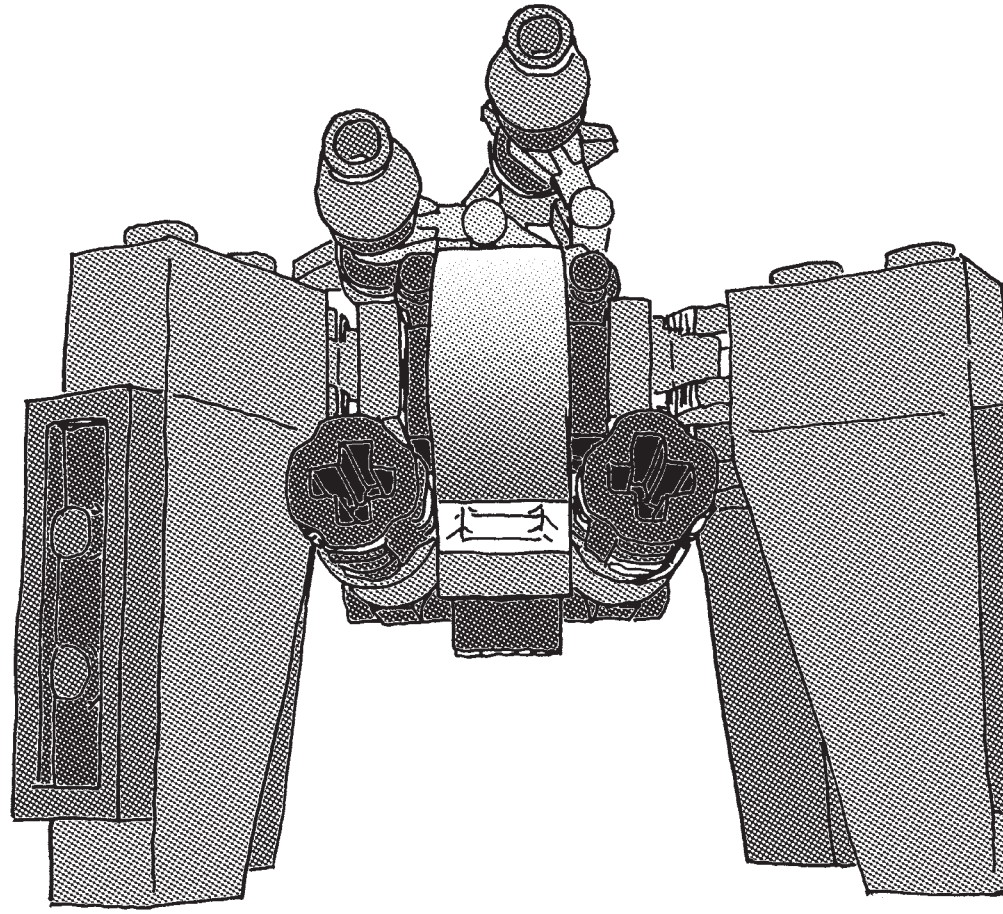




MECHATON

GIANT FIGHTY ROBOTS

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A TABLETOP GAME BY D. VINCENT BAKER

This is the Autumn '06 Moderately Limited Edition.

I designed the core of the game on Labor Day 2002 with my brother **Glen** and my son **Sebastian** (who gave it its name). Big thanks to my wife **Meguey**, my sister **Esther**, and my son **Elliot** for indulging us.

I developed the game into its current full form with the help and insistence of **Joshua A.C. Newman**. Big thanks to **Meguey**, **Sebastian**, **Elliot**, my son **Tovey**, and Joshua's wife **Carrie Bernstein** for indulging us.

I probably would never have made the game except I played *Heavy Gear*, *Up Front*, and his *Gundam* game with **Scott DiBerardino** all those times. Big thanks to **Meguey** and **Emily Care Boss** for indulging us.

I published a version of this very book at GenCon '06 – the GenCon '06 Very Limited Edition. Big thanks to **the Forge booth** and to everyone who bought a copy.

Mechaton. ©2006 by D. Vincent Baker. A lumpley game.

CREDIT

and thanks ::

Thanks to all the people who've played the game in all its states of finish and unfinish. Of them, thanks especially to **Larry Pieniazek** and to the guy who beat my mech to death with a shovel back at Gen Con '03. Also thanks to my brother **Drew** for getting me to that event in time.

Thanks to **Carl Rigney** for last-minute editing.

Thanks as always to the fine folk at **Collective Copies**. Down with the man.

And thanks at last to **Bricklink** for accomodating the sale of many Lego bricks. Visit www.bricklink.com.

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BEFORE YOU PLAY

create your mech army ::

How much is an army?

If you've got 2 players, an army is 3 stations and 4-8 mechs.

If you've got 3 players, an army is 2 stations and 3-6 mechs.

If you've got 4 or 5 players, an army is 1 station and 2-4 mechs.

What's rules for a station?

A station must a) be stationary, hence the name; b) be distinct from the local terrain, so nobody will get confused about what is and what isn't; and c) have a place to clip on a little flag.

A station might be a supply, command or observation station, it might be a crashed satellite, it might be an ammo dump, it might be a jeep with a flat tire and a load of fresh peaches. Whatever: it's something worth fighting over.

What's rules for a mech?

Any given mech can have up to 4 attachments.

All mechs get **2 white dice**.

4 ::

A movement attachment – 4 legs, jumpjets, swim fins, wings, wheels – is worth **1 green die**. You may have up to two movement attachments.

A surveillance/communications attachment – a radio, a laser pointer, spotlights, radar, a night-vision scope – is worth **1 yellow die**. You may have up to two surveillance/communications attachments.

A defensive attachment – armor, a shield, camouflage, stealth composite surfacing, ECM – is worth **1 blue die**. You may have up to two defensive attachments.

A weapon – a chainsaw, a chaingun, a flamethrower, a laser blaster, an assault rifle, rocket pods – is worth **2 red dice** at a particular range (but notice the optional rule about this). You may have up to 3 weapons – 1 for each range.

One single weapon attachment might include symmetrical parts. "All these rocket pods," like "both these wings," is just one weapon.

A hand to hand weapon is worth **2 red dice at hand to hand range only**. A direct fire weapon is worth **2 red dice at direct fire range only**. And an artillery weapon is worth **2 red dice at artillery range only**.

If you take fewer than 4 attachments, you get **bonus initiative dice, 1 for 1** with the attachments you didn't

take. These don't count as attachments, they don't count toward your army totals, and you can't lose them to damage.

If you have no weapons at direct fire range or artillery range, you get **a green d8**. This doesn't count as an attachment, it doesn't count toward your army totals, and you can't lose it to damage,

1-shot missiles and rockets are worth **a red d8** at direct fire range. You can fire them as part of any attack at direct fire range. They don't count as attachments, they don't count toward your army totals, and you can't lose them to damage. However, every army must have the same number of 1-shot rockets, so coordinate at the table.

What's the optional rule?

Here's the optional rule: if a given weapon is plausible at two ranges, you can choose for it to be worth 1 red die each at the two ranges. For instance, you might choose for your submachinegun to be worth 1 red die at hand to hand range and 1 red die at direct fire range. You might choose for your sniper rifle to be worth 1 red die at direct fire range and 1 red die at artillery range. If you have both a submachinegun and a sniper rifle, you could, if you wanted, roll 1 red die at hand to hand range, 2 red dice at direct fire range, and 1 red die at artillery range.

You still may never roll more than 2 red dice at any range.

What's the other optional rule?

Normally, you can't have a second weapon at the same range. Here's the other optional rule: for a second weapon at the same range, you get to roll **a red d8** in your attack.

This rule works fantastic for 2- or 3-turn demos, but I can't vouch for it in a whole game. Caveat emptor.

Some examples maybe?

I build a mech with a big ol' crane arm, spotlights, a tough and battered yellow shell, and a manipulator arm holding an assault rifle. It gets 2 white dice for being a mech, 1 yellow die for its spotlights, 1 blue die for its tough shell, 2 red dice at hand to hand range for its bashy crane arm, and 2 red dice at direct fire range for its assault rifle. It rolls 1 initiative die.

I build another mech with combination wings and rocketpack and a walkie talkie on its back. It gets 2 white dice for being a mech, 1 green die for the wings, 1 green die for the rocketpack, and 1 yellow die for the walkie talkie. (It also gets a green d8 for having no ranged weapons, but that comes later.) It rolls 2 initiative dice.

I build a third mech with armor plates, a massive back-mounted cannon, and small rocket pods on either shoulder. It gets 2 white dice for being a mech, 1 blue die for its armor plates, 2 red dice at artillery range for its cannon, and 2 red dice at direct fire range for its rocket pods. It rolls 2 initiative dice.

I build a fourth mech, and let's say for this one that we're playing with the second optional rule. I build it with an ECM pod on one shoulder, a rocket pod on the other, and a rip saw in each hand. It gets two white dice for being a mech, 1 blue die for its ECM, 2 red dice at direct fire for its rocket pod, and 2 red dice plus a red d8 at hand to hand for its rip saws. It rolls 1 initiative dice.

What's my army worth?

Count up a) *the total number of mechs* in your army, and b) the *total number of attachments* in your army.

Your victory points per asset held (from now on, "*points per*") *starts at 5*.

Do you have *the most mechs*? Bump it down 1.

Do you have *the most attachments*? Bump it down 1.

Do you have *the fewest mechs*? Bump it up 1.

Do you have *the fewest attachments*? Bump it up 1.

For ties, both people bump.

An example of that, yeah?

My army has 3 mechs with a total of 10 attachments.

Let's say that you build an army of 4 mechs, each fully loaded, for a total of 16 attachments.

Let's say that Mitch builds an army of 3 mechs, fully loaded, for a total of 12 attachments.

My points per starts at 5. Do I have the fewest mechs? Yes, tying with Mitch. I get a +1 bump (and so will he in just a minute). Do I have the fewest attachments? I do, for another +1 bump. My points per is 7.

You start at 5. Do you have the most mechs? You do, for a -1 bump. Do you have the most attachments? You do, for another -1 bump. Your points per is 3.

Mitch starts at 5. Does he have the fewest mechs? Yes, he and I tie, so he bumps -1 same as me. Does he have the most or fewest attachments? No, he doesn't, no bump. Mitch's points per is 6.

Now, at the beginning of the game, I hold 5 assets: my 3 mechs and my 2 stations. I start the game with a score of 35(5x7).

You hold 6 assets: your 4 mechs and your 2 stations. You start the game with a score of 18 (6x3).

Mitch holds 5 assets: his 3 mechs and his 2 stations. He starts the game with a score of 30 (5x6).

If the war's called on account of rain, I win, 35 to 30 to 18. If you want to win, here's what you have to do: you have to blow up my mechs to reduce my score, and you have to seize my stations – which both reduces my score and increases your own.

35 to 18! You better get on that.

SET UP THE TABLE

create the battlefield and field your army ::

What should the battlefield look like?

Find a good-sized table and fill it. A round table's best, if you've got one.

You want a good spread of cover and rubble, with some wide avenues/killing grounds and some no-man's-lands and clusters of good cover and places where you're covered from one direction but totally exposed from another.

My first choice is to have everyone who's playing build the battlefield together, but of course that's not always the best choice. It's not even always possible!

What matters is that whoever lays out the battlefield does so without knowing whose army is biggest and best. The relative strengths of your armies determines which order you place your pieces in – so it's important that everyone agree to the battlefield before anyone knows who'll place their pieces first.

What's in range of what?

The rules for fielding your armies refer to *direct fire range*.

If you're playing on a hex map, *direct fire range* is 10.

If you're playing with a 9-long ruler, *direct fire range* is 9, the length of the ruler.

If you're playing with only a 6-long ruler, *direct fire range* is 12, two rulers.

While you're laying out your battlefield, you can change direct fire range, as a group, by consensus, if you want to.

Either way, *hand-to-hand range* is 1, and *artillery range* is anywhere in the whole world outside of direct fire range.

How do we field our armies?

The person with the highest starting score is the defender. In my example above, that's me, with the 35. The person with the lowest starting score is the primary attacker. That's you, with the 18. Everyone else is an attacker. That's Mitch.

Defender, place your stations on the field, wherever you want. Place two of your mechs. Don't place them outside of direct fire range from the nearest station. They establish your perimeter, so place them as forward as you can.

Primary attacker, place one of your mechs a) outside the defender's perimeter, b) just within direct fire range of one of the defender's mechs, and c) exposed to that mech (that is, out of cover).

All attackers, take turns placing your mechs. Don't place a mech any closer to one of the defender's mechs or one of the defender's stations than the primary attacker's first mech. Otherwise, place them wherever you want.

All attackers, place your stations. They must be outside of the defender's perimeter and beyond direct fire range of either of the defender's mechs.

Once all the attackers' mechs and stations are on the field, defender, place your remaining mechs. You can place them outside of your established perimeter if you want, but not within direct fire range of any enemy stations.

What about the doomsday clock?

Put a distinctive *d12* or *d20* out on the field somewhere safe. Set it to 11. This is *the doomsday clock*; when it reaches 0, the game's over.

What other dice will I need?

You'll need at least 2 white d6, 2 red d6, a red d8, 2 green d6, a green d8, a zillion blue d6, half a zillion yellow d6.

I play with 2 full-size blue d6 and like 20 half-size blue d6, and 2 full-size yellow d6 and like 10 half-size

yellow d6. The half-size dice are for putting on the field next to the mechs that they apply to.

You'll also need initiative dice for every mech: 1 or 2 distinctive d10 for each. I try to match my mechs' colors, to make it the easier to remember whose initiative is whose.

And...?

And that's it. You've gathered your friends, built your armies, laid out the battlefield, fielded your armies, set the doomsday clock, and gathered your dice.

Start the game!

Play the game

:: i do to you now the enormous hurt!

What happens in a turn?

1. All mechs roll initiative.

Every mech gets one or more d10 for initiative.

If your mech gets more than one initiative die, roll them all. Go on one of them, whichever one you choose.

2. The turn begins in initiative order.

Initiative order ascends from 1.

Resolve ties by rolling off.

3. On a mech's go:

- Discard your initiative die. You won't need it again.
- Name your target. If you have an artillery weapon you can name a target at artillery range; if you have a direct fire weapon you can name a target at direct fire range. You can name a target at hand to hand even if you've got no weapons at all – but of course you'll have to use a white die to follow through.
- If you're spotting, name your spotting target. You can spot any mech in direct fire range.
- Roll and assign your dice.
 - Pick up all your white dice, all your green dice, all your blue dice, your yellow dice if you're spotting,

and your red dice according to the range to your target. Roll them.

- Remember your green d8 if you have no long-range weapons. Remember your red d8 if you're firing a 1-shot rocket.
 - Assign a blue die or a white die to your defense. Subtract 1.
 - Assign a red die or a white die to your attack.
 - Assign a green die or a white die to your move.
 - Assign a yellow die or a white die to your spot. Subtract 1.
 - Discard all the dice you haven't assigned.
 - The principle is this: red to attack, blue to defend, green to move, yellow to spot, and white to anything.
- First, **your defense**. Put a blue die next to you showing your defense number. This'll be your defense number for the entire rest of the turn. Remember to subtract 1 from your defense die. If you don't assign a die to defense, your defense number is zero.
 - Second, if you have an **unresolved attack** against you, resolve it now, and wait to continue your go until after your attacker finishes hers.

- g. Third, you choose whether to move first, then attack, or attack first, then move.

If you don't assign a die to your attack, you can't attack. If you don't assign a die to your move, you can't move.

WHEN YOU ATTACK

Does your target already have a defense number?

- If so, resolve your attack and continue the turn in initiative order.
- If not, switch to combat order to resolve the attack.

WHEN YOU MOVE

- Move a number of hexes equal to your move die, or less.
 - If you rolled any green dice at all, you can move through or stop in a hex containing cover. If you didn't, you have to go around.
- h. Fourth, **your spot**. Put a yellow die next to your spotting target showing your spotting number. Remember to subtract 1 from your spotting die. If you don't assign a die to spotting, you can't spot.
- i. Finally, **seizing a station**. If you're the only mech within HtH range of a station, you seize it. Discard its former owner's marker, if any, and put your own marker on it.

4. Once every mech's had a go, the turn ends.

- Tidy up the field: remove all defense dice and spot dice.
- Tick down the doomsday clock.

10 ::

What's initiative order and what's combat order?

By default, a turn proceeds in initiative order: by initiative die, counting up from 1.

When you attack a mech that hasn't gone yet, that mech needs a defense number, so you switch to combat order.

Combat order just means that when you're attacked, it's your go next. You do half your go right now, up to step f; then your attacker finishes her go, then you finish your go after she's done.

Show me an example?

Sure, here's an example turn to show initiative order vs combat order. The mechs are Arty, Bashy, and Carver. Arty has initiative 1, Bashy has initiative 4, Carver has initiative 8.

Arty goes first.

Arty a. discards his initiative die.

Arty b. declares his target: Carver.

Arty c. isn't spotting.

Arty d. rolls his dice.

Arty assigns a 4 to his defense, subtracting 1 for a defense number of 3.

Arty assigns a 6 to his attack.

Arty assigns a 1 to his move.

Arty assigns no die to spotting.

Arty e. puts a blue die nearby, showing his defense number: 3.

Arty f. is not under attack.

Arty g. attacks first, then moves.

WHEN ARTY ATTACKS

Carver doesn't have a defense number, because she hasn't gone yet.

So we switch to combat order. Now Carver's up.

Carver a. discards her initiative die. She's going now, not at 8.

Carver b. declares her target: Arty.

Carver c. declares her spotting target: Arty.

Carver d. rolls her dice.

Carver assigns a 5 to her defense, subtracting 1 for a defense number of 4.

Carver assigns a 2 to her attack.

Carver assigns a 6 to her move.

Carver assigns a 4 to her spot, subtracting 1 for a spot number of 3.

Carver e. puts a blue die nearby, showing her defense number: 4.

Carver f. has an unresolved attack against her!

Arty resolves his attack on Carver.

ARTY CONTINUES HIS TURN

Arty moves 1 hex.

Arty h. isn't spotting.

Arty i. doesn't seize a station.

Arty's go is done. Now Carver picks up her turn where she left off.

Carver g. moves first, then attacks.

Carver moves 6 hexes.

Carver resolves her attack on Arty.

Carver h. puts a yellow die next to Arty, showing her spot number: 3.

Carver i. seizes a station.

Carver's go is done. We revert to initiative order. Bashy goes on 4.

Bashy a. discards his initiative die.

Bashy b. declares his target: Arty.

Bashy c. isn't spotting.

Bashy d. rolls his dice.

Bashy assigns a 2 to his defense, subtracting 1 for a defense number of 1.

Bashy assigns a 5 to his move.

Bashy assigns a 5 to his attack.

Bashy assigns no die to spotting.

Bashy e. puts a blue die nearby, showing his defense number: 1.

Bashy f. is not under attack.

Bashy g. attacks first, then moves.

Bashy resolves his attack on Arty.

Bashy moves 5 hexes.

Bashy h. isn't spotting.

Bashy i. doesn't seize a station.

Bashy's go is done.

The turn's done.

We remove the defense and spot dice from the field and tick down the doomsday clock.

How do we resolve attacks?

Did you hit?

Compare your *attack number* with your target's *defense number*.

- If your target's defense number is equal or higher, **you miss!** That's it, the attack's resolved.
- If your attack number is higher, **you hit!** Continue.

Roll damage dice.

Damage dice are *d6s*.

- Normally, you roll a number of damage dice *equal to the difference* between your attack number and your target's defense number. If your attack's a 5, for instance, and my defense is a 3, you roll 2 damage dice.
- If your target has a spot die, however, you can choose to use it instead of rolling your usual damage dice. Roll damage dice *equal to the number on the spot die* instead. Discard the spot die – a spot die is good for only one use.

Check cover.

- If your target's exposed to you, every damage die that comes up **a 5 or a 6 is a hit**.
- If your target's in cover to you, every damage die that comes up **a 6 is a hit**. Every damage die that comes up **a 5 is a hit to your target's cover**. This is especially cool if your target's cover is another enemy mech, but not especially cool if your target's cover is one of your own.

Your target takes damage.

- For each hit she takes, your target has to **lose one attachment or one white die**. She chooses which attachment to lose; when they're all gone, that's when she loses a white die instead.

That's it, the attack's resolved.

Give an example?

Here's an example attack. The mechs are Arty and Bashy. Bashy's attack number is 5, Arty's defense number is 3. Another mech has previously spotted Arty; he has a spot die showing 3.

Bashy's attack is higher than Arty's defense. Bashy hits!

Bashy can choose to use the spot die, in which case he rolls 3 damage dice, the number showing on the spot die.

Or, he can leave the spot where it is, in which case he rolls 2 damage dice: 5 (his attack) - 3 (Arty's defense) = 2.

He decides to use the spot. He discards the spot die and rolls 3 damage dice.

Arty is in cover to Bashy.

Bashy's damage dice come up 2, 3, 6.

Arty takes 1 hit. He pops off his ECM pack; he's lost its blue die for the rest of the game.

Say again about getting destroyed?

Whenever you take a hit, lose a whole attachment.

Lose the die or dice the attachment's worth. If you lose a weapon, lose both red dice.

(If you lose all your weapons at direct fire range and artillery range, that means you qualify for a free green d8. Remember to include it in your roll from now on!)

Once you've lost all your attachments, the next two hits cost you your two white dice.

Once you've lost your two white dice, you're rubble.

Hold on, what can I do with just white dice?

With just your white dice, you can move, defend, spot, and attack at hand to hand only. Naturally you're going to have to decide which to do, case by case.

What's up with 1-shot rockets?

If you're making an attack at direct fire range, you can launch a 1-shot rocket too. Pop the rocket off your mech and include a red d8 in your roll.

What's up with cover?

Relative to your attacker, you can be exposed or in cover. You're in cover if there's something on the field that a) you're up against and b) is between you and your attacker.

Draw a line the long way through the cover, extended out onto the field, to determine whether the cover's

between you and your attacker. If your attacker's on your side of the line, the cover's not between you. Ambiguous cases go to you, the target.

Only consider your own cover, not your attacker's.

Only consider terrain that's within 1 of you. If we're 10 apart and there's a wall at 5 between us, and no other terrain nearby, we're exposed to one another. In other words, you can't be "behind" cover that's more than 1 away. Even if you wish you were.

Single bricks don't count as cover.

Otherwise, when in doubt, be generous to the target.

A mech - even a destroyed one - counts as cover.

What about moving through cover?

If you rolled a green die (including possibly the green d8), you can move through cover with no penalty or grief. You've jumped over it, flown over it, scampered over it, zoomed through it, whatever.

If you didn't roll a green die, you have to go around.

What about destroying cover?

When your target's in cover, every damage die that comes up a 5 is a hit on the cover, right? For each hit, break off three bricks. Individual bricks don't count as cover, so you can blast holes through walls and stuff this way.

What's up with range?

You'll probably remember this from setting up your army on the battlefield, but here it is again.

If you're playing on a hex map, ***direct fire range is 10***.

If you're playing with a 9-long ruler, ***direct fire range is 9***, the length of the ruler.

If you're playing with only a 6-long ruler, ***direct fire range is 12***, two rulers.

While you're laying out your battlefield, you can change direct fire range, as a group, by consensus, if you want to.

Either way, ***hand-to-hand range is 1***, and ***artillery range is anywhere in the whole world*** outside of direct fire range.

Remember that you can attack with a weapon only within its listed range - you can't attack someone 10 hexes away with an artillery weapon, for instance.

What's up with seizing stations?

Seizing your opponent's stations is essential if you're losing. (If you're the defender this game, holding on to your stations is what's essential.)

If your mech is the only mech within hand to hand range of a station, you seize it. This happens as step i in your turn.

If someone else has a marker on the station, pop it off and return it to its owner. Put your own marker there in its place.

So notice how that works. First of all, if two mechs reach the station on the same turn, the one who gets there first - whose step i happens before the other mech arrives - seizes it. Second, you don't have to stand next to a station to own it; when you seize a station, it's yours until someone else seizes it, even if you wander away. However, third, nobody else can seize it as long as you're standing there; they have to blow you up or wait for you to leave.

What's up with the doomsday clock?

The doomsday clock starts at 11, you'll remember.

At the end of every turn, tick the doomsday clock down 1. Turn to the player with the highest current score and ask "do you want to click the doomsday clock down again?" If so, tick it down another 1. Each player, in descending score order, has the option to tick the doomsday clock down another 1.

Nobody has the option to tick the doomsday clock back up.

When the doomsday clock hits zero, the game's over. The turn you just played was the last turn. The end!

You have to be a psychic to manipulate the doomsday clock well. Or at least, you have to be able to think a turn ahead. You want to start double-counting it down as soon as you think you might be winning soon, and you want to stop double-counting it down as soon as you think there's a possibility that you'll stop winning. It's nerve wracking fun!

When is it called for to shout out slogans?

It's always called for to shout out slogans. Come on, like you had to ask.

I do to you now the enormous hurt! Eat giant chainsaw! Oh no, I'm a gimping lame-o! Aiiigh! I'm on FIRE! THIS SUCKS!

Sound effects are called for as well.

Spackita spackita spackita. Foom kaBOOM! Whooosh!

And if you want to talk some trash too, hey, bring it.

What about a soundtrack?

Absolutely!

I should tell you though, right now I'm listening to Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway, so it's like, "I do to you now the enormous hurt! You're just a hurdy-gurdy man!"

Win or lose

that's the point, after all ::

How do we keep score?

Every time you *lose a mech*, knock your current score down by *your points per*.

Every time *someone seizes one of your stations*, knock your own current score down by *your points per*, and bump her current score up by *her points per*.

How about an example of that?

Sure. At the start of our example game, my score's 35 and yours is 18.

Sometime toward the midgame, you smash my poor mech Arty into rubble. He put up good, but in the end you owned his giant fifty robot butt.

My points per is 7, so when you blow up Arty I lose 7 from my score. It goes down from 35 to 28.

A little later, you wedge your mechs through the hole left by dear Arty and seize one of my stations.

My points per is 7, so when you take my station away my score goes down from 28 to 21.

Your points per is 3, so when you take my station your score goes up by 3, from 18 to 21.

Notice that your score is always simply the number of things you've got, mechs plus stations, times your points per.

Oh and hey! Now we're tied at 21.

And at doomsday...?

At doomsday – that is, when the doomsday clock ticks to 0 – all debts come due, all heads are counted, and the scores become final.

Whoever has the highest score at doomsday, wins best. Whoever has the lowest, loses worst.

That's the game?

That's the game.

There's a short game too.

What's the short game?

The short game's 3 players, 2½ hours.

For each of the three armies: two mechs, fully loaded.

Set up the world small and round, with cover mostly but not exclusively around the perimeter. Leave a clearing in the middle with only a little cover nearby.

In the clearing, put a downed satellite.

Put your mechs behind cover and near each other in your section of the perimeter.

Set the doomsday clock to 8.

At doomsday, whoever owns the satellite wins.

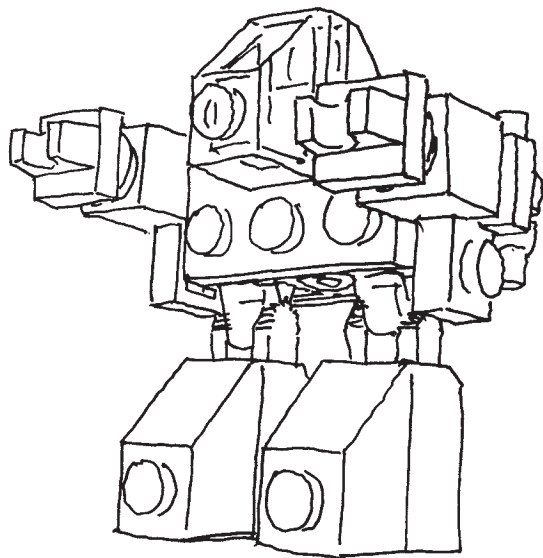
Strategy-wise: Is the only way to win to be the second mech to touch the flag? Can you be the first to the flag and still hold it somehow? Can you hang back and still seize it at the end? I can see trying the fast grab and hold, but hanging back seems like doom to me.

Is there a campaign game?

Not just yet!

At this writing, I'm about to start playtesting a campaign game with my friends. I'm still very open to ideas, though; If you think of something good, please send it my way. You can email me at lumpley@earthlink.net.

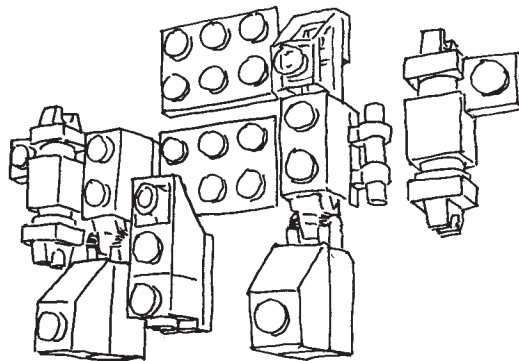
autumn '06 edition ::



Still the classic! Here's a naked mech, quick and easy to make, wicked adaptable. It'll take just about any attachments you can imagine.

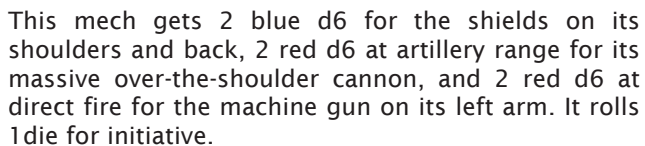
18 ::

Along these lines:

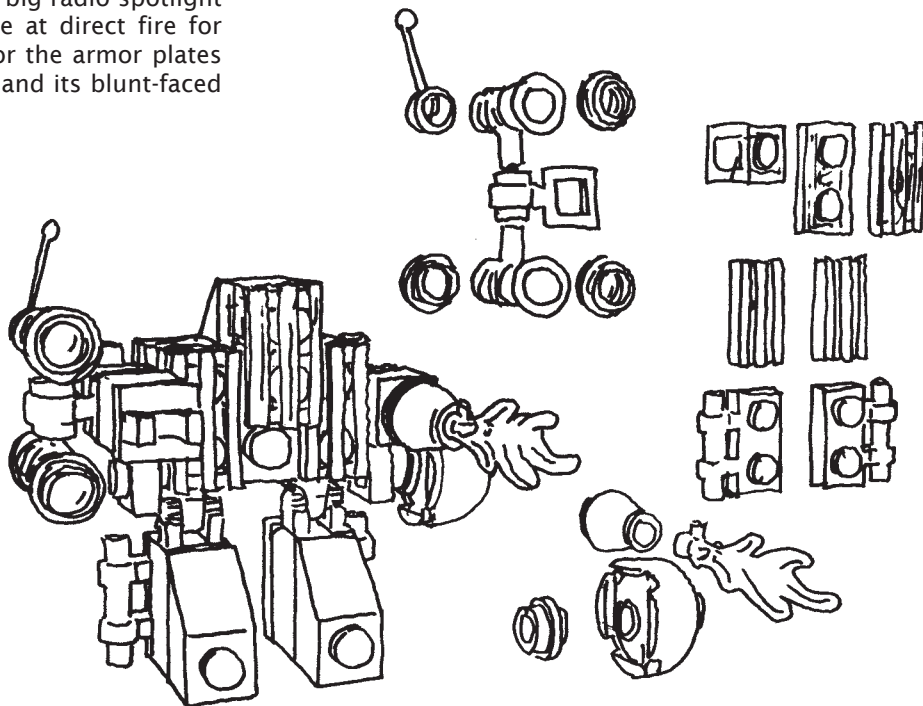


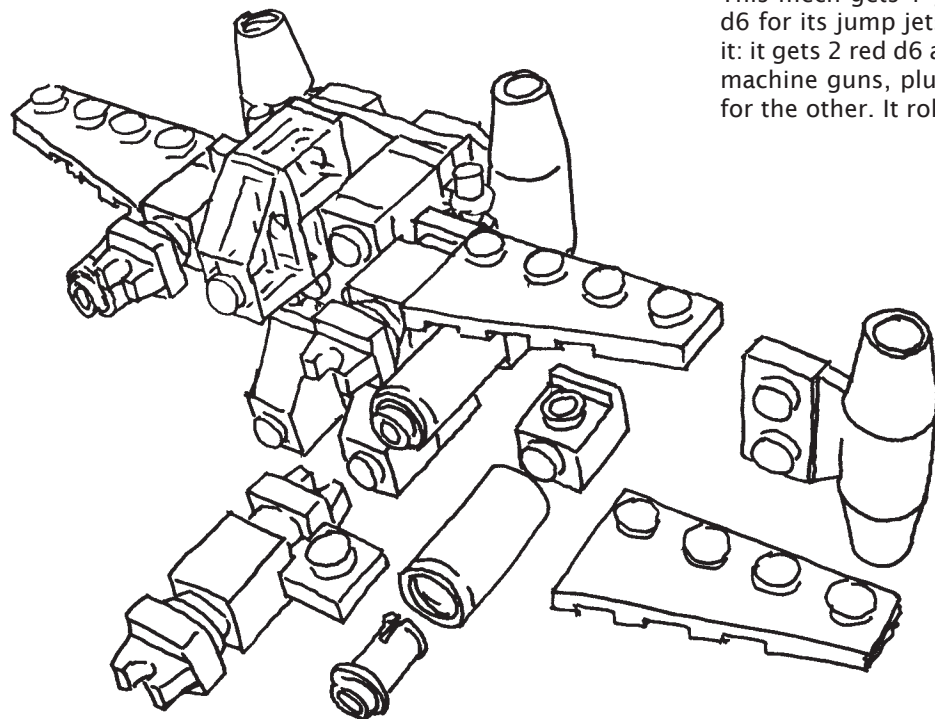
This diagram shows an exploded view of a LEGO Technic assembly, likely a motor or actuator. The main assembly on the left consists of a central motor unit with a long axle extending from the top. Various components are shown floating around it, including gears, connectors, and structural beams, indicating their relative positions for assembly.

I like the optional rule for this mech - 1 red d6 at artillery and 1 red d6 at direct fire for the sniper rifle on its left arm, plus 1 red d6 at direct fire and 1 red d6 at hand to hand for the machine gun with grenade launcher on its right arm. It also gets 1 yellow die for the comms pack on its back and 1 blue die for the ECM on its right shoulder. It rolls 1 die for initiative.

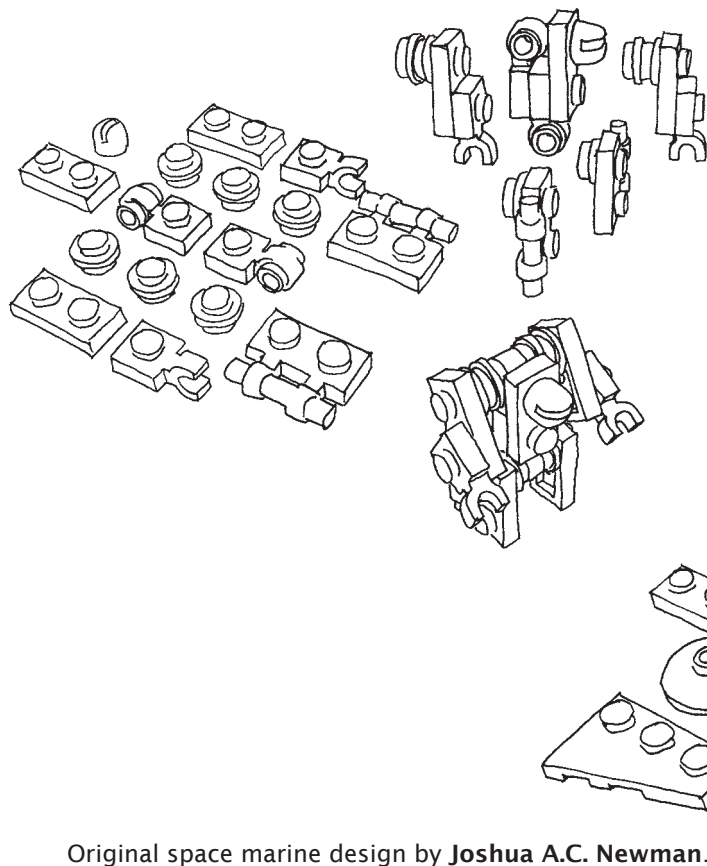


This mech gets 1 yellow d6 for the big radio spotlight things on its right arm, 2 red dice at direct fire for its flamethrower, and 1 blue die for the armor plates on its chest, the struts on its feet, and its blunt-faced cockpit. It rolls 2 dice for initiative.





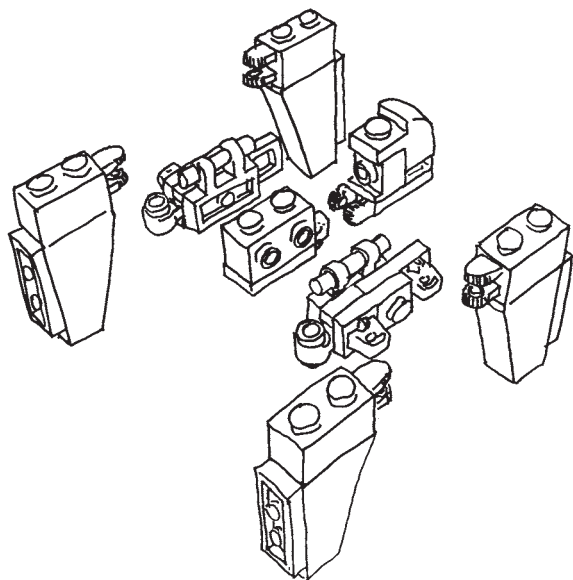
This mech gets 1 green d6 for its wings plus 1 green d6 for its jump jets. I like the second optional rule for it: it gets 2 red d6 at direct fire for one of its underwing machine guns, plus the fearsome red d8 at direct fire for the other. It rolls 1die for initiative.



Here's a space marine. They can't be beat for size and economy - 16 pieces! - but it's pretty hard to make weapons and attachments their size.

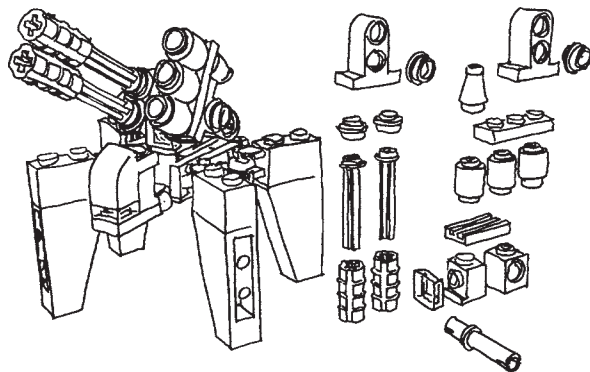
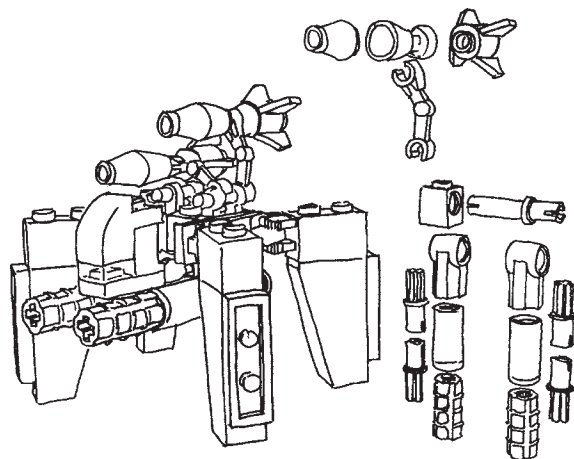
Still they're awfully hot, huh?

Original space marine design by **Joshua A.C. Newman**.

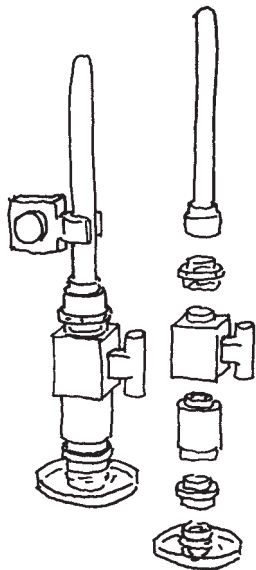


Here's a walker. These are a little harder to build than the basic mechs, they aren't as easy to create attachments for, and they're a lot more limited, but they look *wicked* on the battlefield.

The one on the upper right there is the one on the cover, by the way.

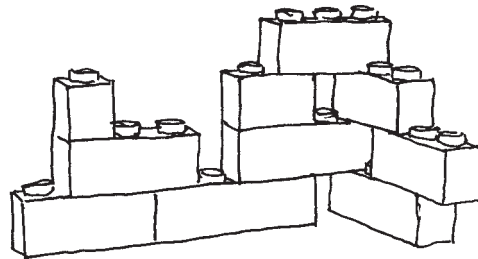


Here's a station:

