonuses to Attributes, plus Skills and Traits for your PC.

Character Attributes

Attributes describe in very rough terms the raw talents of a character. They define a character's physical, mental and social capabilities and contribute to all Tests. Attributes are thus just as important, if not more so, than focused Skill training.

Attributes are measured by the Modifier they grant to Tests. Some Natures start with better Modifiers in some Attributes than others, and thus have a higher maximum potential regarding how good they may get at tasks involving the Attribute in question.

In summary, Attributes are representative of the character without being too open-ended, distinguishing the squints from the socialites and the gymnast from the surgeon.

Fitness

Fitness measures a character's physical ability and helps them pull off feats of might and vigor, or simply impressive gymnastics.

The character with low Fitness is likely skinny, overweight, or handicapped in some way and not very good at traditionally macho heroics like cutting down faceless mooks, carrying princesses off into the sunset, or holding down their drinks.

The character with high Fitness lives a healthy life and could just as well be an exercise nut, as they could be a professional that can make a living out of piledriving people into submission.

Intellect

Intellect denotes whether a character is smart, in the sense that it handles being knowledgeable plus a dose of worldly awareness. Note that Intellect does not correlate directly to education, as a character might just have poor book learning abilities but still have enough wits to spare in tricking everyone around them.

Generally speaking, however, those with low Intellect tend to barely know enough to get by, and aren't very curious about learning about new things either.

Characters with high Intellect are much more critical and objective in their views, and usually believe that knowledge is power.

Empathy

Empathy helps a character perform well socially. The empathic character can tell exactly who he should talk to, how to talk to them, and surprisingly has the tendency to make more friends than enemies.

The low Empathy character is a mix of brash, oblivious and annoying, leaving it up to the player to choose their own brand of poison. Such characters tend to either be easily led by people better endowed at the social arts or are immature to the point others would rather ignore them.

On the other hand, you have the high Empathy character: savvy at social-fu and very likely a person of many friends with just as much influence as themselves, or maybe they are just the likable type, whom others can't help but pour their life stories out to.

Awareness

Awareness keeps someone attuned to their surroundings, being not just perceptive and memorious but also possessing an empathic understanding of other people. With Awareness one can tell a lie from the truth from body language or through recalling small contradicting details.

Those ungraced with a good Awareness tend to blunder into traps – literal or otherwise, and aren't very good at putting themselves in another's shoes.

The character with highly ranked Awareness can predict and read the actions of others and is difficult to surprise. High Awareness makes for great investigators, photographers, and people pretending to be psychics.

Willpower

Willpower is a combination of a character's toughness, composure and morale that helps them keep their feet on the ground against things that wish they rather didn't.

One with low Willpower is frail and lacks the self-control needed to stand firm in the face of mind-shattering abominations from beyond the stars, or eventually caves in to pressure from the typical used car salesman.

Characters with high Willpower are not only aware of how it is important to keep one's head cool in the face of danger, but can also keep standing up after a hit that would have knocked out the average person.

Resources

Resources represents how well grounded a character is from an economic and social standpoint, representing connections, material wealth, and the general stability that modern life in a city demands.

Low Resources means having no one to turn to in a time of need and little in the way of a Plan B after a series of unfortunate events leave you without a home and a job.

Meanwhile someone with a high Resources score is never in financial troubles, knows who to talk to when something needs to be done *now*, and people will be more than eager to do them a favor if it means potentially getting one back later.

Attributes by the Rules

Attributes take the form of a Modifier to your Tests. When performing a Test during a Scene you roll 1d10 and add to the result your Modifier from the appropriate Attribute, then compare it against the Difficulty Number of the task you are trying to achieve. If your result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number, you have succeeded at what you were trying to do. Should this Test be made against another character, the Difficulty Number is equal to their corresponding Defense. This means you want to roll high and have high Modifiers to your Attributes. This is doubly important when you consider that your Defense and Plot Armor values also come from Attributes!

Attribute Purchase Costs

Desired Item	First Purchase	Second Purchase	Third Purchase	Fourth Purchase	Fifth Purchase
Fitness, Intellect or Empathy	2 PP	4 PP	6 PP	8 PP	10 PP
Awareness, Willpower, or Resources	1 PP	2 PP	3 PP	4 PP	5 PP

Modifiers to your **Attributes may only be bought up to five times for each individual Attribute, with each providing a +1 increase to the Attribute in question**, and their cost depends on how many upgrades to the same Attribute you have already bought. **Each purchase is going to be more expensive than the last.** The first time you purchase a +1 to your Empathy Attribute, it will cost you 2 PP, the second time it will cost you 4 PP, and so on. This increase in costs **does not apply to other Attributes**, meaning that, as by the previous example, should you wish to purchase a +1 to Fitness after raising your Empathy, it would cost you 2 PP and not 6 PP, because Modifiers to Fitness had not been purchased a priori.

Because Enhancements are so powerful, Characters may not purchase more than **three total Enhancements per Episode Arc**. That means they can start with three, can get up to six during the second Arc, and so on. They can spread said Enhancements through several Attributes or stack them all in one place, as long as they keep to that one limit.

Boys, be Ambitious!

But what do these numbers mean? Here's what a particular score in any Attribute can signify to the game world in a way that is easy to notice and readily observable by other characters who get to know the Attribute's owner a little.

0) Nonexistent.

An Attribute this low makes for a character that is no longer functional. They might be dead, insane, imprisoned or worse.

1-2) Poor.

The character is either impaired in that attribute or really doesn't have any scrap of natural talent and doesn't care enough to change that.

3-4) Mediocre.

The character is unexceptional, and, while they're not particularly bad, they're easy pickings for another who knows what they're doing.

5-6) Good.

The character either has a solid natural talent or a considerable amount of training, enough to stand out from the crowd.

7-8) Notable.

The character is distinguished among peers for their abilities and likely practices at it often, being recognized as an above average individual.

9-10) Outstanding.

The character has achieved a level of capability only obtainable through impressive natural gifts *and* extensive practice.

11+) Masterful.

The stuff of legends, the character is a genius the kind that is born once every several centuries. If put to use, such a level of ability will earn its owner a place in the history - or at least the Guinness' World Records - books.

If an Attribute gets to the Masterful level, something only possible to specific Natures and with specific Attributes, it should be relevant to the story - they're record breaking masters of their domain after all, that should get them noticed!

Defense and Plot Armor

Your Defense, along with your Plot Armor, keeps you safe from other people trying to injure or affect you in various ways, as the DN that others have to beat with their Tests if they want to harm you.

Your Defense is a combination of your reflexes, ability to read the moves and motives of others, and quick thinking, **its value is equal to your Awareness plus 5.**

All PCs also have Plot Armor to mark how resistant they are to outside influences. Whenever any harm is done to your character, you are dealt **Damage to your Plot Armor** depending on the source. Your Plot Armor signifies how much Damage you can take before the lights go out.

Plot Armor is measured in Layers, of which every Character has three. These slowly track Damage as it progresses from a bruise to a flesh wound to a broken bone. **Your Willpower is how much an individual Layer of Plot Armor can take in Damage** before breaking, and all Layers share the same endurance.

When you take Damage you **remove a number of points from the topmost Layer**, one once it is out of points you move on to the next Layer of Plot Armor. Having fewer Layers gradually makes you weaker until the third and last Layer is gone, at which point you go down with it. Damage dealt is not permanent, and will heal with time, so instead of erasing your values you should only change the number to the left of your Plot Armor, reducing it by the appropriate amount.

Naturally Adaptable

Natures are there not to tell you what are the only kinds of characters you can make, but to give you a starting point. If you feel their starting Array of Attributes is restrictive, ask the GM about using this optional rule to let you shuffle their values around:

You can switch the values of Fitness, Intellect and Empathy with each other. And you can also switch the values of Awareness, Willpower and Resources with each other. You can do only one of these per character. This works differently for Professionals, who can instead choose two of either Fitness, Intellect and Empathy or Awareness, Willpower and Resources to give one of the chosen Attributes a starting bonus of two and take those points away from the other Attribute.

This way a Prodigy may trade in their Empathy for Intellect if they want a more cunning but aloof character, or switch Willpower with Awareness if they would like to be more laid back and observant, at the price of their typical endurance and energy.

Character Creation Outline

Once you have an idea of what it is you'd like to play, you need to start filling in the details with a combination of hard rules and roleplaying hooks. This chapter goes through the steps required to finish creating your PC in the recommended order to make the process as streamlined as possible, but you should feel free to retrace your steps and fiddle with things until you feel satisfied.

Step 1) Starting Nature

The first real step towards completing that pretty character sheet you've got is to choose one of the four Natures. Each one will give your Character a default set of starting abilities and helps define their personality and aptitudes.

Step 2) Basic Customization

Your PC has 30 Pilot Points (PP) to customize him or her. You can increase the starting array of Attributes from their Nature, give them a more defined set of Skills, and other, more ubiquitous, features from a selection of Traits. After that, calculate the Character's Defense and Plot Armor.

Step 3) Personal Genre Themes

Go a little bit deeper into who the character is and what you want to do with them during the game, by selecting one Theme for each category: a Reason, a Typecast, and a Bane. Roleplaying these Themes will grant you Genre Points.

Step 4) Genre Powers

You can use the Genre Points gained during play to become much stronger during battle, breaking stalemates in your favor and saving allies from the brink of death, among other effects. A new character begins every session with a single Genre Point.

Step 5) Finishing Touches

Write everything down in your character sheet. This section also has a questionnaire for you to provide the little quirks and perks of your PC that may not have an impact on the rules of the game but help shape them as a human being.

Skills

Skills are the combination of the knowledge and training in a specific field a character has. Being more narrow in focus than Attributes, they define a character's areas of expertise to fair greater extent. The way they work is rather simple, when you make a Test and one of your Skills would apply **you gain either one or two Advantages to said Test** depending on how skilled you really are. An Advantage lets you roll two dice instead of one, and you keep the result that is better from the two. With two Advantages you roll three dice instead, and specific circumstances might grant you more of them.

When you purchase a Skill you must choose one of the four levels of skill available: **Amateur, Adept, Expert or Master**. Depending on the Level, you may also need to choose one Specialty for said Skill - a single subject within the Skill's broad portfolio to focus in. The Amateur level represents the bare minimum of talent and knowledge required to perform just on a small part of what a Skill can do, **Amateurs gain an Advantage when using that skill's chosen Specialization**, but receive no benefit from it the rest of the time. Adepts of a Skill are well learned and practiced in every possible use of the Skill in question with no preferences, thus **Adepts always receive one Advantage**. Experts are those who have both a solid know-how of the Skill in question but are particularly good at one of its divisions. **Experts receive two Advantages with their chosen Specialty, and one with all other uses**. Then there's the Masters in both theory and practice of the Skill, the very best of the best, **Masters gain two Advantages to every Test with the chosen Skill**.

If you do not like the Skills from the list, then you may make up your own and discuss with the GM what areas of expertise this new Skill would cover. Examples of such Skills would be some branches of Sciences or Humanistics that do not have an obvious skill for their applied use, and Skills devoted to individual ways to make a living.

Keep in mind not all custom Skills are viable in every campaign. A Skill for the sole purpose of being a successful shop owner is not going to be very (or at all) useful in a game based on the Wagner from the example setting world without some creative thinking. You may only create one custom Skill for your character.

For the purposes of piloting giant robots no Skill is needed. Piloting ability is integrated into the statistics of the Mecha itself. Your expertise handling a sword or being the best jet fighter pilot around won't help your piloting. Since GGG wants to represent the Mecha Genre as a whole and there are a myriad of ways in which you can control Mecha, GGG has separated a character's Intermission and their Operation mechanics entirely and left it up to the user's imagination how they are linked.

Skill Purchase Costs

Amateur Skill	Adept Skill	Expert Skill	Master Skill
3 PP	5 PP	7 PP	10 PP

It should be noted you can upgrade from a level that costs less to one that costs more by spending the difference in PP after the Skill has been acquired. If you jump from Amateur to Expert (first passing through Adept, if necessary), then your chosen Specialty remains the same.



Athletics

Encompassing one's physical fitness and training, athletics applies to all those situations in which a considerable amount of physical prowess is required. The character trained in Athletics is not going to be flat-footed when he finds himself chased by assassins and in need to climb a wall in a hurry, swim across a river, or long-distance jump from one rooftop to the next.

Athletics Tests always use the **Fitness** Attribute.

Possible Specializations:

Acrobatics, Climbing, Parkour, Running, Swimming.

Possible Advantages:

Being on stimulants, high performance bike, playing on your 'home turf.'

Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to climb a sheer slope, running around debris, swimming against the current.

Sample Tests:

Jumping from one rooftop to another (DN 10), a foot chase (DN Contested Athletics), crossing the English Channel (DN 15).

Craftsmanship

Maybe you're an excellent painter, or the fastest mason alive, or perhaps the long lost son of MacGyver. The craftsman is able to create and repair small physical objects with the genius necessary to accomplish the feats at a greater scale, such as in architecture or engineering. Craftsmanship related Tests are usually Extended in nature.

Craftsmanship uses **Empathy** to Tests when creating a work of art, requires **Intellect** when working on complex mechanical plans, and **Fitness** when doing simple routine work like fixing up a broken table.

Possible Specializations:

Carpentry, Chemistry, Cooking, Demolitions, Poetry.

Possible Advantages:

Quality ingredients, a reference library, specialized equipment.

Possible Disadvantages:

Distracting noises, an improvised work area, terrible base materials.

Sample Tests:

Building a tree house (DN 10), Engineering a deep space probe (DN 15), composing an epic Pulitzer-award piece (DN 20).

Combat

The character is trained in the many ways in which one can make someone else come back home with a bruise, or worse. Combat represents brute strength, well-honed marksmanship, or even practical knowledge of strategy and tactics depending on the. Two people engaged in a fisticuff will use Combat to determine the winner, but so will two generals trying to control their troops more effectively than the other.

Fighting generally benefits from **Fitness** rather than **Intellect**, however the more theoretical uses of Combat will use the latter instead.

Possible Specializations:

Chess, Gentlemen's Duels, Revolvers, Strategy, Swordsmanship.

Possible Advantages:

Being on stimulants, attacking from surprise, attacking from the high ground.

Possible Disadvantages:

Taking on someone armed while unarmed, shooting targets under cover, shooting while you are trying to drive a vehicle.

Sample Tests:

Attacking another with a physical weapon (DN Defense), engaging another in a chess duel (DN Contested Combat), breaking down an old, wooden door (DN 5).

Deception

Knowledge in nothing less than the art of bluffing. A combination of fast-talk, telling convincing lies, and a fair degree of acting skill. Its uses are, thus, broad in scope from pretending to be someone else to seducing a hapless millionaire into marriage. Note that putting up an act that doesn't actually do anything but get other people's attention is the domain of the Presence skill instead. Deception involves actively trying to get something out of someone rather than amused or confused looks at the idiot running their mouth.

Deception generally uses **Empathy**, though **Intellect** can apply in the case of more elaborate and impersonal scams such as forgery.

Possible Specializations:

Bluffing, Disguises, Forgery, Intimidation, Seduction.

Possible Advantages:

Victim is desperate for what you have to offer, impersonating your identical twin, conning someone full of themselves.

Possible Disadvantages:

Your face was on the news recently as that of the culprit, faking an accent in a language you barely know, trying to fool a wide audience.

Sample Tests:

Convincing a guard that you just forgot your ID, running a pyramid scheme scam, intimidating another with empty threats (All DN Contested Awareness).

Diplomacy

You're an able negotiator and can help people solve matters peacefully, when possible. Diplomacy expresses a sincere desire to win someone over. It can be used to calm down an angry person, rally a crowd to follow your lead, or seduce someone you fancy, but the interest in doing so must be genuine. It should be noted that since Diplomacy is, usually employed to show good will towards the person who needs to be convinced, it is entirely possible the recipient of the message won't need to make a Contested Test themselves if the explanation given was good enough. The Willpower Test should only be performed by characters who stubbornly refuse changing their views. Failing to meet the Diplomacy Test with their Willpower does not necessarily mean they are convinced, either, they could just be giving up the discussion temporarily.

Diplomacy almost always uses **Empathy**, though **Intellect** may be used to drone on about exactly why you are right, and **Fitness** could be applied to demonstrate why others would want to be on good terms with you, for their own good of course. The first alternative is harder to pull off, however, and the second is just as likely to cause you additional trouble rather than help.

Possible Specializations:

Etiquette, Hagglng, Intimidation, Peace Talks, Seduction.

Possible Advantages:

Target is easily bribed or blackmailed, the other person trusts or fears you.

Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to sweet talk multiple people at once, convincing someone who dislikes you, terribly inappropriate clothing.

Sample Tests:

Getting a few free drinks from someone you just met, making an emotional appeal to the jury, negotiating for a cease-fire (All DN Contested Willpower).

Finesse

Employing flexibility and hand-eye coordination over standing power and might, Finesse is a much better Skill of choice for pickpocketing, juggling and walking on a tight-rope than it is for running a marathon.

Finesse always is paired with the **Fitness** Attribute since slipping out of manacles or picking a lock can not be an act of social savvy or mental acuity.

Possible Specializations:

Balance, Escapism, Juggling, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing.

Possible Advantages:

An object easy to palm, quality breaking and entering tools, target is distracted.

Possible Disadvantages:

Handling large objects, restrictive clothing, watchful paranoid eyes on object of choice.

Sample Tests:

Diving for cover when a firebreak breaks out (DN 5), cautiously mugging a purse (DN Contested Awareness) cracking open a state of the art safe (DN 15).

Electronics

Electronics as a Skill distinguishes those who not only know how to use equipment and gadgets electronic in nature, and who are also able to learn how to use new tools as they go, from the masses that still treat them as if they were powered by gnomes inside. You may use Electronics as a replacement for other Skills by having a computer do all the work for you, within reason, but doing so will take more time than if you did so yourself, for the most part.

Unless you're using said equipment to communicate with someone else - in which case you would Test **Empathy** - Electronics is an **Intellect** based Skill.

Possible Specializations:

Artificial Intelligence, Communications, Computer Hardware, Hacking, Military Technology.

Possible Advantages:

Access to a supercomputer, task is easily automated, excellent internet connection.

Possible Disadvantages:

Computer is old or otherwise subpar, the task is tedious and the computer easily screws it up if left on its own, slow internet connection.

Sample Tests:

Looking up simple information (DN 5), hacking a system that another is guarding (DN Contested Electronics), programming your own personal assistant NPC (DN 15).

Humanistics

Humanistics represents not a philosophical current but an academic level of education with an emphasis on social and behavioural sciences. Which is to say, those that study people. Humanistics corresponds to rolls made to research a subject, appraise an antique, and so on. Take note that a high skill level in Humanistics does not necessarily mean the character is older than others, they could simply have actually paid attention and retained what they learned in school, in addition to reading a book or two. Take note this is for purely theoretical knowledge, and applying it will usually require the use of another Skill - a psychologist needs people skills, such as Diplomacy, and not just book learning to get others to open up for therapy, for instance.

Academics will use the **Intellect** Attribute for all Tests barring the most exceptional and unlikely of circumstances

Possible Specializations:

Archeology, Economics, History, Law, Psychology.

Possible Advantages:

Access to a government database, campus library, or a custom internet search engine.

Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to research an unusually obscure topic, uncooperative client or patient, identifying an object in very poor condition.

Sample Tests:

Figuring out whether a case has a legal standing or not (DN 5), identifying a Picasso original (DN 5), deciphering an ancient text in a forgotten language (DN 15).

Investigation

The investigator is a gatherer of information and the sifter of that which is true or useful from that which is noise or a lie, not only noticing physical things that others don't but also intuitively knowing that something isn't quite what it seems. You may use Investigation to try and find a secret passageway in the creepy mansion, or figure out that the blood found at the murder scene does not match that of those who were allegedly present, or bar-hop asking if people have seen a particular missing child. It is important to note that trying to get information out of people with Investigation is done via manipulative methods, and is therefore rather different from using Diplomacy to do so, in which the character is straightforward.

Investigation uses **Awareness** at all times, since it is less about finding new information (which you obtain through other Skills) and it is more about interpreting details over a period of time.

Possible Specializations:

Contact Calling, Crime Scenes, Dream Analysis, Interrogation, Puzzles & Riddles.

Possible Advantages:

Unrestricted access to area, gear and databases, a team to help you notice things or bounce ideas off of.

Possible Disadvantages:

Subjects are unwilling to aid you, looking for impossibly small objects or clues, dealing with planted evidence.

Sample Tests:

Fishing for simple information from your list of contacts (DN 5), searching for well hidden or disguised items (DN 10), getting someone to speak by tricking or intimidating them (DN Contested Willpower).

Medicine

The old and proud tradition of keeping other people alive and in good health. With it comes a good dose of knowledge about the capabilities and limitations of the human body and mind. The most obvious and common use of Medicine is to diagnose and treat illnesses whether they are physical or mental, but you can also use it in place of other skills such as Craftsmanship or Diplomacy if you are dealing with a subset of it such as pharmaceuticals or veterinary medicine.

Medicine needs **Intellect** in both its theoretical and practical purposes.

Possible Specializations:

Diagnostics, Forensics, Pharmaceuticals, Psychotherapy, Veterinary.

Possible Advantages:

Helpful assistants, Stable and cooperative patient, Access to family history for diagnosing.

Possible Disadvantages:

Treating a patient who is in critical condition, uncooperative, or with multiple contradicting symptoms.

Sample Tests:

Diagnosing a patient (DN 5), First aid (DN 10), Eye surgery (DN 15).

Presence

Sometimes all you want is to make sure you get people's attention, Presence does exactly that. When you want to impress others with a performance of song, fast talk, or to make sure people are listening to the elaborate speech you wrote you will want to use Presence.

Presence will receive full benefits from **Empathy** the grand majority of the time, with **Intellect** only being applicable for trying to confuse people with the abuse of jargon or buzzwords, and **Fitness** being only useful for minor tricks of athletics.

Possible Specializations:

Carousing, Greek Drama, Playing the Guitar, Speeches, Technobabble.

Possible Advantages:

Rehearsed previously, appreciative public, plenty of money to make merry with others.

Possible Disadvantages:

Terrible ambience, poor quality microphones or other such equipment, unfriendly public.

Sample Tests:

Distracting others with blatheromancy (DN Contested Awareness), performing a very difficult piece (DN 15).

Sciences

The scientist is a character who has achieved a higher level of education than the norm and is familiar with the scholarly lifestyle pursuing one or more of the "hard sciences". This Skill corresponds to rolls made to solve a mathematical problem, identify a rare breed of animal, and reciting the table of elements by memory. Much like with Humanistics, Sciences is neither necessarily indicative of an older character.

Sciences will use the **Intellect** Attribute for all Tests barring the most exceptional and unlikely of circumstances

Possible Specializations:

Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics.

Possible Advantages:

Supercomputer on request, Quiet working space, Lots of reference material.

Possible Disadvantages:

Subject matter of research is obscure, Analyzing a sample in poor condition or contaminated, Dealing with impossible geometry the human mind cannot comprehend.

Sample Tests:

Identifying a strange animal (DN 5), Accurately predicting the weather for the next week (DN 10), Figuring out if and when a meteorite is going to make impact (DN 15),

Stealth

The stealthy character is not just adept at the art of 'how not to be seen,' but is also capable of being seen and yet remaining unnoticed. Stealth is used to camouflage and hide oneself from the eyes of others as well as to shadow another and conceal one's presence in a crowd. The character with Stealth cannot just disappear from another's perceptions without actually hiding first, just to note.

Stealth is a **Fitness** based Skill, for obvious reasons, and it would require an unusual scenario for that to change. Oftentimes, Stealth is used in Mixed Tests first before the action that is attempted to be taken stealthily.

Possible Specializations:

Camouflage, Crowds, Shadowing, Silent Movement, Smuggling.

Possible Advantages:

Poor lighting, distracted target, soundless environment such as a vacuum.

Possible Disadvantages:

Distinguishing clothes, noisy equipment such as body armor, paranoid target.

Sample Tests:

Sneaking up on someone (DN Contested Awareness), the ol' ace in the hole (DN 5).

Generalists and Specialists

There is one subtle aspect of Mecha fiction - and most fiction in general - that does not often agree with reality itself: the portrayal of skillsets.

In the Mecha Genre, most Characters are masters of the field that they focus in, to a ridiculous degree. A person who is "good at sports" will be good at all of them at once, the team's smart guy is an omni-scientist who is a master of every field of applied and theoretical sciences, and no one bats an eye when a painter is so good at 3D modeling that she can recreate the entire Louvre in just a few minutes.

Of course there are exceptions, soldiers that undergo training are not taught how to fire just a single kind of gun without ever touching on how unarmed or melee combat works, but in most scenarios this is not how real people work. A chef is not a master of demolitions, a samurai is not a marvel gunman, and a chessmaster is not going to be commanding armies like a general.

An option to choose between both kinds of skill sets is thus presented. You may keep the generalist approach and enjoy all the benefits of an absolutely preposterous level of talent with any chosen Skill **OR** you may choose to use Specializations for a cheaper cost but have it harder in other subsets of it for the sake of an unique Concept or, well, simple realism.

Survival

Survival is a broad skillset representing a talent to fend for yourself without many of the commodities of modern life, from knowing what to eat and where to sleep to being able to find your way out of a maze and staying on the good side of wild beasts.

Survival is usually related to **Intellect**, though if it is used to pacify animals will use **Empathy**.

Possible Specializations:

Animal Handling, Foraging, Hunting, Meteorology, Navigation.

Possible Advantages:

Domesticated animals, camping equipment, personal in-depth knowledge of the area.

Possible Disadvantages:

Hungry or scared animals, no equipment whatsoever, unknown area.

Sample Tests:

Finding food and water (DN 10), pacifying animals (DN Awareness), figuring out the weather for the immediate future (DN 5).

Vehicles

This proficiency is for operating all sorts of vehicles that *aren't* giant robots. Whether it is to sail, fly, or drive this Skill has got your transportation needs covered. You can use Vehicles to not just operate but also to fine-tune, perform maintenance, and pimp out your machines.

Vehicles depends on **Fitness** when you are the operator, but it uses **Intellect** when you're working on one or more of them.

Possible Specializations:

Helicopters, Motorcycles, Planes, Sailboats, Tanks.

Possible Advantages:

A concept model vehicle, luxury or otherwise high quality tools.

Possible Disadvantages:

Driving through unhelpful terrain, toolbox is incomplete or tools are in poor condition.

Sample Tests:

Tailing, escaping, or being in pursuit of one or more vehicles (DN Contested Vehicles).

The Power of Money

Resources can be used to replace nearly any Skill you do not have, as long as you have the money, friends, or political power to back it up.

In Rules terms this means you can Test Resources in place of another Attribute and Skill combination to have someone else do your work, but being successful will inflict a Disadvantage to all further Resource Tests for that same Episode.

But there is a caveat, however, in that the use of Resources is only possible if you have enough time to actually go look or call for help. Some urgencies might increase the DN, others might outright make using Resources this way impossible.

Miracles

Miracles are more or less superpowers, a combination of ESP, nanomachines, and psychic aptitude. They allow one to manipulate the environment, the self, and even the minds of others. Their effects range from the subtle pull of gravity to the fiery brutality of pyrokinesis.

But of course, that power comes at a price. These special powers always have a side effect harmful to the user, from a painful headache after trying to read someone's thoughts to your own act of pyrokinesis exploding in your face.

Miracles work like Skills do, with the side effect that they have a limited use. **Each use of a Miracle will deal Damage to your Plot Armor by 1 plus another point per each multiple of 5 you meet with the result of your Test.**

Miracles are open ended and broad in what they can do, they also are each the equivalent of several Skills at once. **They are purchased in the same manner as Skills** (choosing one of the four levels of aptitude) such **no character should have more than one Miracle.**

The effects of Miracle Skills take an Action to manifest and require another Action every Turn if they are to be maintained at length.

Unless otherwise noted, if you are using a Miracle Skill, you cannot be using a mundane one in the same Test.

Electricity

The Electricity Miracle Skill is a powerful one with both subtlety and raw power. It can do anything from recharging a cell phone to commanding a computer with a thought, and of course it can zap bad guys left and right. All these uses require you need to have the target within line of sight.

Electricity requires **Intellect** when doing anything that isn't throwing lightning bolts all over the place, which takes **Fitness**. It may also be used in combination with the Electronics Skill.

Possible Specializations:

Thunderstorms, Powering Objects, Frying Electronics, Tesla Performances, 'Tuning in' to Digital Communications.

Possible Advantages:

Cooperative weather, High-conductivity materials, Anything that would make an Electronics Test easier when operating remotely.

Possible Disadvantages:

Target is surrounded with lightning rods, Low-conductivity materials, Anything that would make an Electronics Test harder when operating remotely.

Sample Tests:

Recharging a battery (DN 5), Throwing a lightning bolt (DN Defense), Charging the local atmosphere with a few hours worth of electricity (DN 20).



Force

Similar to the psychic power known as Telekinesis, the Force Miracle controls kinetic forces between objects, its domain being essentially the control of local gravity. Force may be used to send items (or people) in a particular direction, to change the trajectories of projectiles, an even to temporarily fly. Force may affect targets within your immediate vicinity only - usually up to your line of sight.

Force has multiple uses, the subtler approaches will use **Intellect**. While Tests that try to apply the brute force method, make use of your **Fitness**.

Possible Specializations:

Deflecting Projectiles, Fine Manipulation of Objects, Levitation, Pulling Objects to your Hand, Telekinetic Strikes.

Possible Advantages:

Local gravity is in your favor, subject is cooperative, object is very light or has little mass.

Possible Disadvantages:

Local gravity is working against you, trying to reflect bullets back to their source, object is heavy or has a large mass.

Sample Tests:

Gently moving an object or willing person your size in a single direction (DN 5), altering the course of bullets coming at you just enough so they miss (DN Contested Combat Test), creating your own gravity well (DN 20).

Matter

Through this Miracle a character is able to manipulate solid objects with a touch, anything from complex metallic alloys to a raw chunk of uranium. Doors can be reinforced, swords can be sharpened... And yet turning lead into gold remains near impossible. As a general rule doing anything to objects that are large, complex or huge in mass will be ludicrously difficult to achieve.

Intellect will let you improve anything of solid substance, break it down, reshape it or even make a duplicate. It may be used to boost the Craftsmanship Skill, allowing it to skip on Extended Tests to create complex objects almost instantly. Matter has no effect on living beings, at most it only works on dead tissue, and it cannot alter anything electronic and have it still function after the fact.

Possible Specializations:

Weapons, Food, Duplication, Money, Prosthetics.

Possible Advantages:

Raw materials to create your duplicate with, Object to be transformed is similar in function and origin to the one you desire, Object you are trying to break is very light, of simple structure, or has little mass.

Possible Disadvantages:

Trying to create something out of nothing, Transforming one object into another that shares little or nothing with it, Trying to break an object that is heavy, of complex structure, or with a large mass.

Sample Tests:

Granting any one item an Advantage to all tests made with it for a Scene (DN 5), Breaking down reinforced steel (DN 15), Anything that you could use Craftsmanship for.

Phantasm

You possess the power to craft illusions and mirages that can be just as convincing as the real thing. You must concentrate and clearly visualize (or an equivalent when fooling other senses) what it is you want others to perceive – or what it is you don't want them to perceive, if you are trying to render an object or person invisible to their naked senses. Your illusions are no more or less than implanting sensory perception into the victim so hard that the effects might as well be real. This can probably be explained by experts as some sort of quantum mechanics shenanigans, probably using magnets. Phantasms may be projected within your immediate vicinity only - usually up to your line of sight.

Phantasm Tests make use of **Intellect** and need to beat the Defense of onlookers to be believable. At the cost of suffering a Disadvantage, Phantasm may be used as a mental attack, crafting an illusion so realistic they can force others into truly feel their effects (like shooting someone with an illusionary gun) and they will suffer damage equal to how much the Defense DN was passed by.

Possible Specializations:

Sounds, Disguises, Invisibility, Light Shows, Nightmarish Visions.

Possible Advantages:

Appropriate environment, victim is in a suggestive state, user spends considerable time visualizing the phantasm before manifestation.

Possible Disadvantages:

Unbelievable conditions, victim suspects something is wrong, user has difficulty concentrating.

Sample Tests:

A swarm of buzzing bees no greater in size than yourself, imitating another's looks and voice, changing the writing on a letter (All DN Defense).

Probing

The human mind is a fragile thing, and you may exploit the raw unfiltered subconsciousness of people. Particularly concentrated efforts can let you manipulate them with the art of suggestion without them ever realizing it. No matter the application, You must have line of sight with the subject, and must concentrate on reading them for as long as you continue to attempt using this Skill.

At its simplest Probing will let you read surface thoughts as words and images by testing it together with **Awareness** versus a Willpower Test from the subject. At a Disadvantage you may also play the role of voice inside their head with **Empathy**, asking them questions they will answer to and convincing them that listening to the devil on their shoulder is a good idea, you may even try and force their imaginations to see things they usually wouldn't. Repeated failed attempts, unsubtle questions, and generally suspicious uses of this Miracle will provoke suspicion on the subject, and once they become paranoid they will start to look for something to blame it on. And you better be damn sure they will think it is your fault whether there is any actual evidence to their claims or just a gut feeling.

Possible Specializations:

Daydreaming, Introspection, Self-Doubt, Spreading Mistrust, Stirring Anger.

Possible Advantages:

Subject is unconscious, has good reason to do what you are suggesting or to question what you want to ask them.

Possible Disadvantages:

Subject is very focused on the task at hand, decidedly against the suggestion, or even of exploring a question.

Sample Tests:

Reading another's mood, finding out what accomplishment another person is most proud of, giving a sleeping victim nightmares (All DN Contested Willpower).

Providence

Providence is one of the trickiest Miracles, governing what seems to be little more than dumb luck and doing rarely anything that can be observed and interpreted. The truth is that Providence edges and pokes at people's fortunes, granting its practitioner the ability to manipulate the threads of Karma through good or ill fortune. In addition, people whose lives seem to revolve around particular concepts may see themselves empowered when they embody or pursue them.

Users of Providence mostly rely on **Awareness**, as the perception and manipulation of Karmic connections needs a combination of careful observation, sharp intuition, and being one of those genre-savvy types. Blessing someone is a Help Test, while cursing them is a Disruption Test. Otherwise, it may be used to enhance **Resources** Tests related to finding a juicy tip from a contact, finding the person you were just looking for, or otherwise to make serendipity smile in your direction.

Possible Specializations:

Blessings, Curses, Reasons, Typecasts, Banes.

Possible Advantages:

The subject of either a blessing or a curse is obviously doing any of fulfilling their Reason, acting to their Typecast, or falling prey to a Bane, the subject of a blessing has made a promise or vow and will be helped to upkeep it, the subject of a curse has betrayed the trust of a friend and will suffer it when facing them.

Possible Disadvantages:

Blessing someone who really has it coming to them, cursing someone who has done no ill and has only helped other folk.

Sample Tests:

As Help or Disruption Tests, Detecting another's Themes (DN Contested Willpower), Meeting a celebrity (DN 10), Winning the lottery first prize (DN 20)

Sight

You possess uncanny Extra Sensory Perception that provides you with subtle clues about specific things and warns you of impending danger, but it expresses itself in odd manners – perhaps you feel a certain pressure from things you believe to be important, or you can hear the ringing of a bell when something is threatening you, or maybe information comes to you during lucid dreams.

Sight's workhorse is **Awareness** and it can be used to improve any kind of Test using that Attribute, whether any Skills are also being applied or not.

Possible Specializations:

Surprise Attacks, Premonitory Dreams, Sensing Lies, Noticing Hidden Passages.

Possible Advantages:

Anything that would make an Awareness Test easier.

Possible Disadvantages:

Anything that would make an Awareness Test harder.

Sample Tests:

As all Awareness Tests.

Somatics

Somatics induces the body of the user (or of another person) to overexert itself and achieve superhuman physical feats. Anything from superstrength to senses sharper than those of any living creature, passing through supernatural regeneration of wounds. The reverse effects may be applied to others Offensively as well. All uses of Somatics require the target to be touched.

Somatics Tests are Help Tests, and have no Action cost if used on yourself. Another possible use for Somatics is for Healing Tests to heal yourself or another by replacing Medicine. Offensive Somatics Tests replace the Combat Skill and deal internal injuries to the target, or may be used to inflict Disadvantages as the Disruption Action - your choice. All three uses are keyed to **Fitness** as the Attribute of choice.

Possible Specializations:

Healing, Inflicting internal wounds, Physical Boosts, Crippling and Weakening.

Possible Advantages:

Anything that makes touching someone easier.

Possible Disadvantages:

Anything that makes touching someone harder.

Sample Tests:

As Help, Healing, Offensive and Disruption Tests.

Speed

Perhaps more accurately described as "The Miracle that slows down Time", Speed just so happens to look like a wholly different thing to everyone who isn't the user - they seem to be impossibly fast. Through Speed you accelerate your brain and heartrate, turning what other people feel as seconds to minutes as far as you are concerned.

Speed can be used to enhance any **Fitness** Test, whether it is using another Skill or not, and may even perform a more controlled use through **Intellect** to slow things down for a bit, effectively hitting a real-life pause button. The only thing this pause does is let you think peacefully, and attempting to move or affect the world outside your head in any meaningful way will cause things to get back in motion again.

Possible Specializations:

Athletics, Finesse, Combat, Vehicles, Pauses.

Possible Advantages:

Anything that would make a Fitness Test easier, quiet or calm surroundings when trying to make a pause.

Possible Disadvantages:

Anything that would make a Fitness Test harder, noisy or chaotic surroundings when trying to make a pause

Sample Tests:

As all Fitness Tests, Taking a break for one minute in what is one second for everyone else (DN 5), doing the same but for one hour in the lapse of one minute (DN 10).

Temperature

This Miracle Skill enables control over the unseen thermal forces around your person, for a multitude of effects. Temperature is easier to control according to your mood. If you are calm, it is easier to make the environment colder and if you are excited, then heat proves simpler to generate. You need to be within an environment with oxygen in order to use this power, and it will not work even in a partial vacuum.

For as long as you are in proper conditions, you may perform an **Empathy** based Test to influence your surroundings, generally no further than your Zone. You may use this Skill to damage others physically with flames or try and freeze them, but it will require the environment to provide a source, such as a bonfire or windy frost. Attempting an Offensive Test in an improper environment will be at a Disadvantage. You may create these conditions on your own, but you need to stop maintaining the effects to make your attack, effectively using them up.

Possible Specializations:

Gases, Environment, Liquids, Offensive Tests, Solids.

Possible Advantages:

A suitable environment (such as a sub zero temperature room or one that is on fire), being in the proper emotional state (such as being soothing or violent) or affecting materials that are naturally suitable (such as nitrogen with cold or flammables with heat) according to the specific application of the Skill.

Possible Disadvantages:

Improper environment, emotional state, or materials for the effect you are trying to achieve.

Sample Tests:

Acting like a glorified microwave or air conditioner (DN 5), actually making people feel uncomfortably hot or cold (DN 10), creating the conditions for an Offensive Temperature Test (DN 15), you generate so much heat or cold that you can make an area freeze over, or melt a small amount of metal (DN 20).

Traits

Further down the specialization spectrum you have Traits, focusing on what your character does with their life or the natural gifts independent from training that they have always had. Traits are simpler than Attributes and Skills in that they are a 'buy and forget' deal, thus each Trait has a single fixed cost before its description. Once bought, it stays there, not to be upgraded any more again in the future.

Because they have such a wide variety of effects Traits are separated into various categories, some of them with common rules to themselves, then there's a category of catch-all General Traits.

It is important to note that **many Traits only make sense when taken at Character creation**, and as such the GM may disallow from taking them later on without coherent justification - a character could become Alluring in the middle of a Season due to facial reconstruction, for instance, but they cannot become beautiful just *because*.

Certain Traits are (Focus), these require you to choose a singular topic from their portfolio when you buy them and are very similar in function to Specialized Skills. **These Traits may be taken multiple times**, but every time you must choose a different Specialization for them.

Much like with Skills, it is possible you may want to possess one that is not present in this book. Should that be the case, present an alternative Trait to your GM using those presented here as a guideline, and they might allow it if it fits the campaign scenario and doesn't make anything else obsolete.

This should, in most circumstances, only be for Specialized Traits that grant Advantages or negate a Disadvantage during certain circumstances that do not involve Mecha.



General Traits

Animal Person

Cost: 3

Effect: All Empathy-based Tests are at an Advantage when trying to influence the behaviour of applicable animals.

Description: Usually seen in animal trainers and a veterinarian or two, take note that while this makes handling domesticated (or domesticable) animals a simple task, trying to make friends with a swarm of angry wasps about to murder you remains impossible.

Common Sense

Cost: 3

Effect: Once per Episode the GM may discreetly inform you that you are about to act on an idea that is not very well thought-out or give you a clue as to where you should go next if you are stumped for ideas. You should probably pay attention when they do that.

Description: You are fortunate enough to possess that which is the most uncommon of all senses, making you question things that other people take for granted and enabling you to make well-grounded decisions on your feet.

Intimidating

Cost: 3

Effect: Attempts to make people afraid of you (generally with the Diplomacy or Deception Skills) are at Advantage.

Description: You're scary. Maybe it is the way you look at people or your unnerving voice, or perhaps you just look the part of a murderer. Fortunately, a scared target is more likely to do what you want... Usually.

Make Do

Cost: 3

Effect: You may negate up to one Disadvantage from Tests using improper tools or no tools at all.

Description: You are used to working without all that fancy expensive equipment and can make the best of what you've got, and are better suited to improvising than most.

Performer (Focused)

Cost: 3

Effect: You gain an Advantage when Testing Presence with your chosen performance.

Description: You have rehearsed yourself a routine for a specific kind of performance.

Possible Specializations:

Beethoven, Celebrity Impersonations, Shakespeare, Stand-Up Comedy, Swan Lake.

Polyglot

Cost: 3

Effect: When presented with a Language other than your mother one for the first time, do a DN 10 Intellect Test. If you pass, you are fluent in that language. This does not work with languages that are supposedly dead or alien in nature.

Description: Though the world at large still uses the English Language, the benefits of being able to speak multiple languages in an era of worldwide communication are not to be underestimated.

Danger Instinct

Cost: 5

Effect: You gain an Advantage to Awareness Tests when anyone would try to catch you off-guard.

Description: Better safe than sorry. Some call it gut instinct, others call it attention to detail, and while there are those that would go as far as to call it paranoia, you don't really care what it's called as long as it continues to keep you in one piece. Remember your mantra: better safe than sorry.

Gamer (Focused)

Cost: 5

Effect: This Trait gives you an Advantage when experience with your obsession of choice would be beneficial. Such as when playing it.

Description: Maybe you're just good enough at playing chess, poker or trading card games to make a living from tournaments, but maybe your talents will be useful elsewhere. Who can say when the President is going to need someone in their cabinet well versed into the dietary habits of the classic mythological Manticore?

Possible Specializations:

Cat's Cradle, Chinchirorin, Dungeons the Dragoning 7th Edition, Super Gear Wars, Texas Hold'em.

Gumshoe

Cost: 5

Effect: After a failed Awareness Test, you may turn it automatically into a success once per Episode.

Description: You always find any information that you need. Or at least, enough clues to point you in the right direction.

Ingenious

Cost: 5

Effect: Once per Episode you may gain two Advantages to the use of a Skill that is applied in a way that is inventive or off the wall.

Description: Creative does not even begin to describe you. You are always doing things that no one else would even consider, and coming up with new solutions to old problems is always fun!

Jaded

Cost: 5

Effect: Willpower Tests made to resist being frightened or revulsed are at an Advantage.

Description: You are largely desensitized to things that others would find shocking or worse, and you've probably had more than your fair share of awful circumstances. Cynicism and a nihilistic outlook on life are complementary but not at all obligatory.

Shrewd

Cost: 5

Effect: Resources Tests made to manipulate or get past the machinations of institutions are at an Advantage.

Description: You are politically minded, keeping track of the political scene in your own time, and you know who to call to get something done in the urban jungle of red tape.

Streetwise

Cost: 5

Effect: Resources Tests made to maneuver, investigate or somehow make use of seedy places are at an Advantage.

Description: When people have business in a shady part of town, it sure comes in handy to have someone know the how and why of life on the streets, its perils and resources, and its rules and jargon.

Superior Immune System

Cost: 5

Effect: All Willpower Tests to resist diseases or drugs, whether recreational or not, are at an Advantage.

Description: There is something to be said of people who are able to drink rat poison as if it were a light drink. You probably don't even remember when was the last time you caught the flu too.

Weapon Expertise (Focused)

Cost: 5

Effect: When performing a Test relating to knowledge of, or when fighting and armed with the chosen weapon, you gain an Advantage.

Description: There is a single category of weapons that you are a guru in, and you know everything there is to know about their craft, maintenance, use and history.

Possible Specializations:

AK-47, Composite Longbow, Chemical Explosives, Katana and Wakizashi, Revolvers.

Alluring

Cost: 7

Effect: You are at an Advantage when socializing with someone who could be attracted to your character.

Description: Maybe you have really good fashion sense, maybe it is your charming personality, or perhaps it is your unique and distinctly sexy voice. Whether you want it or not, people are attracted to you.

Hard Work and Guts

Cost: 7

Effect: Once per Episode you may choose to ignore any and all Disadvantages you would suffer until the end of the current Scene.

Description: It truly is a wonder to behold the power of human determination, of performing at one's best when under the worst amounts of pressure, of rising to meet a challenge when no one would expect you to overcome the odds. It is not that you are impervious, but instead you choose to continue fighting, even if anyone else would have long given up.

Jack of all Trades

Cost: 7

Effect: Once per Episode you may choose a single Skill and become proficient at the Amateur level in it until the end of the current Scene.

Description: You're a real Johnny do-it-all. Maybe you're an exceptionally curious person, a voracious seeker of knowledge, or just a guy with too much free time to burn – possibly a combination of the three.

Genius

Cost: 7

Effect: You may substitute any other Attribute with Intellect for the purposes of a Test, and if successful you may not use this Trait again during the same Episode.

Description: There is no limit to what your cunning is capable of. Through inventiveness and careful analysis, you can quickly find novel approaches to old tasks, allowing you to get the most job done with the least amount of effort.

Living Database

Cost: 7

Effect: If your character could reasonably have been exposed to some factoid or experienced something in the past that you as the Player don't know about or remember yourself, the GM should refresh your memory about it.

Description: Your memory is a thing of wonder that has been further cultivated by extensive learning through books, conversation, and other methods. Obscure names, dates and other minutiae rarely escape you and you are able to recall events with near-photographic detail.

I was Here all Along

Cost: 10

Effect: Once per Episode you may Test either Stealth or Deception against a DN of 10 to reveal that you were present in a Scene that did not include you, either in hiding or disguised as an unassuming background character as appropriate to the Test in question.

Description: You are insidious and sneaky, everywhere yet nowhere, and generally in places someone else wishes you rather weren't there.

Leadership

Cost: 10

Description: People look up to you. You can inspire and motivate others even if they barely know you – maybe you've got a gift for words and a magnetic personality, or maybe you're just plain terrifying and people are more afraid of disappointing you than losing their lives.

Effect: You may Test Empathy and Presence once per Episode to grant any number of people of your choice an Advantage to all Tests for each multiple of 5 met by the result until the end of the current Scene.

Lucky

Cost: 10

Effect: Once per Episode you may reroll any one failed Test of your choice during an Intermission, and grant yourself an Advantage to the reroll.

Description: Look, a penny! Sometimes things just work in your favor, actually they do so pretty often, and for absolutely no immediately discernible reason. Were you born under a star of fortune? Are you the reincarnation of the most karmically favored person in existence? These and sillier questions may or may not actually get answered.

Psychic Power

Cost: 10

Effect: You reduce all the Damage taken from using your Miracles to one, regardless of how well you do with the Test.

Description: Miracle users are already scary enough, but the ones that have strengthened and honed their talents further - through science, discipline, or stranger means - are closer to monsters than human beings.

Spirit of Steel

Cost: 10

Effect: You may substitute any other Attribute with Willpower for the purposes of a Test, and if successful you may not use this Trait again during the same Episode.

Description: If you don't succeed at first, try again harder. If it hurts, you get up again and ask for seconds. There is nothing to look forward to but victory, because failure is not an option.

Deathblows

How your character fights is not really all that important to the game's rules. Your character could use a gun, or whack people with a war fan, or use electric yo-yos and it all means the same thing. Most of the time, anyway.

Deathblows are the thing that spices up combat, as special techniques that add unique effects to the results your regular Combat Test. **Before rolling an Offensive Test, you may call out a Deathblow to grant the Test in question its effects.** Deathblows usually apply to Combat Tests, but you can make use of them with anything that intends to take out someone else's Plot Armor.

A Deathblow is putting extra effort into one of your assaults on an enemy to make it more effective. Sometimes the point of a Deathblow is to impair counterattacks, other times to make your opponents go down faster.

A Deathblow can be anything from deciding you want to unload your whole cartridge at once to chucking your melee weapons like shurikens to using the environment inventively and somehow setting everything on fire.

Each Deathblow may be used a number of times per Episode equal to its Cost, which you may choose as anything between 1 and 5. Multiple different Deathblows can be combined into a single Offensive Test, though **it costs you one Disadvantage to the Test for each Deathblow beyond the first.** Even then two or more Deathblows of the same type cannot be stacked this way.

Defensive

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: For each multiple of 5 you meet with the result of the Offensive Test, you inflict a Disadvantage to all Offensive Tests made against you for a Round.

Description: They say that the best defense is a good offense, and through the years all sorts of to apply this battle philosophy have been documented. Anything from a curtain of suppressive fire, to a parrying and counterattack-based stance, to enveloping yourself in flames so that no one will dare touch you.

Finisher

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: If you do at least one point of Damage when using this Deathblow, double the Damage dealt.

Description: Aiming to strike vital areas, the purpose of this technique is nothing else than to turn an incapacitating move into an outright lethal one. It is not very good when used without first making sure you can significantly hurt your foe, though.

Multitargeting

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: Your Offensive Action targets any number of Enemies at once.

Description: The more, the merrier. You attack multiple enemies at once, switching your rifle go into the good old spray n' pray mode, or maybe you get fed up of playing nice and resort to explosives.

Precise

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: Your Offensive Test gains double the benefit from Tension.

Description: An and extremely accurate technique that uses speed and volume of fire, suitable for bursts of rapid fire and flurries of blows.

Stunning

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: If you do at least one point of Damage when using this Deathblow, then any further Offensive Actions against the same target for a Round gain an Advantage, plus yet another Advantage for each five points of Damage dealt.

Description: Your purpose is not to vanquish thy foe, oh nay. You're here as both a distraction and enabler, and by the time they realize that you fight dirty with nets, chains, gas and other nasty tricks - so that others can finish what you started.

Tearing

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: If you do at least one point of Damage when using this Deathblow, then for the next 1d10 Rounds the Enemy takes 1 additional Damage at the beginning of their Turn. Multiple, separate uses of Tearing will stack, causing additional damage each Enemy Turn.

Description: A vicious technique for softening targets, and a nasty tactic when employed by someone who is also good at fighting defensively.

Assets

Assets represent meaningful traits to roleplaying that a character has but aren't intrinsic to their person, or, in other words, conform their possessions, reputation and contacts. Because things are more interesting when something happens than when it doesn't, a PC may have an Asset solve a problem or achieve an objective in their stead, if the GM allows it.

But there is a catch: **Each time you use an Asset to advance the story, you must do a DN 20 Resources Test. Should you fail, then your Asset accrues one Debt Point by default, plus another Debt Point for each multiple of 5 you missed the DN by.**

The GM must impose this Debt onto your PC at a moment of their convenience in the near future, in the form of returning the favor. The difficulty in returning the favor to pay off your Debt is directly proportional to the amount of Debt Points collected from your failure, as below:

Debt Points	Importance of Favor	Example of Payback
1	Something simple that should be able to be solved in a single scene.	Covering up for a friend on a boring shift they want to skip so they can have fun instead.
2	A task that, though simple, poses a degree of annoyance or risk to your character.	Missing out on an important meeting to attend an event that makes good face with the public in general.
3	Something you're not really okay with but that you'll do it for the asset.	Stealing back the goods you've just bribed an important government official with.
4	The character would never do this if not for the fact that the asset is at stake.	Giving up on the perfect chance to kill your most sworn enemy because your protégé is in mortal danger.

These favors always ask the pilot to go out of their way for the sake of the Asset. A favor in which the Asset is benefitted as a side effect of furthering the player's goals is not a proper favor. **Should you fail to perform this favor and get rid of your Debt, you lose access to the Asset for the rest of the Episode Arc.** If you neglect to help in the first place or worse; the loss of the Asset is permanent until you make amends.

Furthermore, **if the Debt obtained this way is equal to or higher than the Cost of the Asset, then the Asset may not be used again until the Episode Arc has ended even if you do pull it off.** You've overwhelmed them with your requests, and you're only helping them out to remain in good terms. If the Debt obtained this way is lower than the Asset's Cost, then it is reset to zero immediately after you have paid your favor back.

Generally speaking the use of an Asset will let you keep things going and will only cause you a minor inconvenience for it - or none at all if you have the Resources and luck to back it up. They are like a get out of jail free card, except you will have to pay a price later.

Ally

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: As per all Assets.

Description: An Ally is a single NPC that is a close friend of the pilot, generally another pilot with a mech and of a power comparable to the party. Allies are not part of the party for a reason: They have their own complications and motives, and for every time that they lend you their help they will expect you to give them a hand. If necessary, Allies are considered Rivals in power, as per the NPC creation rules.

Fame

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: As per all Assets.

Description: Fame means that the pilot himself is an influential figure others want to have on their side, or at least don't want to cross in public. This will open many doors, but if you're not careful it may also close just as many.

Organization

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: As per all Assets.

Description: The pilot has a group watching their back or that have sworn their loyalty to the PC, an Organization has members that individually don't even come remotely close to an Ally's worth, but as a group prove to be far more that. And they're all loyal.

Wealth

Cost: 1 to 5

Effect: As per all Assets.

Description: The PC is owner of the universal facilitator to one's needs and desires: Money. It can come in the form of a stable cash flow or considerable liquid assets. Just remember that being wealthy tends to make you lose more friends than make them.

Anomalies

In a similar vein to Miracles, Anomalies are Traits for those characters who can do things that should by all means be impossible, and can do them with greater frequency than Miracle users to boot.

Unlike other Traits, Anomalies do not have a Cost in PP, but they come with a hefty downside to them. You may not have more than one Anomaly.

Aerial

Effect: You can fly with complete freedom of movement. In addition to the obvious benefits to your mobility this means a Disadvantage to all Tests made to harm you physically. Whenever you would take Damage, you take twice that amount instead.

Description: You can move in three dimensions for any length of time – even hovering in place – without requiring a running start or the favor of the winds. Your flight speed is equal to your regular speed on foot. The disadvantage to this is that you are very light and frail, and anything that actually harms you will hit you like a truck.

Cyborg

Effect: You are immune to damage from vacuums, and most toxins or illnesses. plus you do not need to eat or sleep - though doing so does helps you keep your sanity. You suffer a Disadvantage to the use of Empathy with any Test, as well as to any Awareness Test made to contest Diplomacy or Deceit.

Description: Despite being part machine, you pass off as a human pretty well for the most part. You have a solid edge over regular fleshfolk as far as survivability is concerned, but your augmentations have the unintended side effect of making you both less able to connect to others, and more vulnerable to emotional manipulation.

Nightmare

Effect: As an Action, you may make a Contested Empathy and Presence Test against the Willpower of any number of characters in your presence. Those who fail to beat your result will take Damage equal to the amount they missed the DN by. Any one character may not be affected by this more than once per Episode Arc. Any uses of Empathy for purposes other than intimidation are at a Disadvantage.

Description: There is something terrifying about you, likely a combination of unsightly deformities and being really creepy. Whatever the reason, you can strike fear into the hearts of children and adults alike. All it takes is a very suggestive look, but flashing a smile with two rows of pointy teeth will work too - if you have those.

Reanimating

Effect: At the end of a Scene in which you took Damage past your first Layer of Plot Armor, you are fully healed back to normal. But for each Layer beyond the first healed this way you suffer a Disadvantage to all Tests for the rest of the Episode.

Description: You are more than just difficult to put down, you will come back from the dead and regenerate all your wounds given time. Alas, this is an extremely painful process, and the bigger the wounds you have to heal the more you will wish that you didn't have this 'gift'.

Technobane

Effect: Once per Episode you may disable any modern piece of machinery or electronics no larger than yourself in your presence, causing it to malfunction for the duration of a Scene or outright breaking it until repaired. All Tests using the Electronics or Vehicles Skills, or those involving Equipment Traits are at a Disadvantage.

Description: Gygravagnite reacts to your presence, and it does not like you. Simple modern appliances tend to malfunction around you, and you have a small degree of control over your 'power', being able to release the Element G equivalent of a short-lived EMP by concentrating on it. Thankfully, you do not have any effect on anything bigger than yourself, such as a Gear. That could be really nasty.

Wild

Effect: You gain an Advantage to all Awareness Tests and uses of the Survival Skill. You may speak with Earth animals, translating sounds they make into simple and short sentences in your head - think "Master is angry" or "Timmy fell down the well". This grants you an Advantage to interactions with them. All Tests using either of Intellect or Resources that don't fit the previously mentioned criteria are at a Disadvantage.

Description: Ever since the first Cryptid sightings, there have been reports of 'wild childs' in some of the lesser populated islands of the Far West with a surprising ability to survive in the wild, in spite of radiation, and communicate with the little wildlife in the area.

When Everyone is Super...

As befitting their name, both Miracles and Anomalies do not belong in the average setting, and even when they do they should not be common. That said they do have a place in the Genre and even the provided scenario in chapter 6 has a few rumors of psychics and monsters in human form.

These options may or may not be allowed depending on the kind of story that the group wants - A gritty war drama would not be much of one with characters who can fly, heal wounds with a thought, and read enemy thoughts.

When allowed, both Miracles and Anomalies should be relevant from a story standpoint to retain their flavor of uniqueness. Maybe the Foundation grafts Cryptid organs into an Operative, or Hiryu really is trying to raise kids to be psychic, or perhaps a RUF member manages to escape from Zone 11... But changed.

Equipment

What would a futuristic game be without dozens of technological gadgets, badass but slightly impractical weaponry, and vehicles that defy our knowledge of physics with their stunts? Well, it would be a simpler one, for starters.

Managing inventories is a task so slow that it is even a chore in computer games, where all it takes is a few clicks. Imagine how much of a chore it can be if the PCs have to go out and restock supplies every Episode, while managing their money and making sure the bills don't go unpaid. Worse, when it comes to buying mundane items, which computer or house or cell phone model should you go for? These are valid concerns in real life, but they will also rarely affect the game meaningfully.

On the other hand, the gadgets, weaponry and vehicles are pretty cool and worth the hassle in keeping track of them, so GGG seeks to balance realism and attention to detail with cinematics and simplicity.

Firstly, a PC with a stable income (such as those from Hiryu and Verne) is assumed to have a respectable income, enough to cover their basic needs and splurge on a few luxuries here and there. Furthermore, they are assumed to always have goods and services accounted for and available in their home – unless it is relevant to the plot that they don't have them.

Secondly, all equipment that fulfills a similar function is assumed to be the same for the purposes of the game mechanics. All cars drive the same by the rules of the game and all guns shoot the same by default. **Equipment only stops you from suffering a Disadvantage to your Skill Test** on tool-requiring tests – unless they are specially good, but more on that later.

Thirdly, a Character trained in a Skill is assumed to have what they need to do their jobs as far as more ubiquitous equipment goes. A medic should have access to at least a first aid kit, a computer technician to their laptop, and a stunt driver should have one or more things to drive. In case of doubt, address with your GM just what your PC has on hand or can request.

And finally, anything else that you want to have, specially if it would get you out of a jam, requires a Resources Test to see if you either have it on hand or if you can buy it.

Otherwise, the rules here deal with special items that grant unique advantages or otherwise boost the character that wields them. However you **may not own more total Equipment Traits in PP than your Resources Attribute times two**. Further Equipment may be obtained through roleplaying and the use of Assets such as by borrowing it from an Ally, but it is likely going away at the end of the Episode in that case. It stops working, goes missing, has to be legally returned to its owner, or something to that effect. **Unless you pay for your Equipment in PP, it is not going to be a permanent feature**. If certain items are consumed or useless after being used and you have spent PP to obtain them, you may acquire a replacement at no PP cost.



Ether Drive (Focused)

Cost: 3

Effect: Choose a Miracle at the Amateur Level when you take this Trait. You may use said Miracle as if you were trained in it, but only with the chosen Specialty with no other possible use, and the Ether Drive will act as a Proxy taking the Damage in your stead. The Proxy cannot be repaired with any kind of Heal Test, and once broken only time will make it function again.

Description: After endless testing, the Clarke Foundation has found a way to weaponize the harvested organs of Cryptids. They will not tell you what exactly the items in question are, but their origin is obvious to anyone who has dealt with the original creature in the past. Its not like the put much effort in trying to disguise alien eyes as 'experimental lenses' anyway.

First-Aid Nanomachines

Cost: 3

Effect: The use of First-Aid Nanomachines will make the user Test Medicine as a Healing Test. Repeated use of First-Aid Nanomachines in the same Episode are likely to have side effects - a Failure to meet the DN will Damage the patient equal to half the amount they missed the DN by.

Description: Soldiers often cannot afford to wait until a field medic has made their way to them, and the invention of fast-acting medical Nanomachines has single-handedly increased survivability rates by 40% since their inception and have since made their way into the civilian market.

Omni-Counter

Cost: 3

Effect: The use of an Omni-Counter is an Extended Electronics Test that takes approximately one minute to finish, with a DN of 10 for vaguely gathering data in the immediate vicinity, and a DN of 15 for more precise readings.

Description: A ridiculously complicated and fidgety device that sacrifices simplicity for versatility. The Omni-Counter can detect energy emissions ranging from the ever popular Gygravagnite radiation to tracking motion and honing onto life signs with utmost precision. Really, pretty much anything that is invisible to the naked eye can be detected, you just need to be able to tell the darn machine what it is looking for – which is harder than it seems.

Body Suit

Cost: 5

Effect: You are immune to the harmful effects of vacuums, heat and cold. The Body Suit will also impair any attempts to physically harm you with a Disadvantage.

Description: The Body Suit is the name given to the smaller and more practical versions of astronaut suits used these days by workers in the SSA. These are sealed and will protect the wearer from the dangers they face while working outside the colony itself. The Body Suit provides 12 hours' worth of air supply and the obligatory waste disposal system that you need to work in space for any length of time.

Energy Shield

Cost: 5

Effect: Once per Episode and during your Turn you may, as an Action, Test Electronics to inflict one Disadvantage to all Tests trying to do harm to you and any allies who remain in the same zone, plus another Disadvantage for each multiple of 5 met by the result. Maintaining the Shield requires more Actions to be spent keeping it up, and if you let go to do something else the number of Disadvantages it inflicts decreases by one. You may resume maintaining the Shields afterwards, but it will keep the current amount of Disadvantages instead of refreshing it back to full power.

Description: Employed only by the SSA's Military Police, who don't seem to have trouble figuring out how to make portable forcefields, Energy Shields are a backpack that can be thrown down and commanded to spring a one-way see-through barrier for cover. The tactical value of such items is immense, and multiple VMP officers armed with these are known for mounting remarkably powerful anti-Cryptid barricades until the Foundation gets there.

Masterwork Tool (Focused)

Cost: 5

Effect: Choose a Skill when you take this Trait. All Tests made to perform a task this item would be helpful towards are at an Advantage for as long as you have it on hand. If applicable, this tool is a Proxy as well, such as a plane.

Description: You are usually considered to have what you need to use your Skills, but it is possible to acquire inherently superior equipment that makes things so much easier. This can be a masterwork bastard sword that has been passed down from generation to generation within your family without losing its edge, a closet full of disguises for every occasion, or simply a book that serves you as an inspirational muse to craft your poetry.

Digital Aide

Cost: 7

Effect: You gain an Advantage to all Electronics Tests if your Aide has access to the same terminal you are trying to operate. Furthermore, you can leave your Aide performing Tests on your behalf (and using your own Attributes) while you are doing something else as a Proxy, sort of allowing you to be in two places at the same time.

Description: Gygravagnite-based AIs can fit into an USB drive specifically made to be their home, being much better than any other AI on the market by a considerable margin. Such Aides are programmed to be able to fit to a variety of jobs, and can actually speak and react intelligently to prompts, though they do not have any semblance of a self. Digital Aides respond to voice commands of their owner and can be customized to have an on-screen avatar, as well as one of several personalities to add some color to their speech patterns. Once ownership has been set, the Aide will remain hidden and not respond to anyone who is not the owner. Only a technologically savvy person will be able to even recognize that the USB has something inside.

Invisibility Device

Cost: 7

Effect: Once per Episode you may Test Stealth at an Advantage to hide from prying eyes even if they are all focusing on you right now and there's no immediately visible cover. You are invisible to the naked eye of anyone who fails their Awareness Test until the end of the Scene, and they must first spend a full Action just trying to find you with another Awareness Test against your previous Stealth Test as the DN in order to do anything to you.

Description: It used to be that the modern ninja required a complex combination of smoke bombs, dry ice, the one ring, and all sorts of aces under the hole. No more, now there are actual portable devices to grant their user invisibility, in the shape of watches, cloaks, or whatever suits your fancy. Note that you can still be detected through hearing, heat signature, or by simply being bumped into.

Personal Facility (Focused)

Cost: 7

Effect: Choose two Skills when you take this Trait. For as long as you are within this Facility, any Tests related to the task it was designed to facilitate involving said Skills are at an Advantage.

Description: Now you too can have your own office and staff of competent assistants, secret basement laboratory, or maybe just a very comfortable couch with custom-made joysticks that enhance your leetsauce videogame skills! You are free to design what this Facility is for and what it contains, within reason. Having a mountaintop skull-shaped fortress will certainly require more than just this Trait, which may or may not be "a miracle, and not the type you can buy with PP" depending on how ridiculous it is.

Icarus-Class Powered Armor

Cost: 7

Effect: The Icarus-Class inflicts a Disadvantage to all Tests trying to do you physical harm and lets you fly, with enough power for the length of a Scene. You require a running start and considerable height, then need to continuously move and may not take any sharp turns for the duration of its effects. Mecha are unaffected by this Disadvantage, being far more mobile and not to mention taller. Otherwise, the suit of armor is only going to give you an Advantage to Athletics Tests.

Description: This winged suit of armor is the mainstay of the Verne Military Police for the times when Danube-Class Boards would be impractical or simply overkill. It covers almost the entirety of the body, while still allowing for excellent mobility. The Icarus has limited flight capability, and is equipped with thrusters for 0-G environments.

Armored Land Vehicle

Cost: 10

Effect: This Proxy does not need to make Willpower Tests to avoid being Defeated before all Layers are out. It grants an Advantage to all Vehicle Tests using it and imparts a Disadvantage to all Tests trying to damage it unless they are coming from a Mecha.

Description: You have a singular item that is probably illegal for civilian possession. It can be anything from a thoroughly customized motorbike to an actual tank to a bulldozer transformed into a mobile bunker that destroys all in its path. Hope you can be inconspicuous with it, because authorities are not going to like it if they ever catch wind of what you've got in your garage.

Backup Bodies

Cost: 10

Effect: Once per Episode Arc you may wipe all Damage to your Plot Armor in between Scenes, or devoting a Scene specifically to doing so.

Description: A highly experimental and morally shady device nicknamed 'The Cloneforge' by Clarke technicians. Eligible operatives are installed a memory chip that records their digitized DNA, knowledge bases and personalities, and can be used to restore those to a new body. Through weekly data dumps, valuable Operatives can be restored to life even if their chips are lost. All backups think that they are the original, unless the original chip containing memories of their demise is used. A Cloneforge is not actually all that difficult to use, it can even be set to create a new backup using current stored memory chip data should the user fail to come back after a while. Provided you have a sufficiently large basement and ludicrous amounts of money to pay the preposterous power bills you could have your own - not that the Foundation would allow that willingly, but as the saying goes where there is a will there is a way.

Miniature Chemical Weapon

Cost: 10

Effect: Everyone within the Zone must make a Willpower Test with a DN of 15 at the beginning of every Turn they spend there. They will suffer an amount of Damage equal to the amount they missed the DN by, and will continue to do so every Round for as long as they remain within the area of effect. An Athletics Test with a DN of 10 is necessary to get out of the deadly cloud, and doing so takes an Action. You can throw this and immediately attempt to flee in the same Action. The gas lasts for three Rounds.

Description: One of the most dangerous things a character could carry on themselves and extremely illegal. These Miniaturized, super-concentrated chemical weapons pack enough nerve gas to kill an entire apartment room and yet the containers are small enough to fit within an earring, a watch, or other similar innocuous object. It goes without saying that anybody found trying to buy anything like this in the black market is going to be paid a visit by a number of very nice men, no matter the faction, and will be carefully monitored thereafter.

Genre Themes and Genre Points

Now that you know what your character is like and what they can do, having spent all of their PP, you need to take a step back and look at who they are, who they have been until now, and who they want to be in the future - or don't want to be. Through the following section you will need to figure out what defines your character, their wants and failings, their relationships and beliefs.

If you're the kind of guy that makes a character first and looks for a group later, then you should consider halting the process right now. The next step will be at the very least difficult to do without knowing what kind of game you will be in and what group of characters you'll play with, as a lot of the fun is figuring out what will make for the most fun group dynamics. Should you choose to proceed anyway, you have been warned.

Genre Themes, or just Themes, are the core of what your PC's life revolves around when off the battlefield, and sometimes during Operations too. They're not necessarily objectives, instead they're more like patterns, cliches, or leitmotifs that your PC will explore through the course of the Season, willingly or not.

Genre Themes come in three kinds: **Reasons are the PC's personal motivation, Typecasts are how your PC acts within their group, and Banes represent your PC's most fatal flaw**, you need one of each for your PC.

Whenever one of the three Themes creates conflict, contributes either to character development or to the larger plot, or simply helps make an otherwise boring Scene a fun one, **you are awarded a Genre Point for your efforts**. Genre Points can be used to activate special abilities during Operations called Genre Powers.

Your number of Starting Genre Points is a measly 1 but there is no upper ceiling for how many you can stockpile, though they are reset back to your Starting Genre Points when a new Episode begins. **You increase your Starting Genre Points by 1 at the start of a new Episode Arc.**

Sometimes a PC will earn a Point from their Theme on their own initiative, but often it will be instigated by the GM, other players, or be entirely unplanned and coincidental. Sometimes the character is not aware or agreeable to these developments, such as when confronting their biggest flaw and falling victim to it, but you as a Player get the points for going with it anyway.

Themes naturally change over time, a character's convictions pursued too strongly can become no different than vices and a weakness that is solved with the help of someone else turns into a bond between them. Other times, though, you just aren't having fun with your themes. If you don't like how the Themes you've chosen are playing out, you can change them after every Arc - think it over and give them a last chance before doing the change.

Hamming it Up

There's so much fun stuff you can do and it sure is tempting to hog the spotlight and earn all those delicious Genre Points, right? Don't. Everyone should have their time under the spotlight and if you're taking away time from everyone else the GM is encouraged not to reward you for it.

Generally, the GM should be generous with the first Genre Point awarded each Episode to every player, but unless the player is trying to get other people involved in developing their Themes, that first point should be the last.

Getting a second Genre Point should be done by developing a Theme different from the one you first scored a Genre Point with, while also helping others develop one of their own.

If that isn't enough for your darn greedy self, then you're going to have to wow everyone at the table with your third Genre Theme to receive that third point.

To milk the most out of your Themes regularly you should try to choose some that will have plenty of chances to both contribute to the benefit of the group as well as complicate it for your own character for the entire run of Episodes, and it goes without saying you should not be afraid of making "mistakes" while playing your character if it will make things more interesting.

There is a fine line to keep watch of between interesting and annoying, however, a line that differs for every group. Communication is key to find out how much is enough.

Another good trick is to try and connect your own Themes to other PCs or NPCs, Typecasts make this easier but you can use them for Reasons and Banes as well. Just make sure that you can earn Points from said Themes on your own initiative without requiring the other PC or NPC to seek yours out or to act first.



Genre Reason

Just like every hero has their quest, every champion has their cause, so does every PC have their Reason. Your PC's goal is something that they care deeply about and strive hard to preserve, maintain, or change.

It can be a manifestation of an internal conflict, a code of conduct that is difficult to uphold, or a tangible goal the PC has in mind, ranging between simple and general or complex and specific as you deem fit.

Reasons can be like dreams, far out and distant from the PC's starting point, but, unlike a dream which might not be realistic in scope, the Reason is something the Pilot can actively pursue, consciously or not, and more often than not it is what drives them in life. Alternatively, your Reason might be something much mundane that they are very aware of. Constantly.

Discuss your idea for a Reason with the GM and arrange on something you would like your PC to be involved in pursuing or tangling with. You don't need to get too specific, just make sure you both understand what it is you want for the PC.

Gaining Genre Points via your Reason generally requires proactive behavior on the player's part, and it should be obvious to both player and GM when the Theme has done its job and the Genre Point should be provided.



Sample Reasons

Justice:

You act out of a deep personal sense of what is right and wrong. This may entail making a few enemies out of people you have no need to cross, resisting generous offers to look the other way, or even getting into trouble with your superiors or peers for following your convictions.

Curiosity:

Your inquisitiveness overwhelms your sense of self preservation, leading you often into danger. This can range from walking into every obvious trap the GM ever lays to toying with things until they break.

Expectations:

You are heralded with promises of achievements and would loathe to fall short of them. Sometimes you bite more than you can chew, and other times you have to do things you dislike or disagree with on a fundamental level.

Protector:

You are an idealist and will fight for as long as you have to in order to keep your loved ones out of harm's way. The greater good is fine and all, in theory, but some people mean more than the world to you.

Ambition:

You fully intend to expand your power and influence, and are willing to make sacrifices to do so. This power may be political, military or come in some other form, and chances are that you will leap at the chance to engross it.

Mercenary:

You enjoy your job and the money that comes with it, in the look for fame and fortune and everything that comes with it. You do what you want, and pity to whoever gets in your way, nothing personal.

Independence:

You are doing this simply because you are rebelling, like a teenager angry with mom and dad, whether this is your true calling or not is up in the air. You may find yourself helping people you supposedly despised because your faction of choice is going too far, or take the opportunity to go too far on them yourself now that you have the chance.

Survival:

You do not actually want to do this, but complicated circumstances are forcing you into it, and you would very much prefer stepping out of the cockpit. You could be the first to retreat from battle, and may even attempt to get away from your appointed duty at some point.

Vengeance:

You are seeking revenge for another - a person or a group - that has slighted you. You would gladly walk into a trap if it gives you a chance to settle the score, your own well-being is a secondary matter to making things even.

Duty:

You firmly believe in your faction and what they stand for, and are honorbound to prioritize their best interests. Examples range from defending their name, to standing up for them against bad odds and even willingly taking the fall for them as a sacrificial pawn,

Genre Typecast

Relationships are the lifeblood of any group, whatever form it is they take - people cannot just ignore each other and refuse to interact. That is boring. Furthermore, the PCs are tied to stay together for the sake of their mission, and the relationships that form from being forced into teamwork becomes their Typecast, a role or part they fulfill whether they like it or not.

Typecasts can be general in scope - the PC acts like a leader or hug box to everyone. But Typecasts can also be individual - the PC has a rivalry or a love interest. Such connections with NPCs are possible, but discouraged, important NPCs in the life of a PC should not take the form of Typecasts whenever it can be helped. Think of a role you would like to see your character act in and develop, or a relationship to preestablish and develop further.

Feel free to discuss it with the other players if you want to check whether it would be okay with them, or keep it secret and go for it anyway. Remember that a Genre Theme will get you Points as long as it is explored even if The PCs themselves don't like it!

All Typecasts develop at their own pace as the group evolves as a whole, and no one better than the players involved know when it has contributed to development, but the GM is at a right to veto the awarding of a Genre Point if nothing dramatic visibly happened.



Sample Typecasts

Authority:

You are - or think you are - a born leader, and will direct this troupe of unruly jerks to success even if it is the last thing you do. Chances are that you adopt a bossy tone with the rest of the PCs, and tell them what they should be doing more often than they'd like.

Brotherhood:

You care for another PC and know them inside and out, always there to tell them what they need to hear and give them the helping hand they need. The other character may not necessarily appreciate this, but that does not stop you from doing what you have to do.

Rivalry:

You feel an intense rivalry for a certain other PC, foiling her plans and proving your superiority makes every day that much more enjoyable. This may be a real feud or one that you play up for your own entertainment.

Love:

You are quite simply charmed by the next PC, with all the corn that implies - and will be like a complete idiot for their sake. You can misunderstand their words and actions overreacting accordingly, or be a reasonable human being and deal with the troubles of commitment.

Conciliatory:

You think everyone else is way too messy in what they're trying to do with each other, and work to make it so that everyone gets theirs. You are there when the rest of the group needs a mediator, but may end up feeling like a third wheel when there is not any conflict.

Parental:

You take on a paternal or maternal role, alternating between nurturing and corrective as necessary to one other PC. You do not always like the things you have to do, and in those cases your protégé probably likes them even less.

Greenhorn:

You are the new guy on the team and will try waaaay too hard to impress everyone else so they stop seeing you as a rookie. Examples can include disobeying orders to show off how good you are on the more hotheaded side of the Theme or doing other people's work for them out of the goodness of your heart on a more responsible light.

Troll:

You are an awful person that can't get enough of placing the rest in embarrassing situations and endlessly push their buttons. Whether it is by revealing embarrassing secrets, by showing up at the right time to kill the moment, or by playing practical jokes on others - you are never bored for long.

Devotion:

You greatly admire another and will do your best to be like, help with anything they need, and defend the honor of your idolized role model. Bitter disappointment and crushed illusions not mandatory, but probable.

Buttmonkey:

Someone has to bite the bullet and so the roulette happened to unfavor you, enjoy being the comedy relief that gets no respect. The GM has is probably going to make you a very sad clown at some point, you poor thing.

Genre Bane

Achilles' Heel is perhaps more infamous than Achilles' own deeds, because sometimes great characters are defined by what dooms them more than what they achieve or how they relate to others. This crucial drawback is possessed by PCs too: it is called a Bane.

A Bane can be a general recurring personality trait, an observable physical handicap, an external factor that can complicate things for them, or an even more complex combination of factors. Consider what you think The PC's worst problem could be, and maybe even think about what is the worst ending their story could have, then discuss it with your GM to agree on how he's going to make your life that much harder.

Keep in mind that this is something you want brought up, so choose a Bane that you are comfortable roleplaying going through (or towards) a multitude of times.

Since Banes are generally brought up by the GM and not the player, whatever the Bane is, it should get the better of the PC whenever it comes up under an important situation. If it does not, the PC does not get a Genre Point.

By the same card, the Bane should not be invoked unless it is meaningful, because that is more likely going to annoy Players than encourage the roleplaying of three dimensional, flawed characters.



Sample Banes

Phobia:

You suffer from a crippling phobia that turns you into a gibbering cowardly mess. It can be a common like being afraid of spiders, or something more unique like the ocean itself, either way expect to battle a giant robot spider or to be shot down and drift along with the waves waiting for rescue.

Misshapen:

You suffer from some type of physical deformity or disfigurement, making you quite unpleasant to look at. Chances are that this preemptively closes you down doors that would be more easily open for others.

Haunted:

You are haunted, literally or figuratively by someone or something from your past. Maybe it is survivor's guilt driving you to drink, or perhaps you had a bad experience with a Cryptid and now you are seeing things that should not be slowly driving you mad.

Prejudice:

You lack tolerance for a certain group of people and treat them with contempt, even when you know it isn't in your best interests to do so. You are not subtle about it either, and anyone who is open minded will probably be at odds with you on principle when said group is involved.

Pride:

You are almost suicidally overconfident, which leads to situations where you are over your head. You never forget a slight, and make sure to pay your debts in humiliation.

Disabled:

You suffer from a disability such as paraplegia which makes day to day life difficult. It goes without saying, this probably does not carry over to your ability to control a giant robot.

Angry:

You have a short fuse and a tendency to break out into fits of anger at the smallest of provocations. At the very least, you really want to insult whomever has offended you to their face, and possibly more.

Shy:

You are socially anxious and tend to withdraw from large groups of people. This may lead to the rest of the group probably running over you and your own voice not being heard, often to their own detriment.

Kind:

You are too soft-hearted for the trials of war, and your pacifist tendencies will make you do something stupid eventually. You may go out of your way to save enemy lives, and the GM should reward you accordingly.

Allergy:

You have a dangerous allergy, beyond simple hay fever, it can be an extreme aversion to cat fur or your equivalent of kryptonite. This may make everyday life more complicated than you like, or be one of those things that happen rarely but really set you back when they do.

Genre Powers

Through Genre Points you can access use some of your character's most powerful abilities, in the form of Genre Powers. The use of a Genre Power is a tilt in the balance of the fight, such as an improvised new technique to overcome enemy defenses, a hidden shield that stopped what would have been a lethal blow, or even a dramatic speech that encourages battered allies to rise and keep fighting.

Genre Powers have different speeds and may be used at different times. **Setup Powers can only be used during your own Turn before you take your Action, and Reaction Powers can be used any time**, such as in response to an enemy's Actions or even after someone else uses a Power themselves. A Power used as reaction against any other ability takes effect before what it responds to if the user of the Power wishes it so.

All Genre Powers require the spending of Genre Points in order to use them, at a cost of one Genre Point per Genre Power used. Remember that **you start the each Episode with a single Genre Point**, and that **each Arc passed will give your character an extra Genre Point at the beginning of every Episode**.

Powers are divided in Packages of three Powers each, when you create your Character you **choose two Packages**. By default **you start with six Genre Powers, plus three other Genre Powers** of your choice from your chosen Genre Packages or from the Common Powers pool. You don't start with every Power from your Packages, but you will get a chance to learn them all later. Most Power can only be taken once, but those that require you to make a choice when you take them (Such as Signature Weapon or Hidden Power) can be taken multiple times if you make a different choice.

All Natures have a listed preference for two specific Genre Packages, but you don't actually have to take those as your choices, they're just pointed out as being thematically appropriate for most characters corresponding to that archetype. If your character is an outlier, you should not be afraid to pick any two that aren't either of the listed favored Packages of Powers, and go with whatever you think suits your guy or gal best.

Since there are no hard rules for how you may choose to interpret the effects of a Genre Power, instead each one of them has an example of how it may be applied in their description - but by all means go ahead and use them however you wish, and make it cinematic!

Making your Powers Count

You're probably tired of hearing about how important and awesome Powers are and how you should make them always important and awesome by now. Let's get practical, then. What follows are some techniques to help you incorporate Genre Powers into the narration of your combat scenes to give your Mecha action the anime feel it deserves.

Cutscene:

Your attack stands out because you narrate it in down to every detail, from how your bullets pierce the enemy's own in mid-air to the sequence of punches you deal and combining multiple weapons into one attack for a particularly flashy move. Don't forget the speed lines in the background.

Technobabble:

You make a super awesome move, explaining with all the pseudoscience and made up words necessary exactly why it is incredible and no one could possibly have seen it coming. Sometimes it is okay to tell rather than show.

Flashback:

You build up your badassery by remembering at that exact moment a particular training lesson, emotive moment, or other such memory that could be that extra oomph needed in morale to overcome a greater foe.

New Technique:

You did not wish for it to come to this, but it has, and now you must unveil the forbidden secrets of your Mecha. Alternatively, you come up with a new way to use your old weaponry that the Enemy just cannot escape because they cannot improvise like you do.

Rousing Speech:

There is too much at stake to let hardships overpower you. And you are going to make sure those that would like to stop you know why it is not going to work. Feel free to explain to them about the meaning of love, courage, hard work, memories, songs, or whatever it is that fancies you best as a leitmotif.

One Liner:

Anything you do can be justified being a lot more awesome if it is accompanied by a catchphrase, witty retort, or even a pun. If you've got the advantage then you may also engage in more traditional trash talking. but that is a thing that often only villains do; After all, you don't want to be caught saying that your rival is ten years too early to defeat them, no?

Default Powers

These are the Powers that every PC gets for free, and they're some of the most useful ones so make sure you familiarize yourself with them and keep them in mind at all times.

Data Scanner

Reaction Power

Effect: Choose Attributes and Archetypes, Upgrades and Weapons, or Genre Powers. The GM gives you the specified information about your Enemies.

Description: The enemy's new mobile weapon was tearing through their defense lines, seemingly unstoppable. But Hilda was busy figuring it out, until she recognized the pattern in that barrier "It is a Friction Field, of course! Everyone, switch to Beam weaponry!"

Live Another Day

Reaction Power

Effect: You automatically retreat from the battlefield. This prevents any Damage that would have been dealt to you if used as a response to an attack.

Description: All the sensors were in the red, things didn't look good and Matt knew he had to bail out. The Penderecki hid behind an abandoned building and detonated all it had left to topple it and put a halt to its pursuers. When the dust settled, he was already gone.

Mid-Scene Upgrade

Reaction Power

Effect: Gain a new Upgrade or Weapon, you must pay the cost at the earliest opportunity after the Operation ends.

Setting aside your current UP for a later purchase if necessary. If you would not be able to make the purchase in the future, for whichever reason, the GM may rule that you cannot gain that Upgrade or Weapon.

Description: The engineers said it wasn't ready, but Darren's hand reaches for the small switch, screaming "TAU MISSILE." And sure enough, the projectile hit its mark.

Not so Fast

Reaction Power

Effect: Force an Enemy's Attack against an Ally of yours to be rerolled and have it suffer a Disadvantage, keeping the new result. You may not use this Power more than once per Test.

Description: A split second before the Justice struck Owen's cockpit, it was knocked off balance by swift kick to its metallic gut. Sia got there in the nick of time to save the day, her Gear proudly standing defiant between the enemy and her friend.

Synchro Attack

Setup Power

Effect: You choose one of your Weapons and one other Weapon from any willing Ally to combine them together. Multiple Weapons can be chosen this way, each from a different willing Ally. This combined Weapon has the range of your own chosen Weapon and its Special qualities, but its Accuracy and Penetration is the combined total of all Weapons together. This counts as using the individual Weapons for the rest of the group and they must use up their next Actions, expending all appropriate resources as normal. Weapons that cannot be used against that Enemy, may not be chosen. Defective, Overheating and Technique Weapons may not be used as part of a Synchro Attack, except by the Unit initiating it in the first place.

Description: "SYNCHRONISE CHRONOMETERS!" Charlie bellowed. "Check!" Came three replies. "SYNCHRONISE DRIFT SPEED!" "Check!" And the dull throb of altitude thrusters firing nearby within the vacuum sounded as well. "SYNCHRONISE OBJECTIVE!" "DELTA FORMATION!"

Try Again

Reaction Power

Effect: Reroll any one 1d10 Offensive Test and gain an Advantage to it, keeping the new result. You may not use this Power more than once per Test.

Description: Takashi swings, controlling the towering arms of the GTR, Gran Sword in hand. Time seemingly slows for a second, as he realizes his clumsy attack will contact the ground shamefully far from its mark. The sword rotates slightly in the air, the cutting blade now swinging towards his foe's side.

The Power of Genre

Genre Powers can do some crazy things, and the ones that can be used Instantaneously can get really tricky with their uses, leading to all sorts of potential interpretations on just how lenient the wording is.

As a rule of thumb, if a Genre Power reads like it wants to be used at a particular time – up to and including the limbo between the roll of a die and the resolution of its effects, it should do just that.

Genre Powers are there so that losses can be turned into victories. If Players can't agree between interpretations of a Power, the GM is encouraged to rule in the favor of the Power being, well, powerful enough to do the job - you want to rule in favor of the option most likely to let the Players have a good time, but you also want to remain consistent with your rulings.

This turns more complicated when it is the Enemy throwing Powers all over the place, who refresh their pool of Points between battles. If it turns out that the PC's rivals are too difficult with their constant restocking, you can have them stick to using defensive powers and retreat when Tension gets too high for them to handle - Live Another Day is perfect for this.

Common Powers

Common Powers are available to everyone, they are not automatically gained like Default Powers, but anyone can take them regardless of which other two Packages they chose. Common Powers are useful to pretty much all PCs and you will rarely go wrong in taking one of them.

Counterattack

Reaction Power

Effect: After the next time an Enemy takes an Offensive Action against you, and whether it deals Damage or not, you may take an Offensive Action against them yourself. You may not use this Power more than once per Enemy each Round.

Description: Charles locked blades again with Ray, but before the red Gear could draw away, a flurry of brutal punches marked Charles' defeat.

Counter Intelligence

Reaction Power

Effect: Cancel the effects of any one Genre Power used by another. You may not use this Power more than once per Operation.

Description: Shawn knew that Spike loved his dramatic entrances, and so when the inevitable yell of "DYNAMIC ENTRY-" rung out from a loudspeaker on the other side of the wall, was the sound of metal crushing brick and then running into the wall of reinforced steel hidden inside it.

G-Buster

Setup Power

Effect: Your next Offensive Action using a Beam Weapon gains a bonus to its Accuracy equal to half current Tension. You may not use this Power more than once with the same Weapon per Operation.

Description: Gamma's integrated arm tinted itself a bright hue of green, the concentration of Element G making it glow more and more until it seemed iridescent. The shot that followed was less a beam and more like a shooting star ripping all in its way apart, until it faded into the horizon.

Get Over Here

Setup Power

Effect: With your next Action using a Melee Weapon you can attempt to Engage from any distance as long as the target is within the Weapon's Range, either pulling them next to you or jumping into the Zone they are occupying afterwards. You may not use this Power more than once with the same Weapon per Operation.

Description: "The scary thing about the Andromeda are its chains." Xoe went on "Don't get cocky just because it is a close quarters type, it can pierce your chest with one of those up to three hundred meters away, and reel you in like a fish after you're hooked."

Hit n' Run

Setup Power

Effect: With your next Offensive Action using a Missile Weapon you may Move in any direction of your choosing instead of having to stay still or go towards the Enemy, and gain the Advantage to its use even if you're over half the maximum Range. You may not use this Power more than once with the same Weapon per Operation.

Description: Erica quickly outpaced all the explosions aimed at her, while continuing to bombard an enemy who couldn't catch up. She was never one for playing fair.

One Shot, One Kill

Setup Power

Effect: For your next Offensive Action, you may treat the roll of your Accuracy Test as if it was a 10.

Description: Jamal took a long breath in from his cigarette, letting it fill his lungs. He exhaled, and felt calmer. "Unit Second, sniping the targets!"

Ready for Another Go

Reaction Power

Effect: Restore 1d5 to your Energy.

Description: The servo's strained as the SunBuster weakly rose. It began to glow from within, electricity surging over exposed surfaces. "My god, the Gygravagnite is responding! The energy is enough to fire another Solar Flare!"

Righteous Fury

Reaction Power

Effect: The next time you succeed at an Accuracy Test this Turn, increase the Penetration of the Weapon by 1d10 for that attack. You may not use this Power more than once per Offensive Action.

Description: Gunter screamed like a maniac, impaling the defenseless Board again and again. When he was done, his teammates were as silent as the remains of the enemy.

Signature Weapon

Setup Power

Effect: Choose any one Weapon you have when you take this Power. Activate it to make your next Offensive Action using the chosen Weapon gain an Advantage and a bonus Penetration of 5. You may not use this Power more than once per Operation.

Description: The Demiurge impaled the head of yet another victim along its crystal-riden back, joining the other 49 already present. "YESSS, I AM THE BEST AT SKULLS!"

Use More Gun

Setup Power

Effect: With your next Attack using a Ballistic Weapon, you may attack two targets within range instead of just one. You may not use this Power more than once with the same Weapon per Operation.

Description: Completely surrounded by Botakuris, Isaac licked his lips instead of panicking, drawing four automatic rifles, one for each spare manipulator. "Let's rock, uglies."

Champion Powers

The Champion Package of Genre Powers is centered around the notion of making the user damn-near impossible to shoot down. This can help outlast the Enemy in a war of attrition or make you an effective distraction and point man.

Get a Hold of Yourself

Setup Power

Effect: Ignore the effects of Maiming on all your Areas for a Round.

Description: Sarah's gear stands back up again. Its one intact arm stuffs the loose cabling back inside the hole in its hull. "Impossible!" Says her mechanic. "There's no way the X-2 can continue functioning after that kind of damage, it should be out of power!" Sarah just laughed, making a dash for her enemy once again "I told you, it runs on guts!"

Impregnable Defense

Reaction Power

Effect: Halve the surplus bonus from the next Accuracy Test to bypass your Evasion, even if it was already halved previously. If this would cause the bonus to be halved twice, both instances are separate so that the result is not zero.

Description: Apparently the Providence didn't know it just got hit by several kilotons worth of missiles. The giant legged base simply kept walking towards the Williams.

Believe in Myself

Reaction Power

Effect: Restore your current Threshold Level to full. This cannot restore a Maimed Area back to normal.

Description: "Can't you see this resistance is useless? Don't throw your lives away like this!" The enemy platoon fired again and again, sending Will's flying Gear back to the ground. Each time it stood back up again, and would walk through the flames "...I gave you a chance, I'm sorry it came to this."

Trickster Genre Powers

Trickster Genre Powers are a toolbox for special circumstances where you just need a very specific effect that is completely outside the reach of other Characters. They might not seem like much at times, but they can prove vital in overcoming unexpected complications.

Keeping Up

Setup Power

Effect: Choose one of Evasion, Armor, Accuracy or Penetration when you take this Power. Activate it to raise your chosen Attribute to match the highest amongst your Squad for a Round.

Description: "They've all spent their lives doing things I couldn't imagine, they have more experience with Gears than I'll probably ever have. Its not right for me to be better than them. But I don't want to be a liability, or dead weight that can't defend itself. I WILL NOT SLOW THEM DOWN!"

Hidden Power

Setup Power

Effect: Choose up to 15 UP in Upgrades or Weapons when you take this Power. Activate it to gain the chosen abilities until end of Operation. These abilities are not allocated to any particular Areas, and as such may not be disabled as a result of Maiming. You may not use multiple instances of Hidden Power in the same Operation, and it cannot be used to exceed the limit of Upgrades or Weapons you may only have a limited number of.

Description: "Give up, you're out of ammunition and surrounded, be reasonable!" The enemy shouted. "NO, I REFUSE!" Came the reply from the silver-coloured mech as it flew into the air and began bombarding its enemies with some kind of devastating heat ray. "I TOTALLY HAVE ICE MISSILES TOO!"

Variable Range

Setup Power

Effect: For one Round your Weapons with fixed minimum and maximum Ranges change those numbers to 0 and 10 respectively. This does not work with Weapons that have only one viable Range to them.

Description: The particle cannon round neatly took off the head of the Gear at point-blank with its last bit of power. Valerie switched to her blade and took aim at the fleeing Gear barely visible in the distance. That throw would have earned her a gold medal if this were a sport.

Assassin Powers

Assassin Powers are very clear in their intent: The best defense is a good offense, and sure enough no defense is going to be able to keep up with your impressive offense.

Impetuous Style

Setup Power

Effect: You may treat Technique, Slow and Stray Weapons as if they didn't have those abilities for your next Offensive Action.

Description: Thomas was forced to admit, as the enormous tentacle immobilized him one more time, that there was a certain something about the alien thing. A sheer single-mindedness so simple and chaotic in its ways that even his well-honed senses were defenseless against it.

Pierce

Reaction Power

Effect: The next time you would deal Damage to an Enemy this Turn, treat their Armor as if it were halved. Defensive Barriers have no effect against this attack.

Description: It was a difficult shot. Miguel was not just trying to land a hit on that annoyingly speedy Outsider, but she also had to try and find the spot of weakest resistance of the Gravagne Field. She pulled the trigger, and the beast shook on its side as a single projectile tore a hole into the green flames surrounding it.

Target Lock

Setup Power

Effect: Your next Accuracy Test is an automatic success, with a bonus to Penetration equal to the current Tension. Evasive Systems have no effect against this attack.

Description: Toshiken guided his reticule over the enemy Gear. A marksman of his calibre understood that the true way to an inescapable shot was not to aim, but rather to teach the PsAICon to aim for you.

Scout Genre Powers

Some people don't want to take center stage in the heat of battle, doing better at "Hit and Run" tactics and testing out enemy abilities or simply playing reconnaissance. Scout Genre Powers are for those people.

Cool Under Pressure

Setup Power

Effect: All Offensive Actions taken against you for one Round suffer a Disadvantage and lose the benefit of Tension.

Descriptions: Neil's Gear strafed rapidly from side to side as it moved. This was standard for most experienced Avatars, though many lost track of such basic evasive routines when rattled by intensifying enemy attacks. Neil would not. He continued: *left, right, jump over, roll sideways.*

Gotta go Fast

Setup Power

Effect: You may Move up to two additional Zones as part of your Move with your next Action this Round.

Description: "Hey, hey, hey!" Jason quipped, speeding past the defense lines and throwing them all into chaos "I'll show you why they call me the Sonic Boom!"

Where'd he Go?

Reaction Power

Effect: After an enemy Weapon has failed to Damage you, you may not be attacked by anyone again until your next Turn.

Description: Matthew fired the Incinerator the first chance he got, and wrapped the Cryptid in a gigantic explosion. When the smoke cleared, there was nothing in the crater, and he was about to mistakenly believe that it had worked when tentacles sprouted up from the ground and lashed at him.

Supportive Powers

The Supportive Package is for those who do their job best when they are invisible, keeping one of their allies (or a number of them) in top condition, devoting all your strength to helping them if necessary.

Got your Back

Reaction Power

Effect: Any one Ally gains a bonus of +3 to their Evasion and +2 to their Armor for one Round. You may not use this Power more than once per Ally each Round.

Description: Chen raised a curtain of sand with her Vulcans, obscuring the enemy's immediate field of vision - it was not going to fool their sensors but it should prove an annoyance and that was all she needed it to be.

Guiding Hand

Setup Power

Effect: Any one Ally gains an Advantage to their next Offensive Action this Round. You may not use this Power more than once per Ally each Round.

Description: "Adjusting laser focus for 600m engagement." "My arrays have them picked as 800m away." "Well of course you're further away, it's trigonometry!" "Nick. I am 50m away from a certain idiot." ".....Adjusting laser focus for 800m engagement."

Retroactively Prepared

Setup Power

Effect: You gain another use of a single Support Upgrade that you own for the current Operation. You may choose a different Upgrade with each activation of this Power.

Description: The Lux Cannon failed to project its usual column of heat and destruction, the beeping noise and blinking red meter told Isha that it was not going to fire again anytime soon. Good thing he always kept a spare E-Cap under the Gear's wrist! The proverbial ace in the hole was slotted into the Weapon, and the beam of fiery death tore through enemy ranks once again.

Protective Powers

It would be nice if distractions and bluffs always worked, but way too often the enemy will see through diversions and go for the throat of those who really shouldn't be getting hurt. Protective Genre Powers help mitigate that, making sure that the heat stays off from the little guys.

Come at Me Bro

Setup Power

Effect: For the next Round, when an Enemy makes an Offensive Test against another Ally, you may Attack that individual Enemy once after their own Action has finished. If an Ally uses this Power while your own is active, his Power's effect replaces yours.

Description: His Gear planted himself in front of the group. With a metal hand, it pointed at the enemy squad and made a throat slitting motion. That should buy the Wagner some time, now he only had to hang in there.

Martyr

Reaction Power

Effect: The next time you would be dealt Damage, the Enemy that damaged you also suffers the same final Threshold loss that was inflicted on you. You may not use this Power more than once per Enemy.

Description: The Outsider was far too fast to catch by the much slower Aegis Gravis, and thus Hassan seemingly submitted to doom before it. He was skewered on the end of its weapon, drawn up into the sky. "Gotcha..." He said, as multiple anchors buried themselves in the Outsider's side. It would not escape the next attack.

Take One for the Team

Reaction Power

Effect: The next time an Ally would be dealt Damage from an Offensive Action, you may have half of the final Damage dealt to you in their place. Your Ally still takes the rest of the Damage. Use this once per each instance of Damage.

Description: Shin was nervous to say the least, the waves of enemies just kept coming and there was no sign of reinforcements arriving in the immediate future. He gulped, "We might die here." But Reina would have none of that. "You will not die." Shin blinked and turned to look at her resolute face in the comm screen, as she spoke, "I will protect you."

Director Powers

Through charisma and tactical know-how, Director Powers can help your team to move and act as one, making this the Package of choice for anyone who wants to keep their squadron focused and for their plans to not always fail horribly in the chaos of the battlefield.

Last Ditch Effort

Setup Power

Effect: Choose up to three any members of your Squad. The chosen Units can use any One-Shot Weapons that they have already spent once again. You may not use this Power more than once per Operation.

Description: "It's been a long time since our days as counter-terrorism squad 7B. We've come a long way since then, acquiring 20m high robots, and sophisticated energy weaponry. Remember the double tap? We are encountering similar problems, and we'll use a similar solution."

Strength in Union

Reaction Power

Effect: Choose up to three any members of your Squad. Restore 1d10 Threshold to each of them. If this would take any of them into a lost Threshold Level, restore the corresponding Maimed Area back to normal. You may not use this Power more than once per Operation.

Description: "Listen, to the will of those sleeping under the soil, to the voices of those lost in the sea, to the dying wish of those who became stars in the sky. The time has come to bring this dream to fruition. Rise, young men and women of Hiryu, and become legends!"

On the Double!

Setup Power

Effect: Choose up to three any members of your Squad. The chosen Units may move two Zones instead of one as part of the Move with the next Action they take.

Description: The squad moved in as one flock, but with a current flowing through it, bringing those from the front end, shields still molten from laser fire back to the rear to manage their damage control. Emile was familiar with the concept from cycling, though in this race you didn't want to get ahead.

Controller Powers

The Controller suite is for the character who is more focused on the enemy than on themselves, either singling out key targets and weakening them, or messing with the group's own battle plan.

Confusion in the Ranks

Setup Power

Effect: All Enemies suffer a Disadvantage to their Offensive Actions for a Round. You may not use this Power more than once per Operation.

Description: Brandon cut through their tight formation. The enemy began to respond, moving shields through the gaps in the ranks to cover their exposed surface, but Brandon pulled out the ominously glowing chip in his pocket, inserting it into his radio. The virus ate away at what coordination the enemy had left, if only he could see their faces when all of their communications were switched to the local Polka station.

Exhaustion

Setup Power

Effect: Any one Enemy loses 1d10 Energy.

Description: Kao dodged another hit from the immense hammer, and another, and another. With his frame as light as it was he could keep this up all day. His opponent however, could most certainly not.

The Weakest Link

Setup Power

Effect: Choose one Enemy. Their Armor is halved for a Round.

Description: "The way target 7 moves tells me that he took out his auxiliary plates to reduce his energy consumption and noise. Aim for the central armor." Yasha gave the orders, and the entire team launched a rainbow of energy beams from their multiple cannons, aimed at the weakest spot.

Finishing Touches

After you are done creating the most important aspects of your Character, you should make sure to note them down in the character sheet (adding any reminders or memory aids that you feel might be useful) and figure out the other bits that will also be relevant but in a less direct manner to the game experience.

Roleplaying Details

A Character is more than a collection of numbers. They are living, breathing entities with their own strong points and frailties, their own unique endearing and annoying quirks, and you should strive to make them as three dimensional as possible.

The most crucial of these details is your Character's name, after which come other factors such as age, ethnicity, height, favorite food, and whatever else you feel could ever be relevant. While having all these extra tidbits of information available can be useful (a birthday date can be relevant to plans for the character's birthday, for instance) you only need to add as much as you are comfortable with.

Exchange information with your fellow players and see if there's any way in which you can use each other's ideas to improve your own to create a better group experience.

Go back and change your Attributes, Themes, Powers, and whatever else you think you want to change after having this conversation. You'll get a chance to customize your character further later but this is the final stop for what they will start with.

Roleplaying Details Questionnaire

What are the Character's Gender and Age? Do they look and act the part?

What are the Character's Height and Weight? Are they below average, above it, or just in the middle?

What is the Character's ethnicity? How stereotypical are they physically and in personality?

How does the Character look? Are they attractive? What is their color of hair, eyes and skin?

How does the Character carry themselves? Are they confident, unassuming, or perhaps love attention?

What is the Character's social standing? Are they wealthy and envied? Poor but deeply respected? Strict middle class?

What did the Character do for a living before being recruited? Do they still work it? Were they good at it?

How educated and savvy is the Character? Do they have a Ph.D, street smarts, or are they simply dumb as a brick?

What was it like for them to grow up? What was their family situation? Did they have many friends, few, any at all?

Is the Character religious? Are they into philosophical metaphysics? Do they try to use Quantum Science to sound "deep"?

Is the Character politically minded or do they stick to fighting without getting involved? How would they like the status quo to change?

What does the Character do in their spare time? Do they have a hobby or are they workaholics?

Is the Character a social butterfly or more introspectively minded? If they're not entirely extrovert or introvert, how do they balance them?

Does the Character respect tradition and the letter of the law? If so, do they believe in a right and wrong or do they see themselves as gray?

Is the Character imaginative and future-oriented? If so, do they like to enable others to realize their untapped potential or do they just help themselves?

Random Backstory and Details Generation

Allowing the process of creating a character to have an element of chance need not be devoid of creativity. GGG has such a method but it is more of a guide to encourage a degree of creativity - as opposed to making every little choice for the Player.

Follow the steps as they are outlined, rolling either 1d100 or 1d10 as the number to the left of the table indicate, and don't just take the results at face value, feel free to twist and bend their meaning to make a coherent story. First, roll 4d10 and assign each results to one of the four tables below. Then roll 1d5, this is how many Unique Quirks you will have, proceed to roll 1d100 that many times on the Quirk table.

1. Family History

1	All immediate family is dead or missing.
2	Parents are working with the UEF.
3	Parents are gone and you must care for your siblings.
4	Your entire family is hunted by the UEF for traitorous crimes.
5	Parents were part of Projects Sonne, Mond or Sterne.
6	Parents are spies, deep undercover in UEF territory.
7	Family has disowned and exiled you.
8	Your siblings want to Enact like you.
9	You are from a distinguished bloodline.
0	You don't know or remember your family.

2. Important Acquaintance

1	A childhood friend of the opposite sex.
2	A good friend somewhere in the base of operations.
3	Someone you are at odds with as a co-worker.
4	Your closest friend, always in need of aid.
5	A rival in one or more battlefields of life.
6	Your very own wise mentor figure.
7	A masked or otherwise mysterious 'friend.'
8	A stalker that you may or may not know of.
9	You are betrothed, whether you like it or not.
0	You are lonely, oh so very lonely.

3. Your Gear and You

1	The original Avatar of your Gear died during an enemy attack and you sit in the Core now in their place.
2	You stole the Gear from its original owners.
3	You were trained to Enact for years by your faction.
4	You are just a simple career soldier that chose to Enact, and the Gear was issued to you.
5	You only Enact as part of your secret identity.
6	The Gear will only respond to you, for some reason, and you have no other choice than to pilot it.
7	The Gear is a gift from a family member, friend, or lover and you respect their wishes.
8	You were offered a deal you could not refuse, and lend your skills as Avatar in service.
9	The Gear is your 'giant robot friend.'
0	You made the Gear yourself.

4. Enacting Pedigree

1	Served under a famous officer, who marked you as their favorite.
2	Encountered and defeated a cryptid alone, but was exposed to its harmful energies.
3	Protected a settlement from an enemy raid on your lonesome, holding the enemy off until help arrived.
4	Evacuated a number of civilians from enemy territory, becoming a media hero for some time.
5	Served as test pilot for an important project, and helped to cement Gear technologies now taken for granted.
6	Rescued a kidnapped VIP belonging to your faction, and gained considerable reputation.
7	Are the sole survivor of your original team, and branded as both a lucky survivor and a bad luck charm.
8	Wiped out a cell of insurgents, in possession of anti-personnel Boards and chemical weapons.
9	Had a minor role as part of an important operation to your faction, and is considered to be reliable and competent.
0	Had to make a difficult choice between letting a key enemy figure escape or protecting civilian life.

5.A Unique Quirk

01	Your name is clearly foreign.
02	You are clearly foreign.
03	You have an embarrassing name or nickname.
04	You have a prestigious nickname.
05	You have the same name as somebody famous
06	You have changed your name many times.
07	You are not good at remembering names.
08	You always pace about or fidget anxiously.
09	You constantly twirl your hair or stroke your beard.
10	You always hum or sing this one catchy tune.
11	Your movements are quick, and jerky.
12	You smoke and clearly could use some mints.
13	You are a fortuneteller. But not necessarily good.
14	You have recurring nightmares.
15	You are a daydreamer and zone out a lot.
16	You always forget which day of the week it is.
17	Your birthday comes up on a holiday.
18	You love puzzles and riddles.
19	You are excessively polite and amicable.
20	You use slang no one else really gets.
21	You think out loud.
22	You speak in a silly, exaggerated accent.
23	You are loud. Extremely so.
24	You stutter.
25	You use long words and flowery speech.

26	You often get your metaphors mixed.
27	You are an incurable punster, and like them bad.
28	Your voice is like that of a particular Seiyuu.
29	You look like somebody famous.
30	You look bored.
31	You look way younger than you are.
32	You look way older than you are.
33	You are androgynous.
34	You look at yourself in the mirror constantly.
35	You are considered cute, but not attractive.
36	Your looks are impossibly plain and boring.
37	You aren't very pretty, but you look badass.
38	You only have one eye.
39	You have heterochromia.
40	You are albino.
41	You have an unusual hair color, such as blue.
42	You have an expressive ahoge or antenna hair.
43	You are bald.
44	You adorn your hair, such as with braids or pins.
45	You talk. A lot.
46	You like to argue with other people.
47	You don't like to lie.
48	You tend to try and push your morals into others.
49	You are a vegetarian.
50	You only eat meat.



5.B.Unique Quirk (continued)

51	You like sweets a little too much.
52	You have a favorite tea brand you always drink.
53	You drink way too much coffee.
54	You like to cook for other people.
55	You have an imaginary friend.
56	You have a side job that you do out of love.
57	You do charity when possible.
58	You are a cheapskate.
59	You are quite a pack rat.
60	You compulsively buy what's new and better.
61	You wear provocative clothes.
62	You wear extravagant clothes.
63	You wear formal clothes.
64	You wear the same clothes day in day out.
65	You wear a mask. No one questions this.
66	You have one or more gold teeth.
67	You have a tattoo that can be easily seen.
68	You have a cool battle scar or multiple of them.
69	You have freckles.
70	You keep a "relationship chart."
71	You collect hats and always wear a different one.
72	You have a keepsake of a loved one you treasure.
73	You have a treasured keepsake of your childhood.
74	You use shades, even indoors or at night.
75	You enjoy classical music with style.

76	You are usually listening to saccharine j-pop.
77	You often quote the lyrics of your favorite band.
78	You listen to music even in battle and dance to it.
79	You have a personal 'theme song.'
80	You have a pet robot.
81	You have a pet animal.
82	You have a pet that is possibly illegal.
83	You have a ridiculous number of pets.
84	You are afraid of large animals.
85	You are afraid of bugs.
86	You are afraid of heights.
87	You are afraid of clowns.
88	You are afraid of ghosts and the dead.
89	You believe you've had a paranormal experience.
90	You want to have a paranormal experience.
91	Your favorite genre is horror.
92	Your favorite genre is comedy.
93	Your favorite genre is drama.
94	Your favorite genre is action.
95	Your favorite genre is romance.
96	You don't care as long as it has robots.
97	You want to make your own tv show or manga.
98	You want to make your own videogame.
99	You want to make your own roleplaying game.
00	You are genre-aware.



Example of Character Creation

Violet wants to join the ongoing game that Ingham is running mid-Season, and settles with him that her character's concept is going to be Professor Tendo's Daughter, named Michiko.

Since she's going to be joining the Far West Gygravagnite Research Institute (under the jurisdiction of the Hiryu's Soaring Dragon Fortress), her faction is already chosen for her, so she moves on past that.

Before setting down on a Nature for Michiko, she asks Ingham what the existing PCs are like, so she selects the Professional Nature as it is the only one unrepresented yet, and thus a semblance of a personality for Michiko begins to form in her head - Michiko is trying to prove to her father that she can be a pilot, despite his wishes that she not endanger her life.

Violet considers how to spend Michiko's PP, and figures out that Michiko is going to be the well-learned straight man - or woman, as the case may be. Michiko's Intellect is increased by one for 6 PP, making her considerably smarter than average.

She decides to complement this with a few points of Science and Electronics, but doesn't quite know how much to spend on them so she moves on to Traits. A cursory read through the selection of traits makes three of them stand out in her eyes: Common Sense, Jack of all Trades, and Genius. Ingham brings Ally to her attention, figuring that she could use her relationship with Tendo to her benefit, but Violet argues that Michiko would never ask her dad to get her out of anything.

Back to Michiko's choice of Traits, they cost 17 PP total, so she can't get all of them if she also wants to have some decently trained Skills.

Violet spends her remaining 24 PP as follows: She takes Electronics at the Adept Level and Sciences at Amateur, with a specialty on Biology for 8 PP. Her remaining 16 points go Jack of all Trades, Genius and two points worth of Organization - her dad might be out of the question, but the rest of the Research Institute has her back.

Since Michiko is done in regards to spending PP, Violet will calculate her Defenses and Plot Armor now. Her Awareness is of 5, plus 5 that makes her Defense a 10. Michiko's Willpower is of 5, so every Layer of Plot Armor can take up to 5 points of Damage for a total of 15 before she is out.

Choosing Themes is comparatively easier, she has to get three and exactly one of each category, so she picks Knowledge, Independence and Pride. Michiko wanted to be a veterinarian as a child and became fascinated by the Outsiders as she grew up. Violet thinks that her PC was going to be one of the scientists in her father's institute but she changed her mind the moment she saw the destruction the Outsiders were capable of with her own eyes.

Michiko still yearns to know more about the function of the Outsiders, and she would definitely know more if she had stuck for a few more years of university, but she is too conceited to go back on her word.

Ingham tells Violet that she'll score Genre Points when either Michiko's desire to know more, to not have to rely on her father's influence, or to not go back on her word visibly make trouble for her as a PC or they make for a great scene at the table for others.

Finally, Violet has to choose three Genre Powers for Michiko. Since she isn't very much of a team player - yet - Michiko picks the Champion and Scout Packages to represent her solid all-round set of Enacting skills and more specifically takes the Believe in Myself, Cool Under Pressure, and Impregnable Defense Powers. Violet already figured out most of Michiko's roleplaying details on the way, so she has no need for the questionnaire or the random tables.

Tips n Tricks

You have a lot of wiggle room when it comes down to spending your PP, and unless you go out of your way to do so you are not likely to end with a character that performs poorly under the rules. It remains a fact, however, that the sheer multitude of options can be intimidating, never mind that you are often going to find yourself just a few points short of getting *everything* you wanted to have, like a kid taking their allowance to the candy store. To alleviate this issue, a number of suggestions are included below.

Traits should be your first choice, you get a lot of mileage out of them from a rules standpoint as well as another layer of characterization for your PC, consider getting around 10 Points worth of Traits. Look for things that make sense with your character concept, and try to have an idea in mind already of the Themes you want to play so as to select Traits with them in mind - A Character with Spirit of Steel can have Impossibly Stubborn as a Bane, an Ally can be a protégée and provide a Reason as My Only Successor.

Skills are second most important, not only do they make your character unique moreso than Attributes do, but their Advantages make succeeding at Tests much easier. You generally want to have between 2 and 4 Skills ranging from the Amateur to Adept Levels. Expert and, specially, Master Level Skills are too expensive for starting characters, but if you want a character to be one of the best in the world at something from the start, you should go ahead and do just that - it only means they will not have such a broad range of abilities as everyone else.

Assuming you have any PP left at this point, consider abjudicating them to your Attributes. They play double duty in improving your Tests as well as your Defense and Plot Armor, but they are very expensive and after a few purchases they usually cost too much to be worth it.



Name Michiko Tendo Concept Professor's Daughter

Nature Professional PP Total 0 PP Spent 0

Genre Themes and Points

Character Reason	<u>Knowledge</u>
Character Typecast	<u>Independence</u>
Character Bane	<u>Pride</u>
Starting Points	<u>1</u>
Current Points	<u>1</u>

Roleplaying Details

<u>Stoic, rebellious, fascinated with Outsiders</u>
<u>Smart and studious, likes technology.</u>

Attributes

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

Defense and Plot Armor

Defense	<u>9</u>	Layer 2	<u>4/4</u>
Layer 1	<u>4/4</u>	Layer 3	<u>4/4</u>

Skills

Name	Level	Specialization
<u>Sciences</u>	<u>Amateur</u>	<u>Biology</u>
<u>Electronics</u>	<u>Adept</u>	

Genre Powers

Name	<u>Synchro Attack</u>	Speed	<u>Setup</u>
Effect	<u>Combine two Attacks into one.</u>		
Name	<u>Try Again</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Reroll Acc or Pen with an Advantage</u>		
Name	<u>MidScene Up</u>	Speed	<u>Setup</u>
Effect	<u>Buy Improptu an Upgrade</u>		
Name	<u>Not so Fast</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Enemy rerolls attack w/ Disadvantage</u>		
Name	<u>Data Scanner</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Ask about Chassis, Abilities, Powers, etc.</u>		
Name	<u>Live Another Day</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Retreat from battle.</u>		
Name	<u>Believe in Myself</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Restore Threshold Level</u>		
Name	<u>Impregnable Defense</u>	Speed	<u>Reaction</u>
Effect	<u>Halve Accuracy excess bonus.</u>		
Name	<u>Cool Under Pressure</u>	Speed	<u>Setup</u>
Effect	<u>Attackers suffer a Disadvantage.</u>		
Name		Speed	
Effect			
Name		Speed	
Effect			
Name		Speed	
Effect			
Name		Speed	
Effect			

Traits

Name	Effect
<u>Jack of All Trades</u>	<u>Learn any Skill</u>
<u>Genius</u>	<u>Use Int with any Skill</u>
<u>Organization (2)</u>	<u>Call for help</u>

IN ONE OF THE MANY ISLANDS DOTTING THE FAR WEST ARCHIPELAGO IS A TESTING FACILITY FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO THE WAR EFFORT, THE GYGRAVAGNITE RESEARCH INSTITUTE. IT IS ONE DARK AND STORMY NIGHT LOOMING ABOVE THE OTHERWISE RELATIVELY QUIET PEACE OF THE ENCLAVE THAT IS THIS SCIENTIFIC FORTRESS. MARIA DESIR MADE HER WAY THROUGH A DIMLY LIT HALLWAY AND PUNCHED A CODE INTO THE KEYPAD AT THE END.

THE BLAST DOORS OPENED WITH THE PUFF OF CRYOGENIC GAS EXITING THE CONTAINMENT CHAMBER, AND A CHILL WENT DOWN HER SPINE, BUT SHE DID NOT ENTER. SHE SIMPLY STOOD MOTIONLESS WITH HER EYES CLOSED, FOR SECONDS THAT SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY. THEN SHE TURNED AROUND.

"DON'T YOU KNOW IT IS RUDE TO SPY ON OTHERS, JEFF?"

THE YOUNGER MAN LEFT HIS HIDING SPOT BEHIND A CORNER, RUBBING THE BACK OF HIS NECK "...SORRY, CHIEF."

MARIA SIMPLY CROSSED HER ARMS, CLEARLY AWAITING AN EXPLANATION. IT TOOK A WHILE UNTIL HER STERN GAZE FORCED SOME WORDS OUT OF HER BUMBLING EXCUSE OF A SUBORDINATE.

"...UM, YOU DROPPED THIS." AN OLD AND RUGGED ENVELOPE, UNOPENED, ADDRESSED TO ONE RUBINA HEINLEIN. MARIA STEPPED FORWARD AND TOOK IT FROM HIS HANDS, SWIFTLY BUT NOT FORCEFULLY. "THANK YOU." WHILE HER TONE WAS ANYTHING BUT SCORNFUL, IT WAS EVIDENT SHE WAS EXPECTING MORE OUT OF HIM, BUT IF SHE HAD TO STAND ANOTHER TENSE SILENCE IT WOULD BE THE DEATH OF HER "YOU KNOW WHO THE HEINLEINS ARE?"

"THE ARISTOCRATIC FAMILY THAT USED TO GOVERN A CONSIDERABLE PART OF THE SPACE COLONIES?" HE RISKED, OMITTING THE RUMORS ABOUT THEM BEING PSYCHICS, TRANSHUMANS, OR SOMETHING MORE SINISTER ALTOGETHER.

"AND WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF ME BEING IN POSSESSION OF THIS TEN YEAR OLD ENVELOPE?" SHE WAVED IT AROUND AND FLICKED IT IN FRONT OF JEFF, POINTING AT THE DATE WITH TWO INDEX FINGERS.

"...THAT YOU'RE SOME KIND OF... SPACE PRINCESS?" THIS WAS STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A HORRIBLY CLICHÉD OR CONTRIVED PLOT, HE JUST WASN'T SURE WHICH ONE IT WAS. JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE HE DECIDED TO ERR ON OF BOTH.

"ATTA BOY." AT THAT SHE SIMPLY TURNED TO ENTER THE MYSTERIOUS ROOM, LEAVING A CONFUSED JEFF BEHIND, WHOM SPRINTED BEHIND TO CATCH UP BEFORE THE BLAST DOORS LOCKED HIM OUTSIDE "H-HEY CHIEF! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?"

SHE LED HIM ACROSS A METALLIC CATWALK OVER A SHAFT NEITHER OF THEM COULD SEE THE BOTTOM (OR TOP) OF. "THE PROFESSOR." SHE EXPLAINED, TO WHICH JEFF UNDERSTANDABLY BLINKED IN RESPONSE. MARIA DID NOT TURN AROUND "THE PROFESSOR WAS A FRIEND OF OUR FAMILY, AND MY FATHER GAVE HIM THIS LETTER, DETAILING THAT WHEN I WAS READY I SHOULD SEE WHAT THEY BOTH HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTING DOWN HERE."

THIS SOUNDED RATHER PERSONAL, AND MADE JEFF START TO FEEL SELF-CONSCIOUS "I... SHOULD PROBABLY LEAVE YOU TO SEE THIS FOR YOURSELF, SHOULDN'T I?" OF COURSE, HE WAS CURIOUS TOO, AND THUS HE DID NOT LEAVE. "IT IS FINE." SHE SAID "I ALREADY KNOW WHAT IS DOWN HERE. I DIDN'T DROP THE LETTER, JEFF. I THREW IT, I ALREADY KNEW ALL OF THIS." MARIA HALTED HER WALK AND TURNED HER FACE UPWARDS. JEFF DID THE SAME, WONDERING WHAT IT WAS THAT CAUGHT HER EYES.

AND WHAT THEY SAW HAD THE POWER TO LET A HUMAN BE A GOD OR A DEVIL.

CHAPTER 3



MECHA CONSTRUCTION

Mecha for Everyone

Your Pilot needs a Mecha of their own, otherwise it is kind of pointless to be playing a Mecha game in the first place. The process to create Mecha is largely effect-oriented.

What this means is that the how and why of their capabilities does not matter as much as the what. You can justify and flavor your Mecha's gigantic energy weapon as an enormous shoulder mounted positron cannon, eye beams, or even a gun that shoots a lightshow of rainbow lasers.

In other words, Mecha Construction has less flavor in its creation and is more mechanical oriented - pardon the pun. The end result is that you have room to make your Mecha as aesthetically distinctive as you want, though you can make use of the default examples provided within each ability's description to get it done fast too.

Much like with the piloting character, the place to start with when creating your Mecha is the concept, and it works pretty much the same. Anything ranging from "Old Piece of Junk in the Hangar" to "Sleeping God Encased in Armor" works, as long as you understand that neither is going to be strictly better than the other, and that by the time the deity underneath the metal awakes to its full power the piece old and busted mecha will have been upgraded to the point that it can stand toe to toe with it.

I, Robot

Here is a list of ideas for you to make your own Mecha, most are generic enough that they can be adapted to most campaign scenarios, and should be compatible with the setting presented later in the book.

- Stolen Military Property
- My Grandpa's Masterpiece
- Sleeping God Encased in Armor
- Ludicrously Expensive Personalized Model
- Frankenstein's Mecha-Monster
- The Nuclear Arms Race in Giant Robot Metaphor Form
- Mass Produced Police Mecha
- Construction Robot Upgraded for War
- Mecha Knight Riding a Mecha Horse
- Old Piece of Junk in the Hangar
- Docile Newborn Alien Symbiont
- Lightweight Reconnaissance Type
- Regenerating Nanomachine Monster
- The First Prototype
- Space Pirate Robot
- AI Granted a Body
- Firebreathing Mecha Dragon
- Robot with a Human Soul
- Built in a Cave with a Box of Scraps
- Universal Combiner Plane
- Heavy Artillery Unit
- Transforming Sports Car
- Command-type Custom Unit
- Giant Ninja Robot
- Giant Robot Disguising Itself as a Windmill



Chassis

The Chassis defines the baseline abilities of your Mecha, from how fast it moves to how good its weapons are, and is much like Natures for Characters in that it defines a Mecha's starting **Attributes**. Mecha Attributes are much like those granted by Natures, but for Mecha. The four Chassis types are Eagle, Dynamic, Destroyer and Shield. Ordered from the speediest to the most well armored, though each one has its own idiosyncrasies beyond their defensive quirks..

Eagle

The Eagle Chassis is light and made not to last, but to strike fast and with precision, then getting out of dodge. It does not have much in the way of toughness, but they can be very difficult to hit. Eagle types usually take a while to even be touched, but once they begin to take damage it piles on really fast.

Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
11	4	6	5	5	0

Dynamic

The Dynamic Chassis is an all-rounded that slightly prioritizes mobility over resilience. It is preferred for mecha that avoid the front line entirely since they aren't that well armored, but with some upgrading they can hold their own quite well in nearly every aspect.

Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
9	4	8	6	2	4

Destroyer

Destroyer Type Gears are larger and bulkier than most, they can pack bigger and better armaments and possess enough energy to surpass the firepower of other Chassis types. They are easy to hit, but hit hard themselves, and can even use their available Energy defensively should they need to do so.

Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
3	5	10	8	0	6

Shield

The Shield Chassis makes for Gears capable of withstanding punishment like no other, though they're huge and slow. Missing them is virtually impossible, but their shell is hard to pierce and even then they have a very large damage buffer before they can be in any real danger.

Basic Mechanics

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
0	7	15	6	1	2

Mecha Attributes

Evasion

Evasion makes your Mecha harder to hit; the higher the value, the better it can move out of harm's way. Evasion is like Defenses, and failing to meet the number with an offensive test will result in failure, only after that do they get a chance to overcome Armor.

Armor

Armor measures how difficult it is to actually hurt the Gear after being hit; the higher the value, the harder it is to crack. Armor is the second half of the Defense that attacks need to overcome in order to hurt a Mecha.

Threshold

Threshold represents how sturdy the Mecha is internally and how well it holds against damage after its defenses have been breached. Threshold works much like Plot Armor, but it comes in Four Threshold Levels instead of three Layers.

Energy

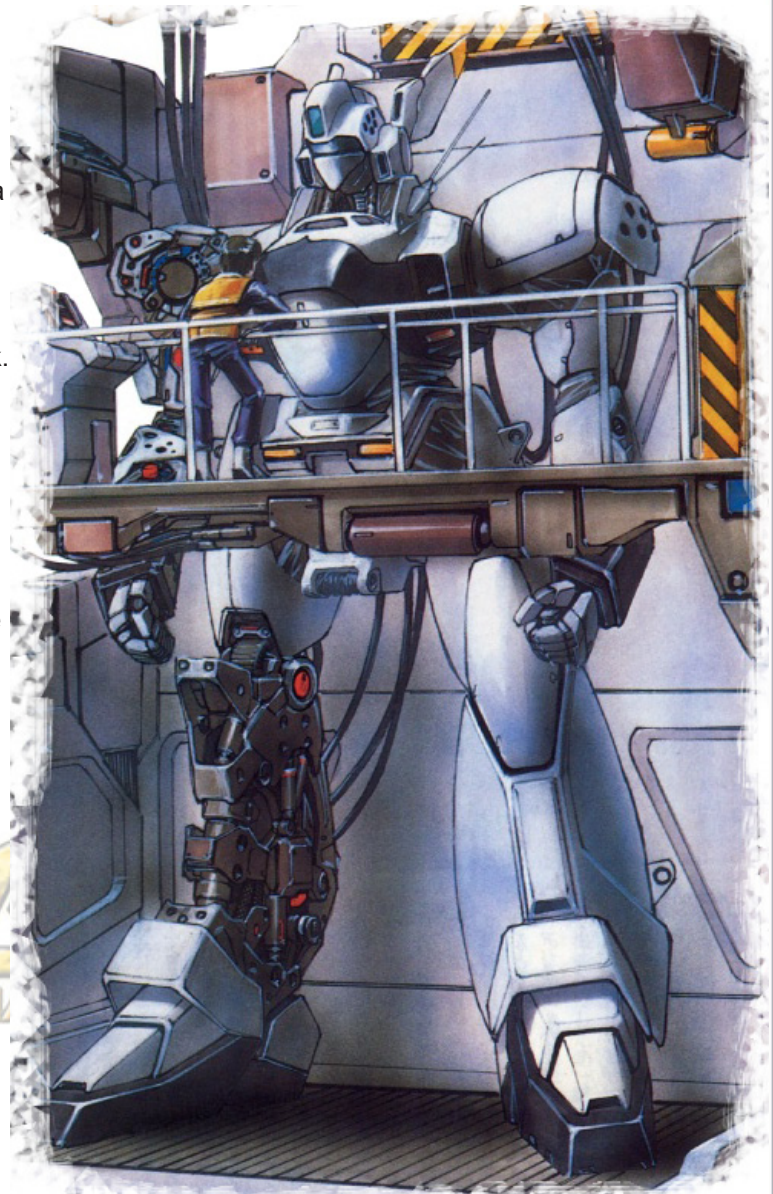
Energy is consumed every time the Mecha uses certain Upgrades or Weapons; the higher the Mecha's Energy, the more can be used. If the Gear does not have enough Energy to cover the Energy cost then they may not use the Upgrade or Weapon.

Accuracy

Accuracy modifies the Mecha's Weapons to be more precise, a Gear with high Accuracy will stand a better chance of landing attacks on its enemies.

Penetration

Penetration enhances the Mecha's Weapons' ability to pierce through the guard and shields of other Mecha, the higher the value, the harder for enemies to shrug it off.



Mecha Construction Summary

Your Mecha, being an extension of your PC, is much simpler to create on a conceptual level and has less steps, but the process of customization itself is more complex.

Step 1) Chassis

The Mecha's Chassis will determine its general performance, deciding whether it is dodgy or tanky, how much Energy it can afford to spend with its special abilities, and so on.

Step 2) Archetype

The Mecha's specialty and most unique characteristic is its Archetype. An Archetype is a single ability that is powerful and makes them stronger than the average mook.

Step 3) Upgrades and Weapons

Your Mecha has 30 Upgrade Points (UP) that are used much like PP. You can enhance the Attributes from its Chassis or acquire entirely new Upgrades and Weapons.

Step 4) Gear Details

In the same way that PCs get their own questionnaire for extra depth, Mecha have one for you to truly make them your own personal machine and pimp them out to your heart's content.

Enhancements

Chassis Enhancement Purchase Costs

Desired Item	First Purchase	Second Purchase	Third Purchase	Fourth Purchase	Fifth Purchase
Armor, Energy, and Accuracy	2 UP	4 UP	6 UP	8 UP	10 UP
Evasion, Threshold, and Penetration	1 UP	2 UP	3 UP	4 UP	5 UP

Modifiers to your **Chassis may only be bought up to five times for each individual Attribute**, and their cost depends on how many upgrades to the same Attribute you have already bought. This is very much like the equivalent process for the people going in the robots themselves.

Much like with Pilot Enhancements, Mecha have a limit of **three Enhancements per Episode Arc**.

Systems, the seventh Attribute

Its not always fighting, sometimes you need to use your Mecha for things that require a touch of skill or technical know-how, such as manipulating small objects with your huge metal hands, decoding Enemy communications, or managing fire suppression systems. Neither of regular Attributes nor specific Upgrades quite cover those things. That's when pilot takes over, via their Systems Attribute.

A Systems Test consists of **1d10+Current Genre Points**, giving PCs an edge over most NPCs who don't have any of those. The rationale for this is that a character who gets things done and is having a good day will perform better than usual, but as they pull more aces from their sleeves and put their badassery to use, it starts to wear them down.

Systems Tests are infrequent, though, so they should not get in the way much if the fact their values are ever changing bothers you.

The Pilot and Machine are One

As an alternative, and with special GM permission, you may choose one of your other six Attributes, the one that embodies how your PC controls their Mecha, and declare it as their Systems Attribute. Use half its value in place of Genre Points when making a Systems Test. Here are some Examples on how you can do this:

Fitness: Motion feedback based controls, where everything you do within the cockpit is replicated by the Mecha.

Intellect: Complex interfaces with gauges, monitors and levers akin to using other technological equipment.

Empathy: Riding a biomechanical monster and getting it to do what you want it to.

Awareness: Automated mental control where the Mecha's reflexes are your own.

Willpower: The Mecha interprets and responds to your mental orders, requiring concentrated effort.

Resources: It literally runs on money.

The chosen Attribute will often be higher than the amount of Genre Points early on - even after halving it - and although it is not as important as the other Mecha Attributes the change is still noticeable. This option is therefore recommended for games intended to have a lower difficulty level or with enemies who all benefit from it, where the GM doesn't mind the extra preparation time in statting out enemy pilots.

When Size Matters

There are no hard rules for Mecha sizes. In fact, there's nothing in the book that outright tells you the size an individual mecha should have aside from that which is implied in the names and descriptions of the four chassis models.

The default assumption is that the average group will want a mix of sizes among them to represent different typical conventions of the genre, but if you want something more standardized nothing says that two Mecha differing in their choice of chassis can't be the same size - and the reverse is also true.

Now if you do want to represent size with chassis? Look no further than below. Be aware that this will take away some options available to players for the sake of common sense, disallowing things like a Eagle Chassis being used for mobile bases for instance.

Eagle:

10 or less meters (32 or less feet)

Dynamic:

11 to 50 meters (36 to 98 feet)

Destroyer:

51 to 100 meters (167 to 328 feet)

Shield:

101 or more meters (331 or more feet)

Archetype

An Archetype will distinguish between similar Chassis types from each other by declaring which of the classic types of mecha they align best with - From super prototypes to mass produced models, to strange things equal part flesh and steel. This distinction is purely aesthetic, because you can always blur the lines, and in fact most Mecha shows do just that.

Archetype Upgrades are powerful and are **integrated automatically to the Core**. Generally your choice of Archetype will provide a skeleton to build the rest of your Mecha around, some lead you in rather obvious directions while others require a more careful approach to make the best of them.

Berserker

Effect: When you take this Design, create a Weapon as per the rules used in the Weapon Creation section but with a Cost that can go up to 10 without the need for Drawbacks. As long as you are within the Fourth Threshold Level, you gain access to this Weapon. You do not have to pay for it with UP.

Description: Your Gear's strongest weapon is locked away, either out of safety concerns or because it is an actual living thing and will only use it when your incompetence puts it actually in danger.

Custom Blueprints

Effect: Increase your Chassis' Evasion, Armor, Accuracy and Penetration by 1 point each. This bonus point does not count as purchasing an Enhancement to those Attributes.

Description: Instead of getting all fancy and gimmicky, your Gear sticks to what works and has an improved structure over its contemporaries.

Experimental Reactor

Effect: When attacking with an Energy-consuming Weapon you may spend 1 additional Energy to gain an Advantage to the Accuracy Test. Should the result be 1 or 10 then you do not consume the additional point of Energy.

Description: Your Gear is capable of an energy output greater than that of others, being a testbed for just how far burning additional Element G can take you.

Integrated Weapons

Effect: You may use your Weapons even if the Area they were allocated to has been Maimed.

Description: One or more of your Weapons are integrated to your Gear's frame, granting complete immunity to any and all attempts to disarm it.

Invincible Frame

Effect: Anytime you would take Damage, reduce the amount taken by 1, to a minimum of 0. The first time that you would be destroyed during an Operation, you remain functional with a Threshold of 1 instead. At the beginning of your Turn you may spend 1 Energy to ignore the effects of Maiming on all Areas for a Round.

Description: In the constant race to create the most powerful Gear, yours dons a new composite alloy of Element G, reinforced to withstand the rigors of battle much better than others not just externally but also internally.

Limiter Release

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test, you may deal 1d10 Damage to yourself to gain that much extra Penetration for that same attack.

Description: You can push your Gear to its limits, at the risk of things spiralling out of control towards an explosive finale for the both of you.

Mental Link System

Effect: Your Remote Weapons gain an Advantage when taking Offensive Actions against non-Remote Weapon targets, and anything that isn't a Remote Weapon suffers a Disadvantage when taking an Offensive Action against them.

Description: You've got a special neural interface in your own Gear's PsAlcon for a faster, yet more refined manipulation of remote weapons.

Regenerative

Effect: At the Beginning of your Turn you may use any Support Upgrade in your possession on yourself without requiring an Action to do so, once per Turn.

Description: Your Gear integrates ammo, nanomachines, and reserves of Gygravagnite into its own frame, letting it draw from them to replenish as necessary much faster than others who have to carry said things around.

Smart Bomber

Effect: Increase the area of effect of your Blast Weapons by 1 additional Zone from the target. When using any area of effect Weapon, you may choose any Zones within their area of influence to be safe from the attack and from any secondary effects the Weapon may carry.

Description: You pack bigger weapons than everyone else. Beams are wider and bigger, missiles split into more missiles that then split into *more* missiles, and can go through magazines fast enough to make it look like it is raining bullets city-wide.

Tactical UI

Effect: Your Unit is always considered to be under the effects of Base and Defensive Terrain.

Description: Your own HUD displays a an amount of data that could make the eyes of less trained folk swirl. In your hands, and with your custom controls, it maximizes your long term efficiency.

To Each Their Own

Each of the factions in the setting included for the game favors certain Chassis models and Archetypes, this does not mean that you have to pick one of those if you want to belong to one of them, but it does mean that they're going to be more common there than in other factions.

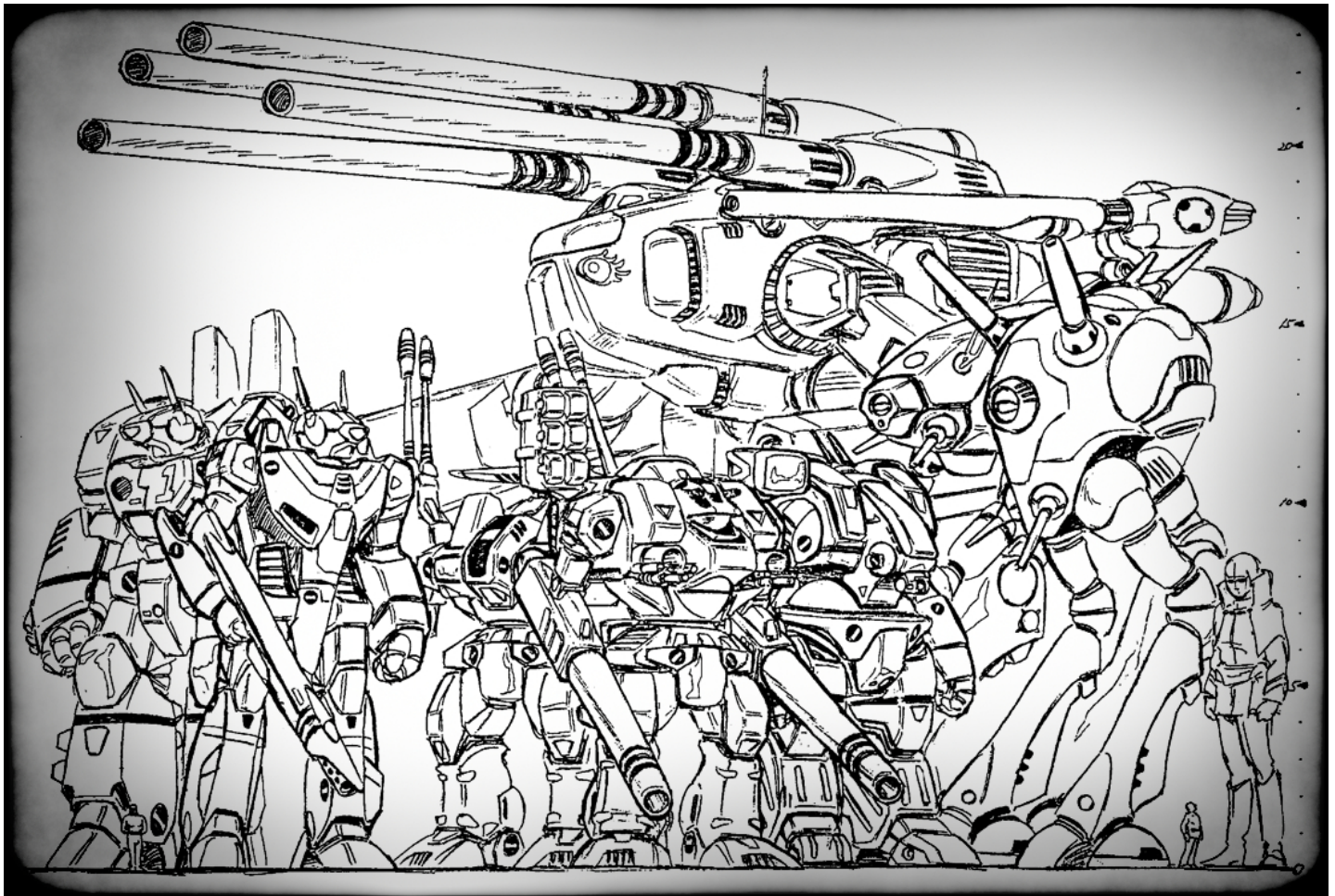
Below are the typical choices of Chassis and Archetype for the Gears each faction prefers, plus Battleships like the Wagner. You don't have to go with these suggestions in order to belong to these groups, they are only there to give you an idea of what the typical Gear they field is like. Mental Link System and Limiter Release are used by all factions more or less at an equal rate, which is to say, rarely.

The SDF's Super Prototypes: Hiryu's Gears are known for being testbeds of novel technology and for their ability to stand toe-to-toe with the fearsome Outsiders, often emphasizing melee over ranged combat. They favor the Destroyer Chassis, and both the Experimental Reactor and Invincible Frame Archetypes.

The Wagner's Production Models: The rest of the RUF employs only true and tested technology and milk it for all its worth, with only a fraction of the Gears and Avatars possessed by their enemies, they simply must do so. They favor the Eagle Archetype, plus the Custom Blueprints and Integrated Weapons Archetypes.

The Foundation's Living Weapons: Though some may doubt these are true Gears given their obvious biological nature, the Foundation is either unaware that they are not fooling anyone or does not care to give their creations a new name. Clarke Gears tend to be Dynamic, with the Berserker or Regenerative Archetypes.

Base Units: These can range from stationary fortresses armed to the teeth to highly mobile battleships for sailing across the sea of stars. They tend to be of Shield Chassis, usually with the Smart Bomber or Tactical UI Archetypes.



Customizing the Mecha

Touching up your Mecha is much like doing the same for its Pilot. **You start with 30 Upgrade Points (UP) for the purchase of Upgrades, Enhancements and Weapons.**

Upgrades come in many different categories, from defensive forcefields to flight systems to programmed battle techniques that push the boundaries of the Mecha.

Enhancements are improvements to a Mecha's Chassis by increasing their Attributes.

Weapons are bought and then allocated in one of your areas but instead of powering you up, they are used in offensive Actions to lay the hurt on your foes.

Finally, you may grab up to two extra Archetypes for 10 UP each, for a total maximum of three Archetypes.

When you purchase an Upgrade or Weapon you must **allocate it to one of your unit's Areas** (Core, Torso, Arms, Head or Legs) and **should that Area be Maimed as a result of Damage any Upgrades or Weapons allocated to it will stop to function for the rest of the Operation** and cannot be repaired unless an ability specifically mentions it may do so. **The Core cannot be Maimed**, but many purchases have limited areas they can be allocated to, and the Core is rarely applicable.

When allocating Upgrades and Weapon, you are free to place things wherever you wish, though it is encouraged you take care to not place everything in one Area - or you stand to lose everything the moment a lucky shot takes it out.

Archetypes must go somewhere, like any other Upgrade, but they always go in the Core. Enhancements are not allocated anywhere, they're just bought and noted down to make keeping track of spent UP easier.

Unless otherwise noted, you may not own multiples of the same Upgrade or Weapon.

Mecha Upgrades Format

Name of the Upgrade

Areas: Where the Upgrade in question can be stored.

Cost: How much UP must be spent to purchase the Upgrade in question.

Effect: The rules aspect of the Upgrade, kept as concise and clear as possible. You may want to summarize them further when writing them down on your own character sheet.

Description: An interpretation of what the Upgrade does in the game's fictional universe. The presented explanation is only a default that you may modify at your leisure, as long as the GM approves, of course.

Areas

There are a total of four Areas for you to place Upgrades or Weapons in them, and you are free to allocate most abilities however you wish. The Core is the fifth Area, and you usually do not get to choose whether to place something in there or not, most things can either go anywhere or can only go in the Core.

Additionally, keep in mind that a few Upgrades like Sub Units or Weapons like Remotes do not go anywhere, but are separate from the Mecha.

Core

The Core is the cockpit of the Mecha, functioning as both the brain and heart of the mechanical body. Many of the more powerful Upgrades can only be allocated to the Core, but no Weapons may be installed on it.

Head

Serving thematically as a secondary Mecha of sorts, the Head is usually for utility systems, but can also be used to deploy barriers or jammers, making it a versatile Area.

Torso

The Area that carries the bulk of the Mecha's defensive Upgrades, generally, since most of them are rather large and make sense here rather than anywhere else. Certain Weapons also fit this criteria, being some of the most powerful armaments a Mecha can wield.

Arms

Like a soldier needs hands to use its equipment, Mecha need them as the primary offensive Area. Although Weapons can be equipped anywhere, the Arms are the only ones where a lot of them actually make sense.

Legs

The Legs are unsung heroes of mobility without the prestige that most other Areas get - although they are very well suited for certain weapons as well. Many experienced veterans favor them to carry caches of ammo or other emergency supplies, while mounting an extra gun or two as well just in case.

Evasive System

Evasive System Upgrades are specialized sensors that give your unit a chance to evade attacks that should have by all regards hit you, at the cost of Energy. This is a special effort from your unit to try and evade an attack by various special means, varying in effectiveness and energy cost. Only one Evasive System upgrade may be used per enemy attack, and only once per attack.

Tracking System

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 3

Effect: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Upgrade. After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you with a Weapon of the chosen Type, you may spend 1 Energy to test Systems and increase your Evasion by the result against that Offensive Action. This Upgrade does not work against Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets.

Description: Your Gear is installed with a variety of equipment to track and read specific types of weapons used against you, allowing you to react to them faster and better.

Learning Computer

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 5

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you, you may spend 1 Energy to deny that Offensive Action its Tension bonus.

Description: The Learning Computer is an amazing system that compensates for the rising difficulties in keeping out of harm's way during battle, it reads and adapts to the patterns and movements of the enemy. Taking advantage of the smallest openings in an enemy's offensive, it automatically responds with its own commands to the Gear in order to keep the Avatar safe.

Reactive Booster

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 7

Effect: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Upgrade. After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you with a Weapon of the chosen Type, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Evasion by 10 against that Offensive Action. Description: A superior version of the Tracking System. Reactive Boosters read specific patterns and automatically move the Gear in response to even the fastest of attacks. Custom variants include CQC footwork and anti-missile cartwheels, among others.

ECS

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 10

Effect: After a successful Accuracy Test made to hit you, you may spend 1 Energy to test Systems and increase your Evasion by the result against that Offensive Action. This Upgrade does not work against Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets. Description: Unlike other Evasive System upgrades, the Electronic Cloaking System is not so much a sensor but the counter to it; an advanced array of rapidly oscillating lasers used to foil most conventional sensing equipment, from infrared to common optics. This proves to be a much better idea on paper than it is in practice, as giant robots still leave giant footprints, produce tremendous noise, and distort the background so much it is almost comical. Nonetheless it proves great for confusing a foe and their automated tracking systems, helping with evasive maneuvers in a pinch.

The Clothes don't Make the Man

An important aspect of any effects-based game is that they are highly compatible with 'Reskinning'. To 'reskin' is to change the flavor descriptions of abilities to suit your character better. An example of reskinning would be to change Aid Another upgrades from tactical knowledge built into the Gear to singing a song that motivates others to do better.

Since reskinning does not change the rules of the game at all, it is easy enough to do for enhancing the roleplaying experience without having to worry about disrupting the game. The most basic Evasive Systems and Defensive Barriers have reskinning built into them, you are going to need to decide just how to represent them because they only work against some of those Weapons.

The Weapon Types themselves (Melee, Ballistic, Beam and Missile) in this game may seem highly specific for an effects-based game, but that's because everyone is supposed to have a variety of Weapons with them, not just one, and as such every Weapon needs to be distinct from others. Furthermore they all do different things better than others, adding to the options and to the complexity of combat scenes. This was a decision to both make everyone's Gears feel like they're unique, and to make the game more enjoyable at a tactical level.

Other than Weapons, nearly everything in the game can be adapted to suit whatever you need. A Reactive Booster can be an anti-missile jammer, Anti-Gravity can take the form of wings or a jetpack, and of course all Areas can be interpreted differently as other limbs with Gears going from humanoid forms to that of animals or vehicles.

If you would like to represent specific non-humanoid Gears better, there will be optional rules for that in the book much later on in the last chapter of the book.

Defensive Barrier

Defensive Barrier lower Damage received or even nullify it entirely, but at the cost of Energy. All Barriers have limitations to their use, except for the most expensive one. Only one Defensive Barrier upgrade may be used per enemy attack, and only once per attack.

Oscillating Armor

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 3

Effect: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Upgrade. If you would be dealt Damage by a Weapon that is not of the chosen Type, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Offensive Action by 3.

Description: Gygravagnite-powered repulsion fields are not as uncommon as the Gravagne Field is, the key difference is their unstable yet minimal output. Not only do they fail to protect against all sources of incoming damage, but they only strengthen specially-made composite alloys rather than creating a barrier on their own. They sure make even the most dull Gear fabulously colorful though.

Friction Field

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 5

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage you may spend 1 Energy to halve the bonus to Penetration from the Accuracy Test of that one Offensive Action. If this would cause the bonus to be halved twice, both instances are separate so that the result is not zero.

Description: A special nanomachine bubble increases air density around your Gear on contact with high velocity physical objects, thereby offering a small degree of protection from nearly everything but often not enough to halt an entire offense on its own.

Custom Barrier

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 7

Effect: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Upgrade. If you would be dealt Damage by a Weapon of the chosen Type, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Offensive Action by 5. If doing so is enough to prevent any Damage from being dealt to you, you get back the Energy point used by this Upgrade.

Description: Refined versions of the technology employed in Oscillating Armor offer a much stronger and lasting defense but lack the variety of protection granted by the prototypes. They come in many forms, some as handheld shields to block close quarter weapons, others deploy beam absorbing particles around the Gear, and so on.

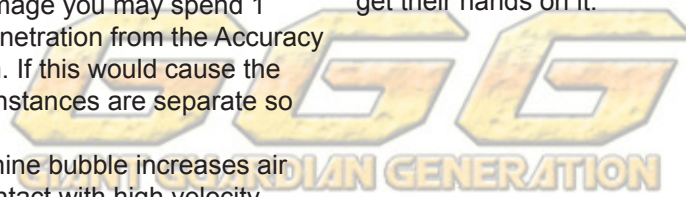
Gravagne Field

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 10

Effect: If you would be dealt Damage, you may spend 1 Energy to increase your Armor against that Offensive Action by 5.

Description: An extremely powerful barrier that outright repels everything you can throw at it, through a constant array of violent explosions. Gravagne Fields are one of Hiryu's most known successes, and the UEF would love to get their hands on it.



The Strongest Shield

Evasive System and Defensive Barrier Upgrades are collectively known Active Defenses, because they protect you only when you make the decision to spend Energy on them, rather than the passive and "always-on" effect from just enhancing your Evasion or Armor Attributes.

Generally speaking, characters are going to want to have one Active Defense either to maximize the effectiveness of Evasion and Armor or to supplement the weaker Attribute of the two. Having better Evasion can help an armored Mecha in a pinch, as can having decent Armor for an otherwise very frail type. If you can afford them, ECS and Gravagne Field are for the most part better than the alternatives. Learning Computer and Friction Field are okayish with most Mecha, but their utility increases considerably when in the hands of Eagle and Shield types, respectively.

More narrow Active Defenses can offer you a better bang for your buck if you know what you're doing. A Mecha that intends to spend most or all of its time in Duels can get protection against Melee Weapons and deny their rival the benefit of the higher numbers Melee Weapons usually benefit from, therefore being clearly superior at single combat. Dedicated snipers can protect themselves from Missiles - by far the best type of Weapon at charging forward while attacking - and focus on shooting down the Enemy before it can get to them. If you're worried about Beams, you should grab an Evasive System or a Custom Barrier, because Evasion boosts are higher and protect you just as much as Armor boosts. Ballistic Types, being all-around Weapons, aren't worth a dedicated Active Defense unless you know that enemies often rely on them.

Just do not forget that Active Defenses have weaknesses, and that there's always a way around them. Some Weapons deal pure Damage, which bypasses both Evasion and Armor entirely for instance. Because you cannot really be invincible, you should not invest extensively in defenses.

Aid Another

Aid Another Upgrades provide an Ally with assistance and relief in various situations, either by the Pilot's skill or the Mecha's equipment.

Guardian Maneuver

Areas: Core

Cost: 3

Effect: When using the Maneuver Action you may extend the benefit to all Allies within Range 1 up to three times per Operation. This Upgrade does not work while Docked nor against Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets.

Description: You fare better than most when attempting to evade a foe, and with clever use of terrain or high speed maneuvering you can both make yourself harder to hit and distract your opponents from other, easier targets.

Support Fire

Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Effect: When using the Assist action you may choose to not suffer a Disadvantage to your own attack up to three times per Operation. You may always Attack Enemies in the middle of a Duel without running the risk of hitting your Ally.

Description: Just because your intention is to help an Ally land a hit it does not mean your own shot should miss.

Granted, interfering in someone else's duel might get you frowned at, but it might also keep them alive.

Battlefield Commander

Areas: Core

Cost: 7

Effect: After using the Micromanage or Maneuver Actions you may have an Ally within Range 1 receive its benefits in your place.

Description: You have diagnostics feeds of all friendlies and several remote protocols to help other units in case of malfunction or just to give them a helping hand.

Sacrifice

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Effect: You may take Damage in place of an Ally within Range 1, at the same amount of Damage your Ally would have taken. After performing a Maneuver Action, and for a Round, you may redirect all attacks targeting Allies within Range 1 to your own Unit, using your own Evasion and Armor as the DNS. This Upgrade does not work while Docked, nor against Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets.

Description: The point man, the distraction, the meat shield. Whatever name you go by, you have the risky but necessary job of painting a target over your head so that others can do their thing.

Support

Support Upgrades enable your unit to support others in the battlefield by performing quick repairs and handing off extra ammunition or fuel during a battle. An Unit with Support Upgrades may use them on itself or on any Ally within Range 1. They may be used up to three times per Operation.

Reload

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 3

Effect: As an Action, you may repair and redeploy a set of broken Remote Weapons or let a single One-Shot Weapon be fired again after they have been previously spent.

Description: Ever wanted to be the guy carrying a hilariously large amount of ammo in his backpack? Now you can.

Jury Rig

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 5

Effect: As an Action, you may Test Systems to restore your Threshold or that of any one Ally by the result. If this would take any of them into a lost Threshold Level, restore the corresponding Maimed Area back to normal.

Description: You carry a dispenser of fast-repair nanomachines and enough metaphorical (or literal) duct tape to hold your battle-ridden allies together.

Resupply

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 7

Effect: As an Action, you may restore your Energy or that of one Ally by 5.

Description: You have with you spare Element G crystals, traditional capacitors and maybe even literal fuel to, well, refuel allies in need.

Overcharger

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: Choose an Evasive System or Defensive Barrier, The Overcharger costs the same as the chosen Upgrade.

Effect: Make any choices concerning Weapon Types that your chosen Evasive System or Defensive Barrier may require when you take this Upgrade. As an Action, you may grant all the benefits of the chosen Upgrade to defending against Offensive Actions for a Round. Any required Tests are made at the time of activation. Note that this counts as activating the chosen Upgrade, and the recipient will not be able to activate a similar defense for the duration.

Description: While it looks like a lightning gun that would make Tesla proud, the Overcharger actually shoots a stream of nanobots carrying Gygravagnite crystals that enhance a Gear's internals and maximize the effectiveness of their in-built systems, with each variant having dozens of possible adjustable settings.

Special Mode

Special Modes are upgrades that boost your capabilities considerably, you may activate them at will but they always come at a price. During your Beginning Phase you may activate any Special Mode and you may deactivate them during any Beginning Phase thereafter. An individual Special Mode may not be activated more than once per Operation, and neither your Remote Weapons nor your Sub Units receive any benefit from their effects.

Over-Booster

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 3

Effect: You may Move an additional Zone as part of your Actions, but doing so costs 1 Energy.

Description: A variant of the various modules used for terrain adaptability. The Over-Booster is unusual in that it is not actually meant to provide a considerable tactical edge in water, space, air or any other particular type of battlefield. Rather, it improves mobility considerably in all of them.

Artillery Mode

Areas: Core

Cost: 3

Effect: Your Ballistic, Beam and Missile type Weapons increase their maximum Ranges by one half of what it normally is, but you lose the ability to Move you normally can take with your Actions.

Description: Your Gear can firmly brace itself in place and adopt a sniping stance, mounting all sorts of devices to improve the efficiency and range coverage of firearms.

Beast Mode

Areas: Core

Cost: 5

Effect: When using a Melee Weapon you attack everything within 1 Zone from you with a single Offensive Action, but you may not Attack past a Range of 1 with any Weapon.

Description: Your Gear becomes a rampaging monster that lays siege to everything under its foot. Either by accessing a different set of combat routines while remaining under your control, or by acting entirely on its own.

Anti-Gravity

Areas: Any non-Core

Cost: 5

Effect: You ignore the effects of Terrain, can shoot through a Zone occupied by an Enemy as if they weren't there to reach another behind it, but may also be attacked without regard for defensive formations. This Upgrade has no effect underwater or in space.

Description: Being flight-capable can easily make the difference in combat against a foe that lacks this capability, but do not forget that you are forsaking your cover in doing so.

Stealth Field

Areas: Core

Cost: 7

Effect: Test Systems at the end of your Turn and impart a Disadvantage to Offensive Tests against you for a Round, plus another Disadvantage for each multiple of 5 met by the Result. Any instance of Damage taken will decrease your Energy by 1. If you don't have the Energy required, then you suffer 1d10 Damage instead per point of Energy you would have lost this way. This Damage will not trigger a chain reaction with itself.

Description: There are things out there that can actually pull off practical invisibility in the battlefield. Thanks to an array of intelligent Gygravagnite emitters that actively keep the unit cloaked at all times. The main drawback of this feature is that it will drain you of power very fast, as the emitters will exert your systems trying to pointlessly hide your exploding silhouette even after you've been found out. It might even shut down or destroy your Gear from the inside.

Three Times Faster

Areas: Core

Cost: 10

Effect: You gain an Advantage to your Offensive Actions, impart a Disadvantage to Offensive Actions taken against you, and may move an extra Zone as part of your Actions. You lose 2 Energy at the end of every one of your Turns. If you don't have 2 Energy to maintain this mode, you lose all of your remaining Energy and it ends.

Description: By tripling your energy output, the speed of your Gear increases dramatically. Many Gears even leave red afterimages in their wake when doing this.



Alternate Forms

Alternate Forms are not Upgrades of their own, but instead a way to facilitate getting more of them by making them usable only sometimes, when you are not using other Upgrades. You purchase a few 'sets' of Upgrades or Weapons both at the same Cost and you may alternate between these sets to gain the benefit of either of them as the situation calls for it.

You may obtain additional Alternate Forms of the same type after purchasing the first one, at the same value of the original sets. Alternate Forms may not hold Sub Units, Combinations, Remote Weapons or other Transformations or Frames inside.

All the various Alternate Forms still count as one Unit for the purposes of tracking abilities you can only have a limited number of. Particularly complex Alternate Forms are going to require multiple character sheets for all their versions.

Frames

Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the greater set of purchases, to a maximum of 10, plus 3. For every additional 10 UP you want to spend on the Frame, increase the cost by 3 more.

Effect: Purchase two 'sets' of Upgrades or Weapons with an equal distribution of UP between each set. You may switch to and from any of these Frames before deployment or after Docking inside your Base.

Description: You have modular equipment that you can switch between Operations to specialize in as many things as you wish

Transformation

Areas: None

Cost: The Cost of the greater set of purchases, to a maximum of 10, plus 5. For every additional 10 UP you want to spend on the Transformation, increase the cost by 5 more.

Effect: Purchase two 'sets' of Upgrades or Weapons with an equal distribution of UP between each set. You may switch to and from any of these Transformations at the beginning of your Turn.

Description: Your Unit is a transformer with at least 2 forms, they can be similar to each other or they can be entirely different.

Modules

Modules are much like Enhancements in that they increase your base attributes, but unlike Enhancements they are vulnerable to external damage. Apart from that, their other key difference is that instead of being a gradual improvement they provide a larger boost to two Attributes at once. A single Mecha may only have one of either the Power or Speed Modules at a time, not both.

Alternate Forms can apply Modules internally to distinguish themselves from each other. Because of this, when a Module is applied to an Alternate Form they go into the Core, and they may also have both Modules though they must each be applied to different Transformations or Frames.

Power Module

Areas: Core if it is part of an Alternate Form. Any non-Core otherwise.

Cost: 10

Effect: Increase your Armor and Penetration by 2.

Description: By concentrating your materials more efficiently, Mecha can take the heat for much longer and can also dish it out much harder. All without increasing bulk.

Speed Module

Areas: Core if it is part of an Alternate Form. Any non-Core otherwise.

Cost: 10

Effect: Increase your Evasion and Accuracy by 2.

Description: Mecha can be augmented through magnetic coating to respond much faster to the pilot controlling the PsAICon. Faster response times mean increased maneuverability, and that translates to a better offense and defense.

Versatility, at a Price

Alternate Forms are an easy way to get the most bang for your buck when you want one or more abilities that are a tad conditional in their use, either because of their cost or perhaps due to having considerable downsides.

You can own multiple Frames suited to different environments each through Features (they don't even cost any UP!), or possess a series of Transformations with entirely different Weapons depending on the Enemy you are facing.

Power and Speed Modules also make it easy to represent a giant robot with alternate forms distinctively bulkier or faster like planes or tanks. Since Modules go in the Core, they are also effectively just as good as Enhancements for Mecha with Alternate Forms.

The only problem with trying to diversify is, of course, that the UP costs tacked to all those Alternate Forms adds up. Fast.

Sub Unit

Sub Units don't benefit your unit directly but instead provide you with additional space for Upgrades, a Subpilot or even a Sidekick minion. A Sidekick is by default automated and works much like a Remote Weapon.

You may spend additional UP later to power up an existing Sidekick or Expansion Pack with more Upgrades or Weapons after it is created. Sub Units cannot hold Alternate Forms, Combinations, or Remote Weapons.

Because Sub Units are very powerful, any Sub Unit taken beyond the first counts as an Archetype. What this means is that you can have a maximum of three Sub Units, but doing so forbids you from taking Archetypes beyond the one you get for free. Similarly, purchasing two Archetypes means you cannot have more than one Sub Unit.

Expansion Pack

Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the total set of purchases, to a maximum of 10, plus 10.

Effect: Choose a set of Upgrades and Weapons and designate them as an Expansion Pack. You may combine with this Pack before deploying or after spending a Round within your Base, granting your Unit all of the Pack's held abilities. You do not gain extra benefit of any Upgrades obtained more than once this way, though they do serve as a backup in case the first instance gets Maimed. At any time you would take Damage, you may purge this Expansion Pack to halve the Damage you would have taken but rendering the Pack and its contents unusable for the rest of the Operation. You may purchase new instances of this Upgrade after the first.

Description: You purchase a multitude of Upgrades as one, by giving them a separate body that you can attach to your own Unit. Effectively these provide an extra limb of sorts, and should you ever be pushed to the limit, you can even eject and use it as an impromptu shield.

Assistant

Areas: Any non-Core.

Cost: 10.

Effect: You gain a subpilot trained to use either the Maneuver or Micromanage Actions during your Turn, and they have their own Action to use that way, though it does not receive a bonus from Genre Points. An Assistant does not get to Move with this Action for free, and may sacrifice the chance to Maneuver or Micromanage to instead Move the Unit 1 Zone in a direction of your choice, or to Disengage. They may board the Unit before deployment or after you've spent a Round within your Base. You may purchase new instances of this Upgrade after the first.

Description: You get a second pair of hands to help you out in the battlefield to improve your efficiency beyond what you can do on your own.

Sidekick

Areas: None

Cost: The cost of the total set of purchases plus 10.

Effect: Choose a set of Upgrades and designate them as a Sidekick, ignoring all Area allocation restrictions. Sidekicks may deploy at the beginning of your Turn without using an Action within a Zone of your Base or from you when the Operation begins. A Sidekick may make full use of any Upgrades or Weapons it holds, having a single Action to use during your Turn. Additionally choose whether your Sidekick is either Agile or Tough, the former choice grants the Sidekick 12 Evasion and 4 Armor, while the latter makes their Evasion of 4 and their Armor of 8. Sidekicks share their Energy, Systems and Tension with you, and are destroyed with the first point of Damage dealt to them. A defeated Sidekick may be repaired by spending an Action, plus a point of Energy for each time it has taken Damage during the course of the Operation. If you Enhance your own Evasion, Armor, Accuracy or Penetration, then your Sidekicks gain the benefits as well. You may purchase new instances of this Upgrade after the first.

Description: You get your own helper robot buddy. Though fragile and not as powerful as yours, it is still another pair of hands. They can be disabled rather easily, but fortunately can just as easily be reactivated and repaired remotely to continue in the fight.

Combination

This is the Upgrade line that enables multiple PC Mecha to crash together in a way that defies all logic and make a new robot that is stronger than the others. Combined Units may even have multiple forms capable of quickly decomposing and recombining to unleash a frenzy of continued attacks, as many as its number of individual Mecha.

Combination Upgrades are meant for PC Units that want to join together. If a character would like to have an NPC buddy to power up with, they should use Sub Units instead.

Combination Upgrades need for you to designate one or more friendly Units that you are going to combine with when you take the Upgrades in question. While Combined, all the Units are treated as the same one.

The act of Combination itself takes an Action from everyone involved and needs the participants to be within a Zone from at least one of the other components. Units may also choose to deploy precombined, if they so wish.

After Combination, the new Combined Unit is at its full Threshold and Energy, any Maimed Areas are restored to normal and it may treat any Weapons of limited use as if they hadn't been used by the original separate component Units. For God and Unison Combination, everyone involved needs to have taken the same type of Upgrade if they want to be compatible. Once Combined, an Unit may not decombine until the Operation is over.

You can take God Combination and Unison Combination multiple times, applying it to a different set of Units you want to combine with each time.

Component Unit

Areas: None

Cost: 10

Effect: After Combination the other Unit gains the benefit of all Enhancements you have purchased, though they do not stack with any Enhancements purchased of their own, and possess your Upgrades and Weapons in the same Areas that you have them. For as long as you remain Combined, you may only take the Maneuver and Micromanage Actions or use Support Upgrades with your own Action each Turn. You don't get to Move with this Action for free, and may sacrifice the chance to do Maneuver, Micromanage or Support to instead Move the Unit 1 Zone in a direction of your choice, or to Disengage. Component Unit is the only type of Combination that can only be used with one designated Combination target at a time, and that does not need for them to have taken a Combination Upgrade.

Description: They say your Gear has been around, and while you don't think that joke is funny, the robot itself is definitely something of an adaptor that works best as a power-up to another Gear.

God Combination

Areas: None

Cost: The number of other Units you wish to combine with multiplied by 5.

Effect: Designate one of the Component Units as the Lead Unit when taking this Upgrade. After Combination the Lead Unit possesses the Upgrades and Weapons of its allies in the same Areas they had them, and uses the highest Attributes among the individual combined Units except Systems. For as long as a Lead Unit remains Combined, the owners of the other Units may only take the Maneuver or Micromanage Actions or use Support Upgrades with their own Action each Turn. A non-Lead Unit does not get to Move with this Action for free, and may sacrifice the chance to use Maneuver, Micromanage or Support to instead Move the Unit 1 Zone in a direction of their choice, or to Disengage. God Combination is the only way for a single Unit to get multiple instances of Weapons with the One-Shot, Technique, Slow and Remote abilities.

Description: You and one or more allies join forces to create a new fully powered up unit with the best that the group has to offer. This giant robot is one of, if not the, strongest that the world might ever see.

Unison Combination

Areas: None

Cost: 10

Effect: After Combination each user has access to only their own purchased Upgrades and Weapons as normal during their Turn. This new Combined Unit has separate Evasion, Armor, Accuracy and Penetration Attributes for all of its forms but its Systems, Threshold and Energy are shared, using the average values of the combiners together for each. These Units may still perform Synchro Attacks with each other, and secondary participants to the Synchro Attack may spend a Genre Point in place of using up their own Actions.

Description: Multiple Gears made compatible with each other can crash together in an orgy of steel and speed lines to make one Gear that stands above all. This combined Gear has multiple forms that rapidly switch between each other, allowing every participant a chance at being the one in the controls.

Features

The default Mecha are assumed to be bipedal humanoids that work somewhat like giant suits of powered armor would, and while those are the majority in Mecha fiction, the Genre has so much more to offer. Features let you represent other things, such as giant spaceships and animal mecha, they are unique abilities with both an upside and a downside.

You may take one or more of these Features for your Mecha. They cost no UP at all and always go on the Core. Keep in mind some Features make sense when combined, such as Extreme Adaptation and Terrain Specialist. A lot of the time though, combining Features together doesn't quite make sense, but there is nothing stopping you from doing so if you can think of a cool enough justification.

Under special circumstances, some Features might be available to take as temporary equipment in a manner similar to Frames, and obtained through using the Mid-Scene Upgrade Genre Power for that one Operation before deploying or even in the middle of the action.

Base Unit

Effect: Any allied Unit within Move Distance may choose to Dock inside you with an Action. This grants them the benefits of being within Base Terrain. They may redeploy outside with an Action, launching a Zone off from you. Units docked can still take Offensive Actions, cannot be targeted or even damaged as long as the Base Unit is functional, and will move with it. If you are ever destroyed, your Squad is defeated. Base Units cannot Engage in or be Engaged into a duel.

Description: Congratulations, you are the thing every one of your enemies is going to try and shoot down over all your other allies. But hey, at least you can help keep friendlies keep functional in a pinch, right?

Extreme Adaptation

Effect: You are immune to Threshold loss from Terrain, but getting extra Movement with your Actions costs 1 more point of Energy.

Description: You thrive in the most inhospitable places known to mankind as if they were completely normal. But all that protection *really* gets in the way of your mobility.

Flyer

Effect: You ignore the effects of Terrain, can shoot through a Zone occupied by an Enemy as if they weren't there to reach another behind it, but may also be attacked without regard for defensive formations. This Upgrade has no effect underwater or in space.

Description: You are not just capable of atmospheric flight, but this is your only way to get around, this can be used to represent any method to fly as long as it is the only way the machine is capable of moving.

Power Suit

Effect: This Unit does not lose any abilities allocated to its Areas from Maiming. Instead each Area lost to damage inflicts a special penalty. Losing the Head means they must Test Systems against a DN of 10 when attempting to use a Genre Power, or the Power fails and the Point is lost after. Losing the Torso doubles all final Damage taken, after all other effects have been taken into account. Losing the Arms inflicts a Disadvantage to all Attacks made and a penalty to their final Penetration values of 5. Losing the Legs means that any Movement taken at all costs 1 additional Energy per Zone.

Description: You do not have a giant robot but a suit of mechanized armor, it is powerful enough to stand up to them, but it is that much more susceptible to direct hits.

Terrain Specialist

Effect: Choose one of underwater, space, or land when you take this Feature. While you are in said environment you ignore the effects of Difficult Terrain and can shoot through a Zone occupied by an Enemy as if they weren't there to reach another behind it. Outside your chosen environment you no longer Move one Zone for free with your Actions and your Offensive Actions suffer a Disadvantage.

Description: A lot of machines derived from the technology that is used for Gears are not humanoid. You can find anything from mecha mermen to fearsome beastly robots resembling mammals or even arthropods, adapted for land-to-land encounters.

Handling Base Units

Much like in the shows GGG emulates, often PCs and NPCs will find themselves fighting to defend their flagship or base of operations from others, who are trying to reduce it to cinders. No one needs to take on the role of playing Base Units, though, because getting attacked by every other enemy isn't really that fun.

If they want to, though, the option is there. The main drawback to having a Base Unit around is that they have a giant bullseye over their heads. Should a Base Unit get destroyed, the consequences should be dire indeed.

Don't just end the game on an anticlimactic note, that simply isn't fun at all. What happens when a Base is destroyed should be up to the group to decide, since the destruction of a Base has potential for plenty of ramifications on the story at large, such an event will likely be a turning point for your game. It is a great opportunity to introduce more dramatic elements to the story and make roleplaying more intense instead of having everyone die.

Bases are usually ships, so they do not have the usual humanoid Areas common to Mecha, instead they have a Bridge in place of the Core, the Antenna takes the place of the Head, the Hull is used as the Torso, the Turrets section is the equivalent of the Arms, and then you have the Stern as the Legs Area.

Mecha Weapons Format

All Weapons must go on non-Core Areas, but have no further restrictions and may go anywhere you please of either the Head, Torso, Arms or Legs.

One special limitation that you must keep in mind, is that you may not have more than one instance each of the Slow, Technique, One-Shot or Remote abilities between all of your Weapons.

Name of the Weapon

Range: The **minimum and maximum effective ranges of the Weapon**. Remember that distances and movement are abstracted, using a Weapon without moving from an area to another by the rules does not mean you remain still while you attack, merely that you get back in position after your striking the foe.

Accuracy: The **bonus the Weapon adds to Accuracy Tests** when used, in addition to the Mecha's own Accuracy.

Penetration: The **bonus the Weapon adds to Penetration**, in addition to the Mecha's own Penetration.

Energy: The **required number of Energy that the Weapon spends with each use**. Much like with Upgrades, if you do not have enough Energy, you may not use the Weapon.

Special: Any unique properties of the Weapon, such as its Type, Keyword abilities, and unique non-keyworded abilities. Each Type has a special ability.

Description: A flavor interpretation of what the Upgrade does in-universe. The presented explanation is only a default that you may modify at your leisure, as long as the GM approves, of course.

Weapon Type Abilities

Ballistic: You may trade in the Movement from your Action to instead gain an Advantage to an Offensive Action using these. If you are forbidden from Moving, for whichever reason, you cannot make use of this ability.

Beam: After one of these bypasses the Enemy's Evasion, you can add all of the excess bonus to your Penetration instead of halving it.

Melee: Melee Weapons gain an Advantage when used in a Duel or attempting to Engage in one.

Missile: When used between Range 1 and half their Maximum Range, the Offensive Action is at an Advantage.

Weapon Special Keyword Abilities

Blast: Some Weapons make really big explosions. Blast Weapons don't attack an Enemy but instead target an individual Zone and make a single Test against all targets within Range 1 from it, regardless of whether they are friend or foe, but they will not cause you to hurt yourself.

Defective: This Weapon is inaccurate or prone to misfiring. If you keep a die roll that is an odd number when using this Weapon, you halve the final amount of Damage you would have dealt with it.

Heavy: This Weapon suffers a Disadvantage if used against a target under less than a Range of 2.

Linear: This Weapon cannot be used with the Aim or Assist Actions.

One-Shot: Even if they don't use Energy, many Weapons have limited uses, for whichever reason. One-Shot Weapons may be only fired once per Operation.

Overheating: The gun is unstable. It will not explode, but its harmful radiation will interfere with your fragile systems. If you keep a die roll that is an even number when using this Weapon, you take 1d10 Damage after firing.

Reliable: Some Weapons usually fare that much better than others. Reliable Weapons are so good they have an innate Advantage to their Accuracy Tests.

Remote: Remote Weapons aren't wielded by the Mecha but instead are deployed and attack separately, you may deploy them within one Zone from you at the beginning of your Turn or at the start of an Operation, and may retrieve them the same way.

When you create a Remote Weapon, you choose whether it is Agile or Tough. Agile types have an Evasion of 12 and an Armor of 4, Tough types have an Evasion of 4 and an Armor of 8. Both types have 0 Threshold and Systems, but run off your own Energy and Tension. Remote Weapons can Move and perform Actions individually, but they require your direct control and use your own Actions to do so. You may spend 1 Energy during your Turn to grant any Remote Weapon you have deployed a single Action, but only once per Turn, and they may not move twice this way.

If you enhance your own Evasion or Armor, your Remotes gain the benefits as well. All Remotes always receive your bonuses to Accuracy and Penetration.

Slow: This Weapon cannot be fired continuously, it may not be fired again if it was used on the previous Turn.

Stray: Upon firing a Stray Weapon you must Test Systems against a DN of 10 and, if you fail, the Weapon may not be used for a number of Rounds equal to the Range it was used to attack at.

Technique: Techniques are special attacks stronger than normal weapons, but are difficult to pull off repeatedly as the Enemy is already going to see them coming. These Weapons do not benefit from Tension to their Accuracy Tests if used more than once against the same Enemy during an Operation.

Unwieldy: After attacking with this Weapon, the targeted Enemy gains an Advantage to Offensive Actions against you for a Round.

Weapons

Every Mecha starts with one Default Weapon (Slam) that is not written in its statistical block. **All other Weapons have an UP Cost of 5.** Since the free one is very bad, and because you don't want to have to even use it, you should purchase additional Weapons instead.

Slam

Areas: Core

Cost: 0

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, Using this Weapon inflicts half the amount of Damage dealt on the Enemy back to yourself, rounding down.

Description: More a desperation measure rather than a proper weapon, whatever it is that remains of your Gear you at least know that you can bump and crash into the enemy if absolutely necessary.

Specific Melee Weapons

Melee Weapons are the bread and butter of most Mecha, being cheap and powerful. The downside lies in their short range and the energy cost that they tend to come with.

All-Out Attack

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: 1

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, Technique, At the beginning of their next Turn, the Enemy suffers half the amount of Damage taken from the original attack.

Description: A brutal no-holds-barred rampage of melee strikes. Those hit by this technique usually don't know it yet, but they are already dead.

Divine Wind

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: Special.

Penetration: Special

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, Using this Weapon will down you a Level of Threshold and Maim the Area it is located on. Its Accuracy is equal to the total UP stored in there, and its Penetration is the Threshold you lost this way. This Weapon cannot be used without having been assigned to an Area, and is not compatible with effects that let you use Areas as if they weren't Maimed. This Weapon is unaffected by Evasive Systems and Defensive Barriers.

Description: You detach one of your Mecha's limbs and make it crash against enemies. Amazing at making use of spare parts and earning the hate of the repair teams.

Finger Net

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 1

Special: Melee, Blast, All within the affected Zones lose half their Evasion (before applying Evasive Systems or Powers that increase it) until they take a Maneuver Action and get a result of at least 10, or until they move out of the Blast area. Entering (or re-entering) this area after the shot will not cause again the loss of Evasion.

Description: A giant net made of Type-W Gygravagnite, made to restrain the speedier Cryptids. By installing them in a Gear's fingertips they can be shot as a surprise in the middle of close quarters combat.

Extending Punch

Range: 0-3

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: 3

Energy: 1

Special: Melee. You may spend additional Energy when using this Weapon to increase its Maximum Range by the three per point of Energy spent, up to a maximum of fifteen at 5 Energy.

Description: A testament to the fact that if you stick enough nerds together in a room and dare them to make the most ludicrous concept a reality, they will succeed. This weapon simply uses a preposterous amount of Gygravagnite Types W and Y, ultra compressed and blended together to make what is, essentially, an entire limb out of nanomachines. When asked why would anyone ever want to do this when you've got perfectly serviceable firearms, their mysterious investor simply said "Because it is cool."

Gallant Kick

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: 4

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, Technique, This Weapon gains double benefit from Tension to Tests.

Description: Few things have the style and potency of this attack, and similarly few are capable of reliably pulling it off. It is said to be the signature move of experienced aces that like to show off their skills.

Radiant Fist

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +5

Penetration: 0

Energy: 2

Special: Melee, Technique, You may add all of the surplus from your Accuracy Test to Penetration with this Weapon instead of halving it.

Description: The ultimate in close range finishers, the unit's hands are equipped with an extremely damaging system, from electric colliders to a radiation pulse that glows with an awesome power.

Specific Ballistic Weapons

Ballistic Weapons offer solid ranges and reliability of use at no energy cost or loss of efficiency from repeated uses. However, they are slightly weaker for their price than other Weapons and often suffer from very poor ammo capacity.

Armor Breaker

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 4

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Slow, On a successful Accuracy Test the Enemy loses all Armor (before applying Defensive Barriers or Powers that increase it) until their current Threshold Level is destroyed.

Description: Special rounds made of depleted uranium designed to tear down and destroy the armor of targets, guaranteeing that anyone who survives it will not function for much longer.

Long Rifle

Range: 2-10

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic. This Weapon cannot be fired without first taking the Aim Action with it, but gains double benefit from Tension to Tests.

Description: The battle-tested Weapon of choice for mecha-scale snipers, with more than enough ammo to last until the end of the battle. The only issue is that it performs terribly, which is to say not at all, when unscoped.

Resonance Cannon

Range: 0-10

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Technique. If this Weapon would deal at least 1 Damage, the Enemy's current Level of Threshold is destroyed instead of normally dealing Damage.

Description: A sonic burst that shatters enemy Gears at their structural level. Though an unwieldy and gimmicky weapon, it is none the less scary to face, considering a mere graze can be as damaging as a direct hit.

Riot Weapon

Range: 3

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 4

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic. This Weapon attacks all Zones within Range in a straight line aimed in a direction of your choice.

Description: Sometimes you don't want staying power but to blow holes in everything nearby, in those situations claymore launchers or a Gear-scale shotgun will do the job.

Sentry Turret

Range: 0-4

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Remote (Tough). This Remote is immobile once deployed and cannot use Offensive Actions other than Suppress, but always gets a result of 10 when Testing Accuracy.

Description: The Sentry Turret is a tripod-mounted BOARD-operated device with remarkable tracking capability. And yet the Sentry Turret is not designed for direct combat, but rather to take a support role in providing area denial. To this end it fires not to kill but rather to lay down covering fire for as long as its supply of self-resupplying nanomachines allows. The only drawback is that, much like all remote weapons, it needs constant energy supplying to operate autonomously, or else its owner is going to have to personally operate it.

Superheavy Machinegun

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 2

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic, Blast, Defective, If you keep a roll of 10 when using this Weapon, you may roll an additive 1d10 that is added to the result. Successive 10's do not give you extra rolls.

Description: A Weapon capable of drowning enemies in munitions, and carrying enough bullets to be accused of trying to overcompensate for something. The recoil is so terrible that it needs to be mounted onto the Gear, and it tends to send most of the shots in the wrong direction, but landing a series of direct hits will wreck anyone.

Specific Beam Weapons

Weapons of the Beam type are very powerful for their cost and come in all ranges. Their notable downside is that they are as deadly as they are hungry for your unit's operating power.

Disruptor Cannon

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 1

Special: Beam, Blast, This Weapon creates an area of effect where Energy-based Upgrades or Weapons double their Energy costs for a Round.

Description: Another one of those kooky experimental weapons that Hiryu loves so much, this one spreads a harmful signal that disrupts other Gygravagnite-based technology. Not enough to disable them, but definitely enough to make the most complicated systems slow down and take extra power just to function normally.

Charge Cannon

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 1

Special: Beam, Reliable. If you take the Aim Action with this Weapon before firing it costs an additional 1 Energy to use, but gains the Blast and Overheating abilities plus a bonus to its Accuracy equal to half current Tension.

Description: A portable, pistol-shaped beam cannon with two different firing modes: Continuous and Charged.

Continuous fire provides an accurate, consistent supply of firepower while the Charged mode takes a while but can blast multiple targets with one shot. Novices are instructed to keep to the Continuous mode - Charged mode can and probably will blow up in the face of an inexperienced user.

Incinerator

Range: 0-2

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: 0

Energy: 1

Special: Beam, Blast, This Weapon sets everything in the area of effect on fire, turning it into Extreme Terrain for one Round.

Description: Someone just had to devise the equivalent of a giant flamethrower, and though its output form may vary - chest beams seem highly popular for some reason - it always is just as energy-hungry as it is monstrously deadly to everything nearby.

Giga Blaster

Range: 1-10

Accuracy: +7

Penetration: 7

Energy: 5

Special: Beam, Overheating, This Weapon attacks everything in between the target and you in a three-zone Column-shaped beam. Giga Blaster requires one Action be spent charging it, and its successful use will automatically make you lose your next Action afterwards. You do not need to declare the target until the moment of firing, only that you are about to use the Weapon, and may Move as normal while powering up as with any Offensive Action.

Description: Arguably the most powerful weapon any Gear could wield, leaving entire battlefields in ruins, it is amusingly enough a prototype of the Incinerators - it just happens to lack many of the safeties that kept the degeneracy chain of Gygravagnite in check. Just be careful with the forceful system reboot. And your unamused allies, too.

Ground Zero

Range: 1

Accuracy: +3

Penetration: 3

Energy: 2

Special: Beam, Technique. This Weapon attacks everyone within Range, including Allies, but not you. For every additional 1 Energy spent on Ground Zero increase its area of effect by 1.

Description: An offensive variant of the technology that would lead to the invention of the Type-G Gygravagnite and more precisely the Gravagne Field. You expel an insane amount of pure, raw Gygravagnite in a highly dangerous explosion with you at its center, coincidentally the only safe spot from the blast radius.

Lux Cannon

Range: 0-10

Accuracy: 0

Penetration: 5

Energy: Special

Special: Beam. This Weapon always gets a result of 10 when Testing Accuracy. Using it will drain all the remaining Energy from the user, but granting a bonus Accuracy of 1 for each Energy point lost this way. You may not use Lux Cannon if your Energy is of 0.

Description: A honest to God giant laser cannon. Not only is dodging light rather hard, no matter who you are, but it is obscenely powerful. Unfortunately for users it is extremely prohibitive concerning energy efficiency, leaving Element G reserves completely empty.

Specific Missile Weapons

Specializing in long range area of effect attacks and capable of disturbing an Enemy's functionality without using energy, Missile Weapons are generally expensive for their offensive power but make great artillery Weapons nevertheless.

Anti-Air Missiles

Range: 1-7

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 1

Energy: 0

Special: Missile. When using this Weapon against targets with Flyer or using Anti-Gravity, you may add all of the surplus from your Accuracy Test to Penetration instead of halving it.

Description: Air dominance is still very much a thing even in this new era of Gears. Everyone in Earth understands this, and provides their troops with necessary countermeasures against their enemies. The RUF has to be careful of those pesky Majesty types, Hiryu has to worry about flying Outsiders taking advantage of how complicated it is to fight giant monsters in the middle of the ocean, and the GAF wants the Wagner destroyed by yesterday.

Bombardment

Range: 1-10

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast, One-Shot. This Weapon deals an additional 1d10 Damage to everything inside, even if the attack otherwise misses.

Description: For those times when you have to pull out all the stops, just point your massive armaments at the center of the enemy forces and watch everything go up in flames.

Interference Cloud

Range: 1-10

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast, One-Shot, Everyone caught in this Weapon's area of effect loses the bonus from Tension to Offensive Actions until they take a Maneuver Action and get a result of at least 10, or until they move out of the Blast area. Entering (or re-entering) this area after the shot will not cause again the loss of Tension.

Description: A series of missiles that explode into a short lived cloud of particles that confuse all targeting systems in the vicinity.

Genius Missile

Range: 0-7

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Slow, Every time you target the same Enemy, you gain an Advantage to further uses of the Weapon against them.

Description: The Genius Missiles are the most advanced homing weapon out there, their on-board computers are linked together and feed each other data on the enemy, continuously improving their effectiveness against repeating targets.

Micro Missiles

Range: 0-7

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Slow, You may elect to not roll dice when taking Offensive Actions with this Weapon and instead treat Tests as if the result were a 10.

Description: A figurative circus of missiles that cruise the sky in a pattern that makes trying to evade them futile for the average unit, and impact from multiple angles at once making a direct critical hit that much more likely.

Nega-G Rounds

Range: 0-4

Accuracy: +2

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Missile. The Enemy loses Energy equal to the Damage taken from this Weapon.

Description: Missiles tipped with compressed Type-G that home in on enemies by magnetic attraction, searching for the particular signature of Gygravagnite Type-R, and spread a disrupting interference on the impacted Gear's internals on impact, collapsing their reserves of Element G into useless minerals.

Custom Weapons

The previous list of Weapons offers a number of very specific ones that all do unique things, for more traditional or simpler Weapons you can create them yourself.

Start with one of the four base templates for Melee, Ballistic, Beam or Missile Weapons and add abilities or drawbacks to it, changing its Cost in UP accordingly. Their starting cost in UP is of 0. There are a few special rules to follow when making your own Weapons.

First, a **Custom Weapon cannot Cost more than 5 UP**. If you want to make a Weapon stronger than what 5 points would allow you to get, **you must give it drawbacks and keep the Cost at 5**. That said, **Custom Weapons cannot cost 0. They must have a Cost of at least 1**.

Though you may have multiple Custom Weapons of the same type, you cannot have more than one such Weapon with a Cost lower than 5 UP. Custom Weapons that cost 4 UP or less may be powered up through the course of the game with additional UP, until their cost is 5. You may also buy off negative abilities such as Technique or Blind Spot this way.

Lastly, the premade Weapons from the previous handful of pages may not be modified using this system.



Custom Melee Weapon

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 1

Energy: 0

Special: Melee.

Description: Anything from a hand-held beam saber, to a drill attached to your knee, to more ubiquitous things such as a double flail that splits in the middle. Just make sure that any Weapons that don't go in the Arms make sense elsewhere.

GGGG

Ability	Cost	Description.
Returning	+1	+1 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to nine times.
Penetrating	+1	+1 to Penetration. May be applied up to nine times.
Accurate	+2	+1 to Accuracy. May be applied up to nine times.
Remote	+1	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Technique or Unwieldy.
Reliable	+6	As the ability of the same name.
Unwieldy	-2	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Remote.
Hungry	-3	Consumes 1 additional Energy. May be applied up to five times.
Technique	-4	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Remote.
Stray	-1	As the ability of the same name. May be applied up to half the number of times the Weapon has instances of the Returning ability.

Custom Ballistic Weapon

Range: 0-7

Accuracy: +1

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic.

Description: Custom Ballistic Weapons are usually bigger versions of the more mundane weapons that existed before Gygravagnite took hold, such as giant revolvers, rifles, and various types of machineguns. They may be hand held or integrated into the Gear anywhere.

Ability	Cost	Description
Long Range	+1	+1 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to three times. Cannot be combined with Short Range.
Penetrating	+1	+1 to Penetration. May be applied up to ten times.
Accurate	+2	+1 to Accuracy. May be applied up to nine times.
Remote	+2	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with One-Shot.
Blast	+5	As the ability of the same name.
Reliable	+6	As the ability of the same name.
Short Range	-1	-2 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to three times. Cannot be combined with Long Range or Blind Spot.
Slow	-2	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with One-Shot.
Heavy	-2	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Blind Spot.
Blind Spot	-4	+3 to the Weapon's Minimum Range. Cannot be combined with Heavy or Short Range.
Defective	-5	As the ability of the same name.
One-Shot	-6	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Slow, Remote, or Technique.

More Weapons for Less

So you would like to have a lot of Custom Weapons to round out your character's offensive prowess or just represent they have everything and the kitchen sink built into them. That is a bit difficult if all but one of said Weapons cost 5 UP. There is one way around this, and it involves paying some of their cost right now and the rest of it later. Basically, you can get around the limitation of having only one Weapon that costs less than 5, under the following conditions:

First, you may only do this while you are creating your Mecha, and only once at that time. Second, you may not have more than one Custom Weapon of the same Cost under 5. That means you cannot have two of them costing 1 - The second must be worth 2 UP or more. Third, they may not have drawbacks, though they may have other abilities. You can increase their offensive power and their range, but not decrease said range or give them an Energy cost.

This way you can get up to four separate Weapons for 10 UP very early, making it considerably easier to cover a variety of situations with your armaments and mitigating the effects of being Maimed, but you are very limited in what you can do with them.

Custom Beam Weapon

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Beam.

Description: Beam Weapons often look much like their Ballistic counterparts, though they do upscale better and generally make for more useful superweapons like beam bazookas, complex multi-beam arrays that go in multiple directions, and of course bunker busting beams of concentrated, pure power.

Ability	Cost	Description
Penetrating	+1	+1 to Penetration. May be applied up to ten times.
Long Range	+1	+1 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to five times. Cannot be Combined with Short Range.
Remote	+1	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Technique or Overheating.
Accurate	+2	+1 to Accuracy. May be applied up to ten times.
Blast	+5	As the ability of the same name.
Reliable	+6	As the ability of the same name.
Short Range	-1	-2 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to two times. Cannot be Combined with Long Range.
Hungry	-2	Consumes 1 additional Energy. May be applied up to five times.
Blind Spot	-3	+3 to the Weapon's Minimum Range. Cannot be combined with Short Range.
Technique	-4	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Remote.
Overheating	-5	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Remote.

This is my Rifle

There's so many options to choose from, how do you know which ones you should take? Generally speaking you want a weapon with balanced Accuracy and Penetration scores for general use, prioritizing Accuracy slightly if only because it pulls double duty.

Melee Weapons are generally better off sticking to close quarters combat, unless you have Get Over Here or you give said Weapon the Slow ability. That said Melee Weapons have great baseline bonuses and are cheap to beef up even further, so they make for great finisher attacks after closing in to the Enemy. Ballistics are the best for a dedicated sniper and also generally useful. Their only real limitation is that you want to stay still (or not be caught in a duel) to benefit from their in-built Advantage. Beams are obviously at best with high Accuracy and employed against heavily armored foes. Lastly there's Missiles, which are best at charging into the fray and get Blast weapons for cheap, they do solid damage but are not as accurate as other types.

Consider having one or two backup Weapons in your less important Areas for one or two UP. If you don't have any Weapons with limited-use drawbacks such as Technique or Slow, take the opportunity to apply those to it, and make a strong emergency use Weapon for a low UP Cost.

As a final note, Advantages can mitigate the issues with Defective and Overheating Weapons to the point that, with enough of them, they might as well be considered free points.

Custom Missile Weapon

Range: 1-7

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 1

Energy: 0

Special: Missile.

Description: Missiles can often go anywhere, though some smaller Gears do make use of hand-held missile pods since they can be quickly discarded after use. They tend to make up for their lesser power with numbers and as such it is not uncommon to see them being shot in great numbers and with notable area coverage.

Ability	Cost	Description
Dogfighter	+1	The Weapon gains a Minimum Range of 0. Cannot be combined with Blind Spot.
Long Range	+1	+1 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to three times. Cannot be Combined with Short Range.
Penetrating	+1	+1 to Penetration. May be applied up to nine times.
Accurate	+2	+1 to Accuracy. May be applied up to ten times.
Remote	+2	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with One-Shot.
Blast	+3	As the ability of the same name.
Reliable	+6	As the ability of the same name.
Slow	-1	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with One-Shot.
Linear	-1	As the ability of the same name.
Short Range	-2	-3 to the Weapon's Maximum Range. May be applied up to two times. Cannot be combined with Blind Spot or Long Range.
Blind Spot	-3	+3 to the Weapon's Minimum Range. Cannot be combined with Dogfighter or Short Range.
Defective	-5	As the ability of the same name.
One-Shot	-6	As the ability of the same name. Cannot be combined with Slow or Remote.

Killing the Mood

Not every kind of Upgrade fits into every kind of game, and some Upgrades are more obvious suspects to this than others. While having access to Gravagne Fields or Nega-G Rounds might be questionable at times, it is the Combination Upgrade line that is probably the most obvious offender as not only can it entirely ruin a game's tone if the GM intends it to be gritty but it also needs cooperation from one other members of the group to actually function.

However this could also apply to more mundane Upgrades and even Weapons - maybe you are undergoing a Gygravagnite embargo and the manufacture of further Beam Weapons is forbidden - these are obviously a case-by-case issue but nonetheless serve just as well to state that it never hurts to ask.

The Personal Touch

To truly make your Mecha more than a really bland pile of mechanics for battle and little else, you are going to have to put some effort in giving it an unique description.

This step can be as superficial or crucial to the game as you want it to be. You could go to great effort to describe its unique equipment via appropriate technobabble but not give it any real relevance to the plot at large, or make it the successor of a series of ambitious but so far catastrophic projects and from there tie it to your PC's Themes.

It is up to you, and to the rest of the group, how much detail and cooperation you want put into this.

Remember to note everything down in the sheet for Mecha once you are done.

Mecha Details Questionnaire

What is the Mecha's name? Is it part of a series or a unique model?

What does the Mecha look like? What are its most prominent distinguishing features?

Does the Mecha follow a theme? Is it alone in that or is it a group theme?

Is the Mecha brand new? Does it have a history?

What is the Mecha's theoretical role? Is it deemed a success, a failure, or simply the best the creators managed?

Who built the Mecha? Why are you its pilot?

What are the Mecha's armaments? Why is it equipped with them over other weaponry?

How does it handle? What would your PC change?

Has it been modified since being rolled out? If so, what was done to it?

What is the Mecha's best asset? What about its greatest weakness?

The Mecha Sheet

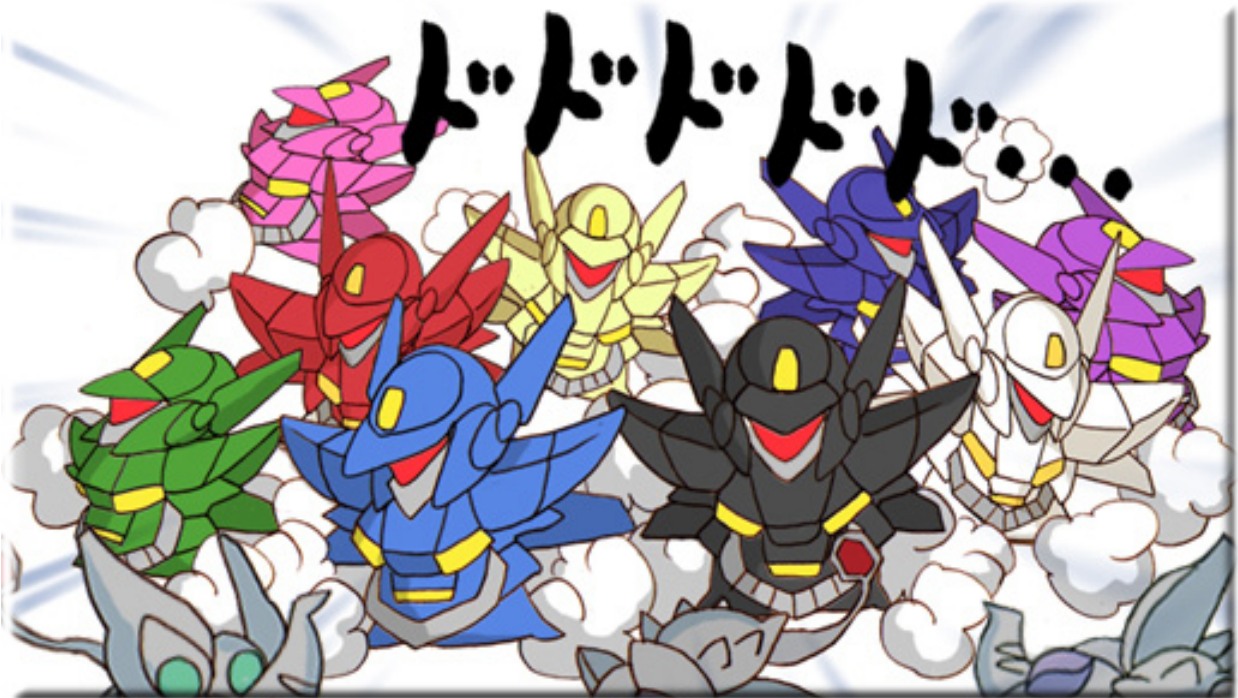
The Mecha Sheet has enough space for you to write everything your Mecha will be able to do, but not enough to go into detail. Be concise and note down the important information that will help you remember or understand what things do at a glance, leaving specific details and precise wording to the long descriptions within the book.

When writing down Customized Upgrades or Weapons, make sure to note their specific applications somewhere, this can be between parentheses, at the back of the page, or wherever you find it useful since it is for your own convenience.

The 'Other' Area in your Mecha Sheet is used for everything that is not installed anywhere in your giant robot's regular parts, such as Remote Weapons, Sidekicks, and Expansion Packs.

Alternate Forms are a bit too unwieldy when you decide to hold more than the standard 10 UP in each Form, or even when you have more than one Form! In such cases it might be best if you just simply grab two separate sheets and update them individually. Just don't forget to transfer Damage and the like if you make a change in the middle of battle.

Refer to the example sheet if you are not entirely sure how one or more rules work, or if you just need check on how to keep track of something, that's what it is there for after all!



Example of Mecha Construction

Violet knows that everyone else has primarily short to medium range melee intensive Gears, realizing that they're probably going to be torn apart by anything and everything that can shoot them before they get to it, Violet decides her Gear will have decent range coverage.

Her character will ride a Dynamic Chassis with the Experimental Reactor Archetype, tentatively naming Michiko's Gear as Queen Minerva, alluding to her character's wisdom and refined talent for battle.

To cover her Unit's defenses, she considers the ECS Evasive System Upgrade, but since her Mecha is already going to be spending a lot of Energy into her Weapons (because of Experimental Reactor) she increases Evasion and Armor by 1 and 2 points for 7 UP total instead. She also grabs the Resupply Upgrade to help herself out of a pinch or to lend a hand when necessary for another 7 UP.

She has 16 UP left to spend, and she moves on to Minerva's offensive abilities. She knows that she wants three Weapons at least, and begins by nabbing an Incinerator for 5 UP. Violet decides she also wants a Giant Tomahawk, a custom Melee Weapon, as a flashy finisher. To create it Violet adds +2 to Accuracy and +1 Penetration to the Melee template for 5 UP. But she wants to strengthen it up, so she gives it an Energy cost of 1 and makes it a Technique, giving her another 7 UP to spend on said Weapon. After some deliberation the points are distributed into five increases to Penetration and another to Accuracy. The final Custom Melee Weapon has a +3 bonus to Accuracy, and a +6 to Penetration, adding up to +5 Accuracy and +10 Penetration with the Mecha's own Chassis bonuses.

Now Violet has 6 UP left over, five of which go into Anti-Gravity with the last single UP being used to make a last Custom Weapon - this time Eye Beams. She adds an Energy cost of 1 to increase her customization budget to 3 UP, which are spent into a simple increase to Accuracy and Penetration for a total of +3 Accuracy and +5 Penetration.

Now she has to install these Upgrades and Weapons: The Giant Tomahawk and Eye Beams will obviously go to the Arms and Head, respectively, and the Incinerator will be placed in the Torso. Anti-Gravity will take the form of wings placed on the back, thus joining the Incinerator in the Torso Area. Not sure where to place her Resupply unit, she looks at the recommendations within the book and installs them in the Legs.

Ingham looks over to check if everything is going alright, and notices that Violet is in no danger of crippling herself with an unfun, useless Unit. She has three Weapons spread over various parts of the body, and can replenish her Energy to continue launching attack after attack. Between the Enhancements and her defensive Genre Powers she won't be going down easy either. The cosmetic and roleplay features of Queen Minerva are very much like those of General Z, but sleeker and more nimble. Ingham okays Violet's Unit and begins to plot adding long range enemies to the next battle so she has a chance to shine with a dramatic entrance.

Tips n Tricks

Making your own Mecha is more complicated and has more room for fine-tuning details than the creation of the Character proper, so it is much easier to get confused by all the options when you don't have a specific concept in mind. Here are a few considerations so you don't accidentally make mistakes when building your Mecha.

A good place to start is to pick a defensive ability like a Defensive Barrier or a Evasive System that goes well with your Chassis. Remember that because of Tension, each subsequent attack gets harder and harder to evade or to soak. It is recommended you have at least one Weapon that can always be used reliably and has a decent range coverage - between 0 and 5 is enough. After you've got your bread and butter, you can grab utility weapons or big finishers. Between 10 and 15 Points worth of Weapons is the usual. Everything else is more situational in its use. Guardian Maneuver, Support Fire and Sacrifice improve team strategies considerably, but do little to nothing without teamwork. Support Upgrades are very powerful but the cost of an Action means they're at their best when helping others rather than yourself.

Enhancements are a great way to spend leftover UP, since they don't cost much (at least at first) and increase your performance notably with each boost. A Custom Weapon with a Cost under 5 is also a good idea if you have already used up your three Enhancements.

Assistant is what you want to get to keep yourself healed or well-oiled through a long battle, since half the time you are going to get something good out of it and you have a small chance of getting double the bonus. The other Sub Units let you spread out Upgrades and Weapons around to either keep them in a safe place, or give them a body of their own to use them independently. Support and Aid Another Upgrades work extremely well with Sidekicks.

Combination Upgrades have the most room for mistakes, and Units that want to make use of them should take care not to end up with something that isn't fun to play. Firstly, a Squad with one or more Components in it should leave Enhancements up to the Components, focusing primarily on Weapons. The Components, meanwhile, should aim for grabbing Enhancements and abilities that improve their Maneuvering, Micromanaging or uses of Support. Unison Combiners are at their best when they make use of their ability to throw multiple Synchro Attacks per Turn, so all participants want at least one Weapon with useful special abilities and one Weapon with raw, strong numbers behind it. Lastly, The God Combination is very expensive, but does the best job of combining everyone's power together, so it does not require as much thought behind it other than to try and keep your selection of Chassis types varied for maximum benefit.

The dust had barely settled by the time that Wong stepped out of the VTOL. He took a moment to resist the urge to brush the remaining sticky flecks off of his suit. Smearing them would only make things worse. Under different circumstances, the abandoned airbase before him may have been almost pleasant. Those circumstances were called 'trees'. Without them, the erosion of the soil had turned the whole facility into a dustbowl, and lent it a uniquely solemn air of depression and disuse. In a way, it was almost genius.

Wong instructed his pilot to listen for any suspicious radio chatter during his meeting, and his personal guards to follow him out. Mr. Beats lacked the conventional form of respect to come and meet an expected visitor upon arrival, especially one who was as well-known as a Wong.

Even with all of the changes in recent years, basic human needs and urges never change. There was a demand for opium before the invention of electricity, and there would continue to be one long after Gears have been replaced by the next advance in weapons technology. As ever, the more enjoyable substances were rigorously controlled by those in authority. Fascists. But the demand was this there. And Wong met that demand, for a price.

Meeting that demand was not always easy. Trafficking his product between zones and across oceans required hardware that attracted attention. Occasionally, those with more testosterone than wits thought that they could muscle Wong out of his market. For these things and more, Wong found it necessary to use force. And when using force, it paid to use it in an overwhelming amount.

That is where Benjamin Beats entered the life story of Jianguo Wong. Walking deeper into the base, Wong and his guards caught sight of a middle aged man walking toward them, out of one of the nearby buildings.

Balding and sweating in the heat, the mechanic's jumpsuit he wore was halfway unzipped, the sleeves of them tied around his waist rather than letting them dangle.

The worn grey suit may have been white once. Wong noted his displeasure at the lack of decorum, but decorum was not Beats's specialty. Wong could make such allowances for an old partner.

"Afternoon Wong." Jovial as always, Beats. "I thought we worked out the details on the phone?"

Kong made a show of looking around. "Of the job, yes. But I wish to see your... materials firsthand."

Beats smiled a toothy grin. "What, you don't trust me? Me, your only friend in this cruel and terrible world?"

No reaction. Wong was too professional for that during anything official. "I do not trust fortune, Benjamin."

Benjamin Beats let out a laugh that made him sound twice as big as he was, and waved for Wong and his men to follow. Beats understood the score as well as anyone else.

Benjamin Beats and the small but loyal team of men who worked for him held a position unique to them on Earth. Building and maintaining a Gear took considerable money, and even more infrastructure. Without those, fielding a Gear was virtually impossible. But in the age of Gears, who wanted anything else?

Benjamin Beats had Gears, after a fashion. They were dirty, ugly things built from the shattered corpses of Gears that had been destroyed and left to rust on the battlefield. Filled with electronics from planes 15 years out of date, and armed with weapons salvaged from virtually anything. No upstanding organization would allow them to pass even a routine maintenance inspection. Then again, no upstanding organization would take the sort of jobs that Beats's boys would.

Wong appreciated the service they provided, and the favors that Beats had done for him in the beginning. Favors he had long since repaid.

But the peculiar nature of Beats's operation meant that how many Gears he had, and what those Gears were equipped to handle, varied wildly after any and every job they performed.

Limbs lost, parts salvaged, ammunition used up and weapons destroyed all added up to a constant flux. It was an uncertainty in performance ability that Wong had never brought himself to fully trust.

Beats came to a stop in front of what was originally designed to be an airplane hanger. With the thick dust and some tastefully cosmetic lack of repairs, you would never know it was currently in use for a much more advanced form of weapon. Benjamin whistled.

The door to the hanger slid open, revealing the shockingly clean workshop inside. In the sterile white light beneath them, two vaguely humanoid junkheaps stood tall.

"Only two?" Kong asked.

"It's not been the best year for us." Biggs admitted with a shrug. "But I am expecting some extra capital pretty soon. We can put together another one then. Anyway, two is plenty for this job."

Wong had his doubts, but Beats didn't make promises he could not keep. "And their condition?" "Better than they look." Biggs said. "The one on the left is a Bravery... mostly. More like about 7 Braveries, held together with parts we got out of a Dominion." Wong quickly checked what he knew about military hardware. "I thought the Dominion was a tank, not a gear?"

"Like I said, not the best year. That other one, though, is a thing of beauty. Somebody took on more than they could handle and ended up on the wrong side of town with a Revolution. One of those fancy ones the Guerillas use. God knows how they got it, but turns out it was a steal. Sucker is built to swap out anything for anything else, let me tell you. In fact..." Beats cupped his hands around his mouth and yelled out to someone in the hanger. "Penny! Bring out Big Red."

It took surprisingly little time for the former-Revolution to lumber out into the daylight. It was, in fact, very red.

"See that on the back?" Biggs asked Kong, pointing. "Missile Launcher we ripped off a UEF Gunboat. Built to be anti-air, but simple enough to repurpose." Wong nodded. "Very impress-

He was cut off mid-sentence by a sound like the air being set ablaze as a pillar of flame launched from the back of Big Red into the air, before diving toward the ground. The dust at Wong's feet leapt into the air half-heartedly from the force of the explosion.

"And that," Beats continued "was your ride out of here."

Big Red turned toward Wong and raised an arm. Wong fought to maintain his composure as he looked down the barrel of a gun that he could probably crawl into if he tried. This didn't make any sense. It had to be a joke. It had to be a mistake.

His guards had already drawn their guns, but even they knew it was a wasted effort. There was nothing they could do to stop even this poor excuse for a Gear, and shooting Benjamin would only guarantee their own deaths.

Wong swallowed, and turned to his only friend in this cruel and terrible world. His eyes asked the question before his words had a chance. At least Benjamin looked torn up about it.

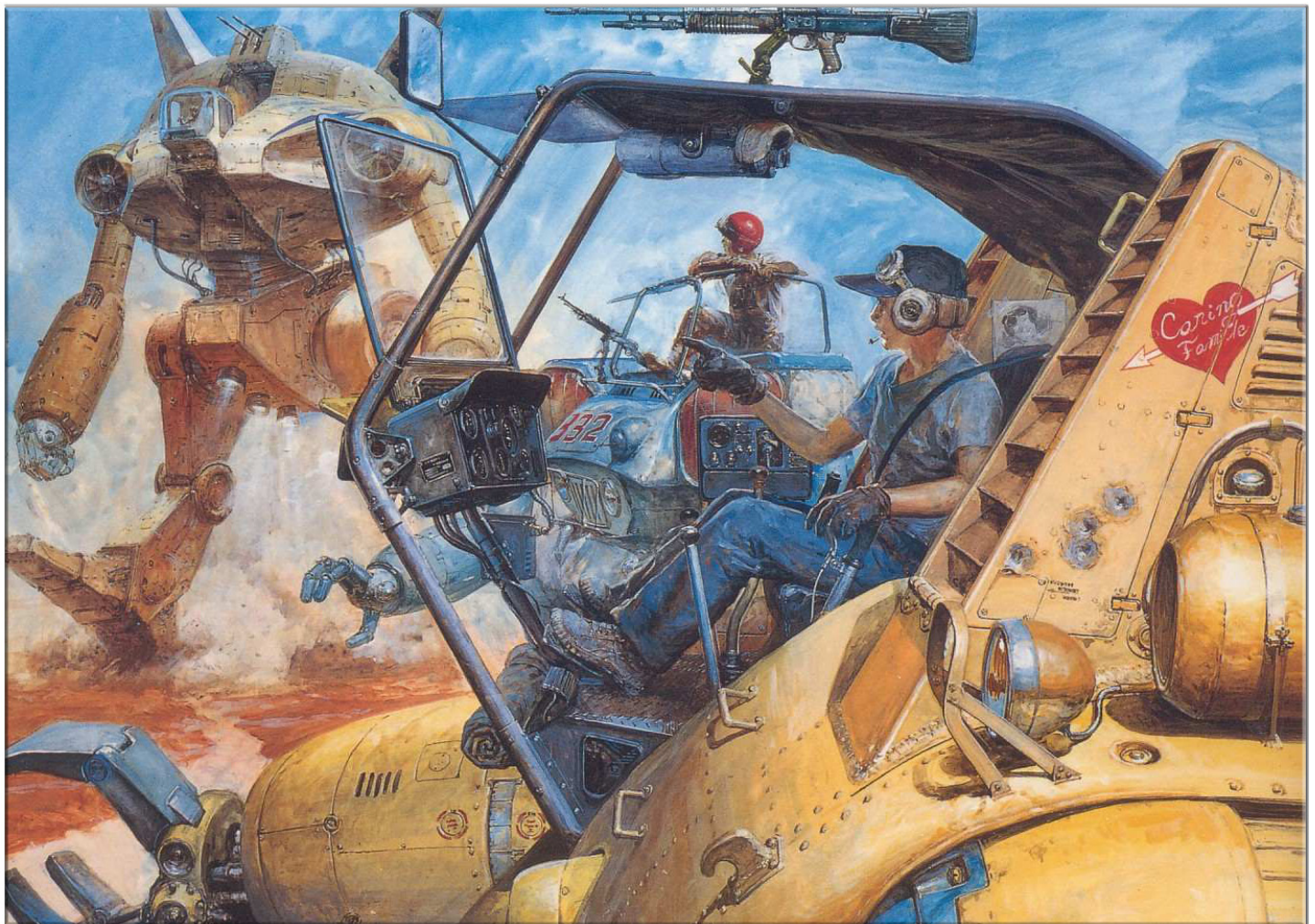
"I don't have anything against you, Kong. I think you are a heck of a guy. You and me, we did alright by each other. The problem is, we did that a little too often. Word got out that I am your man. And, well... you have a lot of enemies, Wong."

Wong went to speak, and realized his mouth was dry. He wanted to blame the dust, but in truth he had not been this terrified since he was a child. The world was falling away beneath his feet. He swallowed again. "I can pay you double what they-

"It isn't about the money. They know my address. We have history, but they made it a pretty clear choice between you or me. And that is no choice at all."

A dull roar filled the air. VTOLs. More than one, coming in from the south.

"If it makes you feel any better, I plan on naming the new Gear after you..."



CHAPTER 4



PLAYING THE GAME

Intermissions

Intermissions consist of a series of Scenes where PCs engage in a myriad of activities seeking to develop their Themes. Despite GGG's most obvious primary feature being the badass giant robots, it is the Intermissions where you will spend the majority of your time as a PC. Mecha are nothing without their Pilot and you need more variety of play than just gunning down enemies and calling each other names to get the most out of a RPG.

GGG's Scenes are much like those from a play. After the stage has been set by the GM everyone assumes their roles as Characters and set out to play them, with the GM controlling everything but the actions of the PCs. Scenes take place at a location and usually involve one or more NPCs, generally those will be preestablished Places and People respectively.

Players will have to speak in character. Which is to say, they need to be mouthpieces for their PCs and maybe do some acting or funny accents if they feel like it. Instead of saying what your character does, you should say that you do it whenever possible. And so on.

It is important to note scenes do not necessarily occur in real time. A single scene may take up to an hour of playtime but only consist of ten thrilling, and excruciating minutes for your PCs, or you could summarize hours of hard work for the troupe with just five minutes of real time and a few dice rolls.

Scenes often have a specific purpose in mind, which basically means that everyone has gathered at that specific location to get something done. Maybe the group has gone to the hangar to perform maintenance on their Mecha or they're trying to get a captured Enemy to talk. Even if they weren't trying to do anything in particular, chances are the Scene will require resolution in one form or another, and to conclude the climax of a scene in your favor you have to roll dice and perform Tests.

Scene Sequence

Episodes should generally begin in the same fashion: the GM sets the very first Scene by gathering the group with a specific scenario in mind. Much like in anime, Episodes generally have a premise that makes them different from the rest, which is usually made clear from the very first Scene. Sometimes it is a simple thing like training with each other, times there is a more pressing issue such as a supply shortage, and the group has to go undercover in Enemy territory to get what they need, or perhaps everyone is on duty and they must figure out a way to pass the time.

Scenes are initiated when the GM sets a starting point for them and describes them enough for the involved player(s) to know how to proceed, after which all get into character and play begins. Scenes continue until the GM declares the Scene to be finished, usually after everyone has, likewise, said they have finished what they wanted to do with it.

After the first Scene is finished, every one of the players gets the right to call for a Scene they would like to have. This can be in any order - going clockwise from the GM's perspective is usually a good idea if there isn't a consensus on who should go first.

The Scene might be called for because the character wants to perform a task without any particular goal in mind, or the Player might have an objective they're moving toward with their PC and the Scene is an excuse to get there. This might be related to the initial Scene, but often won't be, and other Players might also participate in it if the GM agrees for it to be reasonable.

If a scene is approved, the GM sets it as normal and when it finishes the call for scenes continues round the table until all players are done requesting scenes, or until the GM sees fit to interrupt the PC's peaceful lives and orders them to scramble for their Gears to have an Operation.



Tests

Tests are how you resolve conflict during Intermissions and Operations, however, there are many different kinds of Tests. Details aside, most Tests involve the rolling of a single d10 and adding a Modifier from your Attributes to it before comparing it to a DN. A result equal to or higher than the DN in the die roll means you've succeeded - though that does not necessarily mean you got to have your cake and eat it too, you might have only just barely managed to avoid catastrophic failure.

The Meaning of Difficulty Numbers

Low DN challenges are easy to complete and high DN challenges are more difficult in a linear fashion. Though there is a lot of granularity to play with using a scale between 1 and 20, you are more likely going to use increments of 5 instead, as in the following table.

DN 5 Easier in fiction than real life:

Seducing someone to get information from them (Deception or Diplomacy), shooting blanks with a gun (Combat), crafting a Molotov cocktail (Craftsmanship).

DN 10 Leave it to the experts:

Finding shelter in the wild during winter (Survival), disarming a bomb (Craftsmanship), motivating the masses to follow your lead (Diplomacy).

DN 15 Oh my God you can DO that?:

Quadruple backflipping (Athletics), distracting the big bad with a monologue of your own (Presence), bringing someone back from the brink of death (Medicine).

DN 20 What am I reading:

Selling sand in the desert (Deception), finding the true value of Pi (Sciences), hiding under a cardboard box to sneak past security (Stealth).

It is important to note that Tests are a way to advance a story, not to dictate where it should go on a whim, and mechanics for conflict resolution are only presented in a way that permits details to be easily abstracted so that a result is both reasonable for the GM yet doesn't nullify player agency.

This way we do not bind the life of an important PC or NPC to an unlucky, anticlimactic die roll, or risk seeing an entire campaign derailed with every PC getting killed because someone happened to jokingly try out a terrible idea.

At the same time, keep in mind that a game where there is nothing at stake and everyone always gets what they want at all times makes for a boring story, not to mention you might as well do away with the dice rolls entirely if that is the kind of game you are aiming for.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Many, many things can contribute to or deteriorate one's aptitude, from having a pair of extra hands helping you fix your car faster, to terrible weather making it very hard to navigate during a storm. **Having an Advantage means you can roll two dice instead of one, and keep the better of the two as the result.** Multiple Advantages will all add another die to the roll, making the average results of your Tests that much better. **Having a Disadvantage means you roll two dice but keep the worse roll of the two,** and they stack just like Advantages do making Tests with multiple Disadvantages generally terrible.

Should a Test be affected by both Advantages and Disadvantages at the same time, **each instance of both will cancel out until the balance is broken.**

A single circumstance generally does not add more than one Advantage or Disadvantage to a Test, but multiple sources - such as bad weather *and* having a fever - will.

Note that when you have an Advantage you keep the *better* result, not the *highest* one. That means you can choose to keep a lower one if it would be more beneficial to you. In the same fashion, and when dealing with one or more Disadvantages, should the GM think that a higher result is worse for your character they can make you take it instead of the lower one.

The rules for Tests work on the premise that having best equipment in the world or clever positioning can tip the odds in your favor but cannot compensate for a fundamental lack of ability. Tasks are easy enough to succeed at as is - at least reasonable tasks - for anyone with a bare minimum of training or talent, but sometimes Advantages keep piling up and it would be illogical to keep the higher-end results out of a PC's way.

Players may **trade in two of their Advantages for an additional 1d10** to the result. The GM **may trade away two Disadvantages a PC is suffering to raise the target DN by 5.** The one caveat is that all Advantages must be traded this way, so their number has to be even. Disadvantages may be traded without such a limitation.

When you are making a Test that affects more than one character at once, it is possible you may have a different number of Advantages or Disadvantages for each target you are trying to affect. This can make things very complicated to handle, slowing down the game as you resolve the test individually for each.

If the difference in Advantages or Disadvantages is even in number you should convert them to bonus d10's or modify the DN by 5 as explained above. But if you have an odd number of Advantages and Disadvantages, your should convert one of them into a flat bonus of 2 to the Test or the DN (for Advantages or Disadvantages respectively), then turn the rest into additive dice or extra difficulty.

The one exception to this rule are abilities that set the result of rolls to a specific number, such as some Genre Powers or Weapons do. Those ignore both Advantages and Disadvantages entirely, even dismissing the conversion of multiple Disadvantages to an increased Difficulty Number.

Skill Tests

Used almost exclusively during Intermissions, after a player has described what their PC is trying to do with the appropriate Skill, a Difficulty Number will be assigned to the task by the GM. You simply select an Attribute that will help the PC at the activity in question, then **roll 1d10 plus the Modifier from the Attribute with any Advantages from learned Skills** as appropriate, and **compare it with the Difficulty Number of the task.**

If your Test result is equal to the DN or higher, then you have achieved what you sought to do. If you have succeeded by at least 5 higher than the DN you might achieve a very notable success at the discretion of the GM, possibly achieving even greater heights with bigger numbers. Should you fail to meet the DN, however, then depending on what you were trying to do you may suffer the amount you missed the DN by as Damage for Tests involving particularly dangerous elements that you clearly can't quite afford to mess up badly in a repeated fashion.

Contested Tests

If you are in a direct competition against another PC or NPC pitting your skills directly against each other and only one of you can be a winner – such as trying to chase them down or both trying to win over the same audience – then you both make the Test at the same time, and **he who rolls the highest result is the winner.** If you were tied, you might continue Testing to find out who is the clear winner.

Note that though generally you both will be using the same Attributes and Skills, that is not necessarily always the case. Characters involved in a Contested Test can choose to forfeit and admit their opponent as the victor at any time during their Turn.

Healing Tests

Your damaged Layers do not need you to tend to them, but you can still give them a hand to grow back faster.

Healing Tests are almost always done through the Medicine Skill. Before the roll you must announce the Layer of Plot Armor you intend to heal, and will only heal that Layer if you succeed. The same Layer may not be treated again by anyone until the Episode Arc is over.

You heal the first Layer of Plot Armor on a result of 10 or more, the second if you get 15 or more, and you need a 20 to heal the third.

Extended Tests

Some activities are either unfit to resolve in just a few seconds or to not let you try again after a failure. Extended Tests work just like regular Skill Tests **except you may continue rolling after the first attempt** to reverse a misstep or just to improve your existing success.

The GM may impose a **limit on the maximum number of times you may take your chances**, or simply state that every roll takes a considerable amount of time for your character that they cannot quite afford to waste.

It is unlikely for you to take Damage from failed Extended Tests, but a careless lack of proficiency or particularly bad luck could stall your efforts causing you to waste 'Turns' or even have you take half the amount you missed the DN by as Damage, rounding down. Extended Tests **never benefit from Tension**, even if they are used in a Match.

Time Management

Some Extended Tests are simple enough you could try your luck at them for however long you wanted to until you got them right, possibly bringing up the question of why would you bother with the Test in the first place. However, others take considerable more time than a Character can afford to waste with perfectionism.

Whether a failed Extended Test could result in Injury for a Character's Plot Armor depends greatly on circumstances. A list of recommended time spent between the rolls of Extended Tests is presented below:

1 Minute or less:

You probably shouldn't bother rolling this unless there's a considerable chance of irreparable failure, from Injury or otherwise. Examples include picking a lock or driving a vehicle.

1 Hour:

Tasks like these will usually take an entire day to get them just right, or you can spend a handful of hours to get the gist of it, such as researching a subject matter at the library or finding food and shelter in a forest.

1 Day:

These are tasks you quite simply just can't do without spending considerable time throughout one or more weeks. This could be anything from asking around town for clues about a case to taking part in a continental rally.

1 Week:

By this point what you are doing is probably better handled off-screen, such as writing a best seller or building your own home from the ground up.

Characters may take extra time to improve their odds of getting things done right. By taking double the suggested time to perform the Test, you gain an Advantage to it. By taking quadruple as long to do the Test, you instead gain two Advantages. Taking longer than that for a single Test is just wasted effort and provides no additional benefit.

Equipment Tests

You can temporarily obtain Equipment, as in the Traits with the same name, through Testing your Resources. Doing this usually requires a Scene to go and look for such goods, or at least a break in the action to give you enough time to do so.

After a successful Equipment Test, **you suffer a Disadvantage to any further attempts during the same Episode.**

Remember that such Equipment lasts only until the end of the current Episode - it breaks, you return it to the rental shop, it gets lost in your attic, or you have to sell it to fix the hole it left in your wallet.

You need a result of at least 5 to get Equipment with a Cost of 3, a result of 10 to get Equipment with a Cost of 5, a result of 15 to get Equipment with a Cost of 7, and a result of 20 to get Equipment with a Cost of 10.

Attribute Tests

Not everything the PCs attempt will have a Skill associated to it. This is usually the case for tasks that rely solely on a PC's innate abilities and lack any kind of formal training.

Sample Fitness Tests:

Arm wrestling (DN Contested Fitness), Breaking down a wooden door (DN 10), Bending bars and lifting gates (DN 20)

Sample Intellect Tests:

Memorizing the specs of a giant robot in a hurry (DN 10), Checking whether or not you know of an obscure piece of trivia or not (DN 15), Knowing where to go to learn more about an obscure piece of trivia (DN 5).

Sample Empathy Tests:

Making a good first impression (DN 5), Getting the gist of what someone is saying in another language (DN 10), Putting on your best Poker Face (DN Contested Awareness)

Sample Awareness Tests:

Getting a quick feel for someone's disposition (DN 5), Interpreting what a piece of abstract art actually means (DN 5), Gauging distances between shooting targets (DN 5)

Sample Willpower Tests:

Resisting the effects of a heavy alcoholic drink (DN 10), Keeping yourself calm after witnessing the scene of a mass murder (DN 15), Begrudgingly finishing mountains of boring paperwork in record time (DN 5).

Sample Resources Tests:

Picking up or planting rumors on someone without leaving a trace (DN 10), Obtaining a highly sought original Gunboy figure in perfect condition (DN 15), Bribing someone (DN Contested Willpower Test). Take note that most Resources Tests (The exception being those from Assets) will cause you to suffer a Disadvantage to their own kind for the rest of the session.

Mixed Tests

Sometimes what you're trying to do isn't so simple or straightforward that it requires only a single Skill, or even a single Attribute, sometimes what you're trying to do even requires multiple different actions performed in quick succession.

These actions are usually unique and fairly different from each other, ranging from trying to shoot pursuers while riding a motorcycle across a chasm, to sneaking your way behind a guard and then disabling them silently. During those times what you use are Mixed Tests, which combine multiple Tests into one as follows:

First, figure out what is the first part of the Test. In the above examples, it would be controlling the motorcycle across the chasm (if you fall to your death, shooting your pursuer is kind of pointless) or making your way to the guard (without which you can't backstab them). **Make the Test as normal and if you succeed then roll the next Test at an Advantage.** Repeat this process until all necessary Tests are cleared then use the final Test to determine how successful it was in total, if necessary.

This means that such Tests are more difficult, since there are multiple instances of failure, but they also could potentially be used to make a hard Test easier by chaining it to something you know how to do well.

Help Tests

When you try to aid a friend who is about to perform a Test of his own, such as lifting someone up to help them climb a fence or serving as an assistant to an ally performing first aid, you Test the corresponding Skill and Attribute of what this help would entail but don't compare it against a DN, instead you simply try to do your best to help someone else out, and it is them who will have to contend with the task's DN with your aid. Check the following table according to the result.

Help Test Results

Failure:

Result equal to 5 or lower. You are not, in fact, helping and only get in your friend's way. Your ally suffers a Disadvantage to their Test.

Basic Success:

Result between 6 and 10. Not exactly a stellar appearance, but at least you contributed. You may remove one Disadvantage that your ally is under, but if they're not under any Disadvantages your help is largely a token effort.

Critical Success:

Result between 11 and 15. You know what you are doing and it shows, your ally likely appreciates your meaningful aid, and gains an Advantage to their Test.

Grand Success:

Result equal to 16 or higher. Depending on what you were doing, you're good enough that you may or may not overshadow the guy who was supposed to actually get work done, possibly being capable of just doing it on your own. Your ally gains not one but two Advantages to their Test.

Matches

A Match is a sequence of events within a Scene involving two or more characters, usually of a combative nature. What this actually means is that Matches are what results when people are at a cross and one of them wants to press the other, this can be anything from trying to clock the other guy in the face to convincing a witness that they did not see the murderer on the night of the crime.

A Match It is subdivided in Rounds that keep track of how long the Match has been going for. **A Round is the fraction of time during which all characters have a chance to take their Turn.** Rounds are divided in Turns, one each per every character involved in the Match which is usually only two. **In a Turn, a Character makes their individual moves.** Turns are sub-divided **into three Phases.** Anything of importance that happens during any Phase should be narrated by the player responsible for said event or by the GM.

The progression of a Match is detailed below

Match Structure

Step 0) Surprise

When a Character gets the jump on another, either because they walked into an ambush, the assailant decided to stab an unsuspecting would-be-ally in the back, or due to ninja-like use of the Stealth skill, the victim is said to be caught by Surprise. In these circumstances the attacking character gets to make a Action before the defender even gets a chance to roll for Initiative, caught completely flat-footed, and this gives the attacker an Advantage.

Step 1) Rolling Initiative

Before the Match proper begins determine who goes first by rolling 1d10 + Your Genre Points, this is the Character's Initiative. Once the numbers are all rolled and properly ordered from highest to lowest this Initiative Order should be noted down. Characters may freely trade their Initiatives with any willing friendlies at the beginning of a new Round or delay theirs to take place at the same time as another's.

Step 2) Setting Tension

Set Tension to 1 before the beginning of the first Round. Tension rises at the end of each Round by 1. Whenever a Character performs an Offensive or Disruption Test, they add the current Tension as a bonus.

Step 3) Starting the Round

Once Round 1 begins, the Initiative Order follows from highest to lowest, giving each Character a chance to do an Action of their own during their own Turn.

Step 3.1) Beginning Phase

During the Beginning phase, the PC chooses how they will act this turn. This means they decide what they will do and how. They may also use abilities that do not require an Action to be performed, such as talking or taking a few steps. Once the Player is done using abilities and has decided on their Action for the Turn, the phase ends and the Action Phase begins. In addition, the beginning of the Turn is when abilities measured in Rounds from the user's point of view end.

Step 3.2) Action Phase

Actions taken during your Turn generally require Tests, called Action Tests, and once you've taken yours you are done for the turn. When all Actions have been resolved, proceed to the End Phase.

Step 3.3) End Phase

This is the phase at the end of a Turn after the PC's Actions have been made and their effects described. Abilities with a lasting effect that go away 'at end of Turn' end now. When a Turn ends, the character next on the Initiative Order team starts their Turn, and the sequence continues until the Round has ended.

Step 4) Ending the Round

When the Round finishes, Tension increases by 1 and the Initiative Order resets to the beginning, but is not rerolled.

Tension

Tension is a mechanic that represents the dramatic rise in stakes during the ebb and flow of combat as **a bonus to all Tests during a Match that is to Offensive or Disruption Tests.**

Tension always starts at 1, and increases by 1 at the end of every Round, so by the second Round everyone is at 2 Tension, and so on. **Tension adds a +1 to relevant Tests per point,** so a Tension of 5 adds a bonus of +5.

Intensive Management

Tension will always change every Round on its own, and if a bunch of Characters have ways to change their own Tension, this can get problematic to keep track of as a GM.

Every character sheet has a 'Tension Modifier' box for the individual player to place their individual bonuses, and Tension itself should be marked by something simple such as a die, a d20 to keep track of it from turns 1 to 20 is recommended.

The Match or Operation that goes beyond 20 Rounds is extremely rare, but if you somehow find yourself in one that is long enough, remembering to add 20 to the new Tension die will be significantly easier than keeping track of every instance of 10 Rounds that have already passed. Plus, you don't run the risk of mistakenly grabbing that d10 and using it to roll in the middle of the action, then leaving you wondering just how many turns have actually passed.

During an Intermission usually the Tension bonus will apply to Offensive or Disruption Tests. Exceptions are possible, however, and if a GM judges that an individual die roll should make use of Tension because it contributes to the resolution of a conflict (Mostly for Help or Contested Tests) then it should also apply.

Offensive Tests

Sometimes you want to actually hurt another instead of just proving your superiority or scaring them off. **Offensive Tests are exclusively used during Matches after Initiative has been rolled**, and are much like a Skill Test except that **the DN to beat is equal to the opponent's Defense**.

Should your Offensive Test fail, your turn is over and the Enemy gets a chance at an Offensive Test of their own. Should you be met with success, however, then you **inflict Damage and cause them to lose Plot Armor equal to the amount you passed their Defense DN by**.

If you just barely meet the DN, then it does not have a visible effect even though narratively speaking, any onlooker will realize it should have.

It is important to note that Offensive Tests are not only relegated to physical attacks, after all Plot Armor signifies how well a character is holding up in all means. A psychic assault will harm someone's mental wellbeing, and particularly traumatic experiences may have the same effect.

Disruption Tests

Instead of trying to overpower your foe from the get go, you interfere with their game and make it harder for their future attempts to fight back.

This can be anything from tripping up another in a bar brawl to confusing them with overly verbose language in a debate. You **make an Offensive Test as normal** but you only deal half the usual Damage to them (rounding down) and you **place a Disadvantage on the Enemy to all Tests, plus another for each multiple of 5 you bypass their Defense by, that all last one Round**.

Harm and Misfortune

All PC have Plot Armor that protects them from a horrible unsatisfactory death to a random stray bullet, subdivided into three Layers. **The topmost Layer is always the first one to take Damage, when it is full of Damage that Layer is lost and the Layer immediately below it is the one to receive Damage afterwards**, and so on.

When losing a Layer, you must Test Willpower against a DN of 10 for losing the first Layer, a DN of 15 for the second layer, and a DN of 20 for the third Layer. Failing any of these Tests means that you are defeated anyway.

Should you pass your last Test, you may continue going on until you take Damage again, at which point you will have to make another Test. Damage to your Plot Armor heals naturally over time.

The first Level and its Damage last until the end of the Scene that caused them. The second Level lasts until the end of the current Episode. And the third Level remains until the entire Episode Arc has ended.

Advanced Combat Circumstances

The following rules do not apply during most Matches, and in fact do not really need to apply if you would rather keep things simple. Use them at your discretion.

Zones

Everything must take place somewhere. The areas where Matches take place are called Zones; this combat terrain is of an abstracted size that roughly encapsulates the area that Characters might be able to cover without having to abandon a Match or make an effort to take it somewhere else.

Zones might have an effect on the Match, contributing with Advantages (such as fighting in an abandoned warehouse you know every nook and cranny of) or Disadvantages (the place is pitch black dark making it understandably difficult to do anything) or a mix of both (fighting an alligator underwater will give the reptile an Advantage, while you will see yourself at a Disadvantage) or perhaps even none, depending on the occasion. A Character might opt to move the Match to a different, neighbouring Zone on their Action in place of doing something else.

Proxies

Sometimes it isn't you that is directly being under heat, but an object in your possession, like during a car chase. In these cases you do battle using Proxies. A Proxy uses your Attributes, Skills, Traits and everything else that could reasonably apply to an object under your control.

Perform the Match just as you would any other, but you don't suffer the effects of damage yourself and, instead, they apply to the Proxy until it is defeated, at which point it is destroyed and remains unusable until repaired.

Proxies heal at the same rate as Characters for each Layer, though Heal Tests (using Craftmanship in place of Medicine) may hasten the process.

Intermission Scene Example

Ingham: The results from the simulation are posted. Jeff, you're at the very bottom.

Ryu: Ouch, oh well that can't be helped, I did lose after all.

Ray: Blade shows up. "That was the worst Enacting I've seen this week."

Ryu: Oh here we go again. You know what, Jeff is tired from this crap: "Do you practice every day to be a complete jerk or is it just a natural talent of yours?"

Ray: "Your evasive maneuvers are amateurish in the extreme. You are always leaving your left open whenever you move." He's as smug as ever.

Ryu: That does it. Jeff finally snaps and lunges at him. Initiative roll, 8, plus four Genre Points, 12

Maya: This should be good. Pass me the chips?

Ingham: Here you go. You guys show me how well you've learned the rules and handle it on your own?

Ray: Sure. I rolled a 3. I guess you got the jump on me.

Ryu: I'm untrained in Combat so I take my Fitness... And I have no Advantages, right? 7 Fitness plus a roll of 3. I punch for 10, I guess.

Ingham: Remember that Tension starts at 1.

Ryu: A total of 11 it is then!

Ray: My Defense is 12. So you're a point shy.

Ryu: Aw. Your go then. Jeff rushes in angry and throws a careless punch to Blade's face.

Ray: Now Blade is very much trained in Combat at the Expert Level, though his Specialization is in swords, of which he has none on hand, so he just gets one Advantage. I rolled a 5 and a 9, keeping the better of the two, plus my 6 Fitness, and 1 Tension. All this makes a total of 16 coming at Jeff. What is his Defense?

Ryu: Just 9. Oh man, that means I took 7 to the face. Just enough to down me one Layer. Is it my go again?

Maya: You need to Test your Willpower and get at least ten, or you might lose right now.

Ryu: Ah, right. Okay, I got a 13, so I could keep going...

Ray: Remember that this Damage to your first Layer will go away at the end of the Scene. But any further Damage taken from now on will stay for longer.

Ryu: Alright, I see. Take it from there.

Ray: Blade succinctly blocks Jeff's arm and gives Jeff a square, well-placed jab for his trouble. "See what I'm saying? Your left is completely open."

Ryu: Okay, this doesn't look like I'll last long enough to turn it around. How about we negotiate?

Ray: ...How so?

Ryu: Blade doesn't beat up Jeff senseless, and Jeff listens to what Blade has to say... But! Only so that he can beat him at his own game.

Ray: Heh, that is good enough for me.

Ryu: Well then, Jeff falls on his butt and shoots a glare at Blade. Then jumps up and tries to hit Blade once more because he clearly did not get the message the first time.

Ray: Blade is going to hold and restrain him, then push him down to the ground again. "You don't know your own limitations! All you know how to do is charge and go for a direct attack." Having said his piece, he turns to leave. "Idiots that fight carelessly will only slow the rest of us down." And steps out of the room chuckling to himself.

Ryu: Frustrated and mad, Jeff is going to lie there and think about this for a while.

Maya: Nice! Don't you think they deserve a reward for this, Ingham?

Ingham: Indeed. One of Blade's themes is Rivalry, isn't it? That certainly fits. Gain a Genre Point, Ray.

Ryu: What about me? I've got "Aim for the Top!"

Ray: ...Is that really what you called it?

Ingham: Very well, you get a Point too.

Victory and Defeat

What 'being defeated' means is not rigidly defined in terms of the fiction, and depending on the context there are many ways in which you could go about it. Characters duking it out with their fists can fight until one restrains the other, one of them passes out, or even until death.

The outcome that is most reasonable, and most in line with the rules in general, is for the defeated to be knocked out temporarily. That outcome does not always make a lot of sense - a fencing match, for instance, should not have genuine physical injury as a result barring unusual circumstances. That said, the rules do not actually say that anyone dies from taking Damage in general, not even if they have already been Defeated and at the mercy of a much greater foe.

Isn't this unrealistic? Yes, it is, but there is a reason most fiction ignores realism - that would be because it is anticlimactic and often disappointing. GGG's ruleset instead take a different approach: a PC that makes a terrible, terrible mess will continue to live, but they will have to deal with the consequences of their actions for several Episodes.

This is all fine and dandy in theory, but how does this kind of lasting injury hold up in practice? To be perfectly honest, there is no simple way. A Character with terrible burns that cannot move from their hospital bed, or one that is at a mental institution will require Scenes designed around them, and the other players - including the GM - will have to work with the player in question to keep them engaged and prevent them from being bored. Miracle users deserve special mention in that they should be completely tapped out of their powers if their third Layer has any Damage to it.

This should not be seen as a punishment handed down from the GM, however, but as a chance for the PC to develop and come back a stronger person - and maybe try not to make the same mistakes in the future. If playing through that sounds too boring, then consider retiring the PC temporarily - perhaps even giving them up for dead - and adopting another character temporarily until their original comes back triumphantly several episodes later. The flip side of this is that it also applies to NPCs, and unless the GM clearly shows named enemies clearly dying onscreen, they could very well be still alive and plotting their revenge against the PCs.

Operations

The group is going to have to take their Gears out to do battle at some point, otherwise it would be kind of a waste to be playing a Mecha game in the first place, no?

Operations are a special kind of Match that involve giant robots and have a few special rules of their own. We use the term Unit to refer to both Pilot and Mecha as one entity during Operations. All the player's Units are usually Allies. All Units that are Allies with each other are collectively called a Squad.

It is important to note that **a Pilot's Attributes, Skills, Defenses and Traits have no bearing on Operations**, barring a few exceptions only their Genre Points (because of the Systems Attribute) will be relevant.

The Briefing

Before the Operation starts, the players should either have a short Scene for a quick briefing detailing the Operation in character or at least be informed of any peculiarities of it out of character, such as any Enemies detected, the Terrain where the battle will take place, and any special conditions for victory and defeat.

Said special conditions, known as Objectives and Circumstances, are optional rules for the GM to figure out on their own if they want to use them, and are detailed later in the book.

Operation Structure

Step 0) Choosing Equipment

If an Unit has Sub-Units, or Remote Weapons then its owner must choose whether to deploy with them or not and how during this step. If an Unit has Alternate Forms they must also choose which one they will deploy with. This step does not always apply, and it takes place before the Operation proper begins, hence it is "Step 0".

Step 1) Rolling Initiative

Before the Operation proper begins determine who goes first by having each Unit Test Systems. The result is the Character's Initiative. The highest Initiative number goes first, with the order of play progressing to the next highest number and so on. Characters may freely trade their Initiatives with any willing friendlies at the beginning of a new Round or delay theirs to take place at the same time as another's.

Step 2) Entering Formation

At the start of an Operation each Unit enters formation, if there is a Base Unit it either deploys at the edge of the battlefield or at a position of the GM's choosing. Its Allies then choose whether they deploy one or two Zones away from it and where. Other than Base Units, which always receive priority, the Unit to take their turn first is also the first to enter formation, the same is true for the second Unit, and so on until all Units have taken their place. If there is no Base Unit, each side starts at the edge of the battlefield or at a position of the GM's choosing.

Step 3) Setting Tension

Set Tension to 1 before the beginning of the first Round. Tension rises at the end of each Round by 1. Whenever a Character performs an Offensive Action and they make a Test, they add the current Tension as a bonus to the Test.

Step 4) Starting the Round

Once Round 1 begins, the Initiative Order follows from highest to lowest, giving each Character a chance to do an Action of their own during their own Initiatives.

Step 5.1) Beginning Phase

During the Beginning phase, the PC decides how they will act this turn. This means they decide what they will do and how. They may also use abilities that do not require an Action to be performed, such as the use of Setup Genre Powers. Once the Player is done using abilities and has decided on their Action for the Turn, the phase ends and the Action Phase begins. In addition, the beginning of the Turn is when abilities measured in Rounds from the user's point of view end.

Step 5.2) Action Phase

As part of taking their Action for the Turn, the PC may Move a single Zone before the Action proper takes place, but not afterwards. Actions generally require Tests, and after resolving the Test you are to describe and narrate what has taken place during your Turn and proceed to the End Phase.

Step 5.3) End Phase

This is the phase at the end of a Turn after the PC's Actions have been made and their effects described. Abilities with a lasting effect that go away 'at end of Turn' end now. When a Turn ends, the character next in the Initiative Order starts their own Turn, and the sequence continues until the Round has ended.

Step 6) Ending the Round

When the Round finishes, Tension increases by 1 and the Initiative Order goes back to the beginning. Repeat Steps 4 through 6 as necessary until the Operation has ended.

Don't get all Tied Up

It is inevitable that at some point that two or more characters roll the exact same Initiative and their controllers will not easily agree on which of them should go first. Simply have those in a tie roll another d10 and whoever has the highest result gets to move earlier, repeating the process if they are tied once more - just make sure you do not add the new results to the previous initiative rolls, that would be silly. If it is only two Characters then just flipping a coin to see who gets to move earlier is simple enough.

Additionally, the GM might notice that rolling individually for every NPC is a pain when there are large numbers of them involved. This is especially true considering how likely it is they will all inevitably move after most PCs considering they usually lack Genre Points. If you want to save time, you can just roll for all NPCs at once - and if they do have Genre Points, add that to their individual results.

Zones and Range

The rules for terrain and movement are very simplistic. If we were going for realism it would be almost impossible for Mecha of different sizes to play well together, thusly GGG abstracts distances and treats everything roughly as if it were the same size, referring to every meaningful lot of terrain as a **Zone** and leaving to the individual group whether or not they want to measure specific distances using a play with a battle map.

A Zone is a designated area with no clearly defined range - it can represent a whole city block during a bout with very large Mecha, or a single warehouse's room with those that are not much larger than a person. It only needs to be a distance your Mecha could reasonably cover to strike at someone in melee in a few seconds.

Some Mecha can cover multiple Zones every Turn, and most Weapons are capable of striking targets in Zones beyond the immediate next. If you want to use a map such as a Chess or Hex board, each square or hex is a Zone.

It is important to note that Weapons may not attack through Enemies to get at others behind them (but they can attack through Zones occupied by Allies). You must make your way around them or try to break through into enemy lines by occupying the same Zone they are in. This is a risky proposition, and for a Round's worth all enemies making Offensive Actions against you from Range 1 or closer gain an Advantage. This does not apply if you Engage your Enemy in a duel, however.

Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect whole Zones instead of targeting Units individually are unaffected by the rules for cover.

Abstract Me This

Since Actions vary greatly on how much time they should reasonably take, there is no arbitrary time limit of how long a Turn lasts, much less a Round. It can be assumed however, that generally a Turn takes somewhere between 5 to 10 seconds and that a whole Round is somewhere between 30 seconds to one minute.

Likewise, taking an Action is an abstraction - just because you take a single Attack Action with a sidearm it does not mean the gun fires only once, just that you will deal Damage once at most to them by the rules - and the narration of Actions may contain elements not described in the entry of the Action proper if their use embellishes the description and makes for more dynamic combat, as long as the mechanics are untouched.

The listed Actions are not by any means a definitive list of the things anyone is limited to doing, instead we chose to write those that represent a considerable effort from the PC to perform, but minor acts could certainly be performed at no Action cost, such as taking a few steps around, switching a held Weapon for one in its holster, but the most common of them is talking.

Talking does not require the use of an Action, nor is there a limit to when you may talk - it can be at any point during your Turn or during another's. As always, however, we recommend to exercise common sense and not to try to engage in a ten minute long discussion about the finer points of roman politics and paralyzing the action actually taking place.

You're probably going to notice (or have already noticed) that every Mecha moves at more or less the same speed. No matter how high their Evasion is or how tall they supposedly are, they travel at exactly the same pace. You will also notice that there is no need to keep track of ammo spent with most weapons, and that repairing a very small unit is about as difficult as repairing a battleship.

Isn't this unrealistic? Yes, but little details like keeping track of how many bullets out of the hundreds (or thousands) you can carry as a giant robot is not actually all that interesting and only slows down the real action, Mecha having multiple movement speeds is only going to encourage folks to try and 'kite' instead of playing fair and actually interacting with each other... And playing solitaire isn't fun for anyone else at the table.

GGG gets rid of all these little annoying things and lets you focus on what actually matters, but don't interpret this as having infinite ammo or anything like that - if you spend an hour out of combat shooting everything left and right it is very likely the GM is going to declare are going to need a reload even if you "supposedly" have infinite Ammo.

The rules of the game are guidelines for fair play and for what might make a better, more immersive experience, they are not the physics of the game world and you should never treat them as such.

Operation Actions

There are many types of Actions and most of them are available to everyone, the ones restricted to users of certain Upgrades will be described in entry for that particular Upgrade – not here.

Barring special circumstances, you can only take one Action per Turn. **As part of any Action you may Move a single Zone before applying its individual effects** - Mecha are far more mobile than people, and can move what would usually take an entire Action for a human as an afterthought even if they are of similar size.

Offensive Actions

These get a special rule of their own. Since making a high speed giant robot shoot another high speed giant robot is kind of a difficult thing, **Offensive Actions only let you Move towards the target or to circle around it, not backwards or otherwise increasing distance between you two.** Offensive Actions may also be used without making any Movement as well.

Offensive Actions are the only ones to benefit from Tension during Operations.

Aim

You take your time to make your next attack more precise, or at least that's your intention. Choose a Weapon and a target, your next Offensive Action **gains two Advantages to the Accuracy Tests** with the chosen Weapon against that enemy.

Even if you continue to take Aim, you will not gain further benefits after the first Aim Action. If the target ever becomes invalid for the chosen Weapon before you make your shot, or you take any Action that is not to continue aiming before the shot is made, then the bonuses are lost.

Assist

You make someone else's job easier by distracting and meddling with the same target's defenses. Choose a target and an Ally, then **attack the target at a Disadvantage.**

Your chosen **Ally gains an Advantage** to their respective Offensive Tests against that target for a Round. If you would not be able to Attack the target with said Weapon, or it would not roll an Accuracy Test, you may not use Assist with it either. Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets cannot Assist.

Attack

To Attack you make a **an Accuracy Test**, against the Evasion of the Enemy (or enemies, when using something like a Blast weapon) you are attacking. If you succeed then add half the number you've exceeded the Evasion DN by to the Penetration as a bonus, compared against the Armor of the Enemy or Enemies.

Check if the total of your Penetration exceeds the target's Armor, you **inflict the surplus from that as Damage dealt**, and the Enemy loses that much Threshold.

Suppress

You disrupt the opponent's plan of action by drowning them in covering fire, entering a grapple to pin them down, or otherwise using a Weapon in a non-standard way to provide support rather than go for the kill. **Attack an Enemy, halving the final amount of Damage you would have dealt.** Suppression attacks are never at Risk of hurting a friendly Unit that is in a Duel.

If you deal at least one point of Damage this way, if the **Enemy Moves with their next Action, they take the other half of the Damage you would have dealt to them** and will be impaired with **one Disadvantage to all their Offensive Tests for a Round.**

Additionally, should you inflict enough Damage to Maim an Area, **you choose which Area is Maimed.** If this would Destroy the Enemy, **you may also choose to spare them and disable their Core instead.**

Engage

You choose one Enemy and attempt to single them out from the battle at large to have a Duel with them. To do this you must **attack using a Weapon from Range 0.**

Whether you actually deal Damage to them or not, **both of you are now engaged in a Duel**, and occupy a single Zone, being now at Range 0 from each other. You may not Engage a Base Unit unless you are a Base Unit yourself. Weapons with the Blast ability or that affect Zones instead of specific targets cannot Assist.

Duel Masters

Units in a Duel are locked at range 0 and may not Move. Anyone who tries to attack either of both engaged Units will have to Test Accuracy against both of them at once (as if using a Blast Weapon) and if the roll is evens they hit their Ally, if it is odds they hit the Enemy instead.

If the Accuracy Test fails against one duelist but not the other, the one whose Evasion was insufficient is automatically chosen as target. Otherwise, if either of the Units under fire would like to use abilities to negate or diminish damage that would be dealt to them, they can do so as normal.

Attacking any other target than the one you are locked in a duel with is risky if not suicidal, it will give your opponent a free Offensive Action against you.

Butting into the Duel is impossible - there is just too much going on. The only way to help break up the Duel is to destroy one of the participants. Similarly, the only way to break out of a Duel is to Disengage or to see that your opponent was destroyed.

Units in a Duel cannot Combine or use Synchro Attacks, for obvious reasons. The rules for Duels override those for invading an Enemy's own Zone.

Other Actions

If your Action is **not Offensive** in nature and the **Move-ment is towards an Enemy**, then you may take advantage of the weapon targeting systems you are currently not using and **spend 1 Energy to Move 1 additional Zone towards the same target**. This extra speed cannot be used while pulling back.

Boost

You accelerate as much as possible in one direction, ideal for charging and pulling back. **Move an additional Zone after the usual Move you gain from any kind of Action.**

Delay

You take your Action during an Enemy's Turn, choose any other Action you want to take at a specific time and another different Unit's Initiative to be one step ahead of. **When said Unit performs their Action, yours also is considered to take place at the same time.** If the Enemy would invalidate your chosen Action with their own (such as Boosting away rendering you unable to catch up with your own Move after you chose to Attack) you make a Contested Systems Test to see whether your Action fails or if it takes place before their own.

You don't need to specify how you want to use your Action, you can say you want to Attack but not say which Weapon you will use, for instance.

Disengage

You can escape from a Duel you're in and return to the main battle, **moving a Zone away in a direction of your choice.**

No Tests are required, but this still uses your Action for the turn, making for a stalling tactic at best against a foe bent on engaging you one to one, unless you have friends to watch your back.

Dock

If your Squad has a Base Unit within Move Distance, you may dock inside it. This gives you the benefits of the Base Terrain type while you are inside. You may redeploy as a normal Action afterwards coming out within a Zone of the Base. Units docked can still take Offensive Actions, and will move with the base wherever it goes, they cannot be attacked or damaged until the base has been defeated.

Maneuver

You make yourself a hard target by taking cover, releasing chaff, or launching Mecha-like dummy balloons.

Test Systems, you gain 1 Armor and impart a Disadvantage to Offensive Tests against you, plus another Disadvantage and another Point of Armor for each multiple of 5 met by your Result. Additionally, if the whole Round has passed and you've not taken any Damage at all through it, you may choose to retreat from the battlefield at the beginning of your Turn. You may not reenter this same Operation again.

Micromanage

Giant Robots are complicated, serious business, and while having a bunch of computers take care of balancing the limbs or manage the energy output, sometimes you need an actual human brain to interpret the displays and tell the OS to do what it is supposed to do when it refuses to.

Whenever you use the Micromanage Action, **Test Systems, for each multiple of 5 you meet with the result you may Restore 5 to your Threshold or 1 to your Energy**, your choice. If this breaks past a lost Level of Threshold into a Maimed Area, that Area is restored back to normal.

Micromanage may also be used for a variety of small effects in place of either ability. Examples include scanning the area with your sensors, sending a signal flare, and any other use of your Unit's equipment that would be worth an Action.

Using Skills in Operations

Let us say you do not want to do any of these immediately obviously useful things like "Firing Missiles" or "Taking Cover" and instead you want to do something fancier. For the most part, doing something fancy involves the use of Genre Powers, but there are certain actions that Genre Powers do not cover such as convincing another to stop fighting.

As an optional rule, this sidebar presents you a way to do this during an Operation. Like with the change to Systems from the previous chapter, it will tilt the balance of the game in a direction not everyone might be comfortable with, so player discretion is advised. If it works for you, consider expanding this to cover other Skills such as Sight, Electronics, or Phantasm.

You may attempt such Skill uses as an Action with the usual rules for Tests; This is the only circumstance in which your Traits would apply to an Operation.

You may use Deception, Diplomacy or Probing to try and persuade Enemy Grunts to stand down and stop fighting or to retreat before they are shot down, though this is not an easy task. Only one Enemy may be affected per Test and it may only be attempted once per Enemy, even if multiple characters would like to try their hand at this. The DN for this task is of 15, though you also suffer a Disadvantage for each Level of Threshold they have intact. Some Enemies, like alien monsters and AIs, are immune to these skills. Bosses cannot be convinced, and Rivals can either be easier to pacify or outright impossible to reach, depending on circumstances.

Damage

A success with your Accuracy Test will inflict Damage much in the same way that Offensive Tests do during Intermissions. And a Mecha's Threshold works like Plot Armor does for the Pilot inside – with two exceptions,

Firstly, **Mecha have four Levels of Threshold**, whereas Pilots have three Layers of Plot Armor.

Secondly, **all Damage that reduces the defender's Threshold down one Level automatically Maims one of the defender's Areas**, rendering any Upgrades and Weapons in it useless. The affected Area is dependent of the total amount of Damage that was dealt, where **an odd number of Damage will Maim an Area of the defender's choice**, and **a total that is even will Maim an Area of the attacker's choice**.

Areas that have already been Maimed cannot be chosen twice. In the case that a single instance of Damage would take down multiple Levels of Threshold, the defender and attacker alternate who gets to choose.

When the Damage that causes a Maim is inflicted by the environment or by the damaged Unit itself, they always choose the Area that will be Maimed.

However, like any good protagonist, they will fight more fiercely the closer they are to defeat. **The first time a PC loses an individual Level of Threshold during an Operation, they gain a Genre Point.**

Once all four of a Mecha's Levels are gone they are destroyed and any additional Damage dealt is transferred to the Pilot inside (if there is one) usually as Physical Damage. Threshold loss due to damage is healed automatically at the end of an Operation and all Maimed Areas are repaired as well. Energy is also recovered back to full. When a Mecha loses all four Levels of Threshold and has all of its non-Core Areas Maimed, it is destroyed, and the Core ejects immediately.

The Core

The Core is what holds the Mecha's critical systems, such as the very Pilot riding it. Generally the Core is a cockpit with jets installed, but the smaller Mecha have a suit of powered armor instead.

Cores are somewhat well-protected and have access to the most fundamental of the Mecha's Upgrades, but it is recommended for the Pilot inside to retreat on the double at the time of Ejection - if they get the chance, that is, because not many do.

The ejected Core has an Evasion and Armor equal to half that of the regular Unit, has no Accuracy or Penetration, but keeps the same Energy and Threshold, having its own 'fifth' Level of the latter. When finally destroyed, the Core most likely takes down the Pilot inside with itself. At the very least, it should fill their third Layer of Plot Armor all the way.

A Pilot may choose to Eject at any time before their Action during their Turn, placing themselves 1 Zone away from their Mecha's location. A Mecha without a Pilot can still operate with its most basic AI, keeping half of its original Evasion and Armor, It has the whole of its Accuracy and Penetration values, but has no Energy left and is automatically destroyed the moment it takes a single point of Damage.

In the case of a non-controlled Unit such as a Board, Outsider or Cryptid the Core is completely destroyed if a single point of Damage past the exact amount to bring the Fourth Level to 0 is dealt. The one known way to spare them would be with the Suppress Action, in which case the creature is incapacitated and will not be a threat again for an Episode Arc.

A Handy Cap

So what, exactly, does it mean that an area is "Maimed"? The gist of it is that the Area has been damaged in such a way that anything bolted onto it can no longer be used – this does not actually represent the limb being chopped off, at least not by default.

The idea is that anything installed on the Legs can be rendered useless, but does not make the Mecha top-ple over and remain an useless piece of scrap for the rest of the Operation. If it did that, every battle would devolve into shooting each other's feet and that would get old fast, in the same fashion the Torso can be crippled without the entire thing blowing up automatically.

A Maim can represent anything from a deep puncture with a beam saber that cuts off the circuits, to searing heat that wrecks the outer hardware while the internal systems remain functional, to actually representing that the limbs are severed, if that is a description you are okay running with – Mecha can even sustain themselves floating temporarily after their Legs are destroyed, after all, and that might be enough for the rest of the Operation.

This description is usually up to the person who makes the choice of which Area to lose, but taking into account any previous descriptions from the victimary or the intent of their own attack. Mecha can take plenty of damage before they explode, they will slowly suffer the loss of all their Upgrades and Weapons while at it, but will also be gaining Genre Points to compensate for that.

Generally you want to sacrifice an Area that will not be of much use for the rest of the fight, such as one whose Upgrades or Weapons you've already spent, or that offer abilities that just aren't useful against the current Enemy. Since the choice is yours, you have to make sure you don't cripple yourself to oblivion and end up having to Slam your foes to try and eke out a win.

Combatants (both PCs and NPCs) are encouraged to choose one of either getting out while the getting is good, or to use Genre Powers and make a daring last stand if things are somehow bogging down. The use of secondary objectives beyond the obvious 'destruction of all enemies' is also recommended later in the GM section.

Terrain

Operations must take place somewhere, and every locale is different: from flat plains without any cover to the floor being lava. Being able to take advantage of the Terrain can change the outcome of a battle before anyone even realizes how important it is, so make sure that you know where it is you are going to be deployed and how it affects your Unit. The location can be changed via roleplaying – you can lead the enemy to somewhere more advantageous to you - but doing so might not always be feasible.

There are five default types of Terrain, and through modifying and combining them, more can be made.

Plain

The most basic and simple kind of Terrain. Plain ranges from everyday meadows and outer space to the traditional Boss Platforms™, and it is best described by its own simplicity and lack of benefits or hindrances. Plain Terrain has no special rules.

Difficult

From rocky and uneven hills to deserts that clog your Mecha's joints with sand, to having to do battle waist deep in- or even entirely under - water. Difficult Terrain makes it difficult to close in on enemies to attack them or move quickly. Units trying to get **extra Movement out of their Actions must spend 1 additional point of Energy.**

Defensive

Defensive Terrain is distinguished by having a lot of cover for Units, making it comparable to the Mecha equivalent of war trenches. Examples of Defensive Terrain are urban settings or even an asteroid field. Defensive Terrain **imparts an extra Disadvantage after taking the Maneuver Action, plus a bonus point of Armor to the user.**

Extreme

Extreme Terrain covers a variety of hazardous environs that are deadly to people as they are to unprepared Units. Examples of Extreme Terrain include battling inside a magnetic storm or even magma diving. At the **End of a Turn an Unit spends there, they must Test Systems against a DN of 15. Should they fail they take the amount they failed the Test by as Damage.**

Base

Base Terrain contains resupply caches and is just a few automatic defenses shy of being much like a stationary Base Unit. While in Base Terrain, **the Micromanage Action gives both of its benefits with each multiple of 5 you meet with the result.**

The Sky is the Limit

These aren't the only kinds of Terrain you can use, indeed there are as many with an amount of special qualities as large as your imagination allows.

A particular battle could take place very deep underwater, where everyone suffers more Damage from pressure the further they advance, or strong currents move everyone in a particular direction, all this in addition to the rules for Difficult Terrain.

Maybe you want to have an aerial battle instead, Units would need Anti-Gravity activated through all of it and running out of gas means defeat. It is up to the GM how complex they want to get. Just make sure it is clear how they interact with Anti-Gravity or Terrain-based Features and if Systems Tests can do anything to mitigate any impairing factors.

Particular mention deserve 3D environments such as underwater and space that can get really bothersome to manage both for Players and GM, particularly if you use maps instead of the abstract Zone method since 2D maps obviously don't handle elevation or depth well.

To help with this, you should define an arbitrary height as the 'ground' level, and Units positioned above or below relative to that altitude should have a 1d10 next to them to set how many Zones away they are from it. You can even use dice of different colors to help mark those who are higher or lower than the ground level.

Units that are directly above or below another can be trickier, you can squeeze whatever you are using as a token in the same spot easy enough, but, when multiple Units start to do that, things can get messy fast, so for the sake of simplicity try not to let it get that far.

Likewise, you could make it so that Anti-Gravity and the like enable an Unit to move upwards, instead of using the abstracted rules for bypassing defensive formations and the disregarding of ground-level terrain.

If you choose to use 3d movement as part of your Terrain in areas like space or underwater, you should likewise allow it to let you ignore enemy defensive formations in the same way Anti-Gravity does.

The abstract method is presented as the default because it is faster to play with and most Units really have no use for being higher than a single Zone away from the battlefield. If you want to, you may instead let Anti-Gravity allow the Unit to Move upwards, and should an Unit fail to maintain it, they fall back down to ground level, suffering 1d10 Damage per Zone they were above ground level beyond the first. A fair warning: Crying for 'realism' as an excuse to snipe from way up in the sky is bad form. Do not be a bad player.

End of Operation

By default an Operation ends when one team has had all of its Units or its Base Unit destroyed or Retreat, with a mission success going to the victor's side, however there can be other, more varied objectives that can mark a mission's success besides destruction of all enemies. These are discussed more in-depth in the next chapter.

Operation Turn Example

Ingham: And the General Z crumbles in defeat, Jeff is down for the count. Looks like it is up to Maria now. The Outsider turns to face the last Gear standing.

Maya: Maria takes a step back defensively and checks on Jeff's vitals.

Ingham: Jeff's passed out but he'll make it. The Core ejected before the machine started to go down in flames.

Ryu: Aw man... I'm going to be stuck in the hospital for a while, aren't I?

Ray: You should have retreated when I told you to do so.

Maya: "Command, how long until Black General is up and running again?"

Ingham: They patch you to the technicians "The armor is no good, it can't take another hit..." And the next thing you hear is frantic yelling from the bridge "The Outsider's Gravgagne Field is at 100% once again, Type-G fluctuations stabilizing!"

Ray: So it has a barrier and is clearly regenerating Energy. Wow. Blade slams a fist at one of the monitors in his cockpit "Damn it!"

Ingham: Your boss tells you as much "Maria, you aren't going to win a battle of attrition... You have to finish it. Now."

Maya: "Easier said than done..." Maria grimaces and... Okay, let me think for a bit, the Gran DeSir isn't very strong offensively so this is a bit of a problem.

Ingham: Take your time.

Ryu: Can't you cancel it out with a Field of your own?

Maya: Yea, I guess that would be a way to go about it. Ingham, would that be good for a Mid-Scene Upgrade?

Ingham: Give me a good fluff justification.

Maya: Remember how I was going to get the Gran a set of Frames next Arc? I figure it could be part of those Frames.

Ingham: Good enough for me, make the request in-character.

Maya: Yay! "Command... How completed is the Defender Pack?"

Ingham: "About... Seventy percent. The Gravgagne Field is functional but..." Tendo pauses "...I see. Are you sure about using an item this unstable, Maria?"

Maya: "Does not look like I have a choice, Sir."

Ingham: "Very well. Launch one of the Skysplicers with the Defender Pack, immediately!"

Maya: Maria boosts upwards to catch the Type-G Generator, it attaches to the Gear's back and the Gran is enveloped in the green flames of a Gravgagne Field! Drawing the Twin Harkens, it plummets downwards at the enemy!

Ingham: Roll your attack.

Maya: Accuracy Test! I got a 6, plus 4 from my Weapon and another 6 from Tension that's a 16.

Ingham: You cleared it by 6. Test Penetration.

Maya: Rolled a 4. Penetration and Tension are the same as for Accuracy... Gives me a 14. That's enough to damage it, right?

Ryu: Remember to add 3 from passing the Evasion by 6.

Maya: ...A 17 then, thanks. So did I hurt it?

Ingham: Dealt 11 Damage to be exact. As the Gear approaches both Fields repulse and make holes into each other, just large enough for the giant weapon to cut into the Outsider's chest, spraying its alien ooze like a certain Tarantino movie, and the beast recoils stumbling backwards.

Maya: "Now the playing field is even!"

Ray: That was awful.

Ingham: I should dock you XP for that.

Maya: You know you love it.

Ryu: I was useful!

Genre Powers and Intermissions

Usually Intermissions and Operations are rather distinct from each other by the rules, with the only ones that intersect being those related to Genre Points.

This is done in purpose, the ground level half of the game is meant to be simple, while the mecha combat half wants to have a lot of tactical depth. GGG does not try to mix up both of their rules, because doing so often ends up badly for at least one of the halves. Just imagine what would happen if you tried to use Genre Powers during an Intermission, a lot of them just won't make sense, and those that would are absolutely overpowering.

And yet, sometimes the so-called rule of cool seems perfectly reasonable to enforce, all in the name of having more fun at the table. For particularly dramatic Scenes where the PCs really want things to go their way, the six default Genre Powers can translate their effects more or less seamlessly to Intermissions using the guidelines below. A PC may be allowed to use up to three of those Genre Powers per Intermission when they are doing something related to one of their Themes.

The use of said Powers means spending a Genre Point, and takes away the opportunity to gain one from role-playing the Theme in question. Two Powers may not draw from the same Theme this way. More Powers may be allowed for such an use, if a clear ruling can be agreed on by everyone.

Data Analyst - Pick up a general description of a single NPC's statline. No specific details need to be given, but it should be clear which of their Attributes is their favored, how high they rate, and any important Skills or Traits.

Live Another Day - This can be used to both jump into a Scene you weren't previously participating in or to escape from one by pulling the equivalent of a ninja smokebomb trick. The explanation must make sense, though

Mid-Scene Upgrade - Pick up a new Trait, then pay for it later. It can be a talent or item you always had but have been hiding from others, or something you actually do obtain Mid-Scene.

Not so Fast! - Can be used to interrupt another person's Test as long as it isn't an Offensive Test made against you.

Synchro Attack - Combine two PC's Skill ranks for one super-awesome Test. This still uses both of their Turns.

Try Again - Works for any one Test of yours, much like the Lucky Trait.

Scaling Issues

The entire point of having Mecha is that trying to match them in power without one of your own is a futile effort. But for the sake of verisimilitude, many will want to have a way to try anyway, and though they operate under similar rules, there are fundamental differences between Pilots and Mecha that make the issue of a direct translation of statistics for one to attack the other an uphill battle.

This is on purpose, as having rules that make such a transition simple would encourage Players to try and take on them with their Skills instead of their Weapons.

Units trying to shoot hapless bystanders have it easy, they make an Offensive Action at an Advantage, then compare their Accuracy to the Defense of the poor sap they're going to squish, adding Penetration on top of the result to obtain the final Damage taken,.

The GM is encouraged to say that trying to fight back is simply futile - the characters should try to run away from the giant robots, not try to punch them to death - but in the rare case that allowing the PCs a way to fight back is not an entirely terrible idea there are two ways for the GM to have PCs oppose Units, the easy way is to give them Mecha Stats, the hard way is just to try and attack them.

The easy way is not actually readily available to PCs, while it is true that there are characters who can take on Mecha by themselves in the genre, these characters are special cases and presenting rules to allow anyone to do so would ruin the entire point of the character being unique in the first place.

The hard way is paradoxically simpler to execute but not very effective. It consists of making an Offensive Test at a Disadvantage, and since there is no Penetration equivalent for Pilots, half of the excess from bypassing Evasion will have to be compared against Armor to get the final Damage dealt. Deathblows may not be used against Mecha. They just have no effect.

In essence this is not too different from the regular attack method, it is just harder by one step and a half... And very likely to need Tension bonuses to get anywhere against all but the weakest of giant robots.

Advancement

After every Episode your PC is granted an amount of Experience Points (XP) by the GM, whenever you gain XP you should note down the total and add it to your previous XP total to help you keep track of it.

This is because **whenever you gain XP you also gain that many PP and UP**, Pilot Points may be used to augment your PC with further Skills, Defenses or other such abilities, while Upgrade Points are to be spent on either new Upgrades or Enhancements for existing Upgrades of your Mecha.

To put it simply, whenever you gain any number of XP, you may spend it both to update your Pilot and your Mecha in equal measure, and you are to keep note of how much XP you have to make tracking this total of PP and UP easier.

The process of learning new Skills, installing new Upgrades, or whatever it is you are spending your points on is entirely abstracted for simplicity's sake. You may roleplay a justification for their acquisition or simply have it occur off screen, just make sure that, as always, the GM has an idea of what it is you are trying to do with your advancements - he needs to create opportunities for you to take advantage of your purchases after all.

In addition to that, **after every Episode Arc all PCs gain another Genre Power** of their choice from their pool of selectable Genre Powers. **The end of an Episode Arc is also the only time when a Mecha may purchase new Upgrades**, and through the course of it and until the Arc has finished they may only spend their UP on gaining Enhancements, or in powering up Custom Weapons with a cost of 4 or less. Enhancements to Custom Weapons do not count towards the limit to Enhancements when applied to Attributes.

Remember that each character's stock of **Starting Genre Points increases by one permanently** at the beginning of every new Arc.

Switching Gears

Maybe your Mecha got destroyed and everyone presumes you dead, maybe your PC wants to steal an enemy Mecha and forsake his own, or maybe you made a few mistakes during the creation of your Mecha that render it less than fun to play.

Whichever the reason, you want to make up a new Mecha and switch to Piloting it instead of your current one. And that's cool. If you have been keeping track of PP and UP separately (and you should have) then rebuilding from scratch up to your current XP will be easy enough, just make sure you've cleared the issue with your GM so that they may incorporate the change into the story in a dramatic way - remember that you're trying to make a cool story here, after all.

A cool way to do so would be to make the change with an use of the Mid-Scene Upgrade Genre Power, but instead of purchasing another Upgrade you board a new Mecha entirely, and it is at full Threshold, Energy and otherwise brand as new!

By the same logic, you can use the Mid-Scene Upgrade to try out new things if your current Mecha isn't quite working for you. Instead of picking up a new ability during an Operation you can use it to trade out equipment before deploying, for another Upgrade or Weapon worth the same cost in UP or less - you get any spare UP back later, of course.

This is an optional rule for special circumstances, not a hardcoded one, and the GM does not need to abide by it if anyone wants to abuse it by constantly trading gear around. If you want an Unit that can switch stuff before deploying anytime, you should get Frames.

Flushing a giant inhuman organism into space against its will is hard work. Motivating it to exit the station under its own steam is hard work, and requires an understanding of the Cryptid mentality that is typically unavailable to Clarke agents. However, in the rare event that some manner of reliable fixation the demon has can be discovered, this should be leveraged as much as possible. Getting the beast into the relatively safe engagement area of space is far less difficult than the alternative; shipboard combat is cramped, with the Cryptid having a stealth advantage, and whilst maps of the station are available to Clarke personnel, Cryptids will be more intuitively familiar with their home ground. There is also the obvious danger of gratuitous civilian casualties, and damage to the densely packed devices necessary for functions, or even structural integrity of the station.

Cryptids have a high capacity to resist being involuntarily flushed into space. They usually have rough, jagged outer surfaces, allowing them to keep good traction against the hull in zero gravity. Furthermore, by the time the Clarke foundation becomes aware of them they generally have the coordination necessary to actively grab at the hull during a breach scenario, though it is certainly true that 'new' Cryptids often do not possess this reflex. Cryptids also prefer to be surrounded by matter. The void of space is an environment that most Cryptids will choose to avoid if given a choice, as it is the absence of the patterns and matter their existence feeds upon.

As such, the only way to eject Cryptids from the station is to do so suddenly and violently. Any part of the stations actually designed to function as an airlock is simply not adequate as an exit point, at least if it is performing under normal parameters. Luring one into an airlock can be acceptable if the airlock has had its safety features disabled somehow, though even then, airlocks provide a number of grab points, so the creature will need to be provided with weaponised encouragement to leave the lock along with the flow of air. A rule of thumb that Clarke personnel should keep in well in mind, is that if an unsuited human is capable of saving themselves from the hull breach, so can the Cryptid. Heroic actions during this stage of a hunt can only be considered martyrdom at best.

And so we come to the next option: Destructive breach of station environments. This is by far the most effective means of expelling Cryptids from the station, however it must be used sparingly, as it is likely to cause severe and, if used without consideration, outright irreparable damage to the station. In the hands of a reckless agent it is no better than conducting the battle onboard the station. A destructive breach is most effective against those objectives who demonstrate extremely high or extremely low mobility... Or high intelligence. Charges, or any other manner of weapon, perhaps even external fire from Clarke Gears, can be used to breach an area known to have a high activity rate when the target is confirmed to be within it, expelling it along with any crew in the area. Areas with windows are ideal as they are typically equipped with blast shutters which can prevent full depressurisation of the compartment following success. Civilian casualties will fortunately act as "false" grab points when the Cryptid attempts to prevent its expulsion, tying up its limbs and preventing it from reaching sturdier items. Whilst the Clarke foundation would prefer that you do not inflict any civilian casualties at all, a guarantee of mission success is of equivalent value to tens, and in some circumstances even hundreds or thousands of human lives.

A less damaging but arguably more disruptive version of the destructive breach is the module ejection. Whilst a significant portion of the stations were built on site, the discrete prefabricated modules that provided a base for the rest to be built upon still exist, and can be separated in a controlled fashion from the station. To do so will require cooperation from the relevant station control, and as such agents should only expect an approval rate of around 1.8% for Stations I and II. By separating the module containing the Cryptid, the entire module can be opened to space, either removing the objective, or creating a suitable entry point for Gears by doing so in a controlled fashion. This will still annihilate any crew or plant life on board, and cause damage to lower value systems, however the module shell and its associated core systems will remain intact.

In all the above 3 methods, agents will be required to motivate the Cryptid to reach the intended point of exit. The agents should engage in a running battle with the Cryptids from the first point of contact, however fighting well under maximum strength will usually be necessary. Cryptids, despite their powerful nature can still be discouraged by force of arms, and won't pursue prey they have no expectation of being able to apprehend. Ultimately some risk to at least one agent will be required in the luring process in order to create a realistic scenario, even if Cryptid mental states are significantly removed from the human. For the sake of maintaining the social and mental integrity of the cell, Clarke agents should ideally rotate this duty, barring obvious disabilities.

CHAPTER 5



RUNNING THE SHOW

The Genre Master

The GM is a player too, albeit one with a far greater level of responsibility, but at the end of the day they want to have fun just like everyone else.

That said, being the GM often feels like work rather than play. They have to juggle absolutely everything that goes on in a game while making sure that the other players are all entertained and having their time in the spotlight, providing them with the right balance of challenge and development.

It is not an easy thing to do, but that is also what makes it so rewarding. To be GM is to be both a director, writer and to act in your own movie at the same time. You get to narrate and describe everything about the world that the PCs will be in, from how places look to how their actions affect other people. In short, you set the stage and help the other players create a story. This section is made with the GM in mind as the one reading it, from now on whenever we say "You" we are not talking to any other player but the GM.

But do not be fooled into thinking that this is just like writing one of those 'fanfiction' things and that you are the only one with power, or that everything is predictable either. Unlike in console or computer RPGs, there is no set script for the players to just follow and stumble along while they watch 'cutscenes' play. PCs create events and conflict as they go, and they, and you, cannot be sure how it will go until they have rolled the dice.

Genre Master Requirements

In case the previous disclaimer wasn't enough, here's a quick list of things you will have to constantly worry about as a final deterrent; to GM you will need:

- 1) A solid knowledge of the rules, as it is your duty to know the game well enough to be able to solve any rules issues that arise in a swift fashion and to be a good enough judge to make your own rulings when necessary.
- 2) Good improvisational skills -or a lot of planning - to provide a plot and several subplots for others to follow, while fulfilling the Genre Theme quota for all PCs and the good memory - or enough notes - to not forget things.
- 3) To know what it is your players actually want, so as to keep them engaged, and what it is they don't want, to keep them from getting bored.
- 4) A good sense of pacing and general storytelling, so that the story remains focused and reasonable but doesn't go stale from being too predictable, you will need to figure out when to ignore rules and when to employ timeskips to keep the action going, without running the risk of glossing over too much detail and ruining immersion.
- 5) Organizational and communication skills to schedule when, where, for how long, and with whom you will be playing the game. For many, this is the most difficult aspect.

Rule 0

So we did mention the Golden Rules before, but it is important enough to repeat now that we're in the GM section: the GM has ultimate say in everything, not the rulebook, in the name of making things fun for everyone.

If the official rule is one that would ruin everyone's experience, they are free to ignore the specific rule and let things develop differently. If two players can't agree on how to resolve a specific situation, the GM is encouraged to halt it and just say what happens, rules be damned, so that the game can proceed, and if one player is behaving in a way that makes things unfun for others then they should address this concern in an appropriate manner by talking to them about it.

Above all, the GM's job is to make sure the group has fun and he has all of the power in the world, from having control of every single NPC to outright being able to kick someone from the game in the worst of circumstances, to make sure that this objective is met.

Roll With the Punches

You're the GM so there's probably a story that you want to tell, and that is fine, but as a player there are few things as awful as watching a plot unfold and not being able to have an effect on it at all. Roleplaying games have a degree of freedom while retaining a level of challenge that no other form of entertainment can compare to, and it is only natural that players will on their own initiative do things that mess up your carefully planned schedules and well-crafted scheming.

But remember Rule 0, roleplayers generally want to make use of this freedom and you also want to make use of their inventiveness to make the game more fun for everyone and sit back with you again because you are just that good at entertaining them. So what is one to do when a player starts to try and do all sorts of things that leave a chaotic mess of the plot in their wake? Improvise.

If whatever you are planning hasn't made its presence clear yet, then use whatever they are doing to further your own ends, their act was planned by you all along. If what you are doing is readily observable and they're derailing it... Then you've got a problem, because if they're going against what you are trying to have them do, they're obviously having more fun doing something else. Take the hint and perhaps nudge the Scene in a different, player-preferred, direction.

Try to integrate methods, keep the illusion of choice but be permissive enough that what the PCs do actually matters.

Props

While they're anything but obligatory, bringing props to the game table can make the task of helping everyone immerse themselves into the experience that much easier. Remember, however, that immersion is a means to an end and not a goal in itself.

Pushing your Players a Little, every once in a while, with unnerving background noise, dim lighting and requests to leave mobile phones turned off is alright, but don't make that the default and think that fun should be sacrificed for the sake of immersion.

If you're good with graphics design (or good at stealing assets from others, at least), then you should try and have illustrations of important characters and locations. Maps for use during Operations are great if your group is into that sort of thing as well.

Music is another element of the Mecha Genre you would do well in not to cast aside. Good music playing in the background can make a world of difference in creating an atmosphere. The only problem is where to find it. Generally, you will want a number of randomized playlists separated by the mood they're trying to instill (action, anxiety, mystery) and a few other tunes for specific memorable events you have in mind. Soundtracks from the shows (or games, or whatever) you are taking inspiration from are a solid start, but ambient sounds will do in a pinch.

If you think there are particular songs that could represent the game as a whole, then don't hesitate to give your game an 'Opening Theme' and play it to signal everyone it is time to get in-character. Likewise, you may also have an 'Ending Theme' to play when a session comes to an end. This last one is particularly useful when used right after establishing a cliffhanger!

Taking it Easy

Having already established how many roles you've got to juggle in order to be a GM, it is only natural many would see GMing as something that, despite being fun, is exhausting. What you're going to read in the last section of this chapter are a few techniques to achieve maximum effect for minimum effort. Instead of going out of your way to plot against and challenge your players, you will have them cross and be at each other's throats out of their own volition.

Remember: You are still the game's referee and have veto power over everything if they're being a tad too silly or downright incoherent.

Success and Failure

Often the description of a PC's Test is handled by the GM, as the general narrator of the story this might seem like it is just part of the natural order of things and best left untouched. Don't do that. Instead let your Players be the ones to narrate both their successes... And their failures.

Players will certainly be eager enough to describe their accomplishments but, if you also make them describe their missteps, this will, hopefully, not only make them more humble and make the PCs more human but also let them get the best out of their own blunders and ensure no one is unhappy before everyone moves on with the story.

Relinquishing NPCs

Keeping a consistent setting throughout your Episodes has its fair share of benefits but one of the biggest opportunities it presents is the ability to let it make your game environment come alive for both you and the players by sharing NPC duties.

This might sound unappealing at first, Players want to play their PCs, and you certainly do want to keep control of your precious NPCs too, but this has its fair share of advantages for all.

Players will get to play in Scenes where their PCs are not present, possibly even allowing a player to let their PC die and rest in peace knowing they still have a NPC to control for the rest of the game, and they will get to do things their PCs could never do simply because they get to play as NPCs that shake and move the Base they live in or even the setting from the sidelines.

But what about the poor GM who has to surrender their best tools to the fickle nature of the players, what does he have to gain out of this? Well, in case you haven't been paying attention, this entire section is about minimizing workload for you so there's definitely that, but you will also gain a lot just by having your players that much more invested in your game.

Creation Powers

After you've let them narrate the outcome of their acts and control the NPCs that they would normally only interact with, what else could you possibly hand over to them? The answer is the power to directly create or alter their environment by improvising.

Let them improvise on the fly about who and what is around them, and let them devise what they do, how and why. Let's say a PC wants to become a member of a club, what you do is give them total control over such a thing, complete with NPCs that attend it too - they don't even have to make up all of them on the spot, they can just roll with whatever they are thinking at the time.

Whenever they make up an important character or location, note down the information in a single index card and take them out when it is time to put them to use.

Not every one of their ideas will strike the right chords, but you still have veto power, and once they get the hang of it, that won't be the case anymore.

Soon enough they'll be keeping things running on their own, allowing you to concentrate on the crux of your plot, and the Operations instead of having to take care of everything.

Planning Operations

You can't have a game about Mecha without Operations, and you want your Episodes to have a fight somewhere. Okay maybe it should not be during every Episode but the majority of the times you sit down at the table, there should be at least a short instance of giant robots punching each other in the face... Or blasting Outsiders to bits, or some other incident that keeps them an important part of the game - anything from being the face of a political event to helping with reconstruction efforts.

Terrain

Battles have to take place somewhere, and your choice of Terrain as a GM is perhaps one of the subtler ways in which you can not only tilt it towards the end of the difficulty spectrum where you want it to be, but also to make it more than yet another skirmish.

Besieging an enemy fortification is that much more difficult if they have Defensive terrain *and* are surrounded by Difficult Zones from every direction. At the same time, an Enemy that finds an atmospheric environment to be like Extreme Terrain to itself will eventually go down no matter how much difficulty the PCs are having tackling it.

There's a myriad of options available when you decide to get creative, but you should not underestimate the basics either. There is nothing wrong with sticking to Plain Terrain, for one it is simpler and for another it lets you provide an even playing field consistently if your Players prefer entering a battle without having to adapt to a new battleground, preferring to focus on Gear vs Gear tactics.

Longer Operations

Sometimes you want to spring surprise Enemy reinforcements on your unsuspecting players or have a boss with multiple stages. When this is the case you should have everyone reroll for Initiative - most likely the players have forgotten their exact rolls and the new enemies need to roll for Initiative anyway - rewarding those that held onto their Genre Points.

This might cause a battle to go on long enough that it needs to be split into multiple Episodes. Since this affects the mechanics of the game, what are you to do as a GM in that case? You give them a new Genre Point as per usual and treat this as a whole new Operation - and they will receive XP for both of them after the multi-parter is over.

This is, of course, assuming that the split was either planned or ended in a dramatic twist. If you just paused the game you simply treat it as part of the previous Episode.

Objectives and Circumstances

Usually the end of an Operation results from no more enemy Units on the battlefield or from destroying their HQ, likewise a defeat is marked by the same measurements but applied to your own squadron. You will often see the need to designate unique enemy Units as the equivalent of an HQ that earns your players a victory if they're defeated, as the defeat of certain important figures is often reason enough for a surrender, retreat, or outright disabling of all the other enemies.

But you can get more crafty than that: you can tell your players that in order to win they have to Maim a specific Area on an enemy Unit and then Retreat to bring it back to base for analysis, or prevent all enemies from harming an ally that is in the middle of evacuating civilians for a specific amount of Rounds. Maybe your players have Objectives they would like to pursue, such as trying to convince an enemy Unit to lay down their firearms and stop fighting, or help the civilians from the previous example to evacuate.

Some of these Objectives may be completed with the use of the rules for Operations, but many will require a degree of creativity on your part as GM. Regardless of whether there are any hard rules or not, anything that impacts the game meaningfully should require one or more Actions to complete, a Skill Test, or the spending of Genre Points, or maybe a combination of the three for a particularly difficult task.

Circumstances are similar but have a key difference to Objectives: they are imposed upon the group by the GM, whether they like it or not, and as such they should be handled with care. By default there are no special Circumstances in any Operation, much like with Terrain, and just like with Terrain the variety of imaginable Circumstances you can throw at your unsuspecting players is near limitless.

Their degree of complexity can vary greatly. For instance, you might make a very simple Circumstance in having the power at the base cut forcing the group to deploy without knowing anything about the enemy other than that they're coming.

But you can get as complicated as you want. Let's say that the PCs haven't had anything to eat in several days. This attack to their morale could mean they don't gain benefits from Tension until they successfully acquire supplies from the enemy, at which point their renewed spirit lets them benefit from it as normal.

Difficulty and Rewards

At the end of every Episode Arc you should give your players XP so that they can buy new Abilities for their Pilots and Mecha.

Much like in the Mecha Genre, PCs in GGG do not become more powerful out of the blue nor do they have a new gimmick to showcase every Episode. Instead their power increases in bursts along with the strength of the enemies they must face.

There are two ways to figure out how much XP to give your PCs. You can do so based on an Individual per-Episode basis or plan out ahead of time how much XP per Episode Arc you want to give out to keep a firm grip on the PC's power levels.

The Individual Method

At the end of an Episode, look at the final result of the Operation that took place and at how many things of importance happened during the Intermission, and assign XP based on whether the Operation was easy or difficult for the PCs to accomplish and the significance of the Intermission to character development and the plot at large.

Intermission - Bland

An Intermission during which the PCs just go along with things without much initiative and no meaningful conflict takes place has a value of a measly 1 XP.

Intermission - Spicy

An Intermission during which at least one PC got significant development and the plot or a subplot advanced notably is equivalent to 2 XP.

Intermission - Hot!

An Intermission during which the plot at large advanced leaps and bounds and events that transpired have permanently and obviously changed the PCs for better or worse would give the entire group a reward of 3 XP.

Operation - Bland

An Operation where every Turn goes as expected and no PC is forced to Retreat to avoid being destroyed is easy and should award 1 XP.

Operation - Spicy

An Operation where one or more players are forced to Retreat or in which the players are forced to improvise with their Genre Powers in ways they didn't expect to achieve a victory without pulling back is worth around 2 XP.

Operation - Hot!

An Operation where the battle is long and hard fought, only won by the skin of the PC's teeth with a mix of ingenuity, good luck and perseverance earns its participants 3 XP.

The Planned Method

You don't want your Pilots to become superhuman and you intend for your player's Mecha to follow classic genre conventions with the rate at which they gain powerups. If this is the case, this is the method for you.

Take a look at how many Episode Arcs you plan to have and consider how strong you want them to be at the end of each, then divide the Recommended XP per Level by the number of Episodes in each Arc.

Level 1

The Pilots are still getting the hang of things and their Mecha are being improved slowly as they are adapted to their controller: Until around 15 XP.

Level 2

The Pilots have considerable skill and fame in their fields of specialty. Their Mecha are considerably improving their performance and drawing out their expected potential: Until around 30 XP.

Level 3

The Pilot are now masters of their domain or true jacks of all trades, with their Mecha peaking in their expected power in their specialty and a mid-season Upgrade being imminent: Until around 45 XP.

Level 4

The Pilots are now movers and shakers, admired by their allies and feared by their enemies. The Mecha of the crew have either maximized their capabilities or have been Upgraded enough they may be considered new, next-gen Gears that cannot be matched one on one by most enemies: Topping at 60 XP.

Level 5

The Pilot and their Mecha are considered utter badasses and WMDs on their own, capable of shutting down entire armies by themselves if they properly make use of their power to strike at the heart of the enemy faction: Beyond 60 XP.

This scale is useful if you are about to start a new game with characters who are stronger than the norm. You may have your Pilots and Mecha have a degree of experience and begin at Level 1. That means an additional 15 XP to create their characters with and starting in what would normally be the second Episode Arc - Increasing their Starting Genre Points by one, earning a new Genre Power, and being able to take up to six Enhancements.

Keeping it Simple

The importance of your authority as GM is especially poignant when you realize this chapter is talking only to you, and not to the other players, making basically everything in these pages optional material.

Some of the ideas here may seem like an unnecessary complexity or may not mesh well with your style of running things. That is fine. Just keep in mind that variety is the spice of life and do try them out once you're comfortable with what you've already got.

The Course of Episodes

At its heart, GGG is engineered to craft Episodic Character-Driven stories - as opposed to Serial Action-Driven stories - this means that, although the plot itself is important, the heart of the game is how the characters interact with it on a daily basis, as opposed to the plot unfolding on its own and how people react to it.

Your job is to set the stage at the beginning of every Episode with a Scene that engages everyone and encourages them to develop their characters afterwards, throwing in an Operation at them when it looks appropriate.

In other words, you need to find something that they all can do together, and to do so with the verisimilitude they expect out of the Genre, it should be reminiscent of content in mecha shows or comics and will depend on the kind of game you are running - likely with elements taken from slice of life, war drama and science fiction as well.

If you are in need of inspiration, feel free to use the table in the following pages. The story seeds placed in there will not give you an entire plot structure for you to use, but provide a starting point for you to develop your own ideas.

Should you be feeling whimsical and creative enough for it, you may even roll a multiple number of times in the table and mix the results together to create a Frankenstein's monster of an Episode with enough twists and turns to leave your Players appalled.

Some of the results involve Operations, some of them could be used during Operations but not necessarily, and some others are purely for Intermissions. Being completely random, it is possible that one or more results don't suit the game you are running, but you can see that as a challenge to make it work despite expectations.

The Benefits of Episodic Games

Above all other things, Roleplaying Games are a social activity that demands considerable commitment from everyone involved in it to continue weaving a story together week after week. But people have lives, and inevitably they will fail to show up from time to time – sometimes without being able to tell you, the GM, in advance.

The Episodic structure lets you throw a self-contained adventure to everyone who is present at the game table that day and handwave the absence of another PC away with a minimum of trouble to the narrative. A Serial type of game that directly picks up where the previous session left off would run into the trouble of necessitating the PC whose owner is absent to be controlled by the GM, and often that leads to events that the sidelined Player is not entirely in agreement with, much to their frustration.

If anyone misses a session, give them a quick recap of the events taking place in it they should be aware of, either before the game begins or have the characters themselves share the information with them.

Likewise if you really, really need everyone to be together for a particularly important plot development and it turns out one or more people can't make it, you can leave that Episode for later and throw a quick session to serve as a prelude or to show off elements of the PC's lives that are usually ignored, instead of having to cancel the meeting altogether.

The integrity of the story is important, but you should prioritize the Players enjoying it first. Otherwise, they will simply cease to enjoy your game and it will meet an anticlimactic end.



Random Episode Ideas

01	Training day, the PCs must beat a rival group!
02	Training day, the team must fight each other.
03	Training day, but outside of Gears!
04	Training day, redo the last Operation, but harder
05	An accident occurs during a training session.
06	The base enters an impromptu emergency drill.
07	In the middle of a drill, a real emergency strikes.
08	The PCs are on standby, the threat is unknown.
09	The PCs have a day off
10	The PCs are to attend to an important event.
11	A mysterious sponsor examines the PC's squad.
12	A spy makes contact with one or more PCs.
13	One or more of the PCs are stalked by media.
14	One or more of the PCs are stalked by rabid fans.
15	One or more of the PCs see "strange people."
16	They say that ghosts lurk about the base at night.
17	Spies infiltrate and try to destroy the base!
18	Spies infiltrate and try to kill the PCs!
19	There is a shortage of battle supplies.
20	There is a total power outage all of a sudden.
21	Crucial Gear maintenance equipment is missing.
22	Gear weaponry goes missing before deployment.
23	Two or more PCs are having shared dreams.
24	At least one of the PCs has premonitory dreams.
25	Natural disasters strike!

26	Natural disasters strike... During an Operation!
27	Natural disasters separate the PCs.
28	The PCs get on the bad side of dangerous people.
29	An important friend of the PCs is in danger.
30	One or more of the PCs are sick, but still on duty.
31	At least one PC eats bad food and is sick for days.
32	One or more PCs receive blackmail threats.
33	One Gear is picked by the press as a scapegoat.
34	One or more Gears are hijacked!
35	One or more Gears malfunction mid-Operation.
36	One or more Gears are vandalized overnight.
37	One or more Gears test prototype technology.
38	A test of prototype technology goes horribly wrong.
39	Technology compatible with the Gears arrives.
40	One captured Glory activates on its own later.
41	A dead Outsider or Cryptid was still alive after all!
42	Whilst on patrol, an UEF ID calls for help.
43	Whilst on patrol, the PCs.
44	Whilst on patrol, refugees request to be picked up.
45	Whilst on patrol, spies take over the bridge.
46	Whilst on patrol, a dormant Outsider is detected.
47	Whilst on patrol, the PCs witness a Cryptid's birth.
48	Whilst on patrol, the PCs find a wrecked Landship.
49	Whilst on patrol, the PCs get lost.
50	Whilst on patrol, the PCs are ambushed.



Random Episode Ideas (continued)

51	Whilst on patrol, the PCs find a new kind of enemy.
52	A mysterious ally shows up to help, then leaves.
53	A rival team of allies arrives to the base.
54	Enemies have stolen supplies.
55	Enemies attack allied supply transport.
56	Allied supply craft is actually full of enemy spies.
57	The identity of an important NPC is stolen.
58	The identity of at least one PC is stolen.
59	Someone claiming to be an old friend shows up.
60	An NPC turns up dead in strange circumstances.
61	Someone broke into the residence of the PCs.
62	A PC receives flowers and a love letter.
63	A PC receives angry complaints.
64	A PC receives a creepy poem.
65	A PC receives a for collateral damage.
66	Someone plays constant pranks on the PCs.
67	There is no food. Anywhere.
68	The weather is absolutely awful.
69	A 3G-Bomb was detonated relatively close.
70	A 3G-Bomb is fired at the base, ETA is 1 hour!
71	A 3G-Bomb blocks out sunlight for days.
72	After a surprise inspection, PCs risk demotion.
73	A single PCs gets all the credit for last Operation.
74	Dissidents rally to protest against the PC's faction.
75	Dissidents rally to protest at the PC's doorsteps.

76	An NPC having a bad day picks a fight with a PC.
77	An NPC having a good day gives a PC a gift.
78	One PC is accused of treason.
79	PCs receive curious looks from the science team.
80	Usually helpful AIs go rogue.
81	The simulators are replaced with a videogame.
82	A kid claiming to be the child of a PC shows up.
83	A PC's loved one has passed away.
84	Everyone is to undergo a psychological evaluation.
85	Everyone is to undergo medical examination.
86	The PCs are trapped in the same room.
87	A stray animal takes a liking to one of the PCs.
88	A stray animal accosts one of the PCs.
89	A pack of stray animals abhor the PCs.
90	Today is a PC's birthday!
91	Today is the birthday of an important NPC!
92	Today is Valentine's Day.
93	Today is Christmas.
94	Today is Halloween.
95	Today is April Fools.
96	Exposition episode.
97	Sports episode.
98	Beach episode.
99	Hot springs episode.
00	"It was all a dream" episode.



Season Length

You're going to have to define a general number of episodes for all the things that you have planned to take place. It does not need to be strict but should serve as a guideline. It may sound restrictive but having a general idea of the intended Season's length should give a good idea to everyone of the kind of pacing they should expect and whether or not the goals they have set in mind are too short or long sighted.

Plus, if it turns out everyone wants to keep going, you can always get a second Season. These are recommended Season lengths suited to usual Mecha anime expectations.

Number of Episodes to Season Format

6	OVA Miniseries
12	Short Season
24	Single Season
48	Year-Long Double Season

Since GGG works in Episode Arcs, somewhere down the line you'll have to divvy these episodes up into arcs. Somewhere between 3 and 6 episodes works best for the shorter games while 7 and 10 is recommended for the longer ones.

This will be very helpful in distributing any subplots and Themes you want to be explored along the way evenly and start you thinking of how in-depth you wish to explore the Themes. It is recommended to have no less than 2 arcs and no more than 5.

Arc Structure

The Episode Arcs of GGG are an easily glossed-over but crucial element of its narrative and mechanical structure. As GM, you will have to come up not only with episodic plots for your game, but with an unifying element to form an Arc.

Most Episodes in an Arc are interlinked in an obvious fashion. For instance, an Arc may last for the duration of an NPC's visit to the base, and another chain of Episodes will last as long as it takes for the PCs to finish off a recurring foe introduced at the beginning of the Arc.

Remember to mine your PC's Themes for ideas on how to stage your Episodes, and spread everyone's Themes all over the Arc to ensure everyone has a chance for quality roleplaying. The following is a general outline on designing Arcs for your perusal. You do not need to use this method if you have your own, but if you are stumped for ideas then it is definitely worth a look.

Intermissions and Operations

Though the default mode of play is that every Episode will start with an Intermission and finish with an Operation, the XP award methods do hint at another possibility and, indeed, you should consider switching it up every once in a while.

You can have multiple Episodes without having an Operation - but make the next Operation extra difficult to compensate for all the Genre Points the PCs have acquired - or you could even have multiple back-to-back 'Boss Rush' style Episodes with nothing but combat - just keep in mind that without a chance to restock any of their resources the PCs won't last forever.



Step 1: Themes

Take every Theme belonging to the PCs, set them aside and have a good look at them. Do you see any obvious connections between them? Do at least two Themes look like they could make for a good story seed when put together? If so, make note of this 'pair' (or trio, or whatever you've got) and keep looking for more such potential uses for Themes.

For example, if one PC has Unwavering Loyalty as a Reason towards another, whose Bane is that they are Stupidly Brave, then you have one such connection. The brave character will ostensibly place themselves in danger at some point, and the other character will act to protect them. What you are trying to do here is find as many of these little nuggets as you wish to use.

If you can't find any obvious connections between the PCs, then just try to select Themes that haven't seen much love through the course of the Season yet. Remember to make sure you have at least one for every PC, however.

Step 2: Threats

It is all fine and dandy for your Players to pursue Themes on their own initiative, but you want to encourage them a little – And often that means placing them in a tough spot. Take one of the previously mentioned connections (or standalone Themes) and think how you can bring it to the forefront during an Intermission, in a way that will cause conflict for (and possibly between) the PCs. You have an entire setting worth of tools to do so, with more NPCs than you can shake a stick at, so make use of them.

Continuing with the previous example, the Brave PC could be at odds with a street thug and his gang, who seem all too eager to solve any problems between them with their fists. This single Scene already involves two potential Themes being relevant to the game, giving their owners precious Genre Points.

You want to think of one such instance for every Episode, making as many PC Themes relevant as possible each time. How your Players decide to solve these conflicts is up to them, you only want to get them to develop their Characters.

The example characters do not actually have to engage their prospective enemies in combat. Certainly the Brave one could step away (especially if the Loyal one put in a good effort convincing them to do so), if the Player didn't feel like earning the Genre Point for falling prey to their Bane... Is the character comfortable with having their pride insulted like that, after all? Or will they seek out the gang on their own later? What they do is up to them.

Step 3: Up the Ante

You are going to want each Arc to have a satisfactory climax, and there is no more obvious way to do it than to make any Themes brought up earlier in the Arc relevant during an Operation. The Brave Character receives an encrypted message from their most sworn of foes, challenging them to a duel in enemy territory – an obvious trap. What will they do and how will the Loyal Character react?

Again, the PC can opt not to raise to the bait, which could potentially derail your plans quite a bit. But that's okay, you want them to develop their characters first and foremost, and will have plenty of chances to advance your schemes later. If the PC realizes they are okay with going back on their beliefs like that, for instance, it sounds like they might be about to get over their Bane and a new Bane is in order.

In the previous example, the GM need not necessarily have to improvise a whole new Operation plan on the spot. They could just have the challenging enemy and their own allies attack the PCs on their own initiative, while the rival of the Brave PC proceeds to call them a coward and do the other unsavory things that rivals do. There you have your End of Arc climactic duel, without sacrificing player agency to get to it.

A Story About Repetition

This method assumes that the development of Themes will, after an Arc or two, lead to one or more of them changing into different types of Themes or be replaced entirely – and that you have plenty of Themes with solid connections between them to use through various Arcs without risking things becoming stale.

If it turns out that the same two or three connections are always the more interesting ones, you should try to put extra effort in making the other Themes more fun to play with. You can involve important NPCs with the PC's Themes, tie them to important plot elements, and even put them between a rock and a hard place with a serious threat: either make the Theme instantly relevant from then on or the Player has to reevaluate whether they want to keep it if they're not going to make use of it.

Managing Genre Points

Genre Points are more than a simple number that makes the PCs stronger. Genre Points are a tool to let the Players themselves know they are roleplaying their Themes well, that they are helping keep things interesting, and that they are generally contributing to everyone's good time.

Remember, be generous with the first Point per Episode (besides the default Point they get at the beginning of it) but only give out Points beyond that if they do something meaningful, and develop different Themes.

That said, Genre Powers are still a feature of the game's mechanics and that they make the PCs that much stronger when they do have a solid amount of them. While coming up with Operations, you can be reliably certain your Players will be able to trump whatever it is you throw at them as long as they have Genre Points remaining, because Genre Powers are much stronger than the average Upgrade. Of course, this goes both ways, and when you have the group face off against enemies that have their own Points and Powers the Operations will be considerably harder.

This hits another point of gauging an Operation's difficulty. In most games (Roleplaying or otherwise) the only way to tell if something is challenging is to look at whether it is close to making the Player or Players lose or not, but in GGG a conflict where the group spends a number of Genre Points should be considered a success by the GM, as it made them use up their most precious, finite resource.

And that, in many ways, is what you should be aiming for – to keep them challenged and to make them use up their Genre Points, instead of setting out to try and kill them. Be reasonable with rulings for Genre Powers and remember this is a game, not a competition to see who can master the ruleset best.

Likewise, since Genre Points are reset after every Arc, you should at least leave hints for the Players when that is about to happen so they don't hold back.

The Supporting Cast

As it was stated in the previous chapter, GGG better suits Character-Driven stories but that does not mean the details of the setting are unimportant or that you should not attempt to make it come to life. You should use the supporting cast to that end - the PC's friends, rivals, acquaintances and lovers - to both instill a sense that the PCs are interacting with a living, breathing world and to reinforce its narrative themes.

The supporting cast takes many forms. You will need NPCs for the players to interact with outside the battlefield and enemies to war with once they step into the cockpit. Some of them will be straightforward enough. Simple folk who don't have giant robots of their own, Non-Combatants will make up most of the NPCs during Intermissions. Others are defined by their performance during Operations and will prioritize combat statistics, rarely getting to use any Attributes or Skills, if they ever do. Of particular importance are those that are just as relevant during Intermissions as they are during Operations, though they are the rarest of them all.

NPC Tiers

Individual NPCs are just as varied as PCs if not more, and the same could be said of their Gears if they have any, and they advance over time increasing their performance in similar ways, though this depends on their individual Tier. There are Three Tiers for NPCs, all of varying strengths.

When creating an NPC, whether they're intended for use during Intermissions, Operations or both, you go through the same process you would for creating a PC but apply a few special rules in between.

The three categories will explain how the Tier of NPC differs from regular PCs, if they do at all.

Additionally, since NPCs don't necessarily have to be Humans or Gears, they may possess 'Features', special abilities unique to NPCs, that distinguish them as such.

Features may be used to create special PCs such as Cyborgs or to ride other types of mechanized weaponry than the common Gear, though this should be reserved for special occasions.

Tier 1: Grunts

These are the nameless extras, the hapless bystanders, the rank and file mooks. Their only strength lies in numbers if they have them. As Non-Combatants, they are the forgettable NPCs that get a quirk or two at most but are there mostly to fulfill a purpose like shopkeeper or civilian witness, and, as Enemies, they often represent nameless soldiers or AIs with little to no self-preservation instinct. Two Grunts are roughly the equivalent of one PC.

Grunt NPCs have a starting Nature, then a limited number of Skills and maybe some Traits. To create a Mecha this way, you start directly with a Chassis and then assign a very small number of Upgrades or Weapons.

Non-Combatants

Nature: Any

Skills and Traits: Maximum of 20 PP worth of Skills and Traits combined.

Genre: No Genre Points or Themes.

Progression: Choose one of Fitness, Intellect or Empathy and another of Awareness, Willpower or Resources. Increase the chosen Attributes at the end of every Episode Arc by 1.

Combatants

Genre: No Powers.

Archetype: None

Chassis: Any

Upgrades: Maximum of 10 UP worth of Upgrades.

Weapons: One or Two Weapons with a Cost of 5 or less.

Progression: Choose one of Evasion, Threshold or Penetration and another of Accuracy, Armor and Energy for each type of Enemy Grunt. Increase the chosen Attributes along with Systems at the end of every Episode Arc by 1.

The Redshirt Effect

Rare is the Grunt that is not obviously outmatched by a PC in a straight encounter. Even outside the Battlefield they lack the Plot Armor benefits from Genre. This is only further emphasized once the PC's start to gain XP to improve themselves with, and the poor low level NPCs are simply left behind.

This is not an oversight. The PCs are the main characters of the story and no-names shouldn't really be a problem for them to handle. Any PC that has devoted considerable PP to being good at something should be able to demonstrate their superiority when compared Joe Shmoe.

It might seem that offering a respectable challenge to this band of plucky do-gooders without resorting to the constant return of their Rivals or a new Boss appearing every other week is going to be a tall order, but nothing is further from the truth. Intelligently applied numbers of Grunts can make up for their inherent weaknesses with Tension bonuses, the stacking of Advantages by supporting each other, and dictating how and when the encounter takes place - among other tactics.

Tier 2: Rivals

Virtually equals to the PCs in all but ownership, a Rival is a major NPC that is more often than not a recurring thorn in the PC's sides. They don't need to be, though, many of them serve a purpose just fine as temporary presences that last for an Arc or two. A Rival should be considered equal in power to one PC.

A Rival is created and is augmented the same ways a PC in nearly all respects. They take a bit more effort to prepare than the other Tiers for that reason.

Non-Combatants

Nature: Any.

Skills: As normal.

Traits: As normal.

Genre: No Genre Points or Themes. They get a bonus to Initiative equal to the Starting Points of the PCs.

Progression: The same XP total as the PCs.

Combatants

Genre: As PCs.

Archetype: Any.

Chassis: Any.

Upgrades: As PCs.

Weapons: As PCs.

Features: None.

Progression: The same XP total and number of Powers as the PCs.

Like a Boss

Bosses do not have as much variety in their abilities as Grunts and Rivals do. If you stick mostly to using Bosses instead of mixing up all three types of Enemies, this can lead to repetition. There is one way to work around this, and it is to replace some of their abilities with that which is available to PCs, but in greater quantities.

Boss Powers - In place of a Boss Power, you can get any three other Genre Powers instead. Note that this is the only way for Bosses to get Default Genre Powers.

Boss Archetypes - In place of a Boss Archetype, you may grant them a maximum of up to 15 UP to spend on any Upgrades. Yes, they can get regular Archetypes this way, and unlike PCs Bosses have no limits on how many regular Archetypes they can grab.

Boss Weapons - In place of a Boss Weapon, grab three Weapons worth a total of 15 UP instead. These can be custom-made or specific.

You can also do the same for other enemies as well, consider using these guidelines to grant your recurring Rivals some Boss abilities to spice them up. Just keep in mind that some might interact in weird ways with one another, particularly when it comes to Behold my True Power combining Weapons that have no business being together. Do this only after you have some experience with the system. and be prepared to come up with ad-hoc rulings.

Tier 3: Bosses

The toughest of the tough, Bosses are the movers and shakers of the setting as Non-Combatants and fearsome Enemies. Bosses generally fight until they die in battle, and are meant to be rare sights that should not be fought more than once or twice per Arc. A Boss is more or less comparable in power to two PCs.

Because Bosses are powerful, and because the creation of such complex characters can require a lot of time and effort, they are simplified instead. The process is similar to the creation of Grunts, but with vastly more powerful results. The special options available to Boss-type Combatants are detailed in the next section.

Non-Combatants

Nature: Any. Choose one of Fitness, Intellect or Empathy and another of Awareness, Willpower or Resources. Enhance the chosen Attributes by 5.

Skills: Maximum of 20 PP worth of Skills.

Traits: Maximum of 20 PP worth of Traits.

Genre: No Genre Points or Themes. They get a bonus to Initiative equal to twice the Starting Points of the PCs.

Progression: Choose one of Fitness, Intellect or Empathy and another of Awareness, Willpower or Resources.

Enhance the chosen Attributes at the end of every Episode Arc by 1, even past their normal limits.

Combatants

Genre: One Boss Power.

Archetype: One Boss Archetype

Chassis: Any. Choose one of Evasion, Threshold or Penetration and another of Accuracy, Armor and Energy .

Enhance the chosen Attributes by 5.

Weapons: One Boss Weapon.

Features: Bosses are immune to Maiming.

Progression: Assign them one of either another Boss Power, Boss Archetype, or Boss Weapon for every Episode Arc past the first. Also enhance all Attributes by 1, even past their normal limits. A Boss may only have two Boss Archetypes starting with the third Episode Arc and needs to be at the fifth Episode Arc to have three Boss Archetypes.

Boss Genre Powers

Characters have a versatile assortment of Genre Powers at their disposal, but Bosses only get a single Genre Power - albeit a very powerful one. The trick is that they can easily disable certain strategies entirely, punishing characters that specialize too much.

Behold my True Power

Setup Power

Effect: Your next Attack may use two of your own Weapons at the same time, treating them like a Synchro Attack, with all the qualities and bonuses of both Weapons. Your own bonuses from Attributes do not stack multiple times.

Description: To the Custos, there was no such thing as being too careful in regards to protecting the mothership. Just in case that the more-or-less literal rain of fire wasn't enough, it launched a preposterous amount of missiles to boot - when it was all over, none of the Wagner's escorts were still there.

Come Forth, my Minions

Setup Power

Effect: Create a Sidekick with up to 15 UP in Upgrades and 5 UP of Weapons when taking this Power. This Sidekick is deployed one Zone away from you when activating this Power, and may begin taking Actions immediately. You may not have more of these out at a time more than you have Enemies. These Sidekicks count as a single Unit for the purpose of limited-use abilities such as Support Upgrades or One-Shot Weapons.

Description: The walls of the colony shook, and from a nearby hill a tubular thing that no one had ever seen sprung. Its forward end opened, and dozens of Cryptids crawled out from inside, more than everyone could count. The Military Police defensive line was overrun almost instantly and everyone, even the creatures within the Gears themselves, felt afraid.

Do you Desire the Power?

Setup Power

Effect: Choose one Enemy. That Enemy makes a choice, between losing one Genre Point or gain a Genre Point but lose 1d5 Energy and deal 1d10 Damage against any one friendly unit to them, of their choice.

Description: The Outsider had done its research, it had this much control over Tao's Gear, and it was so difficult to resist its commands when its movements were linked to your own brain! Asking for forgiveness with a whisper, he raised the barrel of his gun and shot Jenna on her exposed back.

Die for Me!

Setup Power

Effect: Any one Enemy suffers 1d5 Damage.

Description: The Gravagne did not play fair. That was something everyone already was too familiar with for their liking. But the fact that it could simply wave its hands and everyone's equipment would start to malfunction and then explode was not a trick they had expected.

I Believe This is Yours

Reaction Power

Effect: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Power. Activate this Power to Test Systems and prevent Damage from any one source by the result, if the prevented Damage would be from the chosen type of Weapon you also inflict the result of the Test back to its source. Use this Power only once per instance of Damage.

Description: Wigner opened one of her palms towards the pink-colored beam going her way, which promptly curved around her. "That's impossible! It is bending the pathways created by Gygravagnite particles to deflect our attacks!"

That will not Work Again

Reaction Power

Effect: Increase your Armor by +5 against one Offensive Action taken against you. If the source was an Enemy Weapon you've already been Damaged by previously during this Operation then Test Systems afterwards and restore the result to your Threshold. This may restore you past lost Threshold Levels and it undoes the respective Maim status when it does so, healing the Area back to normal. Use this Power only once per instance of Damage.

Description: They really should have seen it coming, Maralah thought, it was only obvious that at some point a Cryptid would develop the ability to immunize itself to weaponry it has been previously exposed to.

Resistance is Futile

Setup Power

Effect: Restore 5 to your Energy.

Description: The Maxwell collapsed in flames, crushing a ten story building as it did so. Its regenerative powers finally outdone, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief when the flames died down and it was still immobile. That was all the time it needed to reactivate itself by absorbing the toppled building, with a bellow that froze the hearts of the crew.



Show me your Resolve

Setup Power

Effect: You gain +5 to Evasion and +3 to Armor for a Round.

Description: Both Gears punched and knocked each other down. At least, that psychopath was down for the count... But instead everyone heard her laughing and shouting over a public channel "I haven't had this much fun in years!" as if it was nothing.

You are too Slow

Reaction Power

Effect: Force an Enemy to reroll an Offensive Action they took against you and impart it a Disadvantage. Afterwards, you move 1 Zone in a direction of your choice.

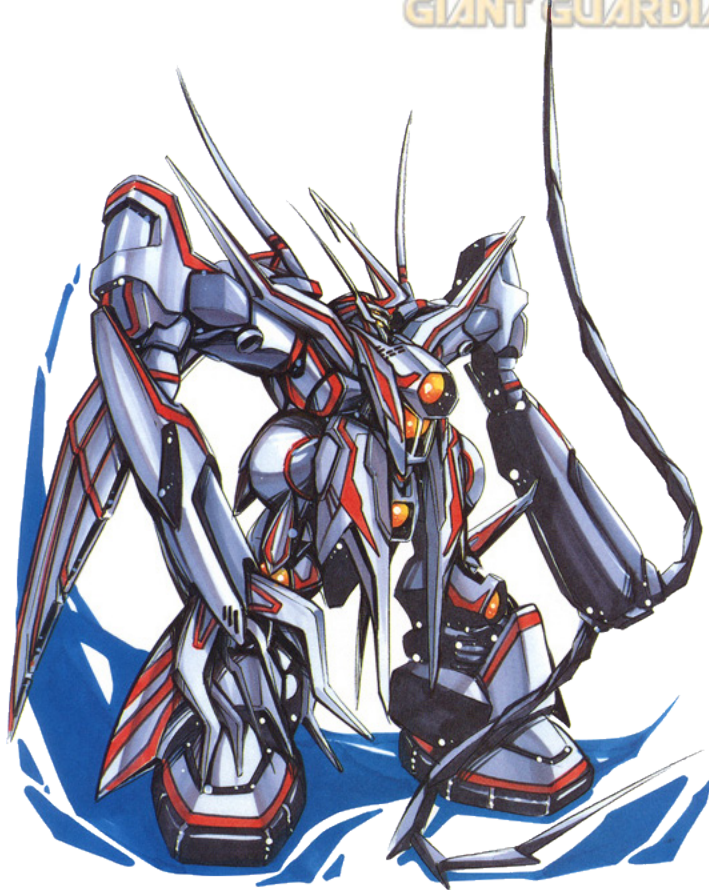
Description: The maniacal laughter of the Glory's pilot just kept going, and Yuji was sick of it. "Shut up! Shut up already!" He raised his arm to fire the beam rifle, but Jonah simply vanished from his sights. Inconveniently enough, he also chose that precise moment to stop laughing.

Your Fate is Sealed

Setup Power

Effect: Halve the Evasion and Armor values of one Enemy for a Round. Use this Power no more than once per Enemy each Round.

Description: The Cryptid screeched in pain and promptly switched gears from lazily walking the streets to tearing buildings left and right, viciously counterattacking the one that wounded it.



Boss Archetypes

Boss Archetypes exist to throw the PCs for a loop, and are substantially more powerful than normal ones, if also more conditional - in fact they are not even always active! Instead they provide a base ability that gets stronger as they take Damage, it 'Levels Up' as they lose Threshold Levels.

Boss Archetypes have no regular effect while they are in the First Level of Threshold, but after entering further Levels (and for as long as they stay in those Levels) they activate and will likely only get more powerful from there.

For the purpose of effects that depend or interact with being attacked or damaged, the effect that takes place is the one of the new Threshold Level.

Adaptive Field

Level 2: Choose a Weapon Type when taking this Archetype. If you would be dealt any Damage from a Weapon that isn't the chosen Type, halve the final amount taken.

Level 3: As above, but if you are dealt Damage from the chosen Type, restore half that amount in Energy.

Level 4: As above, but you may change the chosen Weapon Type at the beginning of your Turn.

Description: You release a bewildering thick cloud of fog-like particles. The fog is defensive in nature, transforming foreign particle-wave matter into a form of energy that the Gear can use, or simply reducing it to a harmless fine mist

Afterimages

Level 2: Impart a Disadvantages to any Offensive Actions taken against you. This does not work against Weapons that attack Zones such as those with the Blast ability. You gain an Advantage to all your own Offensive Actions.

Level 3: As above, but you impart two Disadvantages to Enemies and gain two Advantages instead.

Level 4: As above, but you impart three Disadvantages to Enemies and gain three Advantages instead.

Description: The good old technique of choice for many a warrior that wants to put their superior speed to use against foes.

All Become One

Level 2: At the beginning of your Turn you may sacrifice a single willing Ally to gain the benefits of Micromanage at no Action cost. This counts your Sub Units, but not your Remotes, as Allies.

Level 3: As above, but you count double your number of Genre Points for the purposes of the Systems Test.

Level 4: As above, but you also gain a Genre Point for each Ally consumed this way.

Description: Your assimilation powers can reduce even the smallest and most pitiful of scrap metal to raw resources. It helps that those are usually your mindless, loyal minions and that they are all too eager to sacrifice themselves for the greater good - yours.

Bloodlust

Level 2: Your Weapons gain an Advantage and a bonus Penetration of 5 when used during a Duel or to Engage in one.

Level 3: As above, but you gain two Advantages and the bonus is of 10 instead.

Level 4: As above, but you gain three Advantages and the bonus is of 15 instead.

Description: An enemy with little to no self preservation instinct will always go all out, and one of the greatest perils in facing them is that at some point you will make a mistake, that's when they will capitalize on and exploit it mercilessly.

Bullet Hell

Level 2: At the beginning of your Turn all Enemies within 5 Zones or less must Test Systems against a DN of 10, and on a failure they take the amount the DN was missed by as Damage.

Level 3: As above, but the DN is of 15 instead.

Level 4: As above, but the DN is of 20 instead.

Description: When you've got more enemies than limbs, it often is a good idea to pack several dozen energy cannons and drown the battlefield in an ever-growing colorful and somewhat flowery pattern of pure, unmitigated death.

G-Charge Field

Level 2: At the beginning of your Turn, you may gain the benefits of Micromanaging at no Action cost. You may also spend 1 Energy to grant its benefits to one Ally within Range 1 in addition to yourself, at a rate of 1 Energy per Ally chosen.

Level 3: As above, but you add the effects of a Maneuver with the same Systems Test.

Level 4: As above, but you count double your number of Genre Points for the purposes of the Systems Test.

Description: A more overblown version of the Overcharger, adjusted to emphasize the protection and sustenance of its subjects. Unlike the Overcharger, it can create a storm of nanobots spreading bolts of Gygravagnite all over the place.

Hypersonic Striker

Level 2: You gain an Advantage to your own Offensive Actions and impart a Disadvantage to all Actions against you if you've Moved as part of your Action this Round. You may Move in any direction as part of an Offensive Action, even backwards.

Level 3: As above, but you may also spend 1 Energy to Move an additional Zone when taking your Action.

Level 4: As above, but when you spend Energy you move two additional Zones, gain two Advantages, and impart two Disadvantages instead.

Description: The result of being able to handle acceleration speeds that would kill anyone using a plane, with turning rates previously thought impossible, and all thanks to Element G. Not only does it let the user reach extreme speeds nearly as an afterthought, but it also makes someone good at strafing extremely annoying to pursue and evade.

Juggernaut

Level 2: At the beginning of your Turn you restore your current Threshold Level to full.

Level 3: As above, but you also restore all of your Energy.

Level 4: As above, but the first time that you would be destroyed during an Operation, you restore the Fourth Level of Threshold completely instead.

Description: Lots of baddies can regenerate their wounds to the point it is easy to see it as a repetitive gimmick, but a true devil will completely heal nearly all of them with alarming speed, necessitating one overpowering strike to bring them down instead of several lesser blows.

Nanoskin Shell

Level 2: The next 5 points of Damage that would be dealt to you over the course of the Operation are negated. This tracks separate sources as well, until the buffer of 5 points is exhausted.

Level 3: As above, but instead it negates the next 10 points of Damage.

Level 4: As above, but instead it negates the next 15 points of Damage.

Description: Coated in layers of self-repairing nanites, this is not so much an actual repair or regeneration system as much as it is a sandwich of armor that keeps coming back to protect you from even the most overpowering of attacks.

Payback

Level 2: After an Offensive Action dealt Damage to you, you deal half that much Damage back to the source once their Action is over.

Level 3: As above, but you deal the same amount of Damage instead.

Level 4: As above, but you deal double that much Damage instead.

Description: A sadomasochistic fighting style if there was one, turning the user into both the bait and the trap. All who dare lay a hand on you are to be destroyed with extreme prejudice.



Boss Weapons

Boss Weapons are nasty, and in more ways than one. Some disrupt the opposition's game plan, while others are just plain overwhelmingly powerful.

3G-Bomb

Range: 0-10
Accuracy: 0
Penetration: 10
Energy: 0

Special: Missile. This Weapon always gets a result of 10 when Testing Accuracy and attacks all Zones within range, even yours. 3G-Bomb requires one Action be spent charging it, and its successful use will automatically make you lose your next Action afterwards.

Description: The most powerful weapon this side of the Hiryu's own Kuzuryusen, a lot easier to put to use, and that much less discriminating. Extreme caution is advised.

Constrict

Range: 0-1
Accuracy: +4
Penetration: 3
Energy: 0

Special: Melee, After being dealt Damage by this Weapon, the target loses the benefits of Tension to Offensive Actions for a Round. Additionally, when this Weapon is used to Engage in or during a Duel, the defender cannot Disengage from it for a Round.

Description: Enemies tend to run away when you want to get all close and personal, one of the many perks of having more appendages than most people can count or even identify is that they can stop them from doing just that.

Graviton Wave

Range: 0-10
Accuracy: +0
Penetration: 0
Energy: 1

Special: Beam, Blast. If this Weapon deals at least a single point of Damage, it deals bonus Damage depending on the Enemy's current Threshold Level before Damage is applied. The First Level of Threshold is destroyed automatically and the regular Damage result is ignored, the Second Level receives a bonus 1d10 Damage, and the Third Level receives a bonus 1d5.

Description: A wave of pure crushing force that causes a limited implosion on its targets similar to the technology used in the 3G bomb but at a much lesser scale. It is at its most destructive when foes have all their equipment intact and haven't lost any limbs yet, for obvious reasons.

G-Leeches

Range: 0-5
Accuracy: +2
Penetration: 2
Energy: 0

Special: Missile, Blast. The Enemy loses Energy equal to the Damage taken from this Weapon, and you restore the total Damage dealt to all targets.

Description: Half manufactured ordinance, half intelligent Cryptid. These creatures are suicidal, vampiric extensions of their master for assimilating targets from a distance, exhuming gases and sporelike substances in the direction of the originating Cryptid.

Merge

Range: 0-1
Accuracy: +4
Penetration: 4
Energy: 1

Special: Melee, This Weapon restores an amount of your Threshold equal to the Damage it deals. This may restore you past lost Threshold Levels and it undoes the respective Maim status when it does so, healing the Area back to normal.

Description: The Cryptid latches on to its victim, dissolving the limb into a single chunk of gooish mass, eating away at the bodywork of the Gear itself.

Needle Storm

Range: 0-5
Accuracy: +1
Penetration: 8
Energy: 0

Special: Ballistic. Enemies Damaged by this Weapon cannot take Offensive Actions for a Round.

Description: A rush of syringe-like projectiles of concentrated Element G modified to disrupt signals and stop enemies just enough to disable them from getting most of their offensive systems working efficiently.

Overfreeze

Range: 0-10
Accuracy: +1
Penetration: 2
Energy: 2

Special: Beam, Blast. This Weapon turns the affected area into Difficult and Extreme Terrain for a Round.

Description: Not so much a weapon as it is a whooshing blizzard that can freeze most it touches, it is not potent enough to permanently impair Gears, but will definitely be a bother to anyone who has to walk on the affected area.

Suicide Swarm

Range: 0-1

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 10

Energy: 0

Special: Melee, Blast, Reliable, Remote (Agile). This Remote self destructs to attack, but may be replaced at the beginning of your Turn by spending 1 Energy.

Description: Small grotesque abominations the size of a human hand that latch on to their targets and explode causing a chain reaction to any Gygravagnite-based targets.

Telekinetic Strike

Range: 0-5

Accuracy: +4

Penetration: 0

Energy: 0

Special: Melee. On passing the Accuracy Test with this Weapon you may spend 1 Energy to slide the target one Zone in a direction of your choice. Should it be sent in the direction of another Enemy whose Evasion you've also beat, they both crash and suffer an additional 1d10 Damage and the movement from this Weapon is halted. Targets that share an occupied Zone may still crash into each other, at no Energy cost, but may not be moved to another Zone this way.

Description: Actually having to punch other guys or stab them with swords is *so passe*, it is much more fun to throw them around and have them crash against each other like you're playing bowling with robots.

Wormhole Assault

Range: 0-10

Accuracy: +0

Penetration: 0

Energy: 2

Special: Beam, Blast. You may spend 2 additional Energy to grant this Weapon a number of Advantages to its use equal to 1 Advantage per 2 Energy spent.

Description: By thinking with portals you can shoot at enemies from multiple directions at the same time. Sure, the shots themselves are small and wouldn't be much of a problem individually, but have enough of them coming from every angle and it gets hairy fast.

I Built That

The existing variety of abilities should let you create nearly any kind of enemy, especially once you get the hang of reskinning. Of course, no one is going to stop you from modifying the existing content or creating entirely new Upgrades, Weapons or Powers.

Feel free to come up with your own using the power levels of Boss material as inspiration – their abilities are stronger than their equivalents from the previous sidebar, but not strictly better. Certainly once you start to flex your creative muscles you may find that you want your big bads to be able to do more than deal damage and inflict an impairing condition or two, or that maybe you always find yourself using the same Weapons and would like a change of pace, or maybe you're just really bored and want to play around with the rules of the game a little.

Ultimately it boils down to a question of how much complexity or simplicity you want. Sticking to Grunts that mostly rely on drawbackless weapons and come in Squadrons (so that you don't have to deal with their Areas) is perfectly fine, specially when you're starting out. You don't need to get too fancy to make a challenging encounter, and when it comes down to it you already have enough to do without having to worry about those. If you don't want to be crafty with custom abilities, just play your NPCs smart.



Features

Some enemies use Mecha rules but cannot be Mecha, they might actually be giant monsters or machines that aren't humanoid such as conventional mechanized weaponry. Features can be used to represent these enemies, these are special Features that work just like those available to Players but for one or more reasons are better reserved for the use of Enemies.

Under special circumstances, some of these Features might be available to PCs but this is always at the GM's prerogative.

Biological

Effect: At the beginning of your Turn, restore 5 to your Threshold and 1 to your Energy. If this breaks past a lost Level of Threshold into a Maimed Area, that Area is restored back to normal. All Energy-spending Weapons gain an Advantage against you, plus a bonus of 5 to their Penetration.

Description: Both Outsiders and Cryptids have very unique physiologies. They are extremely tough and never tire out, their only big flaw is that their Element-G based bodies are unstable and paradoxically react the most violently to, well, more of their G-Stuff.

Fortress

Effect: You can not Move as part of your Actions, at all, but regain 1 Energy at the beginning of every one of your Turns. Your Evasion is treated as if it was 0, but you gain half the amount lost in Armor. You cannot use Evasive System Upgrades.

Description: You are a big, stationary target. Either a literal building or you are so slow that it might as well be the case.

Squadron

Effect: You are immune to Maiming. Blasts and other Weapons that target Zones will deal an additional 1d10 Damage to you, even if the attack otherwise misses.

Description: You're not one unit but a group of them acting in unison, most often of four. Said units are quite weak by themselves, having no choice but to emphasize quantity over quality.

The Cryptid Feature

Cryptids have the unique ability to assimilate all that is near them, whether it is in an energy or matter-based state. The Foundation's Gears have (probably) been subdued, the impact of their nature has been (sort of) minimized, and they (more or less) know what they are doing.

Such is not the case for other Cryptids. Wild ones have this Feature to embody their all-consuming ability, which may also be used to represent any Gears made out of them without the (alleged) Foundation's know-how.

Cryptid

Effect: Anytime you deal Damage an Enemy Mecha, the victim must Test Systems against a DN equal to the amount of Damage dealt or the Pilot inside loses one Layer of Plot Armor, plus another Layer for each 5 that they missed the DN by with the result. At the same time, whenever you take Damage you also must Test Systems to avoid being hurt in the same way. Pilots damaged through this ability do not need to Test Willpower to avoid defeat until the Operation is over, at which point they do all Tests as appropriate, but after losing the Third Layer of Plot Armor the next Systems Test failed will defeat them anyway.

Description: Cryptids are known for their ability to kill or cripple Avatars before the Gear itself is done fighting. Whether it is from insanity-inducing beams, parasitic half-leech half-spore abominations, or a good old fashioned swallowing of a Gear whole, they always want more. And if given half the chance, they will do the same to anyone unfortunate enough to be inside a Gear they control. Sure, the giant robot can and will drug them to keep on fighting, but repeated instances in a short time span are likely to prove fatal.

Injury received from other events is easy to visualize – it happens in fiction, and real life, all the time. But Damage dealt to the Pilots from Cryptids can be more difficult to represent, as the effects are generally not immediately obvious until they get very serious and people are already coughing up their organs. Here you have a few examples to get you started.

First Layer - Joint pain, anemia, shivering and shaking.

Second Layer - Blindness, constant flashbacks, fits of psychotic violence.

Third Layer - Fugue state, motor function loss, total amnesia.

Keep in mind that this Feature is not just a strong ability, it is one without a drawback in the hands of most Enemies - because they do not have a Pilot.

Always consider Enemies given this Feature to be one step higher in the ladder difficulty wise, with Grunts being the equivalent of one PC, a Rival being worth two PCs, and a Boss being three PCs.

Pilotless Mecha can still function, and they do so as if the Pilot had ejected. Rather than continuing to fight, they should aim to escape before it is too late.

Do it Yourself

The thing that distinguishes Roleplaying Games from most other forms of entertainment is that you can customize them to your liking, and there is no limit other than your imagination.

GGG as a rules system is flexible and effect-based, encouraging Players and the GM to toy around with the descriptions of events. That is not the only reason most rules in the game stand up on their own, though, another important reason is so that you can take these rules and make up your own setting for your games, with its own unique flavor, without having to spend entire afternoons reworking the rules to make them fit.

Anything you don't like from the few dozen pages this book dedicates to its world? Throw it away and replace it with something you like, or make your own from scratch.

This means figuring out what the world is like, who the PCs will fight against, where they will live, and who they know. Sounds intimidating, doesn't it? GMs all over the world have been doing this on their own for time immemorial, but the more that the Players have a say in this world and its inhabitants, the more they will like playing in it and interacting with them.

That said, many GMs are picky about the kind of games they want to run, and that is fine. This first section, then, is for GMs that either want some guidance or want to make the players invest a little more in the setting, those that want to create everything on their own or don't want a set plot or tone are free to skip parts or the entirety of this section as they see fit.

Think of shows you like and would like to emulate as a group. Make note of the things everyone likes the most about them. What does everyone want from the game? What does everyone not want? What things are they interested in? What are they curious about or otherwise willing to try?

Everyone needs to be on the same page as much as possible regarding what the Series will be like. It would not do any good if every player goes in with different expectations, and if people do expect opposite things from the game then this should be settled before going any further.

Once everyone has come to terms, you can start to define the world.

Ambience and Tone

The Mecha Genre offers a wide variety of settings to play in, from high technology games where impossibly sized giant robots must protect the Earth sphere from an intergalactic alien empire to grim and dark dystopic societies in which people hunt each other with powered armor for money.

If you're going to create a Series then you should decide where it stands within this spectrum. What is the world like? What is the technological level? Are mecha a common occurrence? Has humanity conquered the stars? Are there known alien races? How do the people live in this day and age?

Epic, Gritty or Marvellous?

Epic Settings are where the impossible is common happenstance: perhaps technology has advanced enough to be indistinguishable from magic, or science is rendered irrelevant by some greater force of the universe.

Epic Episodes involve stories that can put the entirety of the world, the galaxy or reality itself at risk with only the PCs to protect it. In an Epic game of GGG, you will generally see weapons adapted to more outlandish interpretations: an energy weapon is the size of the moon (or is the moon) and a heavy railgun instead creates miniature black holes.

Gritty Settings try not to suspend disbelief beyond the minimum necessary and technology is usually down to earth and the existence of humanoid giant robots is somewhat justified. Games are usually about small conflicts such as playing antiterrorist response teams or trying to survive the front lines during a war.

Playing a Gritty game might see many character options restricted for the sake of integrity, such as forbidding biological or animal themed mecha along with limitations on interpreting upgrades to a mecha to more realistic equivalents.

Marvellous Settings are the majority and placed somewhere in between the previous two. They have a semblance of realism to them but maintain elements that we are far away from seeing in our own lives. Mecha are either rare and unique or the main characters and their antagonists are the only ones with the rare ability to go beyond existing Mecha technology.

Conventions of both genres are present, and plots range from giant robot world wars where the PCs are a special unit to private organizations investigating strange events and using their Mecha to solve them. The default setting of GGG is one such example.

Heroic, Tragic or Bittersweet?

Heroic Settings have humanity (or whatever society you are using) as fundamentally good. People may be flawed but they always try their best. Villainous characters tend to have sympathetic reasons for their acts or are simply not human and easily branded as 'evil.'

Characters die in grandiose acts of self-sacrifice or at least get a chance for a really good one-liner before going out. Death can usually be put off until the end of the episode and oftentimes is just an excuse for the character to show up again later as a cyborg or another twist like that.

Tragic Settings are full of damaged, messed up individuals who are either out to get you or self-destructive and generally defined by their faults as people. Recurring antagonists may be completely irredeemable monsters in personality or may simply have a personal problem with the PCs.

Survival is never guaranteed and every battle might be any PC's last, with fates worse than death not being that uncommon. These tend to skip on Mooks and sometimes even Elites as enemies.

Bittersweet Settings are in the grayer morality zone and populated with people who are overall good but sometimes make mistakes, or are too busy protecting their own to worry about others. Enemies range from characters the PCs would be friends with, if they weren't in opposing teams, to the occasional well intentioned but ultimately reckless extremist.

Death is not necessarily common, but it happens to the best, and it is not pretty. Since in the default setting of GGG the world is largely populated by a balanced amount of jerks and morons, it fits as an example of this.



Enemy Mine

The primary enemy faction and their objective will define the conflict that unites your party in opposition and cause. If you want to have more than one enemy faction (as in the default setting), then considering how they interact with each other is just as important as how they interact with the players.

Who or what are they? What are they after? Are they sympathetic? Do they oppose the pilots personally or are they just in the way of the grander objective? How do the pilots feel about them? How large a threat do they pose? Would it be possible to make peace with them?

Your enemies and the threat they represent to the PCs will carry the previously defined tone more than any other aspect of the setting, so make sure they are well defined to reflect it.

Sandboxing

PCs don't just jump from one Operation to the next. They have lives too. This is where your Base comes into play, as it is where most Intermissions will take place. Whether you are running in the style of episodic or serial shows, you are going to have to set an interesting Base for the PCs to live in which motivates them to do things.

While the initial Scene of an Episode is usually a good kickstarter to get people moving, you also need the rest of the setting to change and react organically to keep things interesting.

In other words, you need your Base to be akin to a Sandbox for them to play with. They can do anything they want as long as they stay within the bounds you've set but they have to share it with other kids who are playing their own games in there and they don't want to knock down another's sand castles by mistake.

Episode Zero

Since the group is playing an ensemble cast in which everyone is already acquainted with their Mecha, you miss out on the whole fun of falling into the cockpit and other related genre conventions. However, you can run mini-sessions for each which explore their past before the start. The benefits of this are three: players get the chance to give a test run to their PCs before the actual game begins so they can change the Concept, Themes, and other, harder mechanics before it is too late, as well as be introduced in character to their Base of operations and, finally, lets you and the Player become comfortable with the rules of the game for both Intermissions and Operations.

People and Places

You will have to come up with People and Places to fill your Base with. These will help drive various Subplots and Themes and provide both a cast of support characters and reusable scenarios for your scenes. They will also carry the torch in helping set the ambience that you've previously decided.

Set pieces are nice scenery but not much use without anyone to populate them, so it is recommended to start with People rather than Places since the former's specific qualities are often far more important than those of the latter; having the most advanced Mecha factory in the world is radically different depending on whether the one in charge is a madman trying to take over the world or an organization that wants to help humanity reach the stars.

People are the supporting cast of NPCs. They have Attributes, Skills and Traits like any other PC according to their tiers, and they only have one Theme by default. Whatever you do with their Themes, make sure they involve the PCs in some fashion: they are the main stars, after all.

Places are even less prominent than People, but they're still extremely important, as they will be the literal stages for a great deal of the action in your game and let you decorate a scene with material that encourages character development without having any NPCs take part.

Now, you aren't going to be noting down every possible location the PCs could randomly wander into, that would be not only tiresome but also silly. What you want to do is create a few points of interest players can use during the game for specific purposes. If done right an HQ's Places help build a sense of familiarity, along with a sense of progression as they change over time.

All a Place needs is a quick description, but if you want it to stick you'll likely want to figure out if it provides any Advantages and Disadvantages.

GMPCs

Sometimes you want to make a character that will accompany the PCs in their adventures. That is fine by itself, though it adds another layer of management to the game and isn't really as fun as it sounds. NPCs that act like they were PCs are called GMPCs and are needed to be handled with extreme care.

There is a reason why they're being mentioned as an optional sidebar rule in a chapter that is already optional, and that is the tendency GMPCs have to be the only ones allowed to be important in the game, with everyone else serving as lackeys at best.

GMPCs can be done right, but when that is the case they are there to support or oppose the PCs. They are plot devices at best that enable the PCs to actually impact the story. If you're not confident that you can use a GMPC properly, don't use one.

NPC Themes

Of course nothing says you can't give NPCs Themes. It just means they'll have to interact more with the characters so they all leave their mark, and a NPC that has differing themes for every member of the party can fuel a great relationship web.

That said since NPC Themes involve the PCs, they blur the lines between the usual three kinds making the distinction between them rather pointless. Don't feel forced to represent all categories if you do give them multiple Themes.

Support NPCs don't, by default, pilot Mecha of their own so unless you want to have a recurring NPC Ally or enemy be someone they interact with regularly during Intermissions, there is no need for them to even have Genre Points, making hard rules for their Themes something needless.

Character Focus

The good thing about ensemble casts is that everyone shares protagonism. That said, sometimes you want specific PCs to have a chance to shine. Maybe they haven't been able to do much due to bad rolls or their ideas just don't go well or they are left out of whatever it is the rest like doing, whatever the reason is, these PCs are just begging to have a Character Centric Episode for them.

In such Episodes, the very first Scene is not initiated by the GM but by the owner of the PC in question and everyone else's requested Scenes must be somehow involved with the PC who is the focus of the Episode.

For today, they are the star.



Mini Episodes

Another way to entertain players who haven't done much is to run a solo Episode for them much in the style of an introduction Episode. This is different from a Character Centric Episode in that this special interlude doesn't have to include other PCs – though other players certainly can participate.

There won't be any Operations - or at least they're not recommended. The session can take place during a timeskip between Arcs so as to not interfere with the main storyline, it can play as a flashback, or even a dream sequence. The point is to help to flesh out a character that hasn't seen much development yet. Of course nothing stops you from making this Mini Episode critical to the plot but players that weren't present may resent it if the big bad is killed and the fate of the world is decided when they weren't present.

Sometimes though you have a wealth of content awaiting to be used that just won't involve the entire party. If a character would like to get revenge for their dead family and pursue the enemy leader of the Space Empire, but everyone else would rather continue fighting the invading Dinoroids you can just make the character who wants to go on their own do so later, without stopping the action for everyone else.

You should encourage players to pursue things they want to do, and Genre Points make a great incentive, because these are *characters*. They're not just there to beat up other dudes and dudettes with robots, but to tell compelling stories about themselves. If everyone can get involved in each other's story, all the better, but if someone just has to break off temporarily to get something done a Mini Episode is a good way to make said things happen.

If you want to give that specific PC a power boost, then a Mini Episode is a great chance to do so – simply give them a possibility to roleplay their Themes and they will come out of it with one or two Genre Points for it. String it together into the next proper Episode and the character will be stronger than usual.





Inspiration

So, you actually want to make a wholly pregenerated world on your own and then dump the players on top. This is quite hard, but it does have the benefit of making it much easier to pull surprises on the rest of your group and sometimes it even helps make a more immersive experience. Previous lists with sources of inspiration tried to stick to shows legally available in English, but this list will make use of media beyond animated mediums and some of it will not be easy to obtain for the average consumer, much less with an official translation – additionally, not all of it might be suitable for minors. The list on the left is made with general worldbuilding in mind, while the list on the right is meant to inspire general episodic, sandboxy content.

Aim for the Top! Gunbuster and Diebuster

If there is one thing Gainax has always been constant with, it is their attention to detail... That, and being gigantic nerds. Gunbuster has the better amount of effort placed on the science while still being a super robot show, while Diebuster sports a story that is more complex yet remains whimsical in tone.

The Macross franchise

It is easy to forget, in between all the saving the world with song, that Macross has a surprising amount of thought going into it. It is possibly one of the grittiest Mecha franchises out there once you look closer, without getting lost in the detail.

MuvLuv, MuvLuv Alternative, and the rest of the Muv-Luv franchise

There are many things MuvLuv is famous for, but the one we want here is the in-depth worldbuilding and the immersive experience it offers with its alternate-reality semi-realistic giant robots against terrifying aliens.

Xenogears and Xenosaga (I to III)

Flawed as they may be, both games have rich and detailed worlds. In addition, they are solid examples of how one may mix up Personal and Mecha-scales for action-packed scenes.

Super Robot Wars

You knew this was coming. Hours, days and weeks can be spent poring over the minutiae of a setting to make it the most realistic, deep and meaningful experience your group will ever enjoy. Or you can just tell them: “You are the good guys and have these robots, these are the bad guys and have their own robots,” and have some fun. Don't forget that this, in the end, is just a game.

Mobile Police Patlabor

Probably the closest to realism that Mecha shows will ever get, Patlabor makes a good case example on how not every Episode needs to make use of Mecha, and that they might be used for things other than beating up other robots or giant monsters.

Terrestrial Defense Corp. Dai-Guard

The main characters are everyday salarymen whose job description includes piloting a giant robot and protecting the peace. This should be all you need to know.

Full Metal Panic

Despite having plenty of novels full of hot Mecha-on-Mecha action, the animated adaptation of Full Metal Panic has a good number of episodes with nothing but character interaction, and a whole interlude Season between important arcs devoted to its slice of life elements.

Genesis of Aquarion and Aquarion Evol

Aquarion has enough gimmick episodes for multiple Arcs' worth of Intermissions, subverting common clichés going from “The Soccer Episode” to having an entire Episode centered around being poorly animated. It is overflowing in its abundance of ideas, both silly and serious, for all your episodic needs.

Star Driver: Takuto of the Radiance

It has Mecha, and nearly every Episode has a fight, but they are downplayed in favor of having the villains do silly things that place the main characters in weird situations. It also sports the main character with possibly the greatest abuse of the Mid-Scene Upgrade Genre Power in recent years.

CHAPTER 6



THE WORLD

A History Lesson

2027: The Ring of Fire Tragedy

During the First of December, at three in the morning Greenwich Mean Time, the strongest megathrust earthquake ever recorded in history catastrophically ruptured the crust near the Galápagos. All but a few population centres in the Pacific islands were submerged within minutes. The magnitude of the quake was rated as a nearly unthinkable 10.5, almost literally off the charts and larger than any earthquake previously measured by a factor of ten.

The earthquake triggered a series of massive tsunamis along the coastlines nearby, killing over five million people in two dozen countries. The massive waves went on to strike every coast along the Pacific Ocean claiming the lives of millions more.

The Ring of Fire Tragedy became the deadliest natural disaster in history, and several countries collapsed as infrastructure was washed out to sea and coastlines changed in an instant.

Years later, the First of December would be made a holiday in thirty-five countries across the Pacific Rim. The Pacific Memorial Day, held in remembrance of the countless lives lost.



2028: The Rebirth of the Pacific

In the wake of the disaster and continuing aftershocks that claimed even more lives and hampered efforts to rebuild, the governments of Polynesia, Japan and other 'Australasian' nations merged with the rest of Oceania under the banner of the United Pacific in an attempt to stabilize their economic positions. The United Pacific capitol was placed in New Guinea, which had succeeded in rebuilding its lost infrastructure to a substantial degree and was, thus, a boon to the planning and implementation of further efforts to reclaim the Pacific.

The Ring of Fire, meanwhile, continued to destabilize. The aftershocks had awakened several sleeping volcanoes across the Pacific Rim. Furthermore, near the epicenter of the disaster, there was an unprecedented collapse of the Earth's crust, leading to a massive magma upwelling that boiled the ocean for a thousand miles around. A group of islands began to form, and over eight years it would grow into an archipelago the size of Argentina, eventually named simply: the Far West Archipelago (FWA).

2029-2033: The Rise of the United Pacific

As the aftershocks died down, the Pacific Rim stabilized and reconstruction efforts began in earnest. The business proving to be a tremendous boost to the economies of several flagging world powers. The United Pacific became the key player in these efforts by providing adequate staging grounds for distributing aid and directing efforts. Eventually, it was recognized as sovereign nation in its own right by the UN replacing the old Polynesian governments for good.

The United Pacific grew quickly and well, thanks to having a brand-new infrastructure and the most modern education and technology available from its high density of trained professionals. Its fertile soil allowed it to produce surprising yields of crops, and by the mid-late 2030's, it was producing enough to export to other nations.

It wasn't only in the United Pacific farms that life was reclaiming lost ground. Hardy grasses and simple plants rapidly flowered across the entirety of the FWA amid the volcanic rock. Groups of Geologists studied the island chain in fascination, as the huge magma upwelling did in a mere decade what normally took centuries.

2027 Theories

The cause of the Ring of Fire Tragedy is generally agreed by the scientific and mainstream communities to have been caused by a massive upthrust earthquake that had been on the verge for years.

However, the wave patterns that developed from it, and a great deal of anomalous data from seismic sensors and weather satellites, have led to a number of other theories. The most prominent of them is that a meteor less than a kilometer wide impacted the ocean, a theory supported by tests that show an unusual amount of iridium in debris layers from the time of impact.

Other fringe theories blame secret weapon tests, biblical prophecies, and even alien robots living in the Earth's mantle which is of course a silly idea.

2034-2040: The World's new Major Player

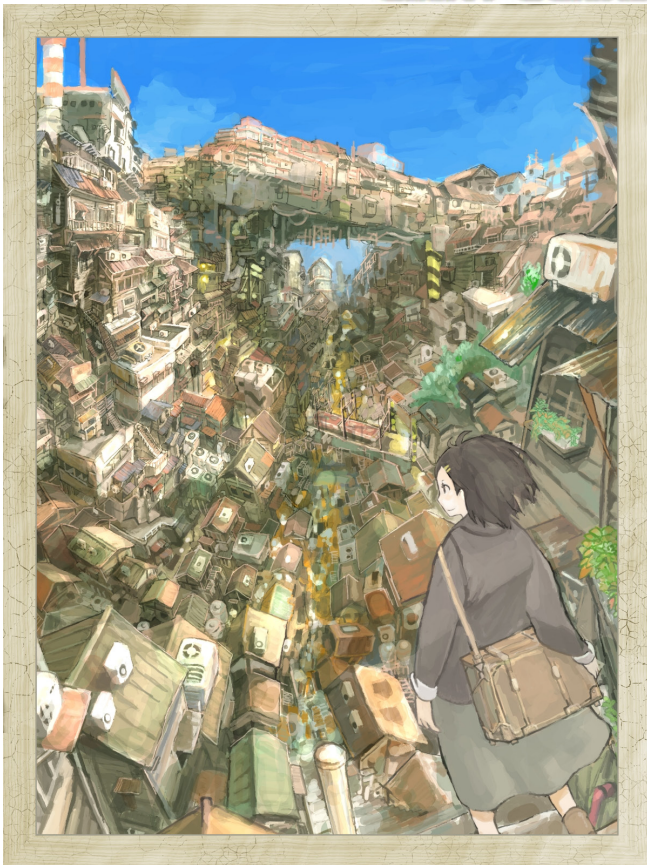
As the United Pacific became capable of supporting its own population without relying on aid and imported goods, being nearly fully self-sufficient, it imposed tariffs on imported manufactured goods in an attempt to grow its own economy further.

Several large multinational corporations refused to do business in The United Pacific with the tariffs in place, withdrawing their support. Unemployment soared to one in five citizens affected within a week as the jobs simply vanished, companies pulling out overnight.

The economic ramifications led to the government of the United Pacific instituting massive public works projects. With the suddenly massive work force in hand, beautiful, massive structures, perfectly planned cities, and works of art that are to this day considered some of the finest made in a century are constructed.

As the construction projects got under way, the United Pacific appealed to the UN for rights to colonize the FWA to reduce pressure on their island populations, now starting to boom in the wake of their rise to world power status. UNESCO, rumored to be under pressure by older world powers, declared the FWA a World Heritage Site and prohibited human habitation, as the newly formed islands were a treasure to science.

In the summer of 2040, a man attempted to claim a homestead in the Far West chain, setting up a camp amongst the volcanic rocks. He was removed before the end of the year. Other animals began colonizing the island as larger plant life took root. The sea around the island, once a barren waste from the heat produced in its formation, cooled enough for fish to live there again.



2041-2044: The Energy Crisis

The long-predicted crisis of Peak Oil finally occurred, and worldwide oil production dropped slowly but steadily. The price of oil shot through the roof, and most energy corporations were forced to merge or sell off their assets. By the end of 2044, there were only two multinational energy corporations left in the world, the American-based Standard Energy and its sole competitor, British Alternative.

Standard Energy led the market and met demand with cutthroat and often blatantly illegal business practices, while British Alternative peddled renewable but inefficient energy.

Worldwide crop yields dropped as fertilizers became scarce and harvesting and transporting goods became more expensive. The exports from The United Pacific and their naturally bountiful volcanic soil re-invigorated their economy, reversing their economic crash, eventually joining the G9.

2045: The Discovery of Gygravagnite

In 2043, a geologist named Locke Gravagne that had been part of a field team studying the FWA was found to have cancer, and it was quickly determined that he had received a massive dose of radiation.

Over the next two years, investigation led to samples he had taken from the FWA, and then to the islands themselves. A novel mineral, highly radioactive but otherwise superficially indistinguishable from jasper was found and named Gygravagnite after the lucky geologist whose illness had led to its discovery.

Field studies found that the majority of islands in the archipelago contained the mineral in negligible quantities, similar to distribution of a rare gemstone.

However, the largest island, that of Neo Easter II directly over the center of the magma upwelling, had a motherlode of Gygravagnite.

Studies on the mineral determined that it had many strange qualities. It had extreme durability and heat resistance, but, vastly more importantly, it acted as an energy source. Minute changes to its environment led to vastly differing outputs of radiation, with seemingly no drop off or half-life. The laws of conservation of energy did not seem to apply to Gygravagnite.

In November, 2045, the laboratories researching the mineral on-site on the FWA were destroyed in a massive explosion along with the small island they had been located on. Satellite imaging showed a fireball over 40 kilometers in radius, along with a massive gamma ray burst. Continuation of the research was called into question, and information on the incident was suppressed.

2046-2050: Infinite Power

With huge amounts of funding from the UN, British Alternative undertook the Unendlich Plan, a dedicated attempt to harness the power of Gygravagnite's variable radiation level as a power source.

After four years, several accidents (including one major accident that led to a release of radiation in a populated area), a series of specific methods were hashed out to make use of the mineral's properties.

Gygravagnite's natural state was named as Type R (apparently for 'Room Temperature,' though the variables involved consist of far more than that). It was found that, in addition to its radioactivity and toughness, it was unstable, and would slowly self-replicate, restructuring olivine and similar minerals.

A second form, Type Y, was produced after considerable UV irradiation to restructure its crystal matrices. Type Y Gygravagnite was discovered to be superconductive at virtually all temperatures, and looks like a pale yellow translucent material with properties similar to glass.

Type W Gygravagnite was made by dissolving the crystals in mercury and had somewhat non-Newtonian properties, hardening under stress to levels vastly superior than even Type R's considerable durability.

After the properties of modified Gygravagnite were published, British Alternative's net worth quickly exceeded that of Standard Energy. The UNESCO ban on disturbance of the FWA was lifted in the closing months of 2050.

The word 'Gygravagnite' enters colloquial parlance, and is quickly shortened to '3G', 'Element G' or simply 'Gygs'.

2051-2054: The Technological Revolution

Under total secrecy, a colossal chunk of Gygravagnite was transported to American shores by the Pacific Fleet, ultimately to go to Boston. Later in the year, Standard Energy set up its own research labs, funded by the US Government and emptying its own coffers to match British Alternative's lead. Under the banner of subsidiary companies, Standard Energy invested in "Reconstruction Effort" mining colonies around the Far West Archipelago.

The United Pacific was more than willing to provide cheap labor for these mining colonies, instilling new life into its economy while signing rights of First Refusal with many of the groups doing the mining. The material proved easy to mine and vast quantities of the mineral were removed from the volcanic rock of the islands.

With the people of the world desperate for a new energy source and Gygravagnite able to provide until-then unparalleled power, it became the nucleus of a new industrial age. With room-temperature superconductors, light materials of a hardness higher than 15 in the Mohs scale, and near-infinite supplies of power, once-unthinkable applications of science became within reach.

At the end of 2054, Project Helios was announced. Its purpose was to build an orbital elevator system to combat overpopulation and expand the frontiers of humanity to the stars, with the ideal construction point being on one of the Far West islands. Plans were drawn up to enable the mining of asteroids.

Project Helios is approved by nearly every country with presence in the UN. Construction by British Alternative is scheduled to begin in June of 2055, and expected to take ten years.

As an oddly appropriate footnote to this human resurgence, earthquakes worldwide receded in occurrence and magnitude.

2055-2058: The New World Government

Terrorism quickly became the main opponent of Project Helios. In just half a year, almost a dozen attempts were made to undermine the project from the inside or destroy it from without.

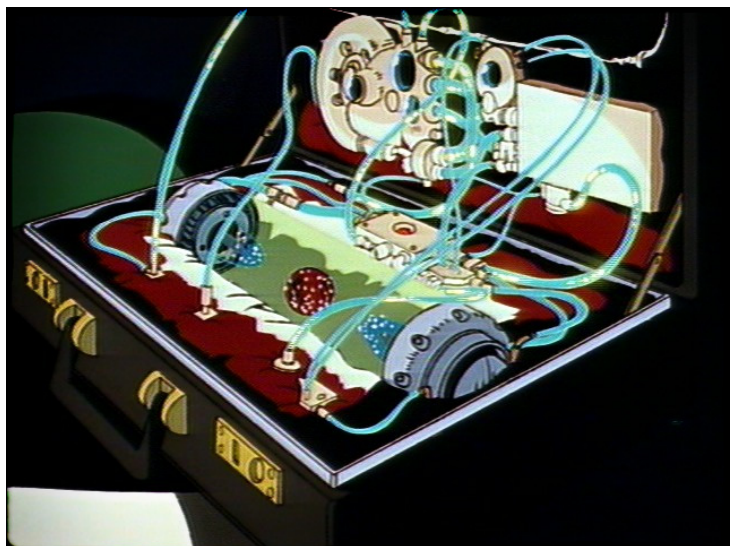
The attacks came from all quarters, with groups varying from religious fanatics to ecoterrorists. Several of the attempts are thought to originate from Standard Energy, but the connections are never proven strongly enough to bring them to justice.

It is at around this time that a serious political movement towards a one world government began, and after spending two years being debated back and forth, the motion finally passed.

The UN was given stronger powers over sovereign nations and restructured as the United Earth Federation, with the purpose of protecting humanity's better interests above any single nation or government, losing its conciliatory role. The major players in the UEF were: America, the United Pacific, and the European Union due to their efforts into the success of Project Helios and the Unendlich Plan.

Standard Energy's own research into Gygravagnite resulted in the creation of an all-purpose kinetic pod, in 2056, which was able to manipulate kinetic energy to use as a propulsor or even a crude shield against projectiles. This is quickly adapted into military hardware, its small size making it suitable for mounting on the then in-development powered armor being designed by DARPA.

Under extremely favorable conditions, the armor was capable of deflecting a 15mm round, and is able to achieve maglev flight under its own power. This marked the beginning of modern warfare in the same way the first crude tanks in World War I marked the beginning of the first age of mechanized war.



2059-2062: Intelligent Weapons

In 2059, the first "true" AI was developed in Japan as part of the Unendlich Plan. Gygravagnite was an integral part of its design, perfect crystals of the mineral being used as its central chips, isolating the miniaturized quantum computers from external factors.

The first prototype models proved capable of basic sapience, though it was only competent at performing the simplest of tasks and had to be taught via programming in a process akin to training an animal. Yet, they were more than advanced enough to replace humans in dangerous working environments.

After proving their worth in the dangerous Gygravagnite mines, the advanced robotics base became a staple of consumer technology.

By 2062, the UEF deployed AI-driven military drones under the codename of BOARD -Broad Operations Assessment and Reaction Devices- and their intelligent automated mobile weapons quelled terrorist cells around the orbital elevator, with survivors being arrested and shipped away to prisons in the darkest places of the world, never to be seen again.

The head of the Japanese AI project resigned when he learned the military was using his designs to kill, and retired to work on his own projects. Ironically enough, he would later uncover the secret to nanotechnology, which would see similar ends.

The UEF Headquarters was moved from New York City to Boston at the behest of Standard Energy, in return for supplying the UEF with advanced weapons and armor.

Nerds worldwide speculated the technological singularity was at hand and welcomed their new robotic overlords.

The G Incident

The destruction of the first Gygravagnite laboratories is almost always thought to have been the result of scientists working with a material they didn't understand and having it blow up in their faces as a result of an unwise test or simple mistake. While the lists of tests scheduled for that day doesn't reveal anything dangerous, it's possible the scientists were doing research that was being kept off the records – or as some suggest, that the lab was destroyed on purpose, by a nuclear device.

Reports that some of the scientists were seen later in other countries are unsubstantiated and remain only that, rumors, though later Gygravagnite research in some nations seemed unusually developed and mature for programs starting from near-scratch.

Conspiracy theorists still hold to this day that the official listing of casualties is incomplete or made up, with a multitude of alleged professionals from fields that have little to nothing to do with physics and chemistry having gone missing since then.

2063-2064: The New Frontier

As the Helios Tether neared completion, automated drones were launched to Lagrange 1 and the asteroid 6 Hebe, the latter chosen as a site for mining raw materials because its placement favored sending material into Earth-crossing orbits.

In 2063, construction began on the first space colony as raw material was streamed in from the asteroid belt. Working tirelessly, the drones completed the space colony before the first day of 2064.

This first space colony had a habitable area of over two hundred square kilometers and, with regular deliveries of volatiles from the asteroid belt and its automated miners, was designed to be able to function as a completely independent city-state, not relying on the Earth for supplies aside from seeds to start growing crops and people to live there.

The wealthy and influential leave Earth for the colony and the eleven more that are constructed after the first are a success. The elite of humanity begin to govern the world from the literal heavens.

The Unendlich Plan bore fruit once more, when a pair of Russian scientists devised a way to cause a controlled degeneracy chain using fractured Gygravagnite crystals. The energy released allowed for launching a particle beam of immense destructive power without need of an unwieldy particle accelerator, making it practical for use as a weapon. Though the UEF officially had no enemies to use it against, it quickly adopts these "Beam Weapons" and orders Standard Energy to refine it, much to the worries of the pacifists.

2064-2070: Anxiety in the Far West

With the area flourishing thanks to hard work of its colonists, Gygravagnite mines, the UEF's support, and Project Helios, the Far West Archipelago had been almost entirely developed, resembling the rest of the United Pacific area, though some islands and stretches of land remained too radioactive for humans to live in. These areas were inevitably near high concentrations of Gygravagnite.

Rumors spread among the FWA citizens about strange creatures roaming in the most barren and radiation-filled areas of land. Most people dismissed these rumors as just tall tales, mistaking mutated or diseased animals as something more sinister. Despite the fact that a total of eight miners disappeared under mysterious circumstances during this time period and thirteen more were hospitalized after demonstrating irreparable mental instability, nothing official is ever said on the matter.

Investigations were discouraged as conditions in the mines are often in violation of international labor laws, and refineries were working under unsafe conditions to meet costs, often dumping waste into the ocean or simply burying it in shallow pits.

2071-2075: The Solar Space Alliance

As the class division between those on Earth and in Space grew, unrest rose on Earth as many felt that the policies being enacted by the UEF were favoring the privileged minority that had left for the space colonies. These Colonials had a vastly disproportionate influence on the UEF, and a spreading popular movement called for them to lose their grip on the Earth, pejoratively dubbing them 'Spacenooids'.

With great reluctance, the colonies withdrew from the UEF and formed their own governmental body, the Solar Space Alliance (SSA). Over several years, they completely severed political ties from the Earth and functioned as truly independent nations. Some trade continued, since there were many crops that did not grow well in space and the Earth was willing to pay a high price for rare earth metals easily mined in asteroids.

After twenty-years time, UEF Gygravagnite Type-R 'seed mines' failed to bear worthwhile fruit, the resulting harvest being akin to a year's worth of hard labor and further attempts are deemed a waste of perfectly useable resources. The SSA continued research on the conditions required to turn Type-R into a proverbial hen of golden eggs, despite owning a fair amount of Gygravagnite mines on Earth. Thusly, in 2075, the SSA constructed the largest Type-R seed mine to date on the moon for this purpose.

2076-2079: The Sun, Moon and Stars

As negotiations for Gygravagnite mining colonies increased in tension – many on Earth believing that the Colonies were trying to grab a larger piece of the pie than they were entitled to – the SSA used their stores of automated workers to mine various moons in the solar system in search of alternative energy sources while waiting for their Type-R colonies to bloom.

Internal conflicts within the UEF led to various "leaks" of bizarre occurrences and strange hazards at major Gygravagnite plants across the globe. Standard Energy and British Alternative continued their battle with disinformation and corporate sabotage.

As a result of the increasing tension and the proliferation of 'accidents,' Gygravagnite research and the Unendlich Plan were divided into three major projects with increased oversight. Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne continued the research on Gygravagnite weaponry, vehicles, and AI respectively.

The Far West Cryptids

While officially, the existence of the Far West Cryptids is denied, the locals can tell you a lot of stories about them. Everything from giant bugs and animate vegetation to strange people-like things that defy any easy description.

They might be mutated local wildlife, as some officials have suggested, or they could be something more menacing. One local man claims he broke open a rock and something indescribable and terrible was sealed right there the stone, flying away after he cracked it open. These and other anecdotes point towards the Cryptids somehow being a natural part of the island, assuming they exist at all.

2080-2085: The New Cold War

In early April of 2083, the central Gygravagnite refinery in the United Pacific suffered a terrible accident and was lost in a massive explosion. Radioactive fallout spread over much of South America, and comparisons to Chernobyl were plentiful, especially in the wake of a tragic rise in still-births and terrible birth defects. Public opinion of the UEF was devastated after this so-called Neo Easter II Incident.

The UEF managed to keep control of Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne through the crisis, though rumors of sabotage and betrayal from within abounded after the SSA unveiled and demonstrated its new all-terrain Gygravagnite powered AI war machine, developed from their more advanced and mature automated worker drones.

Many suspect the SSA's new war machine to have been designed and developed by the AIs themselves, but such is never proven.

While there are no formal declarations of hostilities, both the SSA and the UEF made unfriendly overtures towards one another, and embassies on both sides were closed. Both sides began broadcasting propaganda that informed their citizens that the other side was strangling them and preventing them from accessing resources that they desperately needed to survive.

The UEF claimed the SSA had control of greater Gygravagnite supplies than they needed, while the SSA decried the UEF and said their limiting of raw materials was putting a bottleneck on the SSA economy and endangering the very future of mankind.

It is no surprise then, that comparisons to the Cold War of the previous century were in no short supply throughout the early to mid 80's.



2086-2090: Alien Subjugation

In 2086, the heads of Projects Sonne, Mond, and Sterne suddenly vanished along with their best staff, leaving no traces of their research other than vague notes and oral records about "General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robots" or "Gears". Their disappearance was at first thought to be a mass defection to the SSA, and nearly sparked a war then and there.

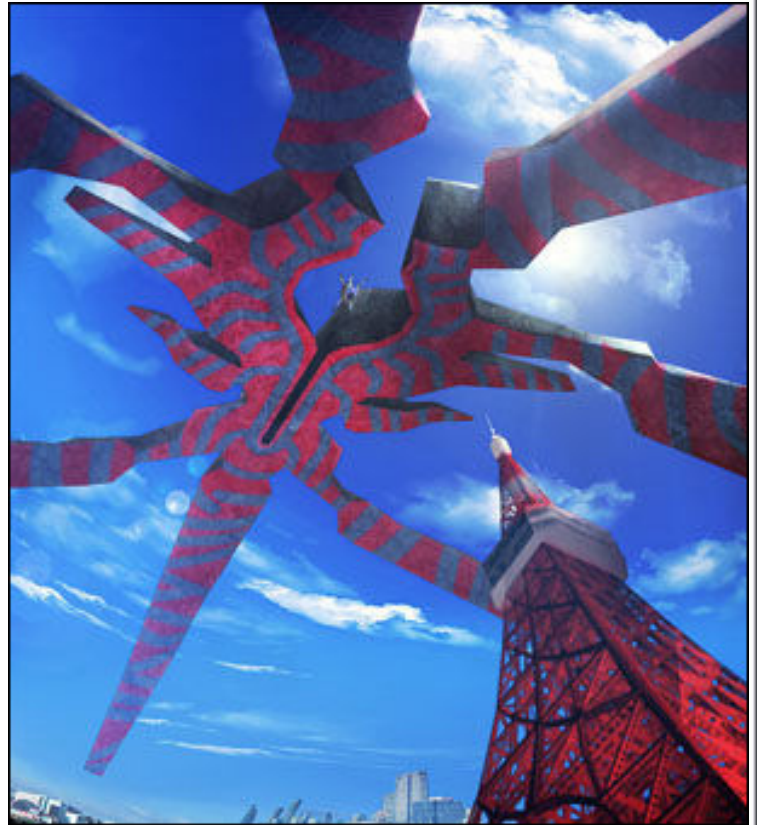
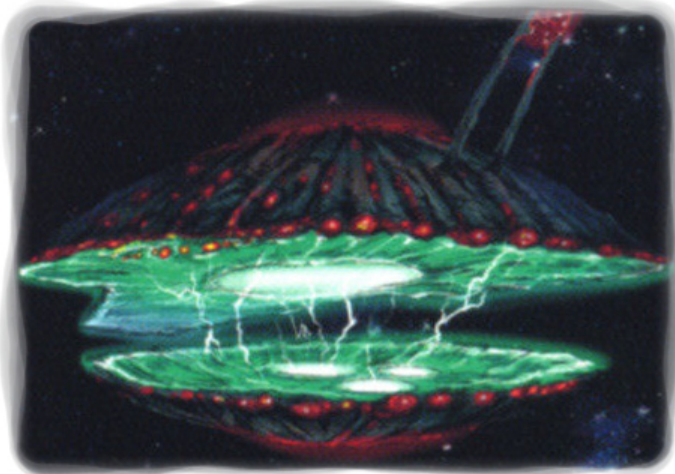
Before shots are fired, however, a single enormous spaceship of clearly Alien nature arrived from an unknown origin point and began approaching the Earth sphere. Though initially humanity was ecstatic, attempts at making contact with the aliens fail and marvel turns to worry when the spaceship is estimated to be in a collision course with three space colonies, due in a single day's time.

Inevitably, the ship intersected the colonies in its direct path, destroying them and ending the lives of all that failed to evacuate, while the alien ship, unharmed, continued to head towards the Earth itself. The SSA treats this as an act of aggression and opens fire on the Aliens. The population of the colonies was summarily decimated as the ship retaliated, leaving two of the ten space colonies open to vacuum and the others damaged, some beyond repair. What is later called the Battle of the 23 Hours ended when the Aliens destroyed the SSA headquarters, leaving all but one cluster of colonies in ruins.

In short order, the spaceship landed over the epicenter of the Neo Easter II Incident and from there made demands to negotiate with the UEF, using messages broadcast in every major language on Earth.

The entity or entities in the ship remained nameless, refusing to identify themselves. Ambassadors of the UEF are taken into the ship at an arranged time and some form of peace with what they call "The Outsiders" was agreed upon, though exactly what the agreements or deals were remain top secret.

After completing negotiations, the UEF exercised its power over the Earth with an iron fist, forcing civilians to relocate into "safe" zones where the UEF could control and direct their lives so as not to interfere with The Outsiders. To this end, they used leftovers from the vanished Sonne, Mond, and Sterne projects to create their own Gear Armed Forces (GAF), filling in the gaps of their knowledge and research with what was obviously alien technology.



2091: The Rebellion

Even the Safe Zones proved far from exactly safe. Giant Outsiders, thoroughly alien and each unique, occasionally wandered away from their base over the old Neo Easter II site and terrorized the populace outside the government protected areas in the FWA before retreating back whence they came.

Their purposes and motivations are still unknown, though they always leave a trail of destruction and the dead behind them.

A resistance movement called the Revolutionary Unified Front (RUF) formed within the confines of the North-Eastern American Safe Zone and revolts, forming an organized group to give humanity a symbol to rally around, standing up to the Alien threat and the GAF that tried to suppress them with their own superior brand of Gears. The technology of the RUF Gears appeared to have come from the vanished Sonne, Mond, and Sterne projects, entirely human and home-grown... And in some ways, more advanced than the alien leavings the UEF received like scraps from the table of their masters.

Their propaganda portrayed the Outsiders as having come to stop the evil SSA from taking over the Earth and helping to repair the damage done to Neo Easter II. The Rebellion is mostly reported as minor unrest and civil disturbances in the UEF controlled areas.

Open actions against the Far West rebels by the UEF were and are uncommon, the UEF too busy quelling the resistance on its own soil, preferring to blockade and starve the rebelling areas out. Those rebels that were able to become self-sufficient continued the fight, while others fell and were quietly purged or sent to re-education camps.

The UEF's Deal

While no one outside of the very top of the UEF knows the exact details of their dealings with The Outsiders, it's clear that the Deal isn't one that benefits most of humanity.

The UEF has harsh crackdowns on anyone who thinks of rebelling against them or standing up against the Outsiders, and it has been suggested that the upper echelons of the UEF aren't really human anymore at all. Some say that humans are just being kept alive as slaves or food or some kind of sick entertainment for the aliens.

What is certain is that the UEF is getting plenty of alien technology in exchange for serving their alien masters. Perhaps they learned something inside that ship that makes them think this is the best they can do for humanity. Perhaps they're greedy. Or perhaps the Outsiders are really trying to help humanity as best they can, with alien logic we can't even guess at.

2095: The Repulsion Line

In 2095, guerrillas on the Far West island of Hiryu enjoyed their first victory against The Outsiders as they repelled one of the giant aliens from their city with their home-made one-of-a-kind Gears.

While this was their first victory, it was far from their last, and their determination to fight quickly showed itself as their island was turned into a front-line Military City and a staging point against the Outsiders.

Despite attacks by more giant monsters, the fortress the Hiryujin had built, the Soaring Dragon Fortress, doesn't fall. Indeed, to this day it is a symbol of humanity's ability to defeat the alien invaders.

The UEF declared Hiryujin guerrillas and the Revolutionary Unified Front to be traitors to the human race, endangering the treaties that the UEF said were for humanity's own good.

2099: The Cryptid Menace

In the darkness of space, in the mostly forgotten but not yet gone space colonies, the bizarre creatures known as the Far West Cryptids are sighted once more. Already reduced to a shadow of its former self, the SSA is struck by a rash of disappearances and mental illnesses.

The remaining space colonies suppressed any news about their problems to the outside, effectively blacking out the Earth from their communications. Most suspect that, with the UEF already showing their own citizens the iron fist, the last thing the SSA wanted in its weakened state was to show them just how vulnerable they really were.

A new conflict in Lagrange 2 began against this new spaceborn threat, far away from where the UEF could enforce its laws, and apparently outside the influence of the Outsiders as well. The colonies' Clarke Foundation and its Gears were and are the only ones able to neutralize and put a stop to the Cryptids.

The SSA formally outlawed all trading with Earth, even trade in Gygravagnite, at this point and cut off contact with the Earth officially in its entirety.

Several of the most badly-damaged space colonies are left empty and adrift as the SSA centralizes its population. Rumors persisted of massive warships being built in the asteroid belt and preparations made to move a large part of the SSA's remaining population, if not the entirety of it.

2100: The World as it Stands

Present Day. Present Time. The Earth sphere is engulfed in the flames of war in at least three separate, yet related conflicts.



A Brave New World

Society has come a long way since the early twenty-first century, and many of the advancements since then are taken for granted a hundred years later. Although the current state of the world is not anywhere near idyllic, many can still remember the years gone by when the future of humanity looked bright – at least if you were from the first world. But times have changed.

It used to be that life expectancy averaged to 90 years in many countries—including the space colonies – this in no small part to the application of nanomachines to the field of medicine. Though many disliked the notion at first, it eventually caught on and soon enough virtually every injury or illness could be healed – if you could afford it.

The advancements in AI and robotics propelled industrialization to new heights, making it possible for a handful of technicians to do the work of a hundred – enabling those who still relied on manpower to devalue it even further. No AI with an intelligence quotient greater than that of small mammals was officially created, some say that we never quite learned enough about cognitive development to get there, while others say this was out of fear.

The arts were one of the few areas where the rudimentary brains of the AI workforce couldn't replace human talent, and in this dilettante society many turned to their 'artistic calling' to make ends meet. Transhumanist themes were common, and catered to the interests of the rich and influential, who consumed them voraciously.

The UEF created their own coin as part of their separation from the SSA – who did the same – and the UEF territory still uses their Universal Reserve Notes (or simply 'Notes', though some hardliners like to call them 'Universals') to this day in addition to whichever remains of local currency still survive.

The SSA's preferred medium of exchange these days is the Nobel, which is split into units measured in Centinobels and Decinobels. Hiryu chose to eschew either coinage entirely, and within its borders one primarily deals with the Kurogane, Hagane and Shirogane.

As part of the ongoing globalization process, English was adopted as a secondary Language worldwide and across the colonies, immigration laws in most countries recessed in strictness to fluent speakers. But this was far from benign as it forced the lower classes to compete with each other, while the vacant spots they left in their homeland was taken by AIs.

Space represented the future for many, and indeed, for many years launching for the Colonies was much like sailing for America in past centuries to the eyes of many. The colonies themselves would be happy to oblige these delusions, for they always saw themselves as more humanitarian than their counterparts, keeping as workforce those they favored and relegating the rest to their various mining colonies and a lonely future as part of a skeleton crew.

But hope and ambition were not the sole reason people wanted to go into space; Mother Earth was growing old and its children continued to make a mess of the house. Projects Sonne, Mond and Sterne were as much about saving the Earth from ecological collapse as they were about weaponizing Gygravagnite – it is too bad the Outsiders had to plunge humanity into warring once more.

Do not be fooled into thinking that the world was peaceful before then, though, certainly not everyone saw eye to eye with the UEF's policies and many were the forms these tensions took: From the countries that isolated themselves to those that joined but continued their bitter feuds with its neighbors – all kept out of the eyes of the mainstream media and the privileged populace's everyday lives.

In the end, perhaps it would be an accurate observation to say that the more things changed... The more they remained the same.

Too Much Information

The last few pages abridge nearly a hundred years' worth of information, and the rest of this chapter is going to continue doing so – though it should be more relevant to actually playing the game than a pile of backstory. This information is presented in such a fashion for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, because despite conveying some rather pessimistic views of humanity, GGG is not going to explore them in depth. Such a thing is beyond the scope of this humble game and you would do much better to delve in them using another roleplaying game altogether – all these fascinating advances in various fields of science are presented as plot devices at best and handwaving at worst so that you may focus on the characters without them getting in the way.

The other reason we keep things as simple as possible is that, the more detailed we get, the less room you have to make up your own material and the less that you can change without having to heavily alter the rest of the framework. If there is an aspect of the setting that you hesitate to use or want to replace with an even better idea you had on your own, please do it, it will definitely be more fun for you that way.

Considering that there are no premade answers presented as to the truth of what is going on behind the scenes of the world, a GM will have to make up some if they are thinking of shedding some light on said mysteries.

Of course, you could just drop said plot altogether and just use it as an excuse to have hot giant robot on giant robot action, which is perfectly fine too.

Sonne, Mond and Sterne

One of the greatest mysteries of the Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Centuries is what actually happened to the heads of the Project meant to reap the rewards of Gygravagnite, of the reasons behind their disappearance, of what they left behind, what they took with themselves, and of the destinies they met.

Investigations both public and private point in several directions, the most popular theory being of a defection to the Space Colonies, some speculate that they are behind the Guerillas and their superior technology, yet others like to believe they are the creators of the Outsiders themselves.

The truth may never be known, but one thing is for certain: Their individual projects all proved successful and that can be seen everywhere today, from everyday appliances to the world's most impressive battle machine: the Gears.

Originally an acronym for 'General Enforcement Anthropomorphic Robot,' it took less than a year for the acronym to supplant the real name. This general-use weapon has defeated the ancient adage that 'all-purpose serves no purpose' in military design.

Designers know that this is a lie, since there is such a depth of variety in Gear models and such vast differences that it is basically cheating to count them all as a single type of machine, much like pretending that a stealth bomber and wheeled artillery are the very same thing.

However, Gears do have a stunning amount of similarities between themselves, despite their variation, unlike most other armoured vehicles of ages past. Gears tend to be obviously humanoid in nature, and can function just fine with only one driver at the helm, given the name of 'Avatar' to differentiate them from the controllers of other mechanized weapons, and the process of controlling them known as 'Enacting'.

The main innovation that Gears brought with them was the Psychic AI Control or 'PsAICon' system, an interface built into the Gear's cockpit that reads the electric signature of the controller's neurons. An on-board AI then encrypts, processes and interprets the signals of what the user intended for the Gear to perform, and allows the various other mechanisms inside to handle said actions.

The head section of the Gear usually acts as a middleman between these systems and the environment, usually packing most sensory equipment as well, as it was found that made it considerably easier for Avatars if the Gear mimicked the functions of the human body as much as possible.

Gears also implement a variety of 3G-based technology. Every Gear has a system of balancers that, together with an alloy that allows for limited magnetic levitation capacity, handles all stress to the limbs in the form of shock absorption – enabling giant machines to move at speeds that a land bound machine could rarely match in the past.

Several miniature Gygravagnite reactors are placed alongside the joints instead of having of a single, greater engine, allowing for complex combinations of movements that automatically distribute all the energy a limb could need, and producing bursts of energy that compensate in the case of a missing leg – covering for the most glaring weakness in giant bipeds.

Gears can not only reproduce every single movement that the human body is capable of, but also can move in ways beyond the elasticity of any human that has ever existed, in addition to quite simply being able to mount a inestimable variety of equipment on their bodies.

Finally, the PsAICon's reliance on computers means that they can be easily customized and reprogrammed to be 'taught' a variety of maneuvers as the Avatar requires, and all the Avatar has to do is train themselves to transmit the proper thought patterns to activate said techniques, making Gears incredibly versatile.

What these advances mean when looking at the big picture is that now every single soldier on a battlefield could perform to the full extent of their abilities without being limited by their physical bodies, being as resilient or speedy as necessary.

And since Gears could adapt to virtually any kind of situation on the fly without having any 'natural predator' on the battlefield besides other Gears, they became the standard by which all future weapons would be judged.

This is not to say Gears are perfect weapons. That claim is far from the truth. Gears are more complex to control than other vehicles of warfare of the past, with the difficulty of training new Avatars making it so that no faction ever has more than a few platoon's worth.

Gears also require more resources to both produce and maintain than any other weapon to date. However, as the number of Gears outnumbers that of Avatars, factions can get away with switching out a damaged one for one they have in 'stock' keeping their Avatars on the battlefield.

Due to the limited number of Avatars and costly maintenance of Gears, squadrons of Board vehicles controlled by a human overseer are the mainstay weapon of choice for practical purposes in the UEF's arsenal. What Gears excel at is at maximizing the potential and survivability of human soldiers, and since no automated drone from the UEF has -so far- managed to match human talent Gears will remain the undisputed kings of human warfare.

Not even the sheer numbers of automated Boards abusing the vastness of the old UEF armies match the performance of a well-oiled GAF platoon.

Despite all these advantages, work still continues on Gears by every faction in the Earth Sphere to ensure superiority over their foes, straying far enough from the baseline to further bring into question the use of an unifying name for them all, from strange Gears that have non-humanoid forms they can transform into, to ones that may possibly have a strange living organism filling that Gear armor.

General Equipment

Though counting all the applications of Element G to warfare would take nothing short of an eternity, a list of the most common implementations of its advances in the form of weaponry is much more down to earth.

Following are some of the most common armaments seen in battlefields worldwide - and beyond, these weapons are common to a great variety of Gears due to their many advantages over others.

Compact Quarrel Controls

Issued to virtually every Gear is the so-called CQC system, apparently a joke placeholder name that carried all the way through its development cycle, Compact Quarrel Controls are a very simple but effective concept.

The Gear's hands are made as human-like as possible and the PsAICon is programmed to be responsive to even unconscious reflexive thought for them. This would prove to be a terrible idea in any other area of the body - the human form is simply too different from most Gears' - but, when applied correctly, it allows anyone with a knowledge of hand to hand combat to effectively make use of that expertise.

Comboing with the CQC system is the variety of giant cold weapons devised as a cost-efficient last resort weapon, for those times when there's no other reasonable option.

Firearms

Even in this day and age of previously unthinkable technology, classic armaments still have their use, even if they require to be used in truly preposterous amounts to have the same efficiency as superior Beam Weapons.

While Gear-scale Cannons are just as good as one can imagine, ranging from 120mm railguns to the monstrous 1200mm trans-horizontal cannons, the lower tier fully-automatic, mounted 36mm vulcans fill a somewhat more niche role as weapons designed to lay covering fire and exploit holes in enemy defenses rather than pure implements of destruction.

When compared to most other Gear-class weapons, firearms are cheap to produce and easy to upkeep, making them more of an afterthought to ensure a Gear always has an all-range weapon than anything else. Despite this, they are not to be underestimated; Many skirmishes have been decided not by who had the flashiest weaponry but by who was able to wear down their enemy the best, and firearms excel at that.

Beam Weaponry

Beam weapons are miniaturized versions of the first degeneracy particle beam cannons. With a simple pull of a trigger, a number of unstable, contained Gygs crystals expel their energy in a straight, linear path of pure destruction. This is mostly seen in the common-use Beam Rifles fielded by most Gears across North America, but multiple variations have been developed, from larger, more punitive cannons to the so called "Beam Saber".

A beam saber discharges a minuscule amount of constant, highly focused energy making use of a minimal amount of Type Y around the edges to contain it from dispersing too much. Obtaining maximum efficiency at minimum cost, the effective range of the weapon is its only real limiting factor.

A key advantage of the Beam Saber over other particle beam based weaponry is that the 'blade' can easily bypass the defensive measures meant to shield Gears from other beam weapons. At the same time, the use of Type Y to help form the blade means that a skilled user can use his own beam saber to block another.

In close combat, nothing has quite the same combination of speed and sheer power of an energy blade - just make sure the enemy goes down with that first attack, getting a second one in against a prepared foe is understandably difficult.

Missiles

Precision-Guided Munitions suffer from many of the same flaws that plague firearms, and have several extra of their own, such as reliance on guidance systems that can be interrupted and poor performance at medium to short ranges. Even then, the fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as a wrong weapon, only wrong defensive systems, and high-yield explosives are so effective when they do work that they simply cannot be ignored.

The most common are the small kind, designed to be launched in quantity to overwhelm defenses that would usually stall other kinds of missiles; these are either carried by Gears in hand-held portable "Pods" designed to be fired all at once and then discarded or come installed into the Gear, in truly exorbitant quantities that make their repeated use a possibility.

Missiles are unique in that they can be loaded with special munitions, losing destructive power for a tactical advantage by interfering with enemy effectiveness.

Gygravagnite Type-G

The key to the guerrilla's more advanced equipment and their (relative) success over their foes lies in their discovery of the fourth refinement of Gygravagnite. Achieved by a process that is said to have only been successfully finished once and is clouded in the most absolute secrecy, this gaseous state of Element G is only visible when in obscenely large quantities.

Resembling bright green dust, Type-G is rather hazardous; its particles possessing extremely violent repulsive forces, tearing apart any material that comes into contact with it.

The only Type-G reactor in current existence is assigned to the Guerilla's Wagner, the first flying battleship. A multitude of smaller and imperfect Type-G devices produced are being regularly put to military use by the Hiryu.

The Wagner uses Type-G for its 'Anti-Gravity' system, manipulating Type-G particles magnetically to keep them contained within Buoyancy Pods. These Pods are milk carton-sized and contain minimal amounts of Type-G, but are present in great quantity, so that if any of them were to be compromised the Gear (and its vicinity) wouldn't annihilate 'too much' of the surrounding area.

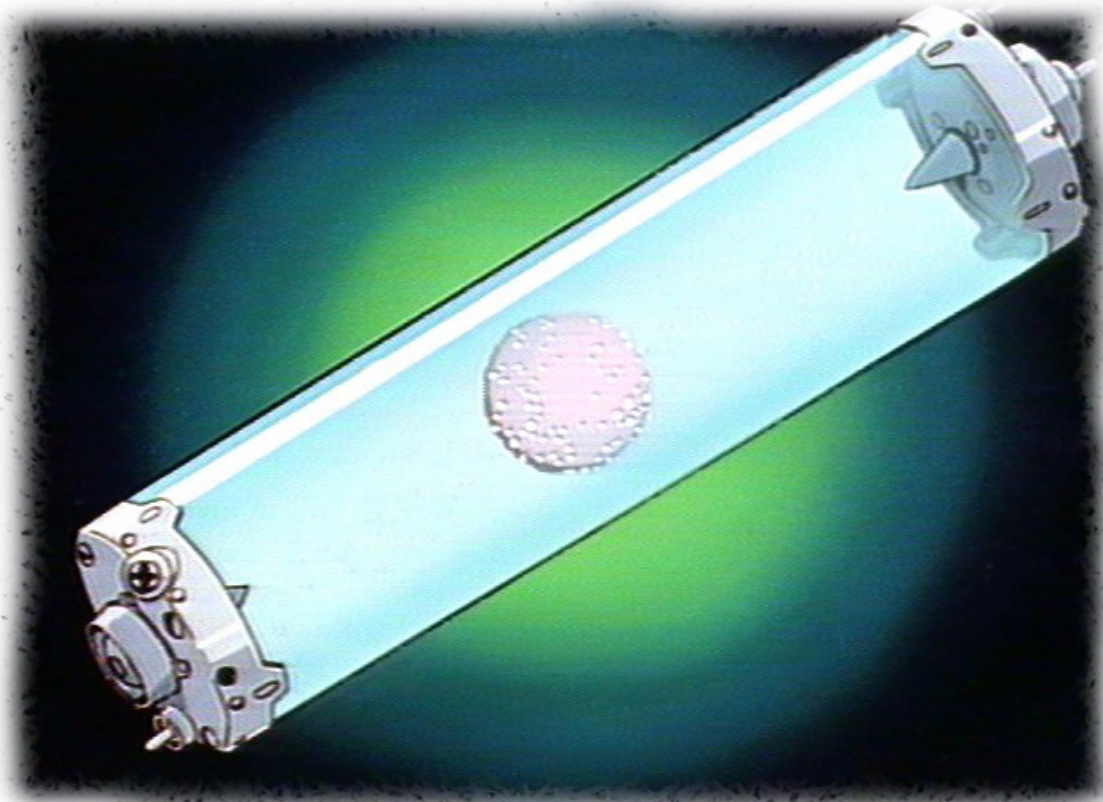
Type G naturally repels its environment and particularly itself very strongly, meaning that even at atmospheric pressures it has a density slightly off of the vacuum of space and the Wagner's sizeable amount of Type-G allows for the lifting of approx 27000 tons.

The research team at the Hiryu developed a method to make an even stronger network of Buoyancy Pods by altering the basic composition of Type-G further - some speculate this was done with the exotic materials that are part of an Outsider's makeup - creating a miniaturized system with apparently negative weight, lowering the effective weight of Gears significantly due to buoyancy, and enabling them to perform insane feats of acrobatics and sustained flight. Enough pods can make escaping the Earth's gravity viable with even simple jet engines, and many believe the Wagner is capable of doing so.

The second known use of this technology is the "Gravagne Field." It consists of a limited supply of Type-G kept contained by a strong magnetic field in the form of a 'barrier' around a Gear, annihilating -or at least drastically weakening- anything that tries to break past it. The energy required to keep the barrier intact even just a few meters from the Gear's own frame uses up truly ludicrous amounts, generally draining the majority of a Gear's energy in as little as a minute of sustained activation. Furthermore, it requires conscious thought to control it, distracting the user from reprisal or movement altogether. This makes an offensive use of the field a dubious tactic at best, but still a wonderful defensive implement to have when desperately needed.

The only proverbial chink in the Gravagne Field's armor is that another forcefield of similar characteristics will simply impart any force behind it onto the hull as the fields do not shred each other. Such an event would likely overload both Gravagne generators if they continued to supply magnetic field to that area, forcing an emergency shutdown. Since only the Hiryu currently has access to this technology, this should not pose a problem. For now.

G E A R
GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



The Soaring Dragon Fortress

Geography

An alliance. A nation. A symbol of humanity's ability to stand against even impossible odds. Hiryu is all of these things and more. Controlling three of the FWA's islands, Hiryu's main island is by far its best known to the population at large. Its famous dragon-shaped fortress faces eastward on the densely populated island; the 339 square kilometers holding a city of over three million and growing. In the last decade, Hiryu's status as being radiation-free - and more importantly, free in other ways that most of the world can no longer claim - has made it the center of activity and hope for Oceania and the rest of the world.

Hiryu Island is more than just a booming population center, though. It's also the front line in the war against the Outsiders. The island was due to be abandoned by the UEF after repeated incursions made it clear that the Outsiders were not going to honor its designation as the safe area 'Zone 83'.

Plans were made to relocate the citizens of Hiryu Island -the Hiryujin- to various other locations, splitting them up to safe zones in North America and Europe, but the UEF's plans went awry when the citizens refused to cooperate.

Guerrillas turned public opinion against the UEF, stirring up feelings of patriotism and pride in the Hiryujin. Starting as a simple resistance against the UEF's harsh resettlement plans, the rebel forces grew in strength and importance. After managing to force a UEF team back by sheer hard work and guts in a very publicly televised scuffle, the house of cards that was the UEF's authority over Hiryu fell like dominoes. It was checkmate for the relocation plans. The UEF was forced to retreat from the island and has never managed to gain a foothold there again.

The Soaring Dragon Fortress is the most well-known landmark of Hiryu, and is what almost anyone from outside will think of first when they think of the islands. Carved into the top of Mount Barou, the Fortress was built over the former local military headquarters of the UEF, though it's unlikely they'd recognize it at this point.

Mount Barou itself holds a prominent place in the young mythology and geography of the island. It reaches a kilometer and a half into the sky, and is one of the few places on the island not covered in industrialization. Civilian structures are not allowed within the base perimeter, with the single exception of the Barou Shrine. Built at the base of the mountain, the Barou Shrine is the largest temple on the island, from which the Priestess is said to communicate with the spirit of the island directly.

The remainder of the main island is heavily urbanized. There are fewer tall buildings than in many other cities, with a large amount of underground construction. Most large buildings house shelters for public use, in case of an attack or stropky weather, something not uncommon during the rainy season.

The other two islands under Hiryu's control -Mitsurugi and Kasshin- are smaller and mostly unpopulated, serving as battlegrounds and the front line of defense against invasion. They serve essential roles in defending the lives of the millions that depend on Hiryu's success, and the loss of either would be crippling. Both islands are all but devoid of permanent human presence, being used solely as battlegrounds for the island's Gear force.

Mitsurugi Island, the farthest from Hiryu at 27 kilometers to the east, and serves as a forward base. Hidden deep within its surface, under a kilometer of volcanic rock, an underground facility was built to store vast amounts of supplies, allowing for rapid repair and restock of friendly forces via AI suppliers. Hidden deployment points and emergency bulkheads make it very difficult, if not impossible, for an enemy to stop the drones or gain entry to the base proper.

Mitsurugi Base itself is a wonder of technology, almost entirely managed by AI with a mere token skeleton crew of humans as oversight in case of emergency. A kilometer of rock augmented with armor plating would allow the base to survive at least a limited nuclear or orbital bombardment, though the more delicate sensors located on the island, able to detect Outsiders from nearly a hundred kilometres away, would likely be blinded until repairs could be made.

In addition to its supplies for Gears, Mitsurugi base carries a large amount of supplies intended for its human crew. In the event that a first encounter on Mitsurugi is lost, the standard operating procedure for the base is for the facility to turn off its power to escape enemy detection until the destruction of the enemy by the remaining Self Defense Forces is confirmed. The base maintains enough supplies on base to last through a long siege, with at least a month of food and water ready at any time.

Closer to the Hiryu mainland is Kasshin island. Unlike Mitsurugi base, there isn't even a token human presence on Kasshin. The entire island is just rocks and automated defensive structures, carefully designed not so much as something to destroy an Outsider but to distract it. A hundred separate mobile beacons are deployed around the island to send out waves of distracting energy in every spectrum the Outsiders have been attracted to in the past and a few extras just in case they help.

These pulsating waves of energy distract and confuse any Outsiders that pass anywhere near the island. The randomized pattern of waves is something like having several spotlights shining in your face at once, blinding and confusing for Outsiders.

Most Outsiders are drawn to the island, and the short recharge time of the beacons means that the dazzling barrage can be kept up indefinitely. This barrage is intended to hold the Outsiders' attention long enough for a final defense line on the coasts of Hiryu to form.

Rumors

* The shrine on Mount Barou is more important than it seems. The island's defenders are trained to prioritize defending it over the rest of the city. Whatever the spirit of the island really is - a tame Outsider, a superweapon Gear, one of the Cryptids - it's the entire reason Hiryu exists today.

* Mitsurugi base is just one of many facilities located in nearby islands, all connected by an underwater network with the Soaring Dragon Fortress at its center, including a direct pathway from Mitsurugi base to below the orbital elevator.

* The rest of the Far West Archipelago isn't under UEF control either, they just refuse to communicate back to Hiryu for whatever reason. Men and women sent to investigate have universally failed to return. Some believe the islands are under direct Outsider control and that any inhabitants there are used to produce their Botakuri attendants, others think that the people there have discarded all of their Element G based technology and have been enjoying a peaceful lifestyle ever since the UEF turned tail.

While in emergencies Gears can be deployed to Kasshin Island, the island was once a Gygravagnite mine, and the radiation persists strongly enough that it's dangerous to put people on the ground at all except to repair the mobile beacons.

The main island of Hiryu is home to a fair variety of imported flora and fauna, with Mount Barou as the only undeveloped part of the island. Mount Barou hosts the only real native life there, mostly lichen with some hardy, small shrubs and grass. Some forms of insects and other small animals have taken residence there, but they are mostly things humans brought with them without knowing. Rats and rabbits have done well for themselves, though they seem oddly intelligent and hard to get rid of.

Mitsurugi and Kasshin are home to little more than rocks and lichen. The radiation and waves of energy pouring over Kasshin make it very hard for life to get a foothold on the island. Anything living on Mitsurugi must quickly adapt to an environment full of explosions. The sea, at least, remains healthy and alive, with extensive coral reefs and fish.



Culture

Hiryu has a history of democratically elected leaders, though during the UEF's reign over the island, free elections were suspended 'for the duration of the current crisis.' After the rebellion, there was fear that one charismatic leader or another would make himself into a dictator, but the fears appear to have been for naught, as the democratic process was reinstated almost immediately after the UEF was removed and Hiryu regained its self-rule.

Despite the support of its people, though, the free government of Hiryu seems to have only limited power in many ways. The President and Hiryu's Diet answer to powerful outside interests, and the reality of the situation is that Hiryu would not remain standing today without this aid from outside.

Support for the resistance comes in the form of money, technology, and manpower. The true origins of the source of this support are unknown (though the popular belief is that the Chinese mafia is the main benefactor of the island). The true agenda of these outside supporters is also unknown, though the number of reasons someone might want to strike a blow against the UEF or the Outsiders is nearly infinite.

The Dragon City of Hiryu is almost a model of self-sufficiency. Almost every household has at least some hand in the production of food; a necessity given the small growing area available to the island and the difficulty of bringing in produce.

Victory gardens can be found almost anywhere one looks, ranging from a few vegetables in windowsill planters to the extensive rooftop gardens that top nearly every building. A thriving fishing industry exists along the island's coasts, and most residents eat fish multiple times every week.

Because of UEF interference, all of Hiryu's trading with the outside is illegal by default. The island requires outside goods, especially finished or manufactured products, to satisfy demand and keep the war effort moving. However, as everything must be done through smuggling and the black market, the price of goods from the outside is extremely expensive.

The local currencies of Hiryu are nearly worthless on the world market, and the island is still haunted by the ghosts of past natural disasters and the current war looming overhead. It's no surprise, then, that Hiryu culture has developed into one of unity and perseverance in the face of danger.

Hiryu is a fusion of several cultures that were forced to band together to survive against the harsh world, each desperately clinging to their own identities in an age when globalization was erasing borders and cultural uniqueness. As the population center of the Far West Archipelago and a statement of humanity's resolve to fight against tyranny and invasion, Hiryu emphasizes how wildly different traits and people can learn to cooperate for the sake of the greater good. The merging of cultures has led to unique architecture and food, driven as much by necessities and scarcity as by anything else.

There is little crime on the island, with official reports putting the total crime rate per capita at just above 25 for every 1000 inhabitants, with almost no violent crimes to speak of. However, it's estimated the real crime rate is much higher, perhaps twice that number or more, and that most crimes simply aren't reported.

The two predominant ethnicities in Hiryu are Japanese and Oceanic. Despite the names, the Japanese are a minority on the island – they arrived on the island first, and consequently were the first to name it and its features. The Australians and Polynesians likely would have gotten that privilege, except the Japanese received UN support that the others did not, something some are still bitter about.

The Japanese make up slightly less than thirty percent of the population, while other Pacific Islanders make up a significantly larger part at just over forty percent. The remainder of the island's population is mostly of mixed origin, with the percentage expected to rise in the coming years. There are few Caucasians or Africans in the population, as travel is heavily restricted (and illegal) and there simply weren't many on the island before the disaster that was the Outsider invasion.

Despite all their troubles, the day to day life of the typical Hiryujin is different - and better – from that of civilians in the UEF's Safe Zones and much more like what life was like pre-Outsider contact. The Hiryujin are proud to be able to maintain that lifestyle despite shortages, war, and the constant threat of annihilation by aliens or the UEF, who most see as being little more than tools of the Outsiders.

Hiryu has all the necessities of civilian life. The Hiryujin study to become professionals, wake up every morning to go to work, get married and have children, and retire when they become too old to continue working. When there is danger they orderly head for the shelters; each Hiryujin is brought up to know that if they were to panic, let alone riot or loot, it would only be for everyone's long-term detriment. The Hiryujin place the good of the whole before the good of the individual.

Religion

Over the last half-century, the religious practices of the Hiryujin blended and converged into one common ethos unique to the island, and appropriately known both on and off the island simply as the "Hiryu Religion". The religion has both monotheistic and animistic qualities owing to its parent religions, and has ancestor-worship and a strong matriarchal tradition.

The focus of the religion is on two primary tenets - the strengthening of one's body, mind, and spirit; and the belief that all things have a spiritual embodiment. Body, mind, and spirit are empowered by the practice of martial arts, typically starting at a very early age. Monks serve as the primary teachers for the various martial arts, and there really is a variety to choose from- there isn't a bias towards one type of martial art or another. Wrestling, kendo, archery, mixed martial arts, and even sumo.

Many never take up martial arts or abandon it early, seeing in them a way to keep kids busy and maybe even keep them in shape, but ultimately little more than that.

Rumors

* The Chinese Mafia isn't the only source of backing that Hiryu island has. While it's obvious that other scattered resistance groups occasionally pass along things of interest, rare and more exotic materials are surprisingly common, to say nothing of the ubiquitous Gygravagnite Type-G. These materials are easily manufactured in space. That the UEF has also been having problems keeping satellite surveillance on the island is quite common knowledge...

* The island can't possibly support its massive population with its restricted imports and small farming area. There are secret farms buried deep underground that produce large amounts of basic proteins, which are formed into a lot of the food people eat. The protein ends up, thanks to processing techniques, indistinguishable from meat or some types of vegetable. What it starts out as, though, is something unnatural... Though perhaps not entirely inhuman.

* The president and Diet are merely figureheads for the real rulers of the island, a small group of Outsiders who have rebelled from the main group of aliens and sided with humanity, as the source of their advanced knowledge and technology.

Even so, the majority of the island acknowledges the wisdom of the Priestesses and Monks, and at least pay lip service and occasionally make token offerings at the temples during holy days.

The belief that all things have a spirit means that the followers of the Hiryu Religion generally try to keep on good terms with these spirits. Those spirits that think well of them - generally those of one's ancestors - are believed to remain vigilant and watch over them. Many of the more traditional and conservative households have a small shrine dedicated to the family's ancestors.

One can talk to the spirits with simple prayers, though for the most part there are no real totems involved, and shrines only serve as gathering places and a place to pray to ancestors. The island, with its limited space, simply cannot afford to bury the dead. Cremation is the most common funeral rite on the island, though some families prefer burial at sea.

The only memorial on the island is to those that have fallen in the war against the Outsiders, a massive concrete memorial that has names added to it once a year in a public ceremony serving as a time to remember and celebrate those who have given their lives in the service of freedom.

The general belief is that the spirits reply to prayers through visions seen in dreams and meditation, and more indirectly through acts of good fortune. It's common for most residents to blame good or bad luck on the spirits, and there's a strong belief in dream interpretation and prediction. Many children keep dream journals - and a few keep them all the way into adulthood.

The spiritual leaders in Hiryu are Priestesses, exclusively women and the only ones who can communicate directly to the spirit of the World - which is something like God itself in the religion, all powerful and the source of all life. Priestesses choose their successors themselves, teaching them the most central and secret mysteries of the religion over many years until they are ready to take up the mantle of Priestess themselves.

Priestesses act as counsellors and mediators in their communities, which respect their insight and acuity. Their arbitration takes the place of what would end up going to court in many other nations, most willing to abide by their (generally quite fair) decisions.

The male Monks have a less celebrated but no less important role, taking care of the temples, working their farms and gardens to feed those who come in need of food and shelter and teaching martial arts, free of charge. The modest temple shrines get by mostly on donations and offerings made throughout the year.



Rumors

* There's more to the spirits than meets the eye. There are coincidences and odd events that defy probability. Though no study has been done on it officially, it's clear that there's something unusual, perhaps supernatural, going on.

* Many elementary school teachers have their students write down their dreams as a regular assignment in class. While some might dismiss this as a simple way to get students writing something interesting to them, these assignments are handed over to government analysts for unknown purposes.

* A few years ago it was word in certain temples that a single, deranged man was inhabiting Mt Barou, hidden even from the military. The man said he could hear the voice of a beast crying at the heart of the world, and that he has left civilization to dedicate himself to recording its mad yelps and moans.

Military

What is now the Hiryu Self Defense Force was formerly the Zone 83 UEF Peacekeeping Force, and as such continues to hold similar structures and ranks in its armed forces, though owing to its small numbers, they have a unified force instead of a separate army, air force, and navy.

Hiryu's cadets are trained to be as proficient in the use of firearms and vehicles as any army in the world, but they are also all trained to be experts at the art of swordsmanship, a style developed by one of the island's greatest aces, a combination of the 'iai' and 'kendo' martial arts that seeks to cultivate the user's mind and spirit as well as to hone their skills at swordplay.

The Gears designed on Hiryu use a special type of motion-controls that make them move almost like living things. This makes them extremely easy for new Avatars to pick up, but means that the more physically fit an Avatar is, the better the machines perform in combat. That this makes the machines more efficient in close combat is no accident - every shot that their Gears fires costs Hiryu, and the more conservative they are, using close quarters combat and similar tactics, the longer they can hold out with their limited resources.

The ultimate source of all of Hiryu's advanced technology is, of course, the anonymous backers that have been supporting them from afar from somewhere in the larger continents. Through black markets and dangerous smuggling operations using interdicted waters, they have obtained plenty of industrial support from outside, providing the raw materials the local industries need to thrive.

With the island exporting very little, the outside backers are investing in the future of humanity, trusting in the resistance forces.

Also strengthened with the help of the rebellion and their secret investors, the former GAF local military headquarters of Zone 83 was transformed into the Soaring Dragon Fortress, complete with a giant dragon head carved into Mt Barou base itself, standing a kilometer and a half above ground level. There, at the highest point of the great mountain, is the automated Direct-fire Intercepting Orbit-range System, 'Kuzuryusen.'

Consisting of nine clusters of Type-R crystals conducting their energy into a central mega-particle cannon with over fifty kilotons of destructive power, Kuzuryusen has only been fired once to date, a test shot against a UEF spy satellite in low orbit. The tremendous power of the cannon not only vaporized the satellite but continued to clear a hole in Earth's orbital debris field, the shock sending dozens of other satellites into unstable orbits and leading to a long night of shooting stars.

Multiple capacitors and energy regulation systems have been placed for use in emergency situations, should Hiryu ever see the need to defend itself with what is probably overkill - just one tenth of the Kuzuryusen's destructive power is destructive enough to take out multiple city blocks in one shot.

Unfortunately, in truth, Kuzuryusen is more of an extremely expensive deterrent to human attackers and can serve little purpose offensively in the war against the Outsiders. Use of the cannon on a firing trajectory that intersects the Earth would cause nuclear-level devastation, and its nature as a pure Gygravagnite weapon means that heavy particles and fallout would poison the land and sea almost irreparably for all future use. Currently, use of the Kuzuryusen cannon requires direct authorization from the President himself, with his office assuming all responsibility for any damage it causes.

The main defense force of Soaring Dragon Fortress beyond its Anti-Outsider Squad is comprised of a plethora of homegrown HMR-01 'Karakuri' model Gears. Their main advantage over other Gears is that they are equipped with the Marionette System, an advanced Board system devised by Hiryu R&D, and may thus be controlled remotely by computer commands. During most operations, these commands are very general and rely on AI flexibly interpreting orders. In a pinch, the Gears can be given more specific commands, or even controlled directly as if one were in the Gear's very Core, when the situation calls for it. Unfortunately, the Marionette System relies on vulnerable control stations that they cannot stray too far from - the densely complex command system and limited range of the Karakuri's onboard communications equipment restricts its actions to within a few km of its central control station, which is none other than the Dragon Fortress itself.

Aside from the Karakuri Gears, the Soaring Dragon Fortress is of course home to various one-off models and prototypes built using experimental weapons and armor, with the implementation of Gravagne Forcefields and Gear-sized Anti-Gravity systems being a local specialty. Many are simply too expensive, too specialized, or just too difficult to maintain for entering mass production. These Gears are given to skilled Avatars who can bring out the best in the designs, though some are simply too difficult for any Avatar to manage, producing bone-breaking G forces or feedback in the motion tracking systems that leads to Avatars becoming mentally unstable.

The Enemy

The Hiryu Self Defense Force is the only armed force in the world that faces off against humanity's greatest foe on a regular basis. The Outsiders were at first believed to be invincible, with the majority of conventional weapons having no effect on them at all (aside from possibly enraging them, but making the invincible alien monster angry at you is typically not something a soldier wants to do). The Gears piloted by the brave rebellion forces have proven that Outsiders can be killed, or at least forced to retreat.

Outsiders are creatures of astounding diverse forms and sizes, and most scientists think that there are a large number of Outsider species, though others think it's equally possible that the Outsiders are all members of one species - the differences might be some sort of incredible racial diversity, deliberate alteration of genomes, or some sort of augmentation. Possibly all three.

Since all Outsiders to date have been unique and they are very difficult to study, proving any theory has proven quite difficult.

The forms Outsiders have taken generally resemble a crystal or manufactured object more than any sort of living creature, but the rare humanoid or animalistic forms also exist, always keeping their metallic or otherwise composite-like texture. Even the size of Outsiders has varied widely, from 10 meters to over a hundred. There seems to be no pattern or reason behind the forms they take, and if there is an underlying logic behind it all, it's a logic that is as alien and unknowable as they are.

Outsiders are made of a bizarre and exotic material known, quite appropriately, as Exotic Matter. The majority of their bodies, by volume, is made of this material, which has bizarre properties. It seems to defy Newton's laws - though in reality they still follow them, just perhaps not as expected given the sign change: They have negative mass. Ten forms of Exotic Matter have been identified so far, though it is possible that further study will uncover more.

The study of Exotic Matter is hampered by a nullification effect that occurs when it collides with normal matter. Unlike antimatter annihilation, nullification doesn't cause a large release of energy, though because of the conservation of momentum, it generates a kind of reactionless drive, and the Outsiders are believed to function primarily by using this effect as a kind of energy source - the cleanest energy source possible, with no byproducts at all except the kinetic energy it produces.

After the death of an Outsider, the nullification of its Exotic Matter accelerates. After going silent, an Outsider will entirely vanish into nothingness within a maximum of 432 hours. Attempts to separate Outsider normal matter components from its Exotic Matter for study have all met with failure. Doing so almost inevitably exponentially hastens the nullification decomposition of the Outsider, leading to shockwaves of free kinetic energy that can have dangerous destructive power.

Rumors

* At least one of the more troublesome prototypes that's locked away in Soaring Dragon Fortress is a more dangerous piece of work than it seems. It's an Outsider, captured, lobotomized, and armored to hide its true nature.

* The Marionette System is based on uploaded human minds. The process was abandoned after it was found that the brain could only be scanned destructively, always resulting in the death of the person being scanned, but the fruits of that experiment continue to be borne out as the source material is copied again and again and again from the digital source code. The Karakuri Gears don't go out of control if they go beyond the range of their control station - they go insane.

* The Kuzuryusen cannon is being readied for another shot. The coordinates are seemingly empty space slightly above the orbital plane of the solar system. Not even meteorites seem to be there, but a lot of energy and manpower is being diverted to this operation.

What studies have been able to prove is that Outsiders lack identifiable internal organs of any sort, and that they do not have a metabolism as humanity understands it. The inside of their bodies seem to be composed almost entirely of a highly corrosive non-newtonian fluid that oozes out of them when wounded. It is believed that this liquid, this 'Outsider Ooze' is some sort of catalyst or mediator for the nullification effect of their Exotic Matter-based biology.

Study of this Ooze has been very difficult to make. It solidifies into a sort of rubber on contact with air, and nullifies entirely within 3 minutes of leaving the body of the Outsider. It's believed that the Ooze's properties allow it to transmit kinetic energy as a kind of complex conductor, which would make it almost invaluable if it could be synthesized. The only thing that is certain about its composition is that it contains at least some amount of Gygravagnite - the radiation signature is obvious.

Outsiders display abilities that vary wildly. Some have dangerous natural weapons that mirror those of the GAF Gears or more likely, the GAF's designs are based on that of their Outsider masters. Others show built-in technology or organs that resemble Element G devices, from eye beams to horns that behave just like homing missiles. That these things evolved naturally is almost impossible to believe, lending credence to the theories that the Outsiders were built or grown as weapons.

The most obvious behavioral trait of Outsiders is that they make absolutely no attempt to communicate with humans. It's unknown if the ones that come out are unable or simply unwilling to communicate - if they're actually sentient beings or not is something that is still being debated. Regardless, they show no more concern for humans than humans would for a swarm of bothersome bugs. And like bugs, the only thing they can do to be noticed is to sting - and the only reply they get is death.

Rumors

*The Outsiders are even more bizarre than that might first appear. The Exotic Matter they're made of isn't something that should be able to exist in this universe. They are either from some dark corner of space where the laws of physics are different or perhaps from somewhere much farther away indeed.

*The Outsider mothership at Easter II is impervious to any and all known manmade implements of destruction. The Hiryu is not just biding time and trying to secure its position, it is trying its best to figure out how to actually strike back at an enemy that probably could annihilate them if they tried hard enough.

*Exotic Matter isn't only found in Outsiders. Detailed medical scans and exploratory surgery have found it in the bodies of UEF spies and traitors. It's believed that they are using the Exotic Matter as some sort of mind control agent - the alternative theory, that people have been replaced by clones or possessed by some sort of ghost-like Outsider - is almost too frightening to seriously consider.

The second distinguishing quirk is their attraction to Element G. It is believed that the main reason that nearly all Outsiders coming out of their mothership at Neo Easter II head west towards Hiryu and the rest of the FWA is because of the vastly higher concentration of Gygravagnite in both raw and refined forms there as compared to the rest of the world. Thankfully for Hiryu, Element G is also the Outsider's greatest weakness.

Outsiders seem fascinated by sources of Element G. They will pick apart and disassemble a Gear if they have the opportunity, apparently studying it and its components. When finished, they do their best to utterly destroy what they've studied down to the last particle, leaving no trace of it behind. This happens this with every new Gear it encounters, which is one reason so many prototypes end up on the battlefield - every new Gear might buy some time even if things go badly.

Mass produced AI units are deployed in attempt to drown them out in numbers, but this has only met with limited success, as the units are inferior in combat to manned ones, and it has proven to be more efficient to turn out prototypes that drive the enemy back or, preferably, destroy them before the Outsiders can do the same.

The reason the Outsiders are so fascinated with Gygravagnite is a hot topic of debate in Hiryu's news, meetings, and cafe chat, but the undeniable fact that they're attracted to it means that the Hiryu are unwilling to store any large amounts of Gygravagnite, or machines using it, near the Dragon City. This has led to burying some larger machines with the hope that rock will shield whatever emissions the Outsiders are picking up, though it's unknown how much that helps.

Recently, things have been taking a turn for the worse. The Outsiders have started adapting to humanity's use of the Gears and have been deploying their own brand of giant battle machines that the Hiryu Self Defense Force has taken to calling Botakuris.

These bizarre mechanical contraptions seem to defy science and logic in many aspects of their design and construction, often using technology that is considered to be impossible or simply hideously inefficient. Whatever process goes into their design, it's clearly inhuman in nature. The Botakuris have been used to wear down Hiryu Gears and defensive lines before making a push on their main target, the island itself, and are sometimes deployed with no Outsider commanding them at all, simply sent to harass or attempt to break through lines on their own. Depending on their design, they can be laughably easy to destroy or a nightmare of metal or even flesh.

The Mobile Battleship Wagner

Life in the Safe Zones

The last decade and a half has been hard on the population of Earth. As the center of power for the UEF, North America has been hit even harder by the radical changes that have destroyed the old lifestyles people around the globe had enjoyed before the Outsider Subjugation.

North America is host to the first 26 Safe Zones, thanks to the greater GAF presence ensuring a swift military response to threats from within or without.

Life inside a Safe Zone has two sides, ranging from oppressive to unhealthy in the extreme. That shouldn't be surprising, considering that the zones are the condensed population of entire continents in only a few dozen cities. The conditions are more like the 19th century than the 21st.

In the center of each Safe Zone is a Sanctuary District, and unless you're part of the UEF, you're almost certainly living in the surrounding government controlled ghettos. The rich, educated and influential get to enjoy living in the Sanctuary hub, with only cutthroat competitiveness and aggressive censorship and information control as their biggest worries. Outside the Sanctuary Districts it is absolutely abhorrent.

The government annexed and took over large parts of every city, walled them off and packed people inside like sardines. Every house, room, and bed in the ghettos is shared by people who might never actually learn each other's names or even meet face to face. There is no such thing as personal space or privacy.

Weapons are tightly controlled; food and water only come into the districts in force and are rationed by Civil Control, leaving the majority of people malnourished.

The supplies the government sends in aren't enough to feed everyone even if they were distributed well – Those in the Sanctuary get preferential treatment, of course.

Civil Control is the government force in charge of controlling each individual district, made up almost exclusively of civilians that would rather join the victors than continue their lives in misery. The people stuck in the ghettos of the Safe Zones have almost no way to improve their lot in life - other than joining Civil Control or hope they score impossibly well in the various tests that the rudimentary school system holds every year.

The government promises work opportunities and ways for the people to honestly support themselves, but unless you're inside the Sanctuary the only thing available is slave labor in sweatshops. Child labor is not uncommon, and many work upwards of twelve hours a day. When they are paid, most of the money goes to paying taxes to the government and the rest to 'penalties for making mistakes and not meeting impossible quotas. The few scraps they can take home are hoarded in a dream of buying themselves a place in Sanctuary Districts or to escape from the Safe Zones altogether, hoping for some kind of better life.



There are few nods to safety in the ghetto factories, and accidents and deaths occur every day. While AIs have been able to do these jobs for years, they're now used to patrol the Safe Zones, spying on the poor and the elite alike and reporting it to their Civil Control overseers, keeping Big Brother updated in real time. The AIs keep a detailed record on everyone. Even children have everything they do and say scanned for potentially rebellious or unpatriotic phrases.

Only folks in the Sanctuary Districts get to retire. Those outside don't have that luxury, nor do they do anything meaningful with their lives, unless one considers sewing uniforms, packing boxes, or other simple labor to be meaningful.

If people don't disappear off the streets or die of one of the many illnesses that plague the streets (many of them due to malnutrition, others because of the filthy living conditions), they're likely to snap and die in one of the riots that flare up from time to time, each one quickly put down with lethal force. Some Safe Zones are home to 'Patriotic Reinforcement' camps, and what goes on there is spoken of only in whispers by the residents. People come back from these camps changed. Most places where these camps spring up have become much quieter, fear-filled places where people simply obey to avoid horrible punishments.

At first, when the Outsiders first invaded, people were willing to do almost anything to get somewhere safe. Now they're willing to do almost anything to get out. The oppression is so bad that the majority would rather risk their lives outside the Safe Zones instead of dying by inches inside them. A lucky few never had to suffer inside them - they hid during the days of forced relocations and have been avoiding the routine searches ever since then.

Escape attempts are common. Some of the more successful have been coordinated with guerrilla attacks from outside by the Revolutionary Unified Front to draw the military's attention while people get away.

Most residents, though, are broken by the harsh lives they've had to live, and simply exist from day to day, weathering the gray misery and depression of the Safe Zones. The RUF has managed to liberate two Zones from the UEF's oppression already, and their efforts may be the only hope for those that cannot escape the Zones on their own.

Rumors

* Those that come back from Patriotic Reinforcement camps usually commit suicide or join either the military or Civil Control not long after their return; others develop much stranger behavioural patterns that are difficult to categorize. With the most extreme case being of one woman who killed and devoured her family on the night of her return before being put down. To this day, not a single one of them has spoken of what actually goes on inside the camps themselves.

* Every year there is at least one major riot in a different Zone with casualties on both sides. This is attributed to the efforts of the guerrilla - some of the people involved are too well-prepared and armed to be just discontent civilians - but Civil Control reacts all too slowly and even the Boards remain passive until the conflict has escalated too far for it to be undercover sabotage.

* Though the news won't talk about it, the situation is quite different in the rest of the world. Several countries across the ocean, the ones that have always been resistant to the UEF's power grip, have openly refused to cooperate with their oppressive policies and are openly waging war. They will not permit the UEF to make them comply forcibly to their demands, and frontier UEF forces are simply told that said places are 'under guerrilla control'.

The Guerilla Effort

The greatest enemy of the UEF on the home front, the RUF is a large underground network, figuratively and occasionally literally. The Revolutionary Unified Front is composed mostly of displaced civilians and discontented UEF officers who have organized against the UEF, with weapons and equipment bought on the black market.

RUF cells work in groups of 20 to 40, operating out of Landships - a bit of a misnomer, as they are suited to function in most kinds of terrain, being capable of sailing the seas and levitating over difficult ground - and focusing for the most part on investigation and sabotage missions. The UEF's forces in most areas outnumber the RUF to such a huge extent that open warfare is simply impossible. However, RUF sources are often found starting riots, organizing escapes from the Zones, and smuggling food and medical supplies to those who need it. Their efforts have saved countless lives.

All RUF cells are in contact with at least one other cell in the continent, though the majority only know of one or two cells outside their own for security reasons. The security of the cells is always a matter of top importance - the UEF would love to crush the resistance, and they have the strength to do it. Only with stealth and guile do the majority of RUF operations succeed.

Lately, there has been a movement to unite the RUF forces across the continent and make a push against the UEF Headquarters in Zone 1, formerly Boston. However, the risk was deemed to be too great. The UEF would put all its forces into play against the Resistance if they made an attack against the UEF Headquarters. Every general wishes for a single decisive battle to end a war, but open conflict is not where the RUF's strengths lie. Such a large battle would simply be a meat grinder and likely lose them the war entirely.

Instead, the RUF has adopted a harassment strategy. They wear down the GAF with sabotage, night attacks, whatever they think will work best to destroy morale and equipment at the least risk. The ultimate goal is to force the UEF to abandon an area, or at least weaken them enough that the RUF can make a decisive strike and eliminate them with force, though that has only been successful on a single occasion.

Most of the RUF consists of untrained civilians, a mix of those who have escaped the Safe Zones and those who had avoided being relocated in the first place. Only now are they finally starting to catch up, learning how to fight through real experience instead of training simulators and boot camps. On average they're far less disciplined than a UEF soldier, but they're fighting for something they believe in. That determination alone is enough to give them a fighting chance.

The RUF would never have lasted this long even with all of their precautions if not for the support of a mysterious third party, the source of all their advanced technology.

Their Gears and Landships are a more than a match for the UEF's designs, though their lack of experienced soldiers to Enact and technicians to perform maintenance means that they're unable to make best use of these advanced weapons.

Most of the RUF knows that they can't really stand up and fight the UEF on an even front - they have few places they can call safe outside their HQ, any large gathering is simply a target, and though popular support is on their side, they can do little more than give people hope and serve as a distraction.

Maybe one day their friends in the Pacific will end the reason for the war, but until then the RUF dedicates itself to supporting the efforts of their lone shining star of hope, the UHDS-01 Wagner.

Rumors

* The RUF Gears are more advanced than what the UEF generally fields. Their Gears have refinements to their basic technology that solve many problems that have plagued Gears since their introduction into the modern battlefield. It appears as though they were designed by a genius, someone who understands the technology better than anyone else alive.

* The Landships are way too spacious for the platoons alone, and some believe they could be used to evacuate civilians from the various Zones - or that this was their original purpose. One of the ideas gaining wind lately is that since the grand majority of the Far West is free of UEF activity it would be ideal for relocating civilians there, and the amphibious capability of Landships further supports this theory.

* The third party that is supplying the RUF with its advanced gears, supporting Hiryu with supplies, and generally throwing its support against the UEF... Well, rumors say that they're the ones who used to run the world from the shadows, and they don't like the way the UEF and the Outsiders have gone and taken everything away from them.

Ride of the Valkyries

A one-of-a-kind vessel, the Wagner is a 'Superlight-Stealth-OmniEnvironmental-Vessel'. It serves as a mobile base of operations for the RUF's most elite force of Gears, allowing them to be quickly deployed into combat and retrieved at a moment's notice when retreat is called for. Its beyond cutting-edge technology makes it ideal for missions that require a great degree of speed and stealth.

The Wagner is like a paradise to those used to the cramped conditions inside the ghettos and devoid of the paranoid watchful eyes of the Sanctuary Districts. With its ample room, clean fresh air, individual beds, access to (recycled) food three times a day, and lack of UEF forces stomping down on the first sign of discontent it sure beats any of the Zones.

There are dangers, to be sure - you can't live on the biggest target to the GAF without facing some serious risk. Even so, the chance to make a difference, to live free, even in danger... That's far better than just marking time and waiting for death under the wing of the UEF.

The Wagner makes liberal use of automation. For a ship its size, it should require a crew of a hundred or more, but it can be run from the bridge with only a skeleton crew of two or three. Such a small crew does greatly impede its combat performance, though, and so a regular crew of around twenty is better for ship operations. Most of the Wagner's large AI complement is devoted to the task of maintaining stealth for the massive vessel.

How this is achieved depends on the scenario, it could mean pumping out powerful electromagnetic pulses, deploying dummy balloons the size of Landships equipped to show up on radar and send out a variety of signals and energy signatures, or firing a wave of anti-radiation missiles without asking permission from the human crew first.

As the Wagner is only one ship, it's typically left up to its massive supercomputer 'Morrigan' as much as the Captain to decide on a course of action. They use complex, inscrutable methods to plot out strategies and tactics to do as much damage as possible to enemy forces and morale. Usually this means annoying several Zones at once to distract enemy forces and obscure objectives before making a lightning-quick strike.

Gear Avatars are often given odd objectives with no clear explanation, from simply landing somewhere and waiting there for a few seconds to destroying random buildings or attacking only specific enemy Gears. Ultimately these plots all come together as a brilliant, grand strategy. In theory. Often the odd requests from the AI have seemingly no effect on the mission. Or at least none that Avatars can see from their limited perspective.

Much of the strategy used by the Morrigan and 'her' crew plays into the low morale of the UEF's populous. Years of tyrannical leadership, brutal enforcement, and imprisonment in ghettos have made the people receptive to the idea of revolution, and the general distrust and hate they have for the armed forces of the UEF is a constant weight on the shoulders of the people who serve. As guerillas, outnumbered and outgunned everywhere they go, the RUF realize how important morale is to an army better than the own politicians they undermine, playing with their troops like a cat's cradle.

Between Operations, the crew of the Wagner have the same worries as any other cell in the RUF. They get supplies from the black market, scavenge them from downed UEF transports or abandoned bases. They train their Avatars to the best of their abilities; the Wagner's onboard AI allowing them to use simulators, unlike the vast majority of RUF cells.

The Wagner serves the cause in other ways as well. As the flagship and symbol of the resistance, its crew has to act politically on some occasions, showing up to meetings with important supporters, appearing at any major RUF meetings (rare events, to be sure, but they do happen) and perhaps most importantly, posing for the camera once in a while so the people back in the Sanctuary Districts have a pretty face to put to the resistance.

Rumors

* The Wagner is an amazing machine. Some would say that the technology it uses, especially the reliance on AI, is more than a little too close to what the SSA used to use to be merely a coincidence. Though it has not demonstrated any kind of ability to escape orbit - yet - it certainly could have survived re-entry and only needed a new coat of paint.

* The Morrigan itself is not just an AI, it is the transplanted personality of a scientist, a general, and a historian each with its own objectives and plans. This would certainly explain the schizophrenic nature of some of its designs, but the possibility that they might be actively trying to outdo the other and what this means for the ones that are to be its pawns makes the RUF shudder.

* There is more than one Wagner. The reason for the rumors of its invincibility and tactical prowess is just smoke and mirrors, covering up every failure. Several Wagners have been shot down already, and each one has been covered up by the RUF.

Liberated Areas

Two Zones have been freed from the UEF's control in North America: Zone 4 (New York) and Zone 16 (Los Angeles). The success of these two operations is something that the RUF is struggling to prove was no fluke. Plans are being made for a strike into another Zone, though the location is being kept secret until the last minute.

The Battle for the Liberation of New York marked the first appearance of the Wagner and, to date, the only major victory through military force from the RUF. It was a lightning-fast strike that used the confusion of the new ship as much as its armaments to make an impact on the enemy. The battle was fierce but the RUF took surprisingly few losses. At first.

The reason why the UEF's resistance seemed so light was because they had decided to abandon New York. They didn't intend to allow the rebels to keep it. Initiating a Burned Earth directive from the highest levels of the UEF, an experimental 3G-Bomb was dropped in the area once the majority of GAF forces and officers had evacuated or surrendered. The devastation was total, worse than an atomic bomb.

Part of the reason the G-Bomb was so terrible is that it caused every Gygravagnite drive and device in its area of effect to overload and explode, fuelling the devastation. Every speck of Gygravagnite was consumed and turned to a toxic, radioactive dust.

Every trace of life within a dozen kilometers was wiped out by a deadly burst of radiation and fire. The land itself was salted and killed - scientists think it will be centuries before any kind of life can return to colonize the area. The 3G-Bomb detonation wiped out the guerrilla forces that had gathered to take Zone 4. It also wiped out all districts in Zone 4.

The RUF has yet to recover its numbers, and the area surrounding Zone 4 has been all but abandoned by its few survivors. What had been intended as the first strike in a campaign through Canada and towards the UEF stronghold of Zone 1 (Boston) ended in death, stillborn before it even got underway. The GAF also learned a valuable lesson that day - that failure on their part would not be tolerated, and that their superiors in the UEF were more than willing to sacrifice them if they were no longer useful.

The battle for Los Angeles fared much better, a real success instead of a Pyrrhic victory. The Pacific Fleet had been destroyed by a berserking Outsider after it radically changed course for reasons unknown, leaving Zone 16 with a glaring hole in its defense by sea - a hole that the UEF was hard pressed to fill, and they were unwilling to commit their Atlantic naval forces to fill the gap, wary of more attacks from the Outsiders. It seemed they were as much in the dark about the plans of their masters as everyone else.

The RUF was quick to capitalize on the opportunity, and began a month-long campaign of hit and run attacks against the GAF's crucial facilities in the area. With supplies running low, morale all but gone, and no reinforcements in sight from the UEF, the officials of Zone 16 surrendered to the rebel forces. Rebellion forces were quick to take over the area, and carefully avoided disabling the anti-aircraft defenses around the city. This foresight was proven wise when they stopped a UEF strike and prevented a 3G-Bomb attack on the city.

Los Angeles is currently the largest urban area under RUF control, and its position as the Safe Zone on the North American continent farthest from Boston and other stronger Zones assists in keeping it free as much as the natural defenses around it, with mountains on one side, the sea on the other.

With the help of the Wagner's diversions and the rebels constantly on watch, there's a decent chance the city might even survive to see the end of the war.

Rumors

* The other reason behind the general reluctance of the UEF to more widespread use of the 3G-Bomb is that it creates a brewing cauldron of strange, bizarre phenomena that defies all known conceptions of time and space on a daily basis, and that having such a thing close to their base of operations is not something the UEF is interested in.

* The Outsider that attacked the UEF's Pacific fleet was drawn to them because of a prototype beacon that a RUF agent smuggled onto the Pacific Fleet Flagship. The beacon's use was a great success, but their limited range and the unpredictability of the Outsiders has made opportunities to try and use a second beacon rather limited.

* Most of what was the Zone 16 military is still in place, including the people. They didn't surrender because they were running out of supplies, they surrendered after making sure the RUF would give them favorable terms. They now work alongside the rebels and continue doing the job of protecting their city, but without alien overlords.

Important Targets

The rebels are not lacking for targets. The primary target, out of reach for the moment, is Boston, the UEF's seat of power and the site of Safe Zone 1. It's the Zone the UEF always shows in propaganda, a virtual paradise compared to the martial law and ghettos of the other Safe Zones.

There are no ghettos in Zone 1 - it is reserved only for the elite and their families.

Boston is one of the few places that has expanded beyond its original city limits since it was made into a Safe Zone. Because refugees were kept out of the Boston area, its citizens continue to enjoy the benefits of a pre-Outsider lifestyle.

The UEF's control here is more of a velvet glove than the iron fist they use elsewhere. Careful information control has kept the population ignorant of the real situation, and most assume that other Safe Zones have the same quality of life they enjoy. UEF propaganda is on every vidscreen and street corner, painting them as heroes and vilifying the RUF - it is, in many ways, the platonic ideal of a Sanctuary District made real.

The city is heavily defended, protected by multiple defense lines that cover all sides. It is all but impenetrable to outside attack and much time has been spent, perhaps wasted, in trying to find a flaw in the layers and layers of defensive measures. The center of the city is a literal citadel fortress, like a castle from ancient times updated to the modern age, with walls almost a half of a kilometre high.

Aside from Boston, the second most prioritized target in North American territory is Zone 11, a military fortress built over what used to be Indianapolis. Like Boston, the Zone has no ghettos, but for an entirely different reason. There are no civilians at all in the Zone - it doesn't even have a Sanctuary, for it is just a giant prison, filled with captives forced to do dangerous slave labor in the prison camps. Tales of abuse of all kinds from the prison are common.

The slave labor in the camps is mostly restricted to menial or demeaning labor, designed as much to humiliate the captives as to punish them. The best the prisoners can hope for is to do farm work, and do something that will at least let them steal some food for themselves to keep them above the purposeful starvation level the UEF keeps them at. Makework and misery aren't the only things that Zone 11 produces, though. It houses the UEF's most important factories, using AI Boards as a workforce (the prisoners obviously can't be trusted with such an important duty) to produce almost all of the Gears, Vehicles, Weapons, other Boards, and further military hardware and pack it to be shipped to other Zones.

Indianapolis' ability to mass produce entire armies to make up for losses is one reason the RUF is finding a war of attrition hard to wage. If the rebels could deny the UEF the capabilities of the Zone, they would have a solid chance of winning the war through sheer strength of arms and tactics.

Naturally, such a thing is easier said than done. Zone 11 is under guard so heavy that is only second to that of Boston. There is a special military division devoted to defending Zone 11 at all times, a massive force of Gears and vehicles produced on site. The forces are heavy and ruthless. There have been reports of them using prisoners as human shields (literally, in some cases) to keep RUF units from attacking.

There's also the issue of establishing outposts through the continent, and accessing them. Though the Wagner regularly meets with the guerilla's 'investors' and is the one that further spreads the goods for the rest of the American continent, only the Captain and the XO ever take part of negotiations with them, and it is unknown whether they get to interact with them face to face or not, or even if they ever get to meet their mysterious benefactors.

Rumors

* At Zone 11 there are places that people won't go, not even the machines keeping the place running. People have seen and heard strange beings in these dark places; those who have seen too much simply vanish. Some say its Cryptids. Some say its spies. Some say it's worse than either of those and refuse to elaborate.

* Zone 1 has its own problems. They aren't the loud kind that anyone hears about - every crime is hushed up and criminals just vanish behind the scenes never to be seen again. The UEF is planning on dealing with these problems proactively, through something called the 'MKGREEN System.' Details on the project are few, but the UEF has been placing orders for large numbers of infrasound speakers and recruiting audio technicians.

* Zone 19, Dallas, has recently been confirmed as the next target of the guerilla. Exactly what they're planning on doing to take the city is unknown, though some think that they've cut a deal with the political leaders of the city.

The Gear Armed Forces

The Gear Armed Forces would be an insurmountable enemy if they weren't acting as the arm of the most paranoid and ineffective parental organization on the planet. The GAF is an army run by politicians, an arrangement that hasn't worked at any point in history. In this case, those politicians are the six most powerful men in the world, a council of figureheads from the most important member nations of the UEF. Each one is a brilliant politician, and between them they have less military sense than an orangutan with a few medals pinned to his chest.

As everyone knows, the UEF will do anything to be on the good side of the Outsider invasion force, up to and including sacrificing their own people.

The power of the Outsiders has already been well shown when they destroyed the majority of humanity's efforts to colonize space, and that unspoken threat backs much of the UEF's dictates - do as we say or the Outsiders will get upset and destroy you. The UEF is the only go-between humanity has with the Outsiders, and so if you want to grow old and have kids, the only option is to follow their orders.

The GAF's own divisions generally hold no lost love for their distant alien masters - they're still human in the end and resent the Outsiders as much as anyone. However, the majority of them help the UEF dominate the rest of humanity with the promise that serving in the military will guarantee the safety of their families and ensure their future.

One of the greatest rewards their Avatars can earn is to have their families moved to a Sanctuary District, or perhaps even to Zone 1 itself. There in Boston, life is a virtual paradise, especially compared to the hellhole of the Zones that many crawl out from. Of course, such soldiers often become so estranged from their families that their help is no longer welcome, just seen as another tool of the UEF's oppressive government.

In practice, these great rewards are merely propaganda, and the heroes that they portray are just playing a part to inspire the masses. Every squad out there tries their best to look after their own, avoid the worst of the politics that run their lives, and do their job to protect the people of the UEF - and make no mistake, most in the GAF do think they're doing their best to protect the people around them. Most of the time, the best they can do is protect themselves from the UEF itself.

Realistically, the best that a soldier can hope for is to enjoy the simpler benefits of military life. They get medical attention, eight hours of sleep every night, clean food and water. For someone who has been living in a ghetto, those prizes are worth even doing the distasteful things the UEF demands of them.

The GAF employs a few standard-issue Gears that have been in service for a number of years now. While proven technology, their raw performance is inferior to what the guerrillas can field. However, the GAF has the advantage of numbers, far superior training, and support from hundreds of Boards.

They would have buried the RUF by now if not for the constant harassment of the Wagner.

The Wagner has become something of a questing beast for the members of the GAF. Its visibility in most important RUF conflicts has made it a famous target, and one with a large bounty on its head

It is well known that the UEF would richly reward the one who brings down the Wagner, setting them up for life. Bringing the ship down has become a competition, with many sabotaging each other so their peers can't claim the prize for themselves.

However, things are starting to look bad for the RUF. A new line of war machines is starting to be deployed by the GAF: the 'Glory' line of Gears, machines that move like living things, with grace and speed beyond any other UEF-made unit to date.

Those who have faced them in combat have reported that it's no surprise they move and act like that - Glories are literally a creature of unknown nature (though everyone's money is on them being some sort of Outsider) encased in armor.

Only a handful of Glories have been produced so far but each one has the same power, or more, as the very best Gears that the rebels can field. Most in the UEF believe that once the Glory line is mass-produced, the RUF is finished.

Rumors

* Each of the six people who lead the UEF have been inside the Outsider ship. Whenever one needs to be replaced, his replacement is taken into the alien's ship. Whatever they see or do in there, afterwards they're left totally loyal to the aliens. It doesn't look like fear. It looks like they saw something that they're still in awe of, and they've been promised rewards for serving it.

* Avatars who get too good, who 'retire' to live in Boston with their families? It's true that they leave their old hometown. Then they vanish, along with everyone who knows them. The leaders of the UEF don't want anyone getting too much personal power just in case they decide to try and butt in on their gig or worse, join the rebellion.

* The Glory is proving difficult to mass-produce, but it's even more difficult to Enact. It has a tendency to go berserk on the field of battle when damaged (or injured, depending on what you want to call it), and more than once they've come back empty, with no trace of the Avatar except a few bloodstains.

The Clarke Foundation

The Space Colonies

The creation of the first Space Colony, Asimov I, was considered the true start of the Space Age. It was the most important symbol of the human race's progress and technology in the 21st Century, a symbol of humanity's desire to explore, improve itself, and find its place in the stars.

Asimov I was among the most difficult construction projects ever attempted. It was a torus almost two kilometers in diameter, able to house a population of a hundred thousand, using the most advanced Gygravagnite technology available to keep its systems secure and stable. It had enough redundant systems to run everything twice over, with a third layer of redundancy in the most vital systems. It was a home among the stars that was even safer than the Earth, in some ways.

The ring-shaped Asimov colonies were designed to rotate around a control hub set into the center of the torus, the centrifugal forces creating gravity in a simple yet effective way. The hub at the center, remaining in Zero-G, was intended for use as fast transit for cargo and people from one part of the colony to another. The remainder of the colony was kept at about half-normal Earth gravity, enough to allow a normal life and prevent the worst ravages low gravity environments had to offer.

Every part of the colonies was purposeful. Not a single square meter was wasted, and most of the pejoratively-called spacenoids have a habit of keeping their arms close in near their bodies for safety's sake, and rarely use gestures for emphasis when speaking, lending them a somewhat reserved, or half-hearted, air.

Someone visiting the colonies from Earth would notice quite a few things as marked differences between the colonies and anything on Earth. The horizon curves upwards, and though at the scale of the Asimov I the curvature is slight, it often makes those unused to it feel as though they're looking at the world through a lens. The sky isn't a blue expanse, or even a black void. It's steel, just an endless curved ceiling.

A dozen colonies were built, in clusters of three around Lagrange points 1, 2, 4, and 5. Every colony was slightly different; some built to serve what needs the spacenoids had, others as an experiment, to see how humanity's effort to conquer the stars could be improved. A number of colonies had extra hydroponics and agricultural equipment to serve as farms. Some had complex industrial centers at their hub to fabricate things in zero gravity.

The colonies were only populated by the cream of the crop from Earth. The ones allowed to emigrate from Earth were the best in their fields, astronauts, scientists, engineers, and biologists. Every kilogram brought into space had to be carefully portioned, and people were the worst dead weight of all. It was almost like a lottery or a competition, and more than a few gave up their families to escape into the void.

The scientific and professional expertise of the Earth drained out into space, leaving behind bad feelings that persist to this day.

It seemed as though things were going to go well for the Colonists. And naturally, History's incredible sense of irony meant that this wasn't going to last for long. Only a few days after the celebration of Asimov I's founding anniversary, the Outsiders appeared

The spacenoids put up as much fight as they could, but they were terribly outmatched. In less than a day, there was only floating wreckage where hundreds of thousands of lives had once been.

The Battle of the 23 Hours started with the three Heinlein colonies at Lagrange 5 being crushed by the Outsider's ship in its careless and dramatic entry. Even as the colonists were reeling in shock from the magnitude of the tragedy, every colony at Lagrange 1 was torn apart in a series of surgical strikes from the Outsider ship. Asimov I through III were blown into shrapnel, most of which fell down to the Earth and helped cement the fear of Outsiders and helped the UEF pin the blame on the SSA soon after. The rest of the destroyed stations still float in place, undisturbed.

The fate of Lagrange 4's Wells bunch was perhaps the worst of all. While Lagrange 1 and 5 at least left some survivors, Lagrange 4 was erased. They vanished into thin air. No trace of the three colonies, of the hundreds of thousands of lives that had been there, remained. Various theories have been put forth to explain their utter vanishing, but none have been proven. Humans simply lack the ability to test any of them, and the Outsiders certainly don't answer questions.

Only Lagrange 2 was spared total annihilation. They huddled in the dark, not taking part in the ill-fated offensive against the Outsiders, watching in horror as almost every other sign of humanity's expansion into space was turned into space dust. Because they made no overt sign of resistance, simply trying to hide, they, and them only, managed to avoid total annihilation.

Today, the Colonies of Lagrange 2 - Verne I, II, and III - stand relatively united, each of them trying to gain an upper hand by keeping a stranglehold on resources that the others require.

Verne I is the only one of the three that produces enough agriculture to be self-sustaining, and its surplus feeds the other two colonies as well. This arrangement was in place even before the Outsiders arrived, though now their production is more important than ever.

Verne II has control of Lunar reserves of Gygravagnite, and they ration it out while working on their own great master plan, Project Odyssey. The ultimate goal of Project Odyssey is to construct a vast fleet of ships to evacuate the hundred and forty four thousand colonists towards a near-by inhabitable star system before the Outsiders or their pawns in the UEF come back into space to finish the Colonies off.

Verne III has the best medical and biotech of the colonies. They mostly pay off the other colonies with medical supplies and care for the injured. To those in the know, though, Verne III is more important as the base of operations for the Clarke Foundation, a mysterious organization that has its own seat in the ruling body of the Colonies.



Rumors

* Notable among the colonies is that Lagrange 3 is, officially, empty. While it doesn't have the stability of Lagrange 4 or 5, or the proximity to Luna enjoyed by Lagrange 1 and 2, it's still valuable real estate. Of course, some say that it isn't empty at all, and that there has always been a colony there, hidden and watching. Ships that go near Lagrange 3 never return.

* Ever since the disappearance of the Wells Lagrange 4 colonies, there have been intermittent radio signals proceeding from there directed exclusively at the Verne bunch. The majority of these signals are too distorted to decipher, though a few seem to have the correct radio protocols to have originated in the Colonies.

* The administration of the Verne Colonies didn't escape the notice of the Outsiders because they refused to fight them. The truth is much the opposite - they cut a deal with the Outsiders and part of that deal was that they wouldn't oppose them. The deal had some rather harsh terms for the colonies, which is why they're preparing to cut and run before the bill is due.

Culture

The Lagrange 2 cluster of colonies was originally colonized as a business venture, and the first inhabitants were the privileged backers and the people they hired to work for them. Originally, the colonies were run with a loose form of democracy, but in recent years, in no small part because of the stresses of a cold war, the democracy that served to entice people to come to the colonies was replaced.

The Verne Colonies are now run like a company, with a board of directors instead of an executive power. In truth, the arrangement is not really different from the way the situation has always been. Even as a democracy, the Verne colonies were always carefully managed by the backers that had organized them, and the political system had been intended as a show to appease the masses of workers. Now with the Outsiders having destroyed their previous seat of power at Asimov I, the pretense was dropped, and the figurehead rulers were replaced with a simple Public Relations department.

Life in the Verne Colonies has changed substantially since the Subjugation. Previously, the majority of those at Lagrange 2 were professionals, not workers. They traded assets and made their way through life with commerce and the stock market. Now there is no one left to trade with, no stock market, and those assets that they lived on are beyond their reach or gone entirely. Those lucky enough to have useful skills were able to find gainful employment, but a fair part of the population was reduced to doing unskilled labor in the wake of the disaster. Many snobs soon found themselves shoulder to shoulder with the blue-collar workers they had hired to tend Verne I.

Of course, this isn't true for everyone. The colonies still have their own upper class, the elite of the elite, who have managed to hang onto much of their old lifestyles. This upper class runs the Verne Colonies directly, through the Board of Directors, and indirectly as the only people with the luxury to do more with their lives than work from day to day.

The culture of the colonies reflects the frustration and hopelessness of those who live there. There is a harsh dichotomy between what happens during the day and at night, with everyone going about their business and spending ten hours a day working at a soul-crushing job to put money in their wallets and food on the table. At night, the cities are wrapped in a decadence that would make Rome blush. Nearly all the richest men and women have their fingers in the business of vice, and nearly a third of the money passing through the hands of the average colonist ends up being spent in pursuit of their own particular escape from the horrors of their lives.

Some of the most popular activities are fight clubs, often carried to such an extreme that people are left scarred or crippled for life; all-you-can eat buffets with included vomitoriums, an extraordinary decadence for a people who barely have enough food for everyone; and of course every type of fetish club that can be imagined, often with activities that would be illegal anywhere else in the solar system.

Rumors

* The board of directors for the Verne Colony has a vested interest in the events taking place on Earth. Their ultimate goal isn't to help anyone but themselves - they're creating conflict and war to keep everyone busy until their own plans can come to fruition.

* While it's true that almost any vice can be quenched in the Colonies, there are a few things that they have flatly made illegal. Some are obviously for everyone's benefit - no smoking as it would contaminate the air supply, the same goes for anything that would cause damage to the structure of the colonies. Oddly, though, the list of forbidden activities includes certain types of music, a number of mind-altering drugs, and the game 'BOARD WARS', all of which are almost universally found and shut down by authorities.

* The most bizarre development regarding the night-time eccentricities of Verne II's scene is that of 'transhumanism cults.' Though no official word has been given regarding their existence, the rumors of fantastic machines that enhance the body and give the user incredible powers are rather enticing to the beleaguered citizens.

The Return of the Cryptids

There are two reasons that a Colonist might not indulge in Verne's peculiar pastimes. Neither of them has anything to do with being worried about the sins they're committing, though the folk at Verne I were always better adjusted than their peers. The primary reason is simply because they don't have enough money to spend any at the brothels or bars others usually frequent. But there's another reason that some stay behind closed doors at night, locking themselves away: Fear.

The rumors say that the Colonies of Verne have become host to a threat that preys on its citizens at night, when they're most vulnerable - the Cryptids. Named after the unknown lifeforms that were said to have appeared in the Far West Archipelago, the Verne Cryptids have one key difference. Instead of appearing in the middle of nowhere, in radioactive wastes far from anything inhabited, never provoking more than rumors or starring in miner's ghost stories, they are showing up in places that are dangerously populated.

People are disappearing and reappearing completely off their minds, or never returning again. No one can confirm the numbers, and they are being kept out of the news as much as possible to avoid panic, but they are steadily growing. Almost everyone can name a friend or a friend of a friend who has simply gone missing or inexplicably changed. Hundreds of people claim that they've seen supernatural or unexplainable things that could only be Cryptids, and even with a lid being kept on the most terrifying or explosive stories, they're still the hot media buzz around the colonies.

But life goes on. Outside of giving the press a lot of sensationalism for the people working during the day to read over and talk about at lunch, very little has actually been done about the problem. In some places security has been increased - typically only after a major sighting that the Council is unable to explain away, and rarely for more than a day or two. The official word changes from day to day, depending on who the Council wants to blame. Cynics say that it changes depending on the time of day, weather, and mood they're in when the interviews are given.

What's being reported is as diverse as it was back on Earth at the height of the Far West Cryptid sightings, and if anything the things that are being seen are only getting more and more bizarre as time goes on. The list includes such gems as a man who looked like he was being projected from a torn film strip, out of focus and upside-down, walking on thin air with his head touching the ground, or animals made out of stained glass with snow for eyes and teeth. Perhaps the most ridiculous sighting was of a car with vegetation for bodywork nearly running over a drunk and, perhaps understandably, extremely upset man. While most were incredulous - drunk men are rarely reliable sources of information - several days after making his report the man was found dead in his home, apparently having been lying in bed for days completely unresponsive until his death.

The fact of the matter is that after a long period of inactivity, the Cryptids have returned in full force. Instead of lurking amongst deserted hills and valleys, only really being seen much when they intruded on miners in Gygravagnite mines, they're appearing in lunar craters and dark alleyways in the tangled cityscape that fills the Verne Colonies. Eventually, it will be impossible to deny that the Cryptids exist, or that these events are their fault. That is, unless the Clarke Foundation solves this problem first.

Rumors

* Cryptids can appear as anything, even a person. The smartest ones can even act human, at least for a little while. Anyone could be a Cryptid, and the first sign you'll have is when they start doing things just slightly wrong - showing strange habits, repeating sounds over and over again, or moving in ways that no person could naturally attempt.

* The Cryptids aren't alien in origin at all. They were created by human hands as a bioweapon that could adapt to any battlefield, but they have gone out of control and it is only a matter of time before they out-compete life everywhere else in the solar system.

* The disappearances have nothing to do with the Cryptids, at least not directly. They're just a cover for the government to use to get rid of problem people, using the fear of the unknown to keep people from asking too many questions. Better, in being the ones to investigate, they can get rid of all the evidence that they were the culprits.

Enter the Foundation

The Clarke Foundation is a group that has been shrouded in mystery since its inception. Even the date of its founding is unknown, the records lost in the Subjugation (if they weren't erased or simply nonexistent in the first place). Recently, they have started being far more active, and showing up in the public eye. According to their Public Relations department, they are one of many scientific groups studying the properties and applications of Element G.

A few papers have come out of the Clarke Foundation, most detailing some minor refinement on genetic manipulation. None are particularly exciting or notable; the kind of papers that show simple advancements rather than massive breakthroughs. The main business of the Clarke Foundation would seem to be limited runs of specialized medical-use Nanomachines. They do not produce products that the average consumer, or even the average doctor, would know about, but specialists speak highly of their ability to produce small batches to exacting specifications.

Additionally, the Clarke Foundation is listed on many budgets and reports filed by the Military Police's 'Special Investigations Department'. The details of exactly what they do is sealed and kept secret, with their contributions being listed only as a third party contractor. A lot of guesses have been made as to what they're actually doing, and it's not hard for most to accurately assume it has something to do with investigating the Cryptids.

Even people working for the Foundation usually don't know the truth. The Foundation has layers upon layers of secrecy, with work broken down between departments and shifts so that no one is ever working on more than a small part of the whole except at the highest levels.

The official story on the inside is that they are investigating alternate energy sources to replace or supplement the limited supply of Gygravagnite.

Most who work for them figure out that one of the primary missions of the Clarke Foundation is to investigate areas that have reports of Cryptid activity. They then track them down and capture them, alive if possible, using Gears that were specially designed and built by the Foundation.

What is done with the captured Cryptids is unknown except at the highest level - only those with the most advanced clearance are ever allowed to even come close to the containment units where the Cryptids are being held, and internal records simply state it as 'research into their natural energy signatures'.

The more detailed reports and findings are only available to those in the know, stored on secret servers and hidden disks. The only people who ever find those reports are the ones that already have the clearance to look at them - when someone thinks they've managed to crack the system and find something they're not allowed to look at, that is only the test to see if they're ready to handle a promotion. That those who do accept the offer remain silent of what they saw speaks worlds about how important that data must be.

Money, Money, Money!

So you want to actually deal with currency as a thing to manage, more power to you. We don't present hard rules for the earning and use of money, but we do have a general guideline that should help in eyeballing prices and converting coinage from modern standards or between factions.

One Universal Reserve Note equals one American Dollar.
One Nobel equals five Notes.

One Kurogane equals a hundredth of a Note, one Shirogane equals a tenth of a Note, and one Hagane equals a Note.

Remember, however, that Verne no longer deals with Earthlings (officially, at least) so this is more a representation of how it used to be between the UEF and the SSA. Hiryu coins have no value outside of it - hence their much lower exchange rate when compared to Notes.

The hiring practices of the Foundation are quite unique as well. They aren't the kind of place to hold job fairs or go through applications. When they decide they would like to hire someone, it's after carefully researching them. The Foundation usually takes a proactive stance in the hiring process, planting HR Representatives to engineer a casual meet up with a prospect. These HR Reps are almost always skilled psychoanalysts, and the casual meet up is really a way to get a bead on someone's psychology. If it goes well, things progress to the next stage.

Interviews are always handled the same way - potential new hires are paid a visit by very well dressed men in black, escorted (often blindfolded) to wherever it is that they hold interviews, and asked some very hard questions.

Those who answer incorrectly are never heard from again. Those who answer correctly, well, that depends on just what job they got. The most interesting position, though, is that at the Childhood Department of Field Operations. It's a lifetime job, whether you want it to be or not.

Rumors

* Despite the seeming lack of extraordinary science coming out of the Clarke Foundation, it is obvious the scientists working for them are some of the most brilliant in the Earth Sphere. What most would never suspect is that this has been the case for decades and that they are the real reason behind the existence of the Verne cluster, or perhaps of the colonies themselves.

* The Clarke Foundation isn't lying when they say they're a laboratory that studies Element G. Their current study into Cryptids is due to the definite links between them and the strange properties of Gygravagnite. Specifically, they think the Cryptids are Element G, or produce it, or are produced by it, or possibly all three.

* The Foundation's research into alternative energy sources is actually an attempt to figure out what exactly it is that Outsiders are made of so as to engineer a way to destroy them - or scare them out of our planet - in a single blow. Were they to succeed, they would become the most powerful people in the entire solar system.

The Mission

All Field Operatives, sometimes ironically called 'Children' by their co-workers after the Department's unfortunate name, receive a variety of surgeries as part of the training for their job.

The exactitudes of this surgery are unknown to all but the doctors who perform them, with even the operatives only knowing a few of the most obvious modifications - positioning locators implanted in their bodies, a subdermal communicator, and retinal readouts loaded with useful information being the most common. Most agents can compare their augmentations and find only a few in common, each one custom-built just for their use.

One of the most important implants that agents could receive, is a Nanomachine hive that has a variety of functions. The nanomachines increase the natural healing rate of the agents, prevent most common diseases, decrease blood loss in case of injury, and so forth. The usefulness of the operative's implants end there, at least for the agent. The rest of the enhancements they're given are more for the benefit of the Clarke Foundation than anyone else. If they read the fine print in their contracts, they quickly learn that they're as much 'property' of the Foundation as the Gears that they Enact.

According to the 'Field Operative's Handbook', which every agent's retinal implants are loaded with by default, one of the other primary functions of the nanomachines is to alter the Operative's DNA, allowing them to interface with the unique Gears developed by Foundation scientists. These Gears are smaller than the standard Gear size and well-suited to urban environments. Avatars have some complaints - often it feels less like driving a Gear and more like trying to get an animal to obey commands from a rider. Some of the oldest Gears are said to have strong, uncooperative personalities, occasionally acting on their own.

As if it wasn't foreboding enough already, the Handbook mentions 'organic energy' constantly when describing the functionality of their Gears. The simple truth, obvious to anyone who has been an Operative for long, is that they are actually some kind of living creature. They might be Outsiders, Cryptids, or something made entirely by man. Scientists don't answer questions, and most Avatars have learned not to ask them. But when they're damaged in combat and start bleeding highly pressurized, ichor-like blood or when they move on their own, it's hard to deny that there's something there.

The primary assumption among Avatars is that the Gears, whatever they are, are being restrained and forced into action. The way they resist commands, go berserk, and otherwise end up being ornery machines backs up that assumption. However, some think that the Gears are serving of their own volition. That camp of Avatars treats their machines as partners or equals, and they have notably greater success on some types of missions, though given the small sample size it's impossible to tell if this is because of the Avatars' own skill or because their methods really work.

The Field Operative's Handbook further details what the agents are expected to do with these Gears. Their primary mission is to subdue or eliminate Cryptids before they can cause too much damage - ideally before many people have even realized the Cryptid was there. The standard operating procedure is for them to bring the contained Cryptid to a retrieval point or, if that is impossible, to call in for a pickup team. No place is off-limits to Clarke Operatives on a case, and they've been given authority from the highest level to keep civil and military security agencies away from delicate situations.

Operatives technically answer only to their own superiors at the Foundation, and while they're normally tasked with keeping the public from learning too much and told not to answer questions from outside agencies, most operatives quickly learn that following the rulebook on that is not the best way to make friends and that they count on those very civil and military agencies for much of their support in the field. Many operatives who don't realize this have to make do with no support at all from outside agencies, or worse - are branded 'potentially dangerous' by other agencies or even the Foundation itself.

Because there's no way to predict the attacks of Cryptids or where they might appear next, Foundation Operatives have to be on-duty and ready to jump into their Gears and deploy at a moment's notice to anywhere in the Verne Cluster. A single creature might be found haunting the night-shift at a factory in an industrial sector, a whole swarm of them might take residence in the maintenance shafts that lead outside the colonies themselves, or they might be covering the outside of the station like barnacles and interfering with communications or cooling.

Unfortunately, not much is said in the Handbook about what the Cryptids actually are. It states that they're a 'spontaneously generated lifeform', which conveys very little about what they are, but essentially gives the gist that it is almost impossible to preempt them.

Rumors

* The Gears used by Operatives are Cryptids that have found just the perfect method to continue their hungry existences, by serving the Foundation as able battle bodies they are then allowed to feed on excess waste, captured Cryptids and traitors to the Foundation, and thus continuing to become stronger the better they do their jobs.

* One thing the Operatives are never told about the nanomachines they have been given is that they can be used to shut down operatives that go rogue, stopping all their bodily functions and killing them in a matter of seconds.

* An early-warning system has been designed to detect Cryptid activity. However, there must be some kind of intrinsic flaw in its design, because it's detecting massive numbers of events all over the Colonies. There's no way that number of Cryptids could possibly exist.

The Handbook goes on to list a few examples of how to subdue or harm Cryptids. These examples and tips are not exactly exhaustive or inventive, which can be partly blamed on the sheer variance seen in Cryptids, but in the end, they boil down to three tenets - 'Everything burns', 'Cryptids die when they are killed', and 'There is no such thing as Overkill'.

There is almost never any warning before a Cryptid appears. They simply come out of nowhere and take the form of whatever is around them, assimilating the surroundings to form a body. Normally, but not always, they mimic the original form of the materials, their body becoming a poor mockery of what was there before. Even the disappearances can be blamed on the 'birth' of a Cryptid in the vicinity of a human being, using their organic matter to form a body.

More worrisome perhaps is then how they are believed to be responsible of the loss in mental faculties of people who are exposed to them; not content with absorbing the body of a bystander who had no more fault than being in the wrong place at the wrong time, they are also capable of assimilating memories and entire personalities, which makes the prospect of hunting the smarter Cryptids much scarier.

Having a Field Day

One of the most important parts of an Operative's training is learning how to work and fight in the various environments they'll encounter in their operations. The first thing they are taught is how to fight in Zero-G, for two reasons - it's easier to manage damage control for new operatives in space, and it's the most difficult part of training for most, and so tackling it first makes the rest of the practical training less stressful for the new Avatar.

After Zero-G training is complete, the Avatars learn the quirks of working in each individual colony. Despite the similarities in their construction, the specialization of each colony is different, and that means that the operatives have to learn about these subtle differences to best know how to investigate Cryptid appearances and engage them in combat.

Of particular importance is learning the sheer scale of Gears. They are big machines. Very big. Even if the Foundation is using some of the smallest Gears ever developed, they can't fit into spaces meant for people - there's no way to use a Gear to chase a Cryptid into a civilian's house that doesn't involve the Gear crashing through the building itself. And that sort of thing almost always ends up getting everyone into more trouble than it's really worth.

As such, after a Cryptid sighting has been confirmed and the entity located, the first job of Children Operatives is to lure them into an open space large enough to make use of their Gears. This is harder than it sounds - no space is wasted in the Colonies, and so the choices of open areas are somewhat restricted.

The most obvious place to take a Cryptid in order to avoid damage is space - that's enough open area for absolutely anything. However, luring them outside has its own difficulties, as expected.

Lucky operatives might find an abandoned warehouse to use as a battleground, and skilled ones might find ways to make sure they remain in midair for the duration of a bout, but in the end, most operatives have to choose what they're going to step on, and so part of an Operative's training involves learning how to decide between ruining farming fields or blasting a radio tower into scrap.

Verne I is the 'Granary of Space' and where the first sightings occurred. To this day the majority of sightings still occur there. Cattle and crops vanish in an almost weekly basis, and almost everyone has seen something odd. Verne I sports the lowest population index among the three colonies, and over half of its space is dedicated to agriculture. A further third of it is devoted to population centers, and the small remainder to just as small local industries.

The people of Verne I are hard workers, with a firm blue-collar culture where hard work is its own reward, and everyone is taught the family trade from a young age. These values have been drummed into the residents since the foundation of the colony with propaganda - some subtle, some obvious - that they're exposed to at almost every moment.

Slowly but surely, the people of Verne I are becoming paranoid of both outsiders and each other. The news there seems only to focus on the danger of what goes bump in the night, and any authorities investigating the area are looked on with fear - the people are all worried that saying the wrong thing will get them involved in something or taken away by men in black for the crime of learning too much.

Verne II is the literal seat of political and industrial power for the Verne Cluster. The other colonies aren't very fond of it - Verne I calls it a 'cesspool of debauchery' and the common opinion on Verne III is that it's just a 'miserable little pile of bureaucracy.'

Because of Verne II's industrial power, most attribute these feelings to simple sour grapes, but Verne II's authorities are specifically a problem, as they simply don't like the way the Foundation has been given so much more political importance, and so have more or less instructed their local companies not to cooperate.

Since there is little to no Cryptid activity on Verne II, the local authorities argue that it's a problem that they can solve on their own without outside help. The popular theory among seniors inside the Foundation is that since Verne II is hosting the Odyssey Project in secret, their general antagonism can be attributed to wanting to keep the ships all to themselves and that they see Verne III, and especially the Clarke Foundation, as a threat towards their goals.

Last, but far from least, is Verne III. It is something of an education center among the three Colonies, a place where the fringe and hip from Verne I and II head, hoping to make a name for themselves with great aspirations. It used to be a transitory Colony for most of its population, just a temporary place to pick up skills and training before returning home to their native Colony. Since the Outsider invasion, the shift of society at Verne II, and the arrival of the new wave of Cryptids, this has changed.



Rumors

* Barbicane is fighting its own private war against the Cryptids. Because their superiors at Verne II keep the Foundation away as much as possible, they've had to fend for themselves. They never go anywhere unarmed, alone, or in the dark. Even so, the few hundred people on the moon is a steadily declining population and might end up trying to cut ties with the people that clearly don't care about them for good.

* The last stage of training for Field Operatives is live combat against a captured Cryptid. This typically comes without warning or instruction from their superiors. Only half of the agents who get to that stage of training survive to graduate.

* The Odyssey Project is almost ready to go. Verne II has been falsifying progress reports and making extra orders of materiel in order to cover their lies. They're planning on waiting - or creating - a crisis to draw the eyes of the Foundation away from them for a time, and then escaping with their entire population, leaving Verne I and III to rot.

Verne III still depends on the other two Colonies, but without the contributions from Clarke and various other prominent laboratories, the limited resources would simply drain away. Without the outside help, they'd run into a food or energy crisis very quickly, and it's a matter of debate as to which would be the first to kill them.

Verne III has a moderate degree of Cryptid activity, but unlike Verne I's insular and fearful populous, the people of Verne III do their best to help authorities solve cases as long as it doesn't directly put their lives at risk.

While they don't know the details, almost everyone is aware of how deep the influence of the Foundation runs and would rather not help Verne II undermine their positions any further.

The last area of note in the cluster is the Lunar base of Barbicane, which is largely a Gygravagnite mine (the result of the only, and wildly successful, Type-R Gygravagnite seed mine still in existence) that spans a small continent's territory. Its machinery is all owned by Verne II, and its critical manpower shortages mean AIs are the ones really in charge of everything, with only a few hundred people living on-site. It's one of the most difficult places for Foundation Operatives to get to, as even in the face of massive Cryptid activity, even to the point of the Gygravagnite mines becoming unusable, the Verne II authorities make sure that the usual civilian route - a ferry from Verne II - is all but closed to them, and more than once Verne II's insistence on making it a headache to get operatives into place has cost lives.

The Rogue's Gallery

The next section includes a number of premade NPCs for use in and out of Operations, though it mostly it focuses on Enemies. It is important to note that you should not take these NPCs as 'Canonical', they are merely examples ready to be dropped into your game at a moment's notice if you don't feel like coming up with your own.

All NPCs are presented for their use during the first Episode Arc. Appearances further down the line will require the GM to power them up as in the advancement rules for Enemies.

Sample Non-Combatants

Avatar Recruit

The GAF, UEF and SSA employ a great number of Gears, and they have a correspondingly large number of soldiers to Enact them. They are all well-trained and know the right amount of tactics to make the best use of their general purpose Gears, while still being formidable enemies out of the cockpit should they be forced outside, and more than capable of making it back safely on their own afterwards.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	4	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	4	4

Skills and Traits: Athletics (Adept), Combat (Adept), Stealth (Adept), Survival (Adept).

Criminal

Whether they are part of organized crime or little more than common burglars trying to feed their families, crime is present everywhere that humans reside.

Some are people hiding from the ironically named Civil Protection in ghettos, others trade common goods from what is left of Eastern Asia to those who can afford it in Hiryu, but something they all have in common is that they would much rather not actually have to get physical.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
6	2	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
2	6	4

Skills and Traits: Deceit (Adept), Finesse (Adept), Stealth (Adept), Streetwise.

Hiryu Monk/Priestess

Upholders of Hiryu's religious traditions come from nearly any walk of life. The vast majority are people concerned either with the metaphysical or societal aspects of religion - some use it to make sense of the world, others value the sense of unity it gives people.

While all initiates receive similar training, males generally emphasize their practice so as to teach future generations how to be healthy of mind and body. Meanwhile the priestesses are able negotiators and spiritual leaders, interested in the wellbeing of the community.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	4	6
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	2	6

Skills and Traits: Athletics (Adept), Diplomacy (Adept), Presence (Adept), Sight (Adept).

Techie

The Soaring Dragon Fortress and the Clarke Foundation employ some of the finest minds that can be found in the Earth Sphere and they don't just let anyone put their grubby little hands on their precious technology. Their staff is thus highly capable, proven after years of study at a formal academy and with the senior members looking forward to a future of joining the big fish in the organization.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	6	2
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
6	4	2

Skills and Traits: Electronics (Adept), Craftsmanship (Adept), Sciences (Adept), Vehicles (Adept).

Security Officer

Either as part of Verne's Military Police or the UEF's Civil Protection, these are the people with actual weaponry and an authorization to use it. They may or may not like their jobs, but in these strange and difficult times, all are trained to come down on any sign of trouble hard and fast.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	4	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	4	4

Skills and Traits: Combat (Expert: Firearms), Diplomacy (Amateur: Intimidation), Vehicles (Adept), Jaded.

Sample Allied Grunts

HMR-01 Karakuri

Karakuris are simple automated Gears, with a fraction of the utility Gears with actual Avatars have, they are deployed in large numbers to defend Hiryu itself when an Outsider offensive gets too close to home.

Karakuris are equipped with close quarter Weapons and their AIs use team tactics efficiently, swarming targets and keeping them pinned while the other Units can fire into the melee without endangering their ally.

They are not going to overpower an Outsider anytime soon, but they can hold the fort against Botakuris that slip past defense lines while the SDF's proper Gears catch up.

USLS-01 Landship Williams

The RUF's base of operations while out in the field are their landships. Way too large and slow to be of any real use during the guerrilla's hit and run operations, they serve a much better purpose defensively as veritable mountains full of guns - totaling around fifty emplacements and turrets - that hold the various defense lines leading to LA with a combination of terrain advantage and sheer firepower until reinforcements -usually the Wagner- arrive.

Life inside Landships is a lot more complicated than in the Wagner. They do not have fancy supercomputers to always make the right choices for them or mysterious helpers made of money they can turn to for supplies when winter lasts too long. Instead they must resort to what guerillas have been doing for centuries in the fight against those bigger and meaner than them: Stealing from their enemy. This is difficult, but doable, and the majority of RUF Platoon Captains have taken to the costume of always having more than they think they will need, because when they do need it, it usually isn't enough.

BMA-099 Danube

After decades of research on automated weapons, the SSA - or what is left of it - believe they have reached the peak of the power-to-size equation. The Danube is a hovering Unit compatible with both 0-G and atmospherical environments that can operate for very large amounts of time on its own and packs quite a punch.

Despite being flimsier than practically every Gear out there, its speed and multiple high-yield all-range energy weapons make it a fearsome enemy should it have a tactical edge on a stronger foe - from advantageous terrain to sheer numbers.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
9	4	8
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	2	4

Areas

Core	Head	Torso
Squadron		Jury-Rig
Support Fire		
Arms	Legs	Other
Custom Melee Weapon		
Disruptor Cannon		

Custom Melee Weapon: +1 Accuracy, +3 Penetration.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
0	7	15
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	4	2

Areas

Bridge	Antenna	Hull
Terrain Specialist (Land)		Reload
		Resupply
Turrets	Stern	Other
Lux Cannon		
Bombardment		

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
13	4	6
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
5	7	0

Areas

Core	Sensors	Turret
Terrain Specialist (Space)		Riot Weapon
Gunbarrels	Thrusters	Other
Custom Beam Weapon	Speed Module	

Custom Beam Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Sample Allied Grunts

HMR-00 Soaring Dragon Fortress

The eponymous 'Hiryu' of the island and its 'Karakuri' automated Gears, the SDF itself and the Automated Gears are obviously the very last line of defense against Outsiders before they're free to rampage around the rest of the Pacific -and beyond- as much as they want. Fortunately for those involved, the fortress itself is as impressive in performance as it is visually, and where its Karakuris, Gunners and rocket-powered Claws don't prove to be enough it may still use its terrifying Kuzuryusen cannon as a last ditch effort, at the cost of destroying a grand portion of the island it is supposed to protect. In a worst case scenario, the Kuzuryusen may be activated to assure either a pyrrhic victory or mutual destruction.

Suggested Genre Powers for its commander include Signature Weapon (Kuzuryusen) and G-Buster from the Common Package, and any combination from the Director and Champion Packages.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
0	9	15	6	1	3

Areas

Core	Head	Body	Turrets	Claws	Other
Base Unit	Giga Blaster	Friction Field	Heavy Machinegun	Divine Wind	
Fortress					
Artillery Mode					
Invincible Frame					

Enhancements: +2 Armor, +1 Penetration.

HMR-02 Kagutsuchi

Kagutsuchi stands as the Soaring Dragon Fortress' first and best success to date. This Gear is testament and symbol to Hiryu's talent at the construction of giant robots and their fierce independent spirit. The Kagutsuchi is an agile, moderately armored model equipped for close quarters combat with Outsiders. Its most notable feature is the Guren Kaina -or Crimson Lotus Arm - used to melt anything it can grab. As a secondary Weapon, Kagutsuchi possesses a mounted beam rifle in its left wrist for those times when it just needs to keep its distance and fill something with holes.

Other than that, the Gear was made for blitzing through the battlefield and reaching its targets as soon as possible. To this end it comes equipped with both the first miniaturized Gear-scale Anti-Gravity drive and 'Rolling Thruster' wheels at the back of each heel to skiff across water without the need to make itself a giant, flying target. Kagutsuchi's fiery appearance becomes even more impressive when the Oscillating Armor is online, making the Gear look like it is on fire and reminding everyone that yes, it is named after the God of fire.

Suggested Powers for a potential Avatar include those from the Scout and Champion packages - Kagutsuchi needs to get up close and personal so it can do its thing. Counter Intelligence makes short work of Outsiders trying to pull hit and run tactics on your guys, and Signature Weapon (Radiant Fist) is also a fantastic idea.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	5	8	8	4	5

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other
Custom Blueprints	Custom Ballistic Weapon	Anti-Gravity	Custom Beam Weapon	Over-Booster	
		Oscillating Armor (Melee)	Radiant Fist		

Custom Ballistic Weapon: +1 Penetration.

Custom Beam Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Enhancements: +2 Energy, +1 Accuracy.

UHDS-001 Wagner

Clocking in at about three hundred meters in length, barely over a hundred in height and just about as much in width, the Wagner might look more like a literal airship than it should have any right to, but this makes sense in its own way. It is full of Anti-Gravity Pods, rendering it as the fastest ship ever designed.

In combat, the Wagner can make use of cannons and missile launchers much like any other battleship, but it is not in its firepower where lies its real strength. It may spread 'balloons' of contained Type-G particles, which spread clouds of the gaseous substance to shield itself and others from harm temporarily, and particularly dense clouds will quite simply stop all electromagnetic signatures from coming in or getting out, thus creating a 'screen' rendering the entirety of the area on the other side a puzzle. These clouds do not last for more than a few minutes before suffering a rapid decay as their explosive energies simply separate too far from each other and fade out. In addition, they expend considerable resources so they are to be used sparingly.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
3	5	10	8	0	6

Areas

Core	Bridge	Shields	Main Cannon	Bottom	Other
Base Unit	Assistant	Oscillating Armor (Beam)	Custom Beam Weapon	Anti-Gravity	
Tactical UI					
Stealth Field					

Custom Beam Weapon: +3 Accuracy, +1 Penetration, +4 Energy, Reliable.

BGM-001 Penderecki

The Penderecki is seen by Gear romanticists as a crude and barely mobile weapons platform, but its sheer usefulness proves that sometimes aesthetics can and should take a back seat. A single Penderecki can cover for multiple Gears at once and multiples of them can unleash an apocalyptic threnody of firepower that will destroy entire enemy platoons in minutes. The Penderecki's main strength is also its biggest flaw. It is an unfortunate one-trick pony that loses many of the benefits of adaptability that Gears are supposed to benefit from, but it packs so many guns and is engineered to make so much out of every one of them that the risk is very much worth it.

Penderecki models are the Wagner's primary Gear force, they can be quickly deployed to unleash preposterous amounts of ordinance and quickly retrieved. Should they need to do so, they can hold the line with a giant flamethrower when enemies get too close.

Useful Powers to a Penderecki pilot would come from the Trickster and Assassin Packages for even better range coverage and offensive capability. Use More Gun also works very well with the Long Rifle.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
0	7	15	6	1	2

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other
Smart Bomber		Bombardment	Long Rifle	Resupply	
Artillery Mode		Lux Cannon	Incinerator		

But it is not just due to its defensive features that the Wagner has been outsmarting and outlasting the GAF, it would not have survived all these years without the Morrigan computer system. Said by those who have had the chance to talk with it to be the most advanced AI in the world, it is actually a network of over a hundred quantum computers and may or may not have access to the entirety of the world's uploaded data. Though if it does, it does not show it. Indeed, even if the Morrigan's calculations and strategic counsel have literally saved thousands of lives -though it may still make mistakes, just as in the Liberation of New York- it does not handle compliments well and is rather humble, continually insisting that all it is trying to do is bring a more peaceful age, so that it may simply go back to studying human history without having to interfere.

Friendly as it may be, Morrigan does not share what it knows of classified information nor does it involve itself with other's personal matters as much as it would like to see everyone under its wing happy.

A prospective Captain should consider taking Genre Powers from the Supportive and Controller lines, as they do very well at enabling other Avatars.

SDE-001 Paladin

The Paladin is a sleek and fast Gear that vaguely resembles an insect in some of its design aesthetics, and is currently the smallest Gear known at just 8m tall. Avatars within often report experiencing an almost-narcotic sensation when the Warlock runs or flies through open spaces. It is as if they themselves could feel the speed they are going at with their very own senses, though this is obviously not the case.

The Paladin has a number of features going for it that keep the models being rolled out: via voice command the Gear can expel a cloud of a Organic Energy from its wings that serves three purposes. The first is that by coating itself with this substance the speed of the Paladin dramatically increases. Outside a Colony, the Gear appears to be a shooting star tearing through the night.

Defensively, the Paladin can use this organic energy to render itself temporarily invisible to confuse attackers. Lastly, the Gear itself has little to no need for sophisticated weaponry, as it can simply harness the organic energy it expels and coat any melee implements it wields, or even harness it for long distance discharges of burning fury.

Because it just loves to eat through Energy reserves, Avatars should have Ready for Another Go and aim to end the fight as soon as possible before the enemy can enact their own battle plan - the Assassin and .Controller Packages suit this purpose well.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
11	4	6	5	5	0

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other
Experimental Reactor		ECS	Custom Melee Weapon		
		Three Times Faster	Finger Net		

Custom Melee Weapon: +1 Accuracy, +6 Penetration, +1 Energy.

CFSV-001 Nine Billion

Designed and tested to withstand conditions of extreme pressure, temperature and radiation, the Nine Billion is a sphere the size of a cargo plane, considerably smaller than other craft meant to transport Gears, and barely does so when there is absolutely no other option for mission completion. The Nine Billion has a few experimental weapons, but its primary purpose is to pick up and transport captured Assets back to the Foundation in secrecy, functioning much like a futuristic black van or helicopter for in-and-off-colony use.

The Nine Billion requires only one operator, and it is not meant for support in the field outside of leaving a token spare cache of emergency repair nanobots or Type-R E-Caps, though this is not so much because they like to help, but because command says it builds dependency.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
9	4	8	6	2	4

Areas

Bridge	Sensors	Hull	Turrets	Cargo	Other
Regenerative		Friction Field	Lux Cannon	Jury-Rig	
Extreme Adaptation		Anti-Gravity	Resonance Cannon	Resupply	

When threatened, its operators are instructed to deploy their clouds of nanomachines and make a quick retreat until the situation is under control and the Cryptid is neutralized.

Should the Nine Billion be forced to take up the fight it has two aces up its sleeve: First is its Lux Cannon, a commendable effort on making any kind of enemy possible to hit. Then there is the Resonance Cannon, which, after analysing a target's physical structure with the Nine Billion's sensors, retaliates using a high-pitched sonar blast using the same wavelength as the enemy's physical composition, causing massive structural damage.

Operators of the Nine Billion should take Powers from the Supportive and Champion Packages to ensure their own survivability... And that of their team, sometimes. Those Cryptids won't recover themselves, after all.

Sample Enemy Grunts

Rotarum X1

The combat Botakuri model designed to hold their own against Hiryu Gears in tandem with the Outsiders' hordes of Magisters providing them support.

Visually akin to a car that sprouted arms and legs and tried to walk upright - before someone attached a bunch of guns to it. The Rotarum is surprisingly agile for something that looks rather clunky, and has demonstrated ample robo-kung-fu talent in the past. In a pinch, it will churn out some rather unhealthy amounts of smoke, and move around like something taken out of a Wuxia film.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
9	4	8
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	2	4

Areas

Core	Head	Torso
Three Times Faster		
Arms	Legs	Other
Custom Ballistic Weapon	Custom Melee Weapon	

Custom Ballistic Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Custom Melee Weapon: +5 Accuracy, +1 Penetration, Unwieldy, Technique

Magister B2

The bizarre logistics support component of the typical Botakuri squadron is more like an overweight man to the casual observer than anything even remotely dangerous, indeed, it even moves in a cartoonish - almost surreal - way that shouldn't look possible from the looks of those legs.

Regardless of first impressions, the sheer bulk of missiles they carry in their bellies should not be underestimated, even their heads can be used as a giant bomb in a pinch. Magister class are known for shielding their companions at their own expense, making clusters of Botakuri considerably frustrating without a way to take out multiples of them at once.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
0	7	15
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	1	2

Areas

Core	Head	Torso
Sacrifice	Divine Wind	Custom Missile Weapon
Arms	Legs	Other

Custom Missile Weapon: +3 Accuracy, Slow.

Strength in Numbers

Because two Grunt Units are the recommended challenge for one PC, they can get complicated to manage if you are fielding them in large numbers and with enough variety in their ranks. There are several ways to simplify them, the most important of which would be the Squadron Feature - not only does it suit their nature as disposable mooks, it means you no longer have to track Maimed Areas.

Consider abilities from the Aid Another line to let them help each other or Modules just to keep them simple. If you need an Energy sink apart from Weapons, Active Defenses are acceptable answers - Gravagne Field and ECS being, of course, the simplest of the bunch - with Stealth Field and Three Times Faster as alternatives.

Then there's Weapons. the Specific Weapons ironically are more complicated to handle because they all have special abilities, while Custom Weapons only need you to think about what abilities you should give them. Your best bet is probably to use one specific and one custom weapon each. Some of the most powerful Weapons you could field in large numbers include Divine Wind, Lux Cannon, and Bombardment. Useful harassment Weapons to mess with PCs would be Finger Net, Armor Breaker, and Interference Cloud. While Long Rifle and Charge Beam are useful in that you only need to actually pay attention to the Grunts using them once every other Turn.

As for making your own custom weapons, you can minimize efforts by just slapping a bonus of +2 to Accuracy and 1 to Penetration on any of the base templates and call it day. For a big boost of power in a 'fire and forget' package, you can also make them One-Shot, or make them cost half the total energy of the Unit so they can only be used twice.

Finally, you can also save yourself time and effort by keeping a recurring cast of Grunts. Instead of coming up with new ones for every other Operation, you create a few and enhance them as the Season goes along. This is what the sample Grunts provided all assume you are going to do.

Majesty

Part fighter jets, part bombers, all stealth. Board-operated aircraft are just as numerous as their landbound version - if not more. Air capability coupled with their speed and sheer firepower make the UEF's air dominance a terrifying thing, requiring extensive effort to appropriately counter.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
11	4	6
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
5	5	3

Areas

Core	Systems	Bombs
Squadron	Stealth Field	Custom Missile Weapon
Flyer		
Turrets	Thrusters	Other
Custom Ballistic Weapon	Over-Booster	

Custom Ballistic Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Custom Missile Weapon: +7 Penetration, -6 Maximum Range, Blast.

Dominion

Even if the real power of the UEF's forces reside in the GAF, the sheer numbers of mechanized land forces in their control from ages past - now unmanned and A.I. controlled - make up the bulk of their forces. More of them continue to be produced since they only require a few human supervisors each.

Attributes

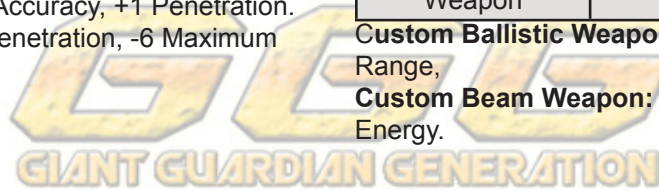
Evasion	Armor	Threshold
3	7	10
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
8	0	8

Areas

Core	Front	Cannons
Squadron	Power Module	Custom Beam Weapon
Terrain Specialist (Land)		
Turrets	Back	Other
Custom Ballistic Weapon		

Custom Ballistic Weapon: +3 Accuracy, -2 Maximum Range,

Custom Beam Weapon: +4 Accuracy, +1 Penetration, +2 Energy.



GAR-06 Bravery

The first Gear to be mass produced by the UEF and the one that other Gears owe the nickname to, the Bravery is a unit designed with the idea that the best way to survive against the SSA's Boards was to never let them hit their own robots in the first place. To this end it is equipped with a multitude of fast-acting jammers to confuse enemy targeting equipment.

After several years additional equipment has been developed to make it less of a walking deathtrap when compared to the RUF's own Gears, with increased energy capacity and endurance in each of its limbs. It also sports weapons for short to long distance encounters and is equally able to shine in any of them as the Gear of choice in the GAF's roster.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
9	4	8	6	2	4

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other
	ECS		Custom Melee Weapon		
			Custom Beam Weapon		

Custom Melee Weapon: +4 Accuracy, +1 Energy.

Custom Beam Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Sample Enemy Rivals

AIE-003 Lapis

The only Outsider that has had multiple encounters with Hiryu's Gears and escaped every time until now, partly because of its power and resilience, partly because it prefers to fight in environments where it has the advantage. Lapis is best described as a submarine multitude of shifting Gygravagnite crystals, all rotating around a Core at the bottom of the creature. Capable of high-yield energy and ordinance-based attacks, Lapis is a rather conservative and even intelligent Outsider, unwilling to expose itself to danger and often found bombarding from a distance until either its Botakuri minions have broken past Mitsurugi's defenses or been wiped out. If really pushed to the brink, Lapis can use its claw-like limb to crush any Gears close enough.

Lapis is a mid-game encounter at earliest considering how effective a sniper it is. It will be difficult to catch up to it unharmed, since it resides at Sea or other environments that make it difficult to access. If you really want to drive home how bothersome he can be as a recurring encounter, you should make use of Difficult Terrain effectively and make it use Live Another Day whenever it has a chance to do so. Other effective Genre Powers would be Hit n' Run and Ready for Another Go - plus anything from the Champion and Controller Packages. It would not be surprising for it to survive until the late game, a point at which it may be outclassed and sidelined by greater threats.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	5	8	6	4	7

Areas

Core	Top	Center	Exterior	Bottom	Other
Terrain Specialist (Water)	Anti-Air Missiles	Charge Cannon	Gravagne Field		
Berserker					
Custom Blueprints					

Berserker Weapon: +4 Penetration, Reliable, Melee.

Enhancements: +1 Accuracy, +2 Penetration.

Now it is Personal

In fiction, Rivals are usually well developed and just as relevant as the main characters to the story, they are often even more popular than the protagonists and every time they trade blows it is guaranteed to be an exciting moment. Trying to replicate this in a table is a noble goal but an RPG is fundamentally different in that the PCs need to be the center of action at all times. You cannot afford to constantly cut to what the NPCs are doing for the sake of their development, so what you need to do is to make them part of the PC's lives.

The simplest of methods is to have them and the PCs meet during an Intermission. Maybe the PCs get in trouble with Civil Protection and they are bailed out of what looks to the NPC like another case of authorial abuse. Maybe they meet them on neutral terms like during a visit to the Sanctuary Districts, or perhaps even in the black market. The point is that they should establish a relationship with each other, so that later you can pull the surprise twist that they're actually enemies and proceed to shout at each other like good rivals ought to do.

This is assuming that the Rival is a reasonable, decent human being, more cartoonish Rivals that are obviously evil do not need much in the way of a relationship with PCs. Such Enemies are the kind that will be fine if they're met once to establish that they are hateful, horrible people and get to do a dastardly deed or two. Low blows like using hostages, infiltrating the PC's ranks as a spy, and sabotaging or destroying their supply chain are all effective at establishing someone the characters will love to hate.

WWG-001 Power

One of the largest Gears seen to date, the Power is covered in spikes and, barring the fact that it looks like a thing that is both alive and evil, it has remarkable similarities to the style of Hiryu Gears. This is possibly as a result of the way that both the GAF and the Outsiders have been studying them.

This Gear is the point man of the Glory class, since it is a big target that will wreck anyone it can catch with its arms or even its mouth. Made for close quarters combat, the creature inside will keep fighting even if it is being torn to pieces. The beam cannon located in its chest has always malfunctioned and was never quite fixed, with each activation being highly damaging both to enemies as well as to the Power itself.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
3	5	11	8	1	6

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Other
Limiter Release	All-Out Attack	Custom Barrier (Beam)	Custom Melee Weapon		
Invincible Frame					

Custom Melee Weapon: +2 Accuracy, +1 Penetration.

Enhancements: +1 Accuracy, +1 Threshold.

Julia Campbell

Julia does not actually have nearly as much formal military training as even the rank and file of the GAF Avatars, instead developing a reputation as a competitive, hotheaded, and bloody-minded fighter. Julia often taunts her opponents in open channels, then takes down any who dare come at her with vindictive ruthlessness.

Julia was once a high school student in Boston, a straight A student with little in the way of violent tendencies outside her passion for fencing. This changed when she witnessed the only time the rebellion has successfully infiltrated Gears into the interior of the city. Observing their attack on the Power's shipment as part of a plan to destroy the convoy when it was least protected, she climbed into the cockpit and successfully activated and intuited the PsAICon controls, rapidly defeating the hardly unskilled rebel operatives on her own.

It was later discovered that Julia had a hobbyist level of interest in historical wars up to and including those of the present era, and examined their data in great detail, from which she took her encyclopedic knowledge of tactics. Further, she had a level of natural skill in Gear operation that was unseen previously. She begged to be allowed to stay on as the pilot of the Gear that she salvaged, and the UEF acquiesced, if primarily out of a curiosity as to how her abilities were possible. A great deal of the girl has been buried beneath the violent tendencies of the woman with every deployment since then, and now Julia is a shell of a person that lives for battle.

Julia is friendly, funny and even flirty in her own way most of the time, with a flair for dramatics. But she should not be expected to show any mercy or attempt at negotiation with enemies save to taunt them.

Someone who trumps over her during a duel one on one might earn her attention, and perhaps even her respect. It is possible that if she were forced to listen somehow, she could be reasoned with, since she's highly unlikely to support a clearly lost cause. That would be because, unlike certain other war obsessed characters, Julia is not willing to actually go out in a blaze of glory, since it is only her ability to continue experiencing battle that matters. This is, of course, unless the end can be prolonged indefinitely, in which case she will gladly lend her aid to drag out the conflict as long as possible.

Anyone unlucky enough to force her to retreat will find out that Julia does not like having a score to settle, and she will not rest until proving that she is the best there is.

Eclair is particularly fond of melee combat, and has refused to use even the simplest of rifles since she first fell into the cockpit, and she flat out forbid anyone from fixing the suicidal beam cannon.

Her relationship to the beast within the Power is perhaps the key reason she has not been replaced, since they seem to be in tune when it comes to their preferred fighting style.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
6	2	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
2	6	4

Skills and Traits: Combat (Amateur: Fencing), Deception (Adept), Diplomacy (Adept), Presence (Adept), Hard Work and Guts.

Genre Powers: All Six Default Powers, plus Signature Weapon (All-Out Attack), Target Lock, and Variable Range.

WWG-002 Victory

The Victory was made when the GAF was convinced it did not need to know the workings of Gygravagnite Type-G at all, and it is the result of them trying to find their own ways around such things. Obviously intended to seek and destroy the Wagner and its own Gears, the Victory excels at taking out individual Units before they know what got them, and will quickly disable even the almighty airship if it is left alone with it.

The Gear sacrifices hardiness for speed and is the only model in the entirety of the UEF that can fly... But not under its own power. Instead it stands atop a mechanized, armored beast that it uses as a platform. The beast is suicidally obedient, and can be sacrificed by initiating plan 'Ramming Speed' if the need to do so arises.

Its other main feature, and most dangerous weapon, are a multitude of smaller, flying biomechanical insectoids. Those are capable of providing support from a distance, firing beams with a frightening tendency to land direct hits.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold	Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
11	4	6	6	8	0

Areas

Core	Head	Torso	Arms	Platform	Other
Mental Link System			Custom Melee Weapon	Divine Wind	Custom Beam Weapon
				Anti-Gravity	

Custom Melee Weapon: +5 Penetration.

Custom Beam Weapon: +1 Accuracy, +1 Remote.

Enhancements: +3 Accuracy.

Leon Wakefield

Leon is a graduate with honors from the Boston academy, a calm and collected Avatar with years of experience, talented as a fighter and tactician. Leon is not one to negotiate with terrorists, and sees the guerilla as misguided at best, to him they are an enemy he must crush himself if he is to rise through the ranks.

A cursory glance to his background reveals that his distaste for the guerilla is not out of loyalty and propaganda, but a much more personal issue. As the son of Executive Councilman Patrick Wakefield, he didn't witness the worst of life in the Safe Zones until after becoming an orphan. To thank for his fate are the -then unnamed- insurgent forces that caused the early violent riots in the first months since the creation of the Safe Zones.

They set fire to and destroyed multiple government buildings - complete with civilians inside, including Leon's own family. As a gullible teenager, Leon let his grief get the best of him. He signed up as part of the volunteer civilian peacekeeping forces almost immediately, but has matured considerably since then.

His idealism for the 'Unified Government' of the UEF is usually looked at with disrespect from his very peers, and although he turns a blind eye to said remarks he is not too soft for his position. When the situation calls for it, and especially when civilian lives are in danger, his wrath is swift and devastating. Leon firmly believes that things will be better once we are truly unified, and that the way to change the system is from the inside.

Due to his exemplary record, his combination of strength and compassion, and his overall polite and charming demeanor, it is no wonder that he commands such loyalty from his team and is loved by the GAF's PR division.

As one of the few lucky survivors that were present for the battle of New York, Leon lost all of his teammates back then as part of both the battle and the detonation of the 3G-Bomb. Since that day, he has been working earnestly to have enough influence so as to put a stop to such senseless sacrifices. He will unify the world and bring peace to the people with his own hands, even if it is the last thing he does.

As the appointed leader of the Glory Squadron, his wingmates can expect someone who genuinely looks out for them and can always give a pep talk. He is not too fond of operating something that looks like only a supervillain could use, but the Victory and himself are a great match for each other, so there seems to be a solid work relationship of mutual respect there.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
2	4	6
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	2	6

Skills and Traits: Athletics (Adept), Combat (Adept), Diplomacy (Adept), Survival (Adept), Leadership.

Genre Powers: All Six Default Powers, plus Ready for Another Go, Strength in Union, and Confusion in the Ranks.

SLF-027 Schrodinger and SLF-028 Wigner

One of the strangest reported Cryptid sightings lately around Verne I is that of a 'man with strange hair and a glowing woman', they are both obviously Cryptid in origin (or at least alien enough to share many of their features) and heavy readings of Element G are detected in places where they are said to appear.

The only pattern to their appearances so far is that they tend to observe Operations to subdue or destroy other Cryptids from a distance, but they have only been confronted once by Children and the results were... Not very promising. Despite their small size, both are extremely powerful and operatives are not to engage them outside of a Gear in all circumstances.

Both share the ability to read thoughts and cause anyone near them to hallucinate, often with results that are heart-stopping. In addition to that common technique, they have demonstrated levels of teamwork unseen in earlier Cryptids, and complement each other with their individual unique characteristics. For now Schrodinger and Wigner seem content enough to hang by the sidelines and observe Operations, but they are a very present threat and there is no telling when they might decide to take matters into their own hands. If they are not dealt with soon, Clarke Actors may find themselves paid a visit one of these nights.

Schrodinger (the man) manipulates sound, while Wigner (the woman) holds domain over electromagnetic radiation. Both may use these abilities to various effects, and the full extent of their control over either element is unknown, but their elusiveness leads the Foundation to believe they use them for illusory purposes, usually due to conflictive readings indicating they are in multiple places at the same time.

Schrodinger

Schrodinger is the forward of the duo, charging in then dishing out as much Damage as possible. Most of the time, he uses his Genre offensively, with Repeatable Resonance Cannons being his trademark.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	6	2
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
6	4	2

Skills and Traits: Athletics (Adept), Combat (Adept), Presence (Adept), Phantasm (Expert: Sound), Intimidating, Jaded, Nightmare.

Genre Powers: All Six Default Powers, plus Impetuous Style, Righteous Fury, and Believe in Myself.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
9	4	10
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	3	4

Areas

Core	Head	Torso
Biological	Resonance Cannon	Riot Weapon
Cryptid		
Invincible Frame		
Sacrifice		
Arms	Legs	Other
Custom Melee Weapon		

Custom Melee Weapon: +4 Accuracy, +1 Energy.

Enhancements: +2 Threshold, +1 Accuracy.

Wigner

Wigner is tactically oriented and hurts the Energy reserves of enemies, she can also redirect the worst blows that would be dealt to Schrodinger to herself, reducing the Damage and gaining Genre for it, to patch herself up afterwards.

Fitness	Intellect	Empathy
4	4	4
Awareness	Willpower	Resources
4	4	4

Skills and Traits: Athletics (Adept), Combat (Adept), Presence (Adept), Phantasm (Expert: Light), Intimidating, Jaded, Nightmare.

Genre Powers: All Six Default Powers, plus Take One for the Team, Confusion in the Ranks, and Exhaustion.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
0	7	15
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	1	2

Areas

Core	Head	Torso
Biological	Support Fire	Jury-Rig
Cryptid	Tracking System (Beam)	Resupply
Regenerative		
Arms	Legs	Other
Lux Cannon		
Disruptor Cannon		

Enhancements: +1 Energy.

Sample Enemy Bosses

AIE-05 Avis

Despite its name, the Angelus doesn't quite look like a bird, gaining its name from the its six wings. Avis is more accurately described as a tripodal tower that does not actually fly, despite being winged.

Rather fragile for an Outsider, what it lacks in bulk it makes up for in firepower. Avis can fire a multitude of Gygravagnite-based 'feathers' from its wingspan that will interfere with the functions of any Gears they make contact with - the result being a temporary shutdown and forced reboot of all targeting functions.

More worryingly, the more wings it spreads the faster the creature blinks from place to place - and it can deflect any energy-based weaponry by shielding itself with its wings.

For a Boss class foe, Avis requires a degree of protection from minions, seeing as it is a pretty straightforward and easily overpowered Enemy if you have numbers on your side.

Improvements to Avis should prioritize giving the Outsider more long-term staying power, with abilities like Adaptive Field or Show me Your Resolve. G-Leeches can be used to fuel Hypersonic Striker, and should all else fail Payback guarantees it will not go out quietly.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
11	9	6
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
5	5	5

Abilities

Power	Archetype	Weapon
I Believe This is Yours (Beam)	Hypersonic Striker	Needle Storm

Features: Boss, Biological.

AIE-01 Custos

The first Outsider seen outside of their Mothership and by far the most powerful one ever recorded, the Custos never wanders too far away of Easter II and attacks anything remotely dangerous that comes within a few hundred kilometers of the island with extreme prejudice. Described since the first days of the invasion as a "Clockwork tentacled UFO" hardly any new information has been gathered on it since then, due to the danger doing so presumes. Many have perished to its extreme bursts of Element G radiation, close in power to a 3G-Bomb.

The Custos is, for obvious reasons, a late-game encounter or even an end boss not only because of its importance as the guardian of the Outsider mothership but also because of its tremendous power.

Good improvements to it as the Arcs would be those that make it easier to survive for longer periods of time, Nanoskin Shell is nasty when combined with Juggernaut. Moreso with Payback. As for stats, enhance its Threshold further, and then give it some Accuracy - then Weapons to use it with. Wormhole Assault and Graviton Wave are a nice warm-up or addition to 3G-Bomb strikes.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
9	9	13
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	2	4

Abilities

Power	Archetype	Weapon
Show me your Resolve	Juggernaut	3G-Bomb

Features: Boss, Biological.

SLF-014 Maxwell

First spotted in the trash incinerators of an inter-colony merchant shuttle from which it escaped into space, Maxwell is an ever-growing pile of scrap metal, Gygravagnite constantly combusting and regrowing, and all sorts of strange elements found only in the remnants of the Asimov colonies.

Maxwell has survived for nearly a decade, not for lack of trying from the Clarke Foundation. It has proven simply too difficult to kill, and it comes out of every encounter stronger than before. Maxwell's distinguishing feature is how it can assimilate any weapon that previously failed to kill it, becoming virtually immune to them.

To add further worries, it is capable of physically assimilating other Gears, turning its strange form of biology into a material that absorbs the Gear's own body and places extreme harm on anyone who happens to be synchronizing itself with it. An ability that the science team would love to analyze, but can't quite afford to attempt to, with the added caveat that if they surrender an opportunity to destroy Maxwell they might not get another one again.

Since it is meant to be encountered solo (like most Cryptids), it can be considered dangerous without being impossible. Maxwell never retreats from battle, but never gives chase to any Avatars trying to flee either, and thus can safely be encountered two or more times until his guard is finally pierced through.

If Maxwell were to evolve further, it most likely would continue its singleminded strategy of focusing on defense first, offense later. Juggernaut is a good start, but Your Fate is Sealed works well before using Merge. Afterimages would also help both with Offense and Defense.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
0	7	20
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
11	1	2

Abilities

Power	Archetype	Weapon
That will not Work Again	Bloodlust	Merge

Features: Boss, Biological, Cryptid.

SLF-016 Laplace

The Cryptid known as Laplace is an amalgamation of corpses from all sorts of lifeforms in various states of decomposition, taking a roughly humanoid form. Its cyclopean head exposes a rather large pulsating brain that glows with an eerie light and has jagged teeth sharp enough to cut a hole into the colonies like peeling a tuna can open. It bounces or simply hovers around the battlefield, with remarkably agility for its bulk, like a demented balloon made of dead people. It can detach fully autonomous parts of itself, which work both as decoys and weapons, floating into anything that Laplace deems a threat and violently exploding on contact.

Laplace has several years' worth of experience outsmarting and outlasting attempts to subdue or eliminate it. It is believed it might have a very strong telepathic and precognitive talents. Laplace can be a recurring mid-to-late game Boss, though it is unlikely to hold up well by then, being extremely single minded in its strategy, and could definitely use some way to regain the Energy it so voraciously consumes outside of Micromanaging.

The better extra abilities it could use would be those that improve its mobility and continue to make it harder to focus on, Come Forth, my Minions and All Become One would make sense. Hypersonic Striker works wonders to amplify the effects of his preexisting abilities, and Needle Storm would be icing on the cake.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
16	4	6
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
10	5	0

Abilities

Power	Archetype	Weapon
You are too Slow	Afterimages	Suicide Swarm

Features: Boss, Biological, Cryptid.

SLF-005 Gravagne

Pure Gygravagnite in the form of a humanoid; that is the only definition everyone has had of the Spontaneous LifeForm 005 Gravagne for decades and that is all anyone actually knows about it. The Gravagne is only spotted occasionally once every several months, and every time it is stronger than before, annihilating everything in the vicinity and absorbing all the Element G into itself before disappearing once again.

What it does in between raids, its final objective, and even its true origin are unknown. Gravagne displays incredible capabilities in distorting spacetime around itself and is theorized to be proof of string theory.

Further complicating the issue of neutralizing it is the fact it is often surrounded by minions - strangely enough, they are usually replicas of other Cryptids.

Attributes

Evasion	Armor	Threshold
14	9	8
Energy	Accuracy	Penetration
6	2	4

Abilities

Power	Archetype	Weapon
Die for Me!	Bullet Hell	Graviton Wave

Features: Boss, Biological, Cryptid.

Gravagne wants even higher defenses if it is going to be a late game enemy, starting with more Threshold and Armor. Payback is a great ability for a boss like Gravagne, since it already has other abilities that eschew defenses and deal straight Threshold damage. Other recommended abilities are Telekinetic Strike and even Do you Desire the Power? to further mess with the opposition's plans while keeping up the pressure.

The Big Bads

Bosses are more interesting than Grunts and Rivals. Because of how their Archetypes need them to be damaged yet functional, you want to give them good defensive enhancements or abilities. Offensively, you want them to be able to use their energy, keeping in mind that the lifespan of the average Boss is between 4 to 6 Rounds.

A Boss is around the equivalent of two PCs, that means you can expect them to knock one character out and the second to beat them just barely - as long as there aren't any outside interferences. But this is just a rough guideline, because a Boss with abilities that have great synergy together can be the equivalent of three PCs, while a Boss with abilities chosen at random might barely be able to withstand the combined power from two PCs to challenge just one of them.

Below are some solid ideas for combinations of Boss abilities to get you started:

Resistance is Futile, Adaptive Field and Wormhole Assault:

Better employed with a Destroyer or Dynamic Chassis - this combination is about constantly releasing obscenely powerful Beams in rapid succession. Adaptive Field provides a modicum of defense, but also helps with Energy reserves.

Come Forth, my Minions!, All Become One and Suicide Swarm:

This Boss will swarm PCs with a relentless army. If the Boss waits until it gets to the last Level of Threshold to respawn them, it can keep itself going indefinitely provided the PCs don't overwhelm it.

You're Too Slow, Bloodlust and Constrict:

At its most vicious with a Eagle Chassis that has its Evasion maximized, this Boss is a nightmare to groups without Support Fire - it will close the distance quickly while evading lucky shots, and once it gets hold of a PC it will not let go.

Also keep in mind that Bosses can trade some of their special abilities for regular ones available to PCs. Artillery Mode and Smart Bomber work very well with Overfreeze, keeping PCs at bay. Believe in Myself and Take one for the Team can make a Boss with the Payback Archetype a terrifying tank for its minions. Behold my True Power can wreck tightly packed Squads by repeating a combined attack from Finger Net and Heavy Machinegun, with backup from a Sentry Turret to keep them boxed in.

All of the Bosses presented here only have rules for their use during Operations, this is because they are giant monsters and will rarely have need for detailed Intermission mechanics. If you think you could ever need them, you might as well just come up with Attributes and assign Skills ad-hoc.

A good rule of thumb is that, for any activity that your Enemies are supposed to be moderately good at, it should be rolled at a +5 bonus and have one Advantage - such as an aquatic Outsider using Athletics to swim. Their Defense should be of 10, and Plot Armor should be around 5 or so. For each Episode Arc beyond the first you may increase these values by one.

Yes, these numbers are assuming slightly above average ranks for all Attributes. That is because it is always safer to err on the side of caution. An NPC being moderately more competent than expected is preferred if it makes PCs put more effort into trying their weird plans.

As for roleplaying these alien intelligences, remember they are supposed to be a mystery wrapped in an enigma. Give them a Theme for a semblance of personality if you need to, but keep them vast and inscrutable.

Running a Hiryu Game

Set in a far away, remote island that is totally not a romanticized eastern culture, a Season of GGG focusing on the island of Hiryu and its inhabitants is a tale reminiscent of the classic "Super Robot" Subgenre of Mecha, with young men and women defending their communities from the giant metal beasts and their inscrutable alien masters that brought mankind to its knees.

The main theme of Hiryu is '**United we Stand**', and games set on the eponymous island are encouraged to play up this factor. The Outsiders and their mechanical monsters, the Botakuri, ravage seaside cities uncaring for their terrorized populace and, after years of quiet despair, the people of the land have taken up arms and decided to fight back, setting aside their differences to face a common enemy.

This is not to say that everyone gets along. Different folk with different backgrounds and interests have always found plenty of reasons to disagree with each other on important matters, and even with everyone working hard towards the same goal, the tension can get so thick sometimes you could cut it with a knife.

This is only made worse by the fact that, currently, the Soaring Dragon Fortress has its hands full simply by defending itself from Outsiders and Botakuri as they come - never strong enough to actually make a serious offensive.

Difficulty

The Outsiders treat humanity itself like a minor obstacle to all the Gygravagnite-based technology they are actually interested in. They generally avoid being destroyed in battle, retreating when the going gets tough. Considering that until the introduction of the Botakuri they were vastly outnumbered, this makes a certain amount of sense.

Add this all together and you obtain a game that is relatively easy on the players, challenging when it needs to be but unlikely to kill many PCs unless they want to play hero and make a glorious last stand themselves.

This, of course, assumes the Outsiders continue to take it easy and don't make use of the terrifying power they demonstrated when they first came in the Battle of the 23 Hours. The why of this status quo is unknown. Popular theory is that they can't examine that which they have destroyed and thus they hold back out of necessity - but the knowledge that if they wanted to they could rush Hiryu with dozens of Outsiders and hundreds of Botakuri sends a chill down the spines of everyone at the base.

What this means is that you, as the GM, can make the game much harder on the PCs if you so wish but that, by default, it is assumed to be a series of Monster-of-the-Week encounters where defeat is possible but death is unlikely.



Inspiration

You can draw parallels between a Hiryu game and many, many Mecha shows, as arguably the most common form that the Mecha Genre adopts is that of Superhero-esque robots fending off big bad monsters from the cities they protect. If you want to run such a game and are in the mood for 'researching' some anime for purely scientific purposes, here are some suggestions:

Mazinger Z and shows from Dynamic Productions

The original Super Robots, protecting Japan and their important laboratories from being destroyed by some very silly looking monsters. If you can get ahold of the various, more modern remakes, that works just as well.

The King of Braves GaoGaiGar

Obvious self-referential jokes about the letter G aside, GaoGaiGar exhibits how one could take a lighthearted show and slowly raise the stakes towards a truly epic scale with its second half, before finally shifting to a darker tone closer to the morally gray zone.

Super Heavyweight God Gravion

Though it is easy to dismiss Gravion as a show that is little more than fanservice, it presents a few interesting concepts for the use of Combiners and their use.

Rahxephon

A symbolism-laden pacific island with its own military struggles to defeat a foe that never goes all out on them, with character interactions as the true heart of the story and a plot whose mysteries can reveal a way to literally change and 'fix' a broken world. Ring any bells?

Fafner in the Azure

Though more obviously invested on the aspect of Mecha that deals with coming of age, and a tad too grim for the average game, Fafner has bizarre Aliens and a multitude of characters that contribute to battling them, instead of a single useful Pilot and Mecha.

Defending Hiryu

Mitsurugi Island should be the stage for most anti-Outsider Operations. It is a mostly plain and featureless battleground and the PCs have ample time to reach it and get the jump on their approaching enemies. Players may have Units use the Docking Action to step in one of the quick maintenance platforms and receive a quick in-battle fix.

Should the battle on Mitsurugi Island be lost, the Players will get a second chance to stop the coming enemy at Kasshin, in which the number of beacons will cause any and all Outsiders to treat it as if it were Difficult Terrain- or at least this used to be the case. Ever since the introduction of Botakuris, who are unaffected by the Beacons, Outsiders have been having a considerably easier time getting around the island. Outsiders are not impaired by the effects of the Beacons for as long as there are any Botakuri present to clear a path for them, and if there are any by the end of the battle on Mitsurugi, Kasshin is skipped entirely and the next Operation takes place directly on the coasts of Hiryu instead.

The coasts of Hiryu are the last ditch line of defense, and Avatars are told it is preferable to be defeated - or destroyed - rather than to allow any enemies to breach into the island and city proper. Coming by the sea, the enemies will start on Difficult Terrain, while the PCs get to enjoy Defensive Terrain and the aid of the Soaring Dragon Fortress itself at the very back of the battlefield, with its many Karakuris and the fearsome Kuzuryusen if they are pushed to the limit.

Do note that use of Blast type Weapons will likely ruin the day of many Civilians, bombarding the city itself with very large waves, unhealthy amounts of radiation, or simply raining fire on it... Without getting into the can of worms that is the Kuzuryusen itself.

The Kuzuryusen is mostly there as a stopgap measure to prevent the game from simply ending in a rather unsatisfactory note. It is very likely to destroy everything on the battlefield but will turn even the happiest of campaigns into a sour story and give even the cockiest of PCs feelings of powerlessness as most of the surrounding civilization destroyed, leaving only the bunkers across it intact - including the fortress itself.

For many that would be a fate worse than simple death could ever be, so don't see it as a cop out and instead take advantage of how it can be used for character development.

Other Operations

As much as Hiryu's defense force would like to assure you they've got them under control, Outsiders are anything but predictable, and there's absolutely nothing stopping them from going around Hiryu and its defensive lines towards other population centers instead, or trying a pincer attack on the SDF itself.

They could likewise take a period of rest and follow it up with an insurmountable force of Botakuris, and even multiple Outsiders can appear at once - something that has not been seen since day one. Heck, you could even have GAF forces try to get in on the action, forcing the PCs to split their forces.

Then there's the fact that Cryptids were originally spotted in the Far West, so even if they are now in space there's good odds that something still lurks in there, with their unique abilities making for a good change of pace.

Ultimately, this means that you have plenty of room to shake things up for your playing group, and that you do not have to stick to the same formula from start to end.



Running a Wagner Game

Despite being at the core of the most infamous military force in the planet, the Wagner and its crew are the ones least prepared for the rigors of the battlefield. All other factions have their own facilities and training regimes to shape up their troops, Avatars included, and, although the Wagner does have some great simulators, they also sport very unfavorable mortality rates that they simply don't get to make the best of them.

Given only the hardest of missions, it is the saving grace for beginners that their Gears are high spec models and that the Avatars chosen by the Morigan have a great level of innate talent. This is by design much like the so called 'Real Robot' Mecha Subgenre of anime, and Episodes of such a game will reflect that.

The Mobile Battleship Wagner as a center of a campaign hinges around a theme of **'Revolution'** - the odds of the PCs are far from being the best, but they'll be damned if they sit down and accept the status quo, because as far as everyone but the top brass of the UEF is concerned any change that happens will be for the best.

Standing in their way are people both sympathetic and despicable, many of them just as afraid of what would happen if the Guerilla were to win as they are of the Outsiders. For all everyone knows the UEF's deal was the only way to save mankind, but that does not matter to the revolutionaries - they will deal with that problem when the time comes, and hope for the best.

Difficulty

The Gears and Boards the GAF deploys are significantly weaker than those of the PCs, and definitely nowhere as threatening as Outsiders or Cryptids, but they have numerical superiority on their side and history has proven that to be a factor the guerilla cannot ignore.

For the time being, the GAF would rather not have all of their good men commit suicide blitzing through the guerilla and the Wagner's defenses but a new threat has arisen: the Glories.

Given only to a special test team of cherry-picked aces - known as the Glory Squad - to gather precious battle data in field tests against live enemies, a strategy that would usually be considered to be simply terrible, every Glory is a foe of strength equal to a PC and aims to kill.

Units that do not use the Retreat Action while heavily damaged are inviting trouble to come through the door, and should they defeat a Glory Squadron Unit they will come back stronger - likely developing a rivalry for the PC responsible and gunning for them whenever possible..

Because every enemy they encounter will go for the throat, the PCs under the wing of the Wagner will have a game defaulting to medium difficulty, a harder time than that at the Soaring Dragon Fortress but also easier than those poor souls at the Clarke Foundation. This can be adjusted by changing how aggressive or well-prepared the GAF is at the time.

GGG
GIANT GUARDIAN GENERATION



Inspiration

As it was previously stated, the situation of the Wagner is very similar to that of Mecha fiction from the age when it first incorporated science fiction and space opera elements into itself. Here is a quick list of recommendations for the GM that is in need of a wellspring of ideas:

Mobile Suit Gundam

The franchise that created the Subgenre, Gundam constantly places inexperienced pilots with superior machines against experienced foes that eventually catch up to them. Most of the entries even have the characters living in an experimental battleship!

Martian Successor Nadesico

Whimsical at heart but still pretty grim when it wants to be, Nadesico is a good source of ideas if you're feeling like playing with your group's expectations and shaking them up a lot.

Overman King Gainer

Though it may not seem obvious at first, you can use King Gainer to make a custom take on the Wagner's mission by mimicking the Exodus, changing the mythical Yapan for the Hiryu. You can even include Cryptids and Outsiders as the equivalents of the Overdevil and the Brunhilde.

Psalm of Planets Eureka Seven

You have a crew of misfits in an experimental battleship fighting against a sinister world government and their elite force squadron gunning for them. All that with the threat of invincible alien hordes looming over them and a lot of character development make for great inspiration material.

Super Beast Machine God Dancouga

Though the titular Mecha shares a lot with Super Robots conceptually, it also shares a good amount of its presentation with Real Robots, serving as a good example of how you could have the most overpowering Mecha in the world but still have to rely on guerilla warfare.

Guerilla Tactics

The grand majority of Operations involving the Wagner come in two forms: blitzing to destroy one or more key facilities and the subsequent getting out of dodge, and drawing enemy fire for a specific amount of time as a distraction.

The first is simple enough. Destroy the Base Unit at the back of the GAF defense lines and Retreat before enemy reinforcements swarm you... The second is tougher. The PCs have to be aggressive and destroy enough enemies to get their attention, and only after dealing enough damage and enough Rounds have passed will they be allowed to pull back.

Generally the former kind of mission is offensive in nature and meant to demoralize and weaken the GAF, while the second is a reactionary defense to slow down a GAF offensive on fleeing civilians or attempting to enter the territory of the guerilla itself.

But that is boiling them down to their simplest form, it is bound to happen that things will be more complicated than that, within those two categories you can fit anything from hunting down new Glory prototypes to raiding a supply line and making it back with your spoils of war.

Battles never go as planned, additional enemy forces will ambush the PCs and allies will be in need of saving. If waging war against the UEF wasn't so difficult, there would not be a need to do it.

Of course, those are just the missions that the Wagner is prepared for, it is likely that they will face challenges they never saw coming. Outsiders may decide to help the UEF quell those annoying pests, traitors may hijack a Landship and hold its crew hostage, and rumors of Cryptids spreading from the remains of Zone 4 might even pop up after a time, predictably enough turning real when things just couldn't get any worse.



Running a Clarke Game

What distinguishes PCs working for the Clarke Foundation from the rest is that while those from the various guerilla forces have a very clear objective and enemy in their sights, the Childhood Department is neither too sure of what the heck it is they're doing nor do they know who they can actually trust.

At its core, this type of game has a theme of **'Secrecy and Paranoia'** with an intricate web of conspiracies and multiple sides scheming and playing politics. This does not mean that the Players have to make politically inclined Avatars, heavens no, while that may make the experience much richer for them, it is in no way necessary.

What the Players should prepare themselves for though is to be at the crux of the issue, to be opposed and assisted by the NPCs alike. NPCs' dispositions towards the PCs could remain consistent throughout the Season, or it could change depending on how much the party can be trusted or manipulated. It does not help that the PC's own superiors aren't any different in that regard, but even then, the Players should unveil at least a moderate amount of these secrets and conspiracies as the Arcs march on, but it is important to keep them from the central conflicts of the game until the very end.

In this vein, the game is very much like the Mecha Fiction that bloomed during the middle of the 90's and remained popular for the next decade. The PCs think that what they're doing is the right thing - at least that's what they're told - but they'll be damned if they know what the consequences of their actions actually are.

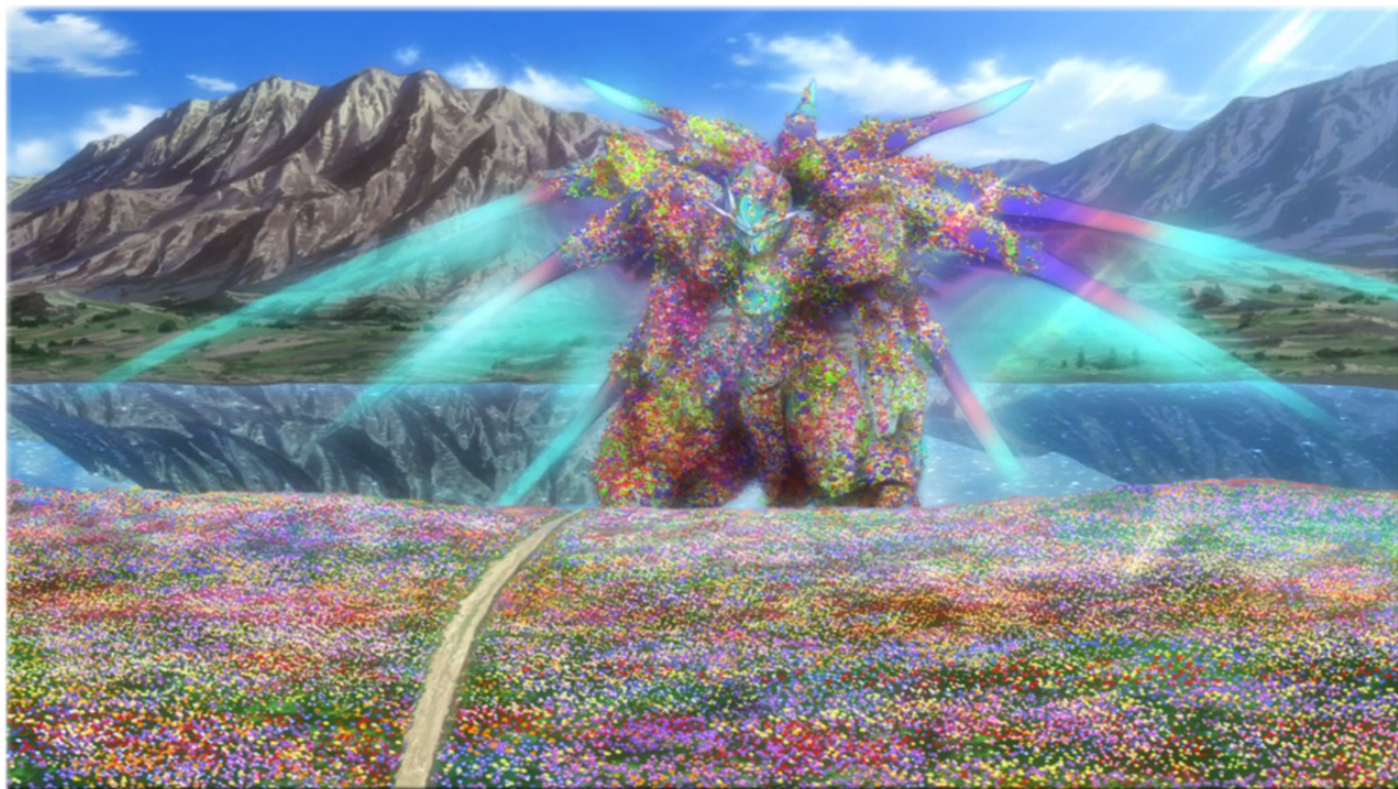
Difficulty

Every single Operation in which the Childhood Department deploys its Gears is not just potentially lethal - it is likely lethal. Cryptids assimilate not only the physical forms but also memories, knowledge and the very personalities of those that endure prolonged exposure to them.

Not even the Avatars inside their Gears are safe, due to the unique offensive methods available to Cryptids. They are capable of damaging a person's psyche and leaving them extremely deranged or even crippling them into helplessness without so much as scratching the Gear itself - to say nothing of those that lack such protection.

On top of that is the matter of Gear combat and how unsavory it is for everyone in the Colonies to see their already cramped spaces occupied by a battle between bizarre aliens and biomechanical monsters. While this has no effect on the battle itself, you should certainly take advantage of the situation when a Blast Weapon is used inside a Colony along with non-Melee Weapons that fail their Accuracy Test to describe the effects of their battles on the environments they're trying to protect, as well as to mess with your PCs later if you want to dig the knife a bit deeper.

To make PCs think about the consequences of their actions more seriously, you could have the Foundation be upset at them: the PCs earn reprimands from their superiors, have the collateral costs of the Operation deducted from their pay, they could even get thrown in a cell for a few days, or a combination of those. The other option, the one that is also harder to pull off but that much more effective on those that aren't complete sociopaths, is to have the community start to show them their unfriendly side once word of mouth starts to get around - making it harder both during Intermissions and Operations for the PCs to get things done.



Inspiration

As the most complex and nebulous of the three factions presented, Childhood Department games are the kind of game that will demand the most of the GM to run a coherent story. Thankfully there are many modern series you can draw inspiration from to help your emulating of this particular division of the Mecha Genre:

Neon Genesis Evangelion

You knew it was coming. Evangelion is as adored as it is reviled, but its influence on shaping the next decade of the medium cannot be ignored, particularly if you want your players to be confused folk building castles in the air like Evangelion's audience was.

The Big O

An action oriented show that has just the right amount of mystery, and a great source of ideas for the handling of investigation scenes. Do not forget though, that The Big O itself frequently left everywhere it touched as a wrecked mess.

Brain Powerd

The parallels between the Foundation's Gears and Antibodies is obvious, and you could definitely take advantage of that and make use of the show's plot elements as inspiration to craft the backstory.

Tekkaman Blade

Not so much worthy of note for the Radam beasts as for the Tekkamen themselves, they are humans that have been assimilated by the Radam but retain all their human faculties, just like Cryptids that have completely absorbed people.

Betterman

Betterman is a show with an oppressive and genuinely creepy atmosphere, with an impressive assortment of biological horrors every episode. On top of that it sports a level of technobabble better than usual for anime, and a conspiracy of multiple distinctive groups all gunning out for the protagonists.

Investigating Cryptid Sightings

The Childhood Department's Operations can be far more complex than those of other factions. They could be as simple as the PCs deploying with their Gears and putting down a Cryptid ASAP, but they could just as well require Clarke Operatives to spend a part of the Intermission tracking down the Cryptid and sometimes may even devolve into the Avatars fending for their lives without their Gears as a Cryptid gets the jump on them for once.

Firstly you should figure out what the Cryptid's behavior will be like. What has it assimilated previously and what will it try to assimilate next? Will it return to the crime scene for a second serving? Is it intelligent enough to attempt hiding from others and, if so, is it any good at it? Is it hellbent on violently eating up the entire Colony, and does it acknowledge the Clarke Foundation as an obstacle on its way?

Second in importance is the Cryptid's placement. Every locale reacts to the Clarke Foundation differently and that will have an impact on whether the search is as simple as being pointed to a dark alley where a strange oversized cat lurks about or if they are more likely to be told to crawl back to the Foundation with nothing.

Lastly are the possible ways in which the PCs can engage the creature in combat. Considering how much they're encouraged to figure out a way to launch a Cryptid off-colony, you may want to consider which methods to do so will be available and which ones won't. If they don't manage to take the battle into space, then the cities of each individual Colony are considered to be Defensive Terrain with plenty of buildings to use as cover, with an Evasion of 0, Armor of 10 and a Threshold of 0, but only vulnerable to Blast type Weapons and only if the PCs are really trying to breach the structure.

Battling Cryptids

Cryptids have the tendency to assimilate everything around them, whether it is tangible or not, and lack the proper manners to ask their owners whether they are okay with their equipment, bodies, or minds being absorbed before doing so. Inevitably, a Clarke Operative will misstep and leave an opening big enough for the Cryptid will begin assimilating them. At that point, defeating a Cryptid is not so much a matter of "how" as it is a matter of "how fast."

What this basically means is that an Avatar whose Gear gets hit a handful of times may be a goner even if the Gear itself is still standing strong. Given that most of the Foundation's Gears are surprisingly durable and that they have often gone through one or more Avatars before getting to the PCs, this may or may not be something that happens relatively often.

For the most part, Cryptids will not inflict lasting harm on a PC - they might make them feel weakened from blood loss, forget their home address number, or leave them temporarily depressed - but these pass with time. The real problem is when that third Layer of Plot Armor breaks; a threat only made worse by the fact that it is very possible for a PC to suffer Damage before combat actually begins, and a PC breaking through that point of no return is going to see something drastic happen to them - they might lose internal organs, hallucinate vividly for months, or become sociopathic murderers as a result of the assimilation process removing key aspects of their emotional balance.

Endgame Ideas

So you want to end things with a bang. The characters have all grown as people and they're strong enough to have taken out the sample enemies, but you are not sure how to go about it. Here are six ideas to get your creative juices flowing, each one making use of one or more rumors and plot hooks present in the corresponding chapter.

The Hiryu's Last Stand:

The SDF has reverse engineered enough Outsider tech to make the Mothership disappear entirely and send it to another dimension, much like they once did to the Space Colonies of Wells years ago. The science team believes this will not kill them, but they should not be able to return back for a good twelve thousand years. After using this weapon, the war is won. The UEF has no longer any reason to fear them, and all seems well... Except for the several hundred remaining Botakuri, directionless and without their masters, heading directly for Hiryu too fast and for any evacuation notices to be effective.

Man's Worst Enemy:

Using another Outsider-turned-Gear as medium and a priestess in a trance state inside the Core, it should be possible to communicate with the Outsiders once again. If the team manages to get the Gear close enough to achieve this via an escort mission, they might be able to make another deal, one more convenient for everyone other than just the upper echelons of the UEF. It becomes grotesquely clear that everything the Outsiders have been doing was condoned by the world government, who gained the secret to immortality in exchange for 'researching mankind and their use of Element G in a natural environment.' The Far West having been handed over like mere goods to trade. A new all-out worldwide offensive against the UEF begins the moment this information is made public.

Power and Responsibility:

The PCs capture one of the six men who rule the world and learn that there is no such thing as a free lunch. It turns out that for all the wonders it is capable of, mass use of Element G brings the heat death of the universe closer with every crystal upwards of a certain threshold - a threshold that the Safe Zones are meant to keep in check and that the Outsiders have been researching. This information is shared among the GAF Generals and the PCs help stage a coup d' etat to take them down. This new world government will have to figure out a way to solve the energy crisis, though the question will be whether they can do so without resorting to oppressing its population or not.

Ragnarok:

The Guerilla and the Colonies perform a joint operation where the former cause a ruckus while the latter take on Boston, aided by the Wagner with an orbital drop. Before the Outsiders can react, a concentration of 3G Bombs manages to sink their Mothership to the depths of the ocean. But things stop going as expected there. The destruction of this event is the greatest the Earth has ever seen, multiple countries become submerged, the unnatural shift in gravity creates a winter that lasts three quarters of a year, and Cryptid births become commonplace in every populated location on the globe. And no one is in a better position to watch and rule over this new world than the New Solar Space Alliance.

The Ultimate Weapon:

Cryptids are actually weapons that the Clarke Foundation and their predecessors have been trying to keep in check for decades, and now after many failed experiments the first controllable Cryptid is engineered, using AIs to keep their instincts in check and allowing them to assimilate only the most selected of components, knowledge and emotion. Waves of Cryptids are sent to the Earth, where they utterly dominate any opposition, even the Outsiders. The PCs are to choose between allowing the SSA's new world domination scheme to succeed and letting these barely controlled monsters continue being produced, or making a stand and destroying the source: the Clarke Foundation.

From the New World:

The origin of the Cryptids is a space between dimensions. They are things that slipped from the cracks between worlds when the Outsiders arrived in our universe, meaning that with enough research on the nature of Cryptids and reverse engineering their biology a way to travel between worlds should be possible. One does not need to win the war with the Outsiders or the UEF if they can simply go to a much more peaceful parallel Earth instead...one which they may proceed to rule themselves with their advanced technology.

THE CAESAR REASSEMBLED ITSELF OUT OF ITS SCATTERED COMPONENT ARMOR-LIKE PIECES ONCE AGAIN, REFUSING TO BE DEFEATED. ONCE MORE THE GIANT KNIGHT LUNGES WITH ITS SWORD AT THE BLADE'S GEAR, CUTTING OFF ONE OF THE BLACK GENERAL'S ARMS. IT WILL NOT GO DOWN WITHOUT HAVING TAKEN BLADE WITH IT TO THE DEPTHS OF HELL.

EVERYONE WAS BATTERED, BUT THEY KNEW THEY HAD ONE ADVANTAGE OVER THEIR SINGLEMINDED FOE, AND BLADE WAS GOING TO CAPITALIZE ON IT "BOTH OF YOU CONTINUE INTO THE CENTER OF THE SHIP, I'LL KEEP IT DISTRACTED."

"WHAT?" IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR JEFF AND MARIA TO PROTEST "BUT YOU -CAN'T- STAND UP TO IT ON YOUR OWN, LESS NOW THAT YOU'VE LOST AN ARM."

BLADE SNICKERED "IT CAN'T BE HELPED, I WOULDN'T MAKE IT BACK WITH BLACK GENERAL IN THIS STATE ANYWAY... LISTEN, IT SENSES I AM THE STRONGEST WARRIOR HERE, IF I MAKE AN OPENING, IT'LL LET YOU THROUGH. IT MIGHT BE AN ALIEN, BUT IT IS STILL A PROUD FIGHTER, AND I CAN UNDERSTAND IT AS SUCH."

JEFF KEPT RADIO SILENCE, BUT MARIA SEEMED MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN KEEPING HER SUBORDINATE FROM KILLING HIMSELF "DON'T BE STUPID, WE SAID WE'D ALL GO BACK TOGETHER, AND NO ONE IN MY SQUAD IS A LIAR. EJECT AND I'LL RETRIEVE YOU, WE CAN STILL BEAT THIS GUY."

THE OUTSIDER ADOPTED A CHARGING STANCE "HEH. THAT'S A GOOD JOKE. JEFF, YOU UNDERSTAND DON'T YOU?" BLADE DID NOT MOVE THE BLACK GENERAL, NOT EVEN WHEN THE CHAIN SWORD WENT STRAIGHT FOR THE CORE.

THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION.

GENERAL Z WAS IN BETWEEN THE BOTH OF THEM, ITS CHEST STILL RED FROM HAVING JUST USED ITS INCINERATOR TO HALT THE INCOMING ENEMY "ARE YOU DONE PLAYING THE COOL HERO YET?"

BLADE WAS NOT AMUSED "I'M NOT KIDDING AROUND-" BUT JEFF REMAINED CONFIDENT "WE STILL HAVE AN ACE IN THE HOLE, PROFESSOR TENDO'S TRUMP CARD AND THE FINAL RESULT OF ALL THE YEARS OF WORK PUT INTO PROJECT GENERAL, PROJECTILE G AND... FORMATION GGG!"

INDEED, THE OFF-VOICE OF OUR FRIENDLY NARRATOR ELABORATES "THE PROJECTILE G CAN AMPLIFY AND CHANNEL MARIA'S PSYCHIC ENERGY INTO TELEKINETIC FORCE THAT HELPS THE COMBINATION PROGRAM REORDER AND REASSEMBLE THE COMPONENT PIECES OF EACH GEAR INDIVIDUALLY, CREATING THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST SUPER ROBOT, THE GRAND GLORIOUS GENERAL!"



Closing Words

Every time I try to summarize my thoughts on this game I end up staring at a blank page for longer than I should, and that is because it means a lot to me. I love Mecha, and I love Roleplaying, but every time I've tried to play with one or more systems supposedly engineered to make for a good Mecha game I've always found them lacking. Many of them are fun to read because they've got a great world behind them, or make you want to tinker with the mecha construction rules to build your own awesome robot just how you like it, and others excel at making you care about the characters and the story.

Ironically, the parts in which you play with the actual mecha tend to be the disappointing ones. Usually the rules are messy, character options are poorly balanced (if they even make the attempt to be balanced at all), and the flow of combat is slow enough to make you dread rolling for initiative instead of getting you pumped for hot robot on robot action. Other times the rules are too simple and your agency as a player stops at rolling the dice and hoping for a good result, because the gameplay is rather shallow and there's not much you can try after the first few fights.

It is a shame, because the RPG trade is one with decades of history and yet - as of this writing for 1.7 - there is no other good 'generic' system for cool yet tactical giant robot fights. Now don't take this the wrong way, there's lots of games that know what they want to do with giant robots, and they do it *right*, but what they want is to either make mecha combat cool *or* tactical (not both), or when they do manage to get those two, they entrench the rules in a setting that complicates adapting them to any other game world.

So that is why I started writing upon a humble .txt file on early 2011, and have been at it ever since on and off almost every week. It is very much a labor of love, because I wanted to make something that wouldn't disappoint demanding players and GMs like me. Even though it has mostly been a one man operation, I have been blessed with a small but very vocal group of playtesters since I released 1.0 during the year of 2012, and they have helped immensely in achieving the goal of a game that is not just for me, but for everyone who loves Mecha.

My primary inspiration for this has been Super Robot Wars, in my opinion the only videogame franchise that gets what makes Mecha in general so cool - to the point that they can take anything that has robots in it and make it play not just well, but also feel *awesome*. GGG has at various stages riffed material in both feel and function from SRW, with varying degrees of success. I confess that mostly doing that did not work all that well, often it meant the rules read well but played poorly, and ended up being discarded or entirely rewritten after playing with them for a while.

It took a little over a year of development since 1.0 to iron out the kinks, and there's still a few things that sometimes feel a bit off. For instance the four types of Chassis have very clear roles and sometimes they make representing certain types of Mecha take some effort with things like Enhancements and Modules. However, when put to use the Chassis types play pretty well, so all is good. On the other hand, if you want a game where you use the giant robots for things besides waging war... Well, GGG has Systems Tests, but rolling them over and over is not exactly an engaging proposition. Such is the price of focusing on a clear goal, and I will take that flaw gladly if it means a game that achieves what it sets out to do.

The end result is a game that can pull off both not only giant robots but also more general anime action, which both surprises and pleases me a great deal. When I just started out I didn't want more than a couple handful of pages for pilot rules, and now not only do they almost eclipse the rules for the robots, but I keep wanting to add more to it because they're so much fun to use. Characters are legitimately interesting and awesome, they can do all sorts of things and no matter how diverse the group is they will all make for great pilots with their own roles.

So that's that. Thank you for your attention, and a bigger thank you to all the people that helped me out with this one way or another. Whether it was spitballing ideas for making a highly derivative yet still interesting game world, yelling at me for making rules that weren't up to standards, pointing out typos and other technical errors, or whatever other use of your valuable time you chose to spend on making this a better game.

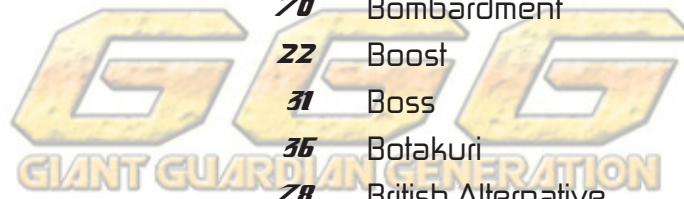
Thank you, in alphabetical order and using internet handles to protect the innocent from being associated with silly anime games: Archivist, AxelWildfire, Black Mesa Janitor, ChillyWilly, Couch, DanteSeptem, DrShort, Feldion, Gzar, Jim_Zumbo, Judanas, Kamen, Killyb, Lodoubt, LawfulNice, macrophage, NekoVerloren, NovanIV, Mr_Rage, OfficerCrash and ZZEva.

If I missed you, know that it is not because I do not value your contribution, but because I either have no record of it, or because you chose to remain anonymous. Or I might have made a mistake, in which case I apologize profusely!

Good luck and have fun.

Index

3G-Bomb	120, 149	Avis	170
Ace	18	Awareness	19
Accuracy	61	Backup Bodies	39
Action	98	Ballistic	74
Adaptive Field	118	Base Unit	73
Adept	22	Battlefield Commander	68
Advantage	7, 90	Barbican	158
Aerial	36	Beam	74
Afterimages	118	Beast Mode	69
All-Out Attack	75	Behold my True Power	117
Aid Another	68	Believe in Myself	47
Aim	98	Berserker	63
All Become One	118	Biological	122
Alluring	33	Blast	74
Ally	35	Bloodlust	119
Alternate Forms	70	Board	132
Amateur	22	Body Suit	38
Animal Person	31	Bombardment	78
Anomalies	36	Boost	99
Anti-Air Missile	78	Boss	116
Anti-Gravity	69, 139	Botakuri	145
Archetype	63	British Alternative	130
Archetypes, Boss	118	Bravery	165
Area	65	Bullet Hell	119
Armor	61	Character	6, 17
Armor Breaker	76	Charge Cannon	77
Armored Land Vehicle	39	Clarke Foundation	155
Arms	65	Chassis	60
Artillery Mode	69	Childhood Department	156
Asimov Colonies	152	Children	156
Assets	35	Civil Control	146
Assist	98	Combat	23
Assistant	71	Combination	72
Athletics	23	Come at Me Bro	49
Attack	98	Come Forth, my Minions	117
Attribute	19	Common Sense	31
Avatar	137	Compact Quarrel Controls	138
Avatar Recruit	159	Component Unit	72
		Confusion in the Ranks	50

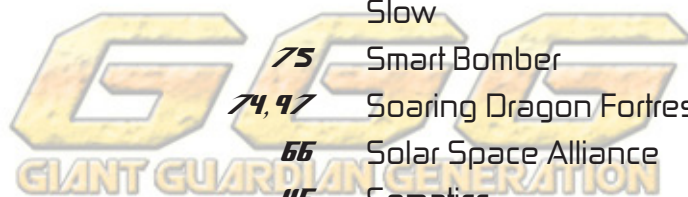


Constrict	120	Dynamic	60
Concept	17, 59		
Cool Under Pressure	48	Eagle	60
Coordinator	18	ECS	66
Core	65, 100	Ejection	100
Cost	19, 65	Electricity	27
Counterattack	46	Electronics	24
Counter Intelligence	46	Element G	
Custom Barrier	67	Empathy	19
Custom Blueprints	63	Enemy	
Custos	170	Energy	61
Craftsmanship	23	Energy Shield	38
Criminal	159	Engage	98
Cryptid	122	Enhancement	20, 62
Cyborg	36	Episode	8, 69
		Episode Arc	8, 113
Danger Instinct	32	Equipment	37
Danube	160	Ether Drive	38
Damage	20, 100	Evasion	61
Data Scanner	45	Evasive System	66
Deathblows	34	Exhaustion	50
Deception	23	Expansion Pack	71
Defective	74	Experimental Reactor	63
Defense	21	Experience Points	103
Defensive	34	Expert	22
Defensive Barrier	67	Extending Punch	75
Delay	99	Extreme Adaptation	73
Destroyer	60		
Dice	7	Fame	35
Die for Me!	117	Far West Archipelago	
Digital Aide	38	Features, Player	73,
Diplomacy	24	Features, Enemy	122
Disadvantage	7, 90	Field Operative's Handbook	
Disengage	99	Finesse	24
Disruptor Cannon	77	Finger Net	75
Divine Wind	75	Finisher	34
DN	7, 40	First-Aid Nanomachines	38
Do you Desire the Power?	117	Fitness	19
Dock	99	Flyer	73
Dominion	165	Force	28
Duel	98	Fortress	122

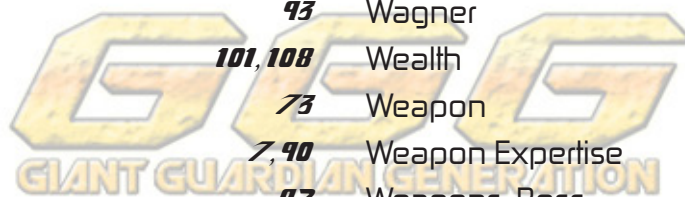
Frames	70	Heinlein Colonies	152
Friction Field	67	Hidden Power	47
		Hiryu	135
G-Buster	46	Hiryu Monk	159
G-Charge Field	119	Hiryu Priestess	159
G-Leeches	120	Hiryu Religion	142
Gallant Kick	75	Hiryujin	140
Gamer	32	Hit n' Run	46
Gear	131	Humanistics	24
GEIM	7	Hypersonic Striker	119
Genius	33		
Genius Missile	78	I Believe This is Yours	117
Genre	6	I was Here all Along	33
Genre Bane	43	Icarus-Class Powered Armor	39
Genre Master	6	Impetuous Style	48
Genre Points and Powers	40, 44	Impregnable Defense	47
Genre Reason	41	Incinerator	77
Genre Theme	40	Ingenious	32
Genre Typecast	42	Initiative	93, 96
Get a Hold of Yourself	46	Integrated Weapons	63
Get Over Here	46	Intellect	19
Giga Blaster	77	Interference Cloud	78
Glory	151	Intermission	69
God Combination	72	Intimidating	31
Got your Back	49	Investigation	25
Gotta go Fast	48	Invincible Frame	63
Gravagne	130, 172	Invisibility Device	39
Gravagne Field	67, 131		
Graviton Wave	120	Jack of all Trades	33
Ground Zero	77	Jaded	32
Grunts	115	Juggernaut	119
Guardian Maneuver	68	Julia Campbell	167
Guiding Hand	49	Jury-Rig	68
Gumshoe	32	Julia Campbell	167
Gygravagnite	131		
Gygravagnite Type-G	131	Kagutsuchi	161
		Karakuri	160
Hagane	136	Kasshin Base	140
Hard Work and Guts	33	Keeping Up	47
Head	65	Kurogane	136
Heavy	74	Kuzuryusen	143

Landship Williams	160	Morrigan	148
Lapis	166	Mount Barou	140
Laplace	171	Move	98
Last Ditch Effort	50	Multitargeting	34
Leadership	33		
Learning Computer	66	Nanoskin Shell	119
Legs	65	Nature	18
Leon Wakefield	168	Needle Storm	120
Limiter Release	63	Nega-G Rounds	78
Linear	74	Nightmare	36
Live Another Day	45	Nine Billion	163
Living Database	33	Nobel	136
Long Rifle	76	Non-Player Character	8
Lucky	33	Not so Fast	45
Lux Cannon	77		
		Offensive Actions	98
Make Do	31	Omni-Counter	38
Maim	65, 100	On the Double!	50
Magister B2	164	One-Shot	74
Majesty	165	One Shot, One Kill	46
Maneuver	99	Operation	96
Martyr	49	Organization	35
Master	22	Oscillating Armor	67
Masterwork Tool	38	Other Actions	99
Match	93	Outsider	144
Matter	28	Overcharger	68
Maxwell	171	Overfreeze	120
Mecha	6, 59	Overheating	74
Medicine	25	Over-Booster	69
Melee	74		
Mental Link System	63	Paladin	163
Merge	120	Patriotic Reinforcement Camp	147
Micro Missiles	78	Payback	119
Micromanage	99	Penderecki	162
Mid-Scene Upgrade	45	Penetration	61
Miniature Chemical Weapon	39	Performer	31
Miracles	27	Personal Facility	39
Missile	74	Phantasm	28
Mitsurugi Base	140	Pierce	48
Modules	70	Pilot	17
Mond	138	Pilot Points	19, 103

Player Character	6	Sacrifice	68
Plot Armor	21, 94	Safe Zone	146
Polyglot	32	Sanctuary District	146
Power	167	Scene	8, 89
Power Module	70	Schrodinger	189
Power Suit	73	Sciences	25
Powers, Boss	117	Season	8, 113
Powers, Packages	44-50	Security Officer	159
Precise	34	Sentry Turret	76
Presence	25	Shield	60
Probing	29	Shirogane	136
Prodigy	18	Show me your Resolve	118
Professional	18	Shrewd	32
Project Helios	131	Sidekick	71
Providence	29	Sight	29
Proxies	94	Signature Weapon	46
PsAICon	137	Skill	23
Psychic Power	33	Slam	75
		Slow	74
Radiant Fist	75	Smart Bomber	63
Range	74, 97	Soaring Dragon Fortress	161
Reactive Booster	66	Solar Space Alliance	133
Ready for Another Go	46	Somatics	30
Reanimating	36	Sonne	138
Regenerative	63	Special Mode	69
Reliable	74	Specialization	23
Reload	68	Speed	30
Remote	74	Speed Module	70
Resupply	68	Spirit of Steel	33
Resistance is Futile	117	Squadron	122
Resonance Cannon	76	Standard Energy	130
Resources	19	Stealth	26
Retroactively Prepared	49	Stealth Field	69
Revolutionary Unified Front	146	Sterne	138
Righteous Fury	46	Stray	74
Ring of Fire Tragedy	11 129	Streetwise	32
Riot Weapon	76	Strength in Union	50
Rival	116	Stunning	34
Rotarum XI	184	Sub Unit	71
Round	93, 96	Suicide Swarm	121
		Superheavy Machinegun	76



Superior Immune System	32	Turn	43, 96
Support	68		
Support Fire	68	Unendlich Plan	131
Suppress	98	Unit	96
Surprise	93	Unison Combination	72
Survival	26	United Earth Federation	131
Synchro Attack	45	United Pacific	130
Systems	62	Universal Reserve Notes	136
		Unwieldy	74
Tactical UI	63	Upgrade	65
Take One for the Team	49	Upgrade Points	65, 103
Target Lock	48	Use More Gun	46
Tearing	34		
Techie	159	Variable Range	47
Technique	74	Vehicles	26
Technobane	36	Verne Colonies	152
Telekinetic Strike	121	Victory	168
Temperature	30		
Tension	93	Wagner	
Terrain	101, 108	Wealth	35
Terrain Specialist	73	Weapon	74
Test	7, 90	Weapon Expertise	32
Test, Attribute	92	Weapons, Boss	120
Test, Contested	91	Weapons, Custom	79-82
Test, Disruption	94	Weapons, Specific	75-78
Test, Equipment	92	Wells Colonies	152
Test, Extended	91	Where'd he Go?	48
Test, Healing	91	Wigner	162, 169
Test, Help	92	Wild	36
Test, Mixed	92	Willpower	19
Test, Offensive	94	Wormhole Assault	121
Test, Skill	91		
That will not Work Again	117	You are too Slow	118
The Weakest Link	50	Your Fate is Sealed	118
Three Times Faster	69		
Threshold	61	Zones	94, 97
Tracking System	66		
Trait	31		
Transformation	70		
Try Again	45		
Torso	65		



Flavor and Advice Sidebars

Rules and Combat Sidebars

2027 Theories	129	Boys, be Ambitious!	20
A Handy Cap	100	Character Creation Outline	21
A Story about Repetition	114	Don't get all Tied Up	97
Abstract me This	97	Duel Masters	98
An Example of Play	10	Genre Powers and Intermissions	102
Battling Cryptids	178	Hamming it Up	40
Features Checklist	7	Handling Base Units	73
Generalists and Specialists	26	Help Test Results	92
Genre Master Requirements	106	Like a Boss	116
GMPCs	125	Longer Operations	108
I Built That	121	Match Structure	93
I, Robot	59	More Weapons for Less	80
Intensive Management	94	Naturally Adaptable	20
Intermissions and Operations	113	Now it is Personal	166
Keeping it Simple	109	Operation Structure	96
Killing the Mood	82	Scaling Issues	103
Making your Powers Count	44	Strength in Numbers	164
Mecha Details Questionnaire	83	Switching Gears	103
Money, Money, Money!	155	The Big Bads	172
Player's Block	17	The Cryptid Feature	122
Roleplaying Details Questionnaire	51	The Meaning of Difficulty Numbers	90
Rumors	141-158	The Pilot and Machine are One	62
Sample Banes	43	The Power of Money	26
Sample Reasons	41	The Sky is the Limit	101
Sample Typecasts	42	The Strongest Shield	67
System Requirements	9	This is my Rifle	81
The Benefits of Episodic Games	110	Three Rules	8
The Clothes don't Make the Man	66	Time Management	91
The G Incident	132	Tips n Tricks	55, 84
The Far West Cryptids	133	To Each Their Own	64
The Power of Genre	45	Using Skills in Operations	99
The Redshirt Effect	115	Versatility, at a Price	70
The UEF's Deal	135		
Too Much Information	136		
Victory and Defeat	95		
When Everyone is Super...	36		
When Size Matters	62		
Your PC and You	8		

Tests

A Test is a roll of 1d10 + Attribute against a Difficulty Number. This number can be static, a variable depending on someone else's Attributes, or the result of another Test. If you have appropriate training in a Skill to help you perform a Test, you gain one or two Advantages depending on your Level of Training.

Difficulty Benchmarks

DN 5 Easier in fiction than real life:

Seducing someone to get information from them, shooting blanks with a gun, crafting a Molotov cocktail.

DN 10 Leave it to the experts:

Finding shelter in the wild during winter, disarming a bomb, motivating the masses to follow your lead.

DN 15 Oh my God you can DO that?:

Quadruple backflipping, distracting the big bad with a monologue of your own, bringing someone back from the brink of death.

DN 20 What am I reading:

Selling sand in the desert, finding the true value of Pi, hiding under a cardboard box to sneak past security.

Advantages and Disadvantages

An Advantage lets you roll an additional d10 with your Test and pick the better roll of the two dice. Multiple Advantages let you pick one dice out of three, four or possibly more. A Disadvantage is the inverse, forcing you to pick the worse result of the dice rolled, and they stack in the same way. Advantages and Disadvantages cancel each other out.

Defense and Damage

The DN to affect a Character with a Test meant to injure them is equal to their Awareness Attribute plus 5. If the Test succeeds, it deals Damage equal to how much the result bypassed the DN by.

Plot Armor and Healing

You can take more or less punishment depending on your Plot Armor, which it comes in three Layers, each of which is equal in value to your Willpower Attribute. Whenever you take Damage, reduce your first Layer of Plot Armor by said number. When a Layer runs out of points, Damage bleeds onto and goes to the next Layer, until all three are gone. Additionally, you must Test Willpower for each time one of your Layers is broken this way or be knocked out. The DN to beat is 10 for the first Layer, 15 for the second, and 20 for the third.

At the end of a Scene, any Damage dealt to your first Layer of Plot Armor is cleared. At the end of an Episode, you wipe your second Layer clean. You only heal Damage to your third Layer of Plot Armor at the end of an Episode Arc.

Time Management

Some activities are going to take more than one Test to complete. As long as you have the time for it, you may continue rolling dice until you get them right.

1 Minute or less:

You probably shouldn't bother rolling this unless there's a considerable chance of irreparable failure, from Injury or otherwise. Examples include picking a lock or driving a vehicle.

1 Hour:

Tasks like these will usually take an entire day to get them just right, or you can spend a handful of hours to get the gist of it, such as researching a subject matter at the library or finding food and shelter in a forest.

1 Day:

These are tasks you quite simply just can't do without spending considerable time throughout one or more weeks. This could be anything from asking around town for clues about a case to taking part in a continental rally.

1 Week:

By this point what you are doing is probably better handled off-screen, such as writing a best seller or building your own home from the ground up.

Characters may take extra time to improve their odds of getting things done right. By taking double the suggested time to perform the Test, you gain an Advantage to it. By taking quadruple as long to do the Test, you instead gain two Advantages. Taking longer than that for a single Test is just wasted effort and provides no additional benefit.

Genre Points

Your number of Starting Genre Points is one, and that number increases by one at the end of each Episode Arc. You gain more Genre Points every time you roleplay well one of your Genre Themes, though they reset back to your Starting amount at the beginning of a new Episode.

Initiative

At the beginning of a combat scenario, everyone rolls 1d10 + their Genre Points. The one who rolls highest goes first, with the second highest roll going second, and so on until everyone has had a chance to move – then the process repeats until the battle is over. Once rolled, the result of your Initiative remains fixed even if you lose or gain further Genre Points.

Tension

Tension is a dynamic number that increases after every Round has passed, starting at 1 for the first Round. Tests made to hurt an Enemy (Offensive and Disruption Tests, essentially) add the current Tension to their Attributes to calculate the result of a Test.

Genre Powers

A Genre Power requires you to spend a Genre Point in order to use it. If said Genre Power is of the Setup Power, it must be used at the beginning of your Turn, but you may use it at any time if it is a Reaction Power instead.

Reaction Genre Powers take effect faster than anything they are used to respond to, even if those are other Reaction Genre Powers.

Systems

Systems is a variable Attribute that Mecha have, with a value equal to your current Genre Points. If you gain or lose further Genre Points during an Operation, then your Systems Attribute is modified accordingly.

Mecha Actions

Actions taken when during Mecha combat come in two categories: Offensive and not-Offensive. The Offensive Actions are: Aim, Assist, Attack, Engage and Suppress. The others are: Boost, Delay, Disengage, Dock, Maneuver and Micromanage. Only Offensive Actions benefit from Tension.

Movement

Moving as part of your Action lets you go one Zone in a direction of your choice. One Zone is the same as one square or one hex if you are using a battle grid. Any time you take a non-Offensive Action you may spend 1 Energy to Move an additional Zone towards an Enemy.

Weapon Ranges

Weapons have a minimum and maximum range listed in the amount of Zones away they can be used to hit things with. A Weapon with a Range of 1 can be used against adjacent Targets. A Range of 0 means it can only be used during a Duel, against targets whose Zones you've stepped into, or that have stepped into yours.

Attacking with Mecha

To harm another Mecha you Test Accuracy against the target's Evasion, add half the amount you passed the DN by (rounding up) as a bonus to your Penetration and compare it against the target's Armor. The total you went over the target's Armor is how much Damage you deal to them.

This is how most Offensive Actions work, keep in mind that Accuracy Tests benefit from Tension. Note that if you're attacking you can only Move towards the target or stand still with the free Move provided by the same Action.

Threshold

Threshold is much like Plot Armor, except that it comes in four Levels instead of three Layers. After Damage has been dealt to your Mecha, you remove that amount from your topmost Threshold Level, and, once that Level is reduced to 0, you begin to remove points from the next one below it, and so on until the last point of your third and final Level of Threshold is gone, at which point you explode or eject depending on the circumstances. The first time that any Level of Threshold is lost during an Operation, you gain a Genre Point. Threshold is restored to normal at the end of an Operation.

Maiming

When a Threshold Level is reduced to 0, an Area belonging to the struck Mecha is Maimed. Maimed Areas are useless and all their Upgrades and Weapons fail to have any use. If the amount of Damage was an odd number then the defender chooses an Area to sacrifice, but if the Damage dealt was an even number the attacker chooses what to take out instead. Maimed Areas are repaired at the end of an Operation.

Duels

Units at Range 0 may Engage each other in a Duel. Once there they may not Move. Anyone who tries to attack either of both engaged Units will have to Test Accuracy against both of them at once (as if using a Blast Weapon) and if the roll is evens they hit their Ally, if it is odds they hit the Enemy instead. If the Accuracy Test fails against one duelist but not the other, the one whose Evasion was insufficient is chosen as target. Otherwise, Attacking any other target than the one you are locked in a duel with will give them a free Offensive Action against you.

Butting into the Duel is impossible - there is just too much going on. The only way to help break up the Duel is to destroy one of the participants. Similarly, the only way to break out of a Duel is to Disengage or to see that your opponent was destroyed. Units in a Duel cannot Combine or use Synchro Attacks, for obvious reasons. The rules for Duels override those for invading an Enemy's own Zone.

Terrain

Every single Zone is of a particular Terrain type, there are five basic types of Terrain, though they are not the only possible ones. Plain Terrain has no effect. Difficult Terrain gives a cost of 1 Energy to anyone within it who wants to Move. Defensive Terrain imparts an extra Disadvantage to attacking someone who takes a Maneuver within it, along with an extra point of Armor to the user. Those in Extreme Terrain must Test Systems at the end of their Turn against a DN of 15 and take the amount they failed the Test by as Damage, while Base Terrain lets you grab both effects of the Micromanage Action instead of having to choose one.

Weapon Type Abilities

Ballistic: You may trade in the Movement from your Action to instead gain an Advantage to an Offensive Action using these. If you are forbidden from Moving, for whichever reason, you cannot make use of this ability.

Beam: After one of these bypasses the Enemy's Evasion, you can add all of the excess bonus to your Penetration instead of halving it.

Melee: Melee Weapons gain an Advantage when used in a Duel or attempting to Engage in one.

Missile: When used between Range 1 and half their Maximum Range, the Offensive Action is at an Advantage.

Weapon Special Keyword Abilities

Blast: Some Weapons make really big explosions. Blast Weapons don't attack an Enemy but instead target an individual Zone and make a single Test against all targets within Range 1 from it, regardless of whether they are friend or foe, but they will not cause you to hurt yourself.

Defective: This Weapon is inaccurate or prone to misfiring. If you keep a die roll that is an odd number when using this Weapon, you halve the final amount of Damage you would have dealt with it.

Heavy: This Weapon suffers a Disadvantage if used against a target under less than a Range of 2.

Linear: This Weapon cannot be used with the Aim or Assist Actions.

One-Shot: Even if they don't use Energy, many Weapons have limited uses, for whichever reason. One-Shot Weapons may be only fired once per Operation.

Overheating: The gun is unstable. It will not explode, but its harmful radiation will interfere with your fragile systems. If you keep a die roll that is an even number when using this Weapon, you take 1d10 Damage after firing.

Reliable: Some Weapons usually fare that much better than others. Reliable Weapons are so good they have an innate Advantage to their Accuracy Tests.

Remote: Remote Weapons aren't wielded by the Mecha but instead are deployed and attack separately, you may deploy them within one Zone from you at the beginning of your Turn or at the start of an Operation, and may retrieve them the same way.

When you create a Remote Weapon, you choose whether it is Agile or Tough. Agile types have an Evasion of 12 and an Armor of 4, Tough types have an Evasion of 4 and an Armor of 8. Both types have 0 Threshold and Systems, but run off your own Energy and Tension. Remote Weapons can Move and perform Actions individually, but they require your direct control and use your own Actions to do so. You may spend 1 Energy during your Turn to grant any Remote Weapon you have deployed a single Action, but only once per Turn, and they may not move twice this way.

If you enhance your own Evasion or Armor, your Remotes gain the benefits as well. All Remotes always receive your bonuses to Accuracy and Penetration.

Slow: This Weapon cannot be fired continuously, it may not be fired again if it was used on the previous Turn.

Stray: Upon firing a Stray Weapon you must Test Systems against a DN of 10 and, if you fail, the Weapon may not be used for a number of Rounds equal to the Range it was used to attack at.

Technique: Techniques are special attacks stronger than normal weapons, but are difficult to pull off repeatedly as the Enemy is already going to see them coming. These Weapons do not benefit from Tension to their Accuracy Tests if used more than once against the same Enemy during an Operation.

Unwieldy: After attacking with this Weapon, the targeted Enemy gains an Advantage to Offensive Actions against you for a Round.

