

# パイニ・サラダ



PINEAPPLE SALAD BY PHIL SBZINE

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# Overview

*Pineapple Salad* is a GMless roleplaying game for three players. It is based on the popular anime subgenre in which a [mecha](#) pilot and a singer become involved in a love triangle against the backdrop of a military conflict. It is assumed that players are conversant with GMless RPGs, scene framing, and polyhedral dice, and have watched a couple of episodes of *Macross / Robotech*.

## Game Preparation

### PC Roles

The game begins with character creation. Decide on a starting player, then going around the table in turn, each player chooses a PC **role** from the following list:

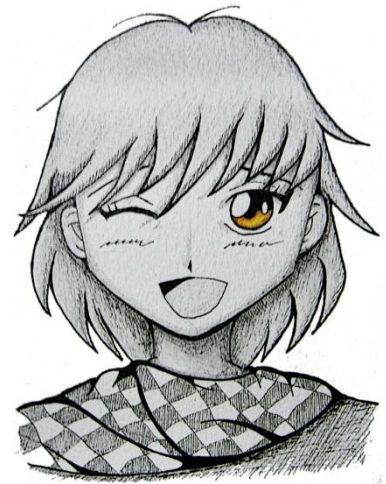
Singer  
Pilot  
Professional

A player choosing the Professional role must specify the profession, e.g. action movie star, spaceship bridge crew, scientist, soldier, spy, nurse. In each game there must be *at least one singer, at least one pilot, and no more than one professional*.

Don't give your character a name or gender yet. We're still painting in broad strokes at this stage.

#### Examples

Singer, Pilot, Pilot  
Pilot, Singer, Singer  
Pilot, Singer, Professional (Paramedic)



### PC Traits

Each player chooses three **traits** for his or her PC. These are words or phrases which help describe the character. The character traits may also help to inspire scenes in the game.

#### Examples

alien clone  
a girl in every port  
depressed  
hyper-competitive  
yum cha waitress

It's OK to change these traits later in the character creation / game preparation process.

# PC Service

Each player decides his or her PC's relationship to war and the military. Tick the "Regular Military" or "Civilian" box on the character sheet under **service**. If you would like to go into detail about your PC's service or lack thereof, you can include details on the blank line below the service checkboxes. Some character service choices - like a reservist or militia member - might reasonably fall into either service category.

The initial choices you make about the PCs' service will help you decide the tone of the game, i.e. how much of a war story you want to tell. A character's service may change during the course of the game, e.g. if the character gets drafted or goes AWOL.

## Examples

Regular military (space marine)  
Civilian (draft dodger)  
Regular military (mecha engineer)  
Civilian (guerrilla fighter)  
Civilian (pacifist)

# Setting Elements

Going around the table twice, each player chooses a different **setting element** from the following list:

Alien	Criminal	Media	Scientist
Authority	Family	Mystic	<a href="#">Senpai / Kohai</a>
Civilian	Machine	Natural	Warrior

At the end of this process you should have two unique setting elements for each player.

During the game, each player will generally play the roles of any NPCs fitting into his or her two chosen setting elements. That player is also responsible for providing any necessary details about the chosen setting elements (e.g. deciding the capabilities of a specific Machine). The setting elements chosen will influence the content of the game, so choose elements that you want to include in scenes.

# Scene Types

Going around the table in turn, each player chooses three **scene types** that he or she would like to see in the game. All players write down the chosen scenes. It's okay to choose the same scene more than once, if all players agree to the duplication. The scene types are:

Ambush	Date	Healing	Rebuilding
Breakthrough	Duel	Intrusion	Reconciliation
Ceremony	Exhibition	Loss	Transformation
Concert	Fight	Lost	Trapped
Contest	Flashback	Mission	The Unknown

The scene types are deliberately vague. For example, a Ceremony scene could equally be a religious ritual, a medal presentation, or a wedding. A Fight scene could be a lover's tiff or an epic space battle. You don't have to decide on the specifics yet.

# Gender, Love, and Rivalry

Now it's time to figure out the specifics of the love triangle. One of the pilot PCs will be in love with a non-pilot PC. These two characters are the **lovers**. The remaining PC is a **rival** trying to win the affection of one of the lovers (that player specifies which one) by breaking them up. You can either decide this through discussion, or by rolling dice for inspiration.

If you choose to go with the dice, all players roll 1d20, rerolling any ties. The highest rolling pilot PC and the highest rolling non-pilot PC are in love at the beginning of the game (or will fall in love in the first few scenes).

Assign names, genders, and sexual orientation to the PCs based on the specifics of the love triangle and the story you want to tell. It's anime, so anything goes, including concealing one's gender and / or alien heritage with a bit of makeup and deft cross-dressing. If you want to be a sexy robot or something that's cool too. You pervert.

## Setting and Conflict

The players collectively describe the game's setting and the military conflict that forms the story's backdrop, using the setting elements and PC service details from their character sheets for inspiration.

The military conflict could be an alien attack on Earth, two companies competing for a mecha contract, a civil war, a coup, or something else entirely. There are no rules for this step - just talk it out until you've got something good.

## Fine Detail

The PCs can also be fleshed out and described in more detail. Is the singer a beauty pageant winner or a tribal priestess? Is the pilot a grizzled veteran, or the young star of a flying circus? This is a good opportunity to review and modify setting elements and PC traits and service details if need be.

## Mecha

The pilot lover player describes his or her **PC mecha**, which is also a type used by the human military. Typically this will be a conventional vehicle (such as a fighter jet, motorcycle, or tank) which transforms into a giant robot. The other two players each describe one **enemy mecha**. Typically these will be non-transforming fighters or robots, much weaker than the pilot lover's mecha. Note that these enemy mecha need not be alien war machines. They could be rival human mecha, AI-controlled drones, or anything else suggested by the setting elements.

The mecha should each be given a stat block, as described in the next section. If you just want to start playing, some pregenerated example mecha are given in an appendix.

# Mecha Design

A game of *Pineapple Salad* needs three types of mecha. The **PC mecha** is the most powerful of the three, while the two enemy mecha are less powerful. Ideally, the one type of enemy mecha will be disposable cannon fodder while the other enemy mecha will be a tougher "boss" type.

## The Mecha Stat Block

Each type of mecha has a **stat block** containing three **non-weapon stats**:

**Ability** - Aptitude for climbing, punching, interfacing with other machines, and any other non-shooting tasks.

**Evasion** - Prowess at dodging missiles, lasers, bullets, falling rocks, toppling buildings, water balloons and so forth.

**Resistance** - Toughness of armour and forcefields for the purposes of being shot with lasers or bullets, crushed under a giant metal foot, etc. Useless for resisting the insanely powerful missiles found in this game.

The stat block also includes two weapons, each with three **weapon stats**:

**Gun** - A weapon with its own **Gun Ability** for shooting, and its own **Gun Resistance** for blasting missiles out of the sky. This could be a laser or a gatling gun or a railgun or whatever you like. It has a supply of **Gun Ammo**.

**Missiles** - A launcher of homing missiles with its own **Missile Ability** for firing, and its own **Missile Resistance** for intercepting other missiles. It has a supply of **Missile Ammo**.

There are two ways to design mecha: fill in the stat block with whatever numbers you like, or use the point-buy system. The latter method is recommended for first time players. Balancing the mecha can be difficult, so feel free to adjust stat blocks between scenes if all players agree. The important thing from a genre perspective is that the human military mecha be able to destroy waves of bad guys in a cloud of homing missiles. Make the bad guys weak but numerous.

## Interlude, with Dice

If you're like me, you love collecting weird polyhedral dice that aren't actually needed for any of your games. Here's your chance to finally make use of them in an RPG. Yes, even your d12.

Each mecha or mecha weapon stat (Ability, Evasion, or Resistance) has a score assigned to it which represents a die. For example, Evasion 6 indicates that that type of mecha rolls 1d6 when dodging things. This means that when you design mecha, you should give them stat scores that match dice in your collection. If you have a d5 handy, Evasion 5 becomes an option.

The Ability stats (Ability, Gun Ability, and Missile Ability) have one extra wrinkle: they may be factorised during gameplay. So Ability 12 may be rolled as 1d12, 2d6, or 3d4. Let's say

you're a dice wholesaler and have a limitless supply of novelty dice. Now you have the option of designing mecha with Ability 30, which may be rolled as 1d30, 2d15, 3d10, 5d6, 6d5, 15d2, or even 30d1.

Don't worry if you don't have enough dice to cover every possible factor of a particular stat. It's fine to have Ability 30 and just roll it as 1d30 or 3d10 or 5d6 instead of using all the weird dice from the previous example.

For the purposes of edge cases and degenerate design ideas, a d0 always rolls a result of zero, and a d1 always rolls a result of one.



## Point-Buy System

The system presented here is a design aid only, and is not supposed to be an ironclad set of rules. Each player starts with a number of **build points**, and designs a mecha type by spending points on different stats. One build point buys one point in a stat, or one unit of ammo for a weapon.

The PC mecha has a budget of 56 build points. The two enemy mecha have a budget of 30 build points each. You don't have to spend all of your build points if you don't want to. For example, it might be fun to have large swarms of individually weak enemy mecha.

The following restrictions apply to non-weapon stats (mecha Ability, mecha Evasion, and mecha Resistance):

- No more than half the build point budget may be spent on total non-weapon stats (e.g. if the budget is 30 points, mecha Ability + mecha Evasion + mecha Resistance = 15 or less)
- For enemy mecha, the minimum value for each non-weapon stat is 1
- For PC mecha, the minimum value for each non-weapon stat is 4

The following restrictions apply to weapon stats (Gun Ability, Gun Resistance, Gun Ammo, Missile Ability, Missile Resistance, and Missile Ammo):

- The minimum value for a weapon stat is 0
- Missile Resistance is always exactly equal to Missile Ability (i.e. whatever you spend on Missile Ability determines Missile Resistance)
- No points may be spent on Missile Resistance
- Points may be spent on Gun Resistance
- Gun Resistance may not be higher than half Gun Ability (rounded down)
- Unlimited Gun Ammo may be purchased for 6 points
- Unlimited Missile Ammo may not be purchased
- Ammo is not replenished during the game

# Playing the Game

The game consists of ten **scenes**. The pilot lover player frames the first scene, then play proceeds clockwise around the table until each player has framed three scenes.

Finally, an **endgame scene** is played out. In the endgame scene, each player plays his or her PC, and the love triangle is resolved. The love triangle may not be resolved in an earlier scene.

## Framing a Scene

The active player (the player whose turn it is) frames a scene in which that player's PC is the **protagonist**. The theme of the scene must be chosen from the list of scene types on the character sheets. All players cross off the chosen scene.

The active player describes the scene idea, and optionally indicates any other PCs and NPCs who are present in the scene. If an NPC is present, a player who does not already have a role in the scene will play the NPC. If there are two such players, the player with the most appropriate setting element will play the NPC. Before the scene begins, the other players may fill in details related to their setting elements.

Any players whose PCs were not named may jump into the scene at any appropriate time, either as their own PCs, or by introducing a new or recurring NPC appropriate to that player's setting elements.

## Incorporating Setting Elements

Where something in the game falls into two different players' setting elements, the players collectively decide which one is more appropriate. For example, if a PC's father is the mayor, that NPC could fall into the Civilian, Authority, or Family elements.

Use the following guidelines to resolve any disputes:

- The active player (the player whose scene it is) never plays NPCs or contributes information about setting elements.
- Elements that are most relevant to the protagonist take precedence. For example, if the mayor is the protagonist's father, the Family element is most appropriate. If the mayor is a different PC's father and the scene is set at city hall, the Authority element is most appropriate. If the mayor is drowning and in need of military rescue, the Civilian element is most appropriate.
- Personal elements take precedence over impersonal elements, and specific elements take precedence over general elements.
- If all else fails, there are three of you, so take a vote.

## Conflicts and Consequences

Each scene will include a **major conflict** and a **minor conflict** for the protagonist PC. These can be whatever you like: a space battle, a disagreement, getting lost in a jungle, a crisis of self esteem, anything. If the major conflict is not obvious from the description of the scene, then the player to the left of the active player will introduce it at an appropriate time



(e.g. "Hideki realises that he is lost in the jungle."). The player to the active player's right always introduces the minor conflict, which is a surprise to all concerned (i.e. does not necessarily follow from the scene description).

A conflict is always between the protagonist PC and someone else: another PC, an NPC, a hazard, or some combination of the above. Conflicts are resolved by rolling dice, and the outcome of the conflict will suggest an ending for the scene: success, success with a **consequence**, or failure.

To resolve a conflict, decide who is initiating the conflict and who is reacting to it. The initiating side will use their Ability score, and the reacting side will use either their Resistance or Evasion score as appropriate.

## Ability

A PC's starting Ability is 4. Add another 4 to Ability for each of these conditions that are met:

- the character's role is relevant to the conflict (+4)
- the character's service is relevant to the conflict (+4)
- at least one of the character's traits is relevant to the conflict (+4)

The bonus for a relevant trait is only granted once, i.e. having two relevant traits is only worth +4, not +8.

An NPC's Ability can be either 4, 8, or 12 (higher is stronger). The player playing the NPC decides on an appropriate Ability level. If the NPC is involved in a minor conflict, his or her maximum Ability score is 8.

A hazard such as a supernova, computer virus, narcotic, rock slide etc has an Ability just like an NPC and follows the same rules. In this case the player who owns the setting element which the hazard belongs to decides on its Ability score. Again, 8 is the maximum Ability score if the hazard relates to a minor conflict.

A character using a mecha to resolve a conflict uses the mecha's Ability, or the Ability of one of the mecha's weapons, depending on whether the conflict can be solved with shooting. Using a weapon's Ability uses up one point of ammo. Ammo is not replenished during the game.

The mecha's basic (non-weapon) Ability may not be used for shooting, but may be used for (say) punching a dinosaur.

## Resistance and Evasion

Resistance and Evasion scores are calculated just like Ability, except that it is possible for an NPC or hazard to have a score of 0 or 1. Resistance is used to endure things like harsh words and starvation. Evasion is used to avoid things, like unpleasant situations and falling rocks.

A character piloting a mecha uses the mecha's Resistance and Evasion when the thing being resisted or evaded is a physical threat like a laser beam or deep ravine. Missile attacks may *only* be resisted by weapons with Resistance, i.e. trying to stoically tough out a missile strike using the mecha's Resistance is not allowed. Non-missile attacks may not be resisted by weapons, i.e. shooting down a laser beam in midflight is not allowed. Using a weapon's Resistance uses up one point of that weapon's ammo. Ammo is not refreshed during the game.

Be generous when determining a PC's Ability, and stingy when determining any character's Resistance or Evasion.

## How Conflict Works

The player portraying for the character or hazard which initiates the conflict describes what is being done (e.g. leaping over a ravine, firing missiles, singing a love song). The action may have multiple targets (e.g. a swarm of missiles fired at a group of three enemy mecha, a love song intended to both impress a talent show judge and send a message to a boyfriend). Divide the character, hazard, mecha, or weapon's Ability equally into a number of dice sufficient to assign one die to each target. For example: Ability 12 could roll 1d12 for 1 target, 1d6 each for two targets, or 1d4 each for three targets. Ability 8 could roll 1d8 for 1 target, 1d4 each for two targets, but could not affect three or more targets. You may voluntarily reduce a character's Ability if you wish (e.g., reduce 20 to 18 in order to roll 1d6 against three targets).

Roll the dice, and have each target roll a die for either Resistance or Evasion, depending on the action. Roll no dice for a score of zero, and count a score of 1 as a roll of 1. The result of the Resistance or Evasion roll is subtracted from the Ability roll. If the result is 1 or more, the action succeeds.

If it's a fight or some other contested situation, the reacting character now gets to use its Ability to strike back in the same manner, regardless of whether the initiating character succeeded or failed. If the initiating character succeeded against the majority of targets in the previous roll, the best the reacting character can do is narrate some negative consequence of the success of the initiating character. The initiator's success cannot be reversed, but the consequence will have some influence on the outcome of the scene. This situation is the only way in which in success in a conflict may have a negative consequence.

## A Note about Consequences

In *Pineapple Salad*, consequences have a narrative rather than a mechanical effect. A success with a consequence does not imply any FATE style in-game penalty. It just means that a character has won a pyrrhic victory in one of the scene's conflicts.

# Optional Rules

Here are some optional rules you can try if everyone at the table agrees:

- In a conflict, instead of splitting Ability into dice evenly, allow characters to split it unevenly, e.g. split 10 into 1d6 and 1d4, or 20 into three sets of 1d4 plus 1d8. Note that this will make NPCs more powerful in scenes with multiple PCs.
- When creating the two enemy mecha, combine their build points together into a common pool of 60 points, and make one weak mecha and one strong boss mecha. This approach works best with two pilot PCs present for the inevitable boss battle.

# Examples

## Example Scene

It's April's turn. April decides to frame a scene in which her PC, May, is singing a song over the radio into order to confuse the commander attacking alien fleet, who has never heard human music. The players agree that this should be the scene's major conflict.

April's character sheet has the Alien setting element, but she can't play the aliens because her PC is already in the scene. Kevin has the Warrior setting element on his character sheet, so they agree that he should play the alien commander in this scene.

Perry doesn't have a role in this scene yet, but stands ready to jump in as needed.

April begins.

"May is standing in the flagship's control room, wearing her beauty queen's crown. She plugs her microphone into the system and starts to sing. What is the broadcast system like?"

Kevin has the Machine setting element, but Perry has the Media element, which is more specific. He describes the broadcast system.

"May's mic lead is some kind of futuristic fibre-optic. When she sings, rainbow pulses travel down the lead into the control system. From there, mighty beams shoot out of the flagship's communications dome to energise a ring of satellites surrounding the Earth. They aim hexagonal panels at the alien fleet."

Kevin steps in now. As he's sitting on April's right, he can introduce a minor conflict.

"The aliens seem shaken by the singing, but it does not affect the squadron of robot fighters heading for the communications dome. I'll use the crab mecha from April's character sheet. There are three of them, resembling jet-black crabs. Lasers jut out from between their jagged claws and take aim at the dome."

Perry decides that this would be a good time to step in. His PC, Nick, is a space fighter pilot and May's estranged boyfriend.

"Nick's space fighter swoops in and attacks the crab robots with a swarm of missiles! Let's see, the missiles are Ability 20, but I'll reduce that to 18 and roll 1d6 against each crab."

Perry rolls 2, 5, and 6. The stats for the crab mecha are on April's character sheet, and it turns out that the crabs' lasers are Resistance 4. Kevin will roll for the crabs. He rolls very well, getting a trio of fours - enough to save one crab.

"The first crab shoots down the missiles heading for it, but the other two are destroyed. The remaining crab changes course and tries to snip off Nick's main engine!"

The crab has Ability 6, so will roll 1d6. The space fighter's Evasion 6 is slightly higher than its Resistance 4, so Perry decides that Nick will try to dodge the crab. They both roll 1d6, but Kevin's 3 beats Perry's 2. It's a win, but since Perry succeeded against most of the crabs earlier, the communications dome is safe.

"The crab shears the engine from the space fighter, then turns its attention back to the dome. By this time the flagship's shields have been concentrated over the dome, and the alien machine's laser fire bounces harmlessly off. The crab retreats."

April again:

"Okay, on to the main conflict. As Nick's space fighter falls towards the Earth, I sing a love song to beat the aliens. But I'm also singing the song to Nick, trying to win him back."

Singing a love song is easy for May. She's a Singer (+4) and love songs are Civilian (+4) even though the objective is to beat the alien fleet. If it were a love song about her fairytale wedding with Nick, that would be another +4 (for her Wants a Fairytale Wedding trait), but she had only rehearsed a regular love song, so the total is  $4 + 4 + 4 = 12$ . There are two targets (the aliens and Nick), each on the receiving end of a 1d6 love song. Neither can evade the broadcast, so they'll have to resist.

Kevin decides that the aliens have Resistance 4 in this instance, being pretty much unprepared, yet with a deep subconscious yearning for love. Perry calculates that Nick's Resistance is 4, since being a Military (+0) Pilot (+0) with traits like Flying Circus (+0) doesn't really bear upon matters romantic.

April rolls 2 for Nick and 4 for the aliens. Perry rolls 2 for Nick's Resistance, and Kevin rolls 3 for the aliens. April narrates the outcome.

"The aliens are entranced by May's love song and stop firing. Nick cries in the cockpit of his doomed space fighter, but he still doesn't want her back after what she did."

And so forth...

## Example Character Sheet

Name: May

Role: Singer

Service: Civilian (blissfully ignorant of war)

Traits: Family Chinese restaurant, Capricious, Wants a fairytale wedding

Setting Elements: Alien, Family

Scenes:

Date	Reconciliation
Fight	Transformation
Fight (again)	Trapped
Concert	Ambush
Mission	Endgame

# Example Mecha

## Jet Fighter

*A fighter plane that transforms into a giant robot. It can also fly through space and even underwater. Although it is lightly armoured, the jet fighter can defend itself with swarms of guided missiles.*

Ability 6

Evasion 6

Resistance 4

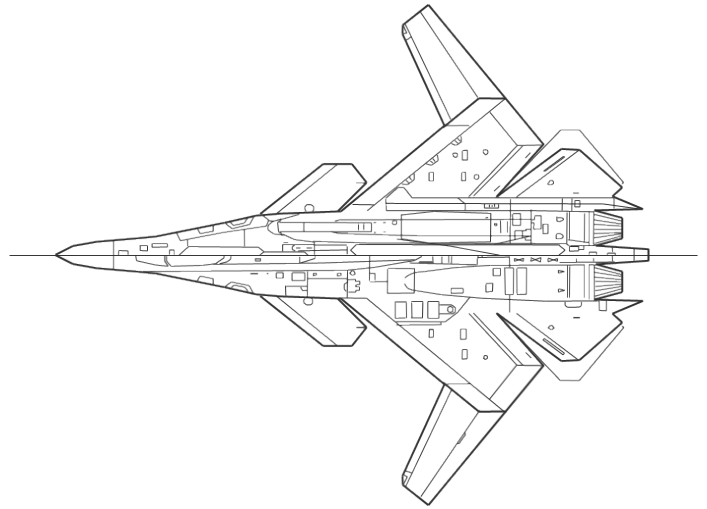
Missiles: Ability 20 / Resistance 20 / Ammo 4

*Two huge missile pods are mounted underneath the jet fighter's wings. When it transforms, they move atop the robot's shoulders.*

Gun: Ability 8 / Resistance 4 / Ammo 4

*The jet fighter has a belly-mounted machine gun. In robot mode, the gun can be wielded like a giant rifle.*

Build Point Cost: 56



## Crab Robot

*This unmanned space fighter is shaped like a crab. It can cut into enemy spacecraft with its claws and lasers. A crab robot attack is typically followed by a boarding party of alien space marines.*

Ability 6

Evasion 2

Resistance 4

Gun: Ability 8 / Resistance 4 / Ammo unlimited

*The crab robot has powerful cutting lasers mounted in its claws.*

Build Point Cost: 30

# Credits

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<p>Name</p> <p>Role</p> <p>Service</p> <p>Traits</p> <p>Setting Elements</p> <p>Scenes</p>	<p>S.D. Character Sketch</p>	<p>パイ ン シ ・ サ ウ ダ</p>
<p>Mecha</p> <p><i>Ability</i>                      <i>Resistance</i>                      <i>Evasion</i></p>		
<p>Mecha Gun</p> <p><i>Ability</i></p> <p><i>Resistance</i></p> <p><i>Ammo</i></p>	<p>Mecha Missile</p> <p><i>Ability</i></p> <p><i>Resistance</i></p> <p><i>Ammo</i></p>	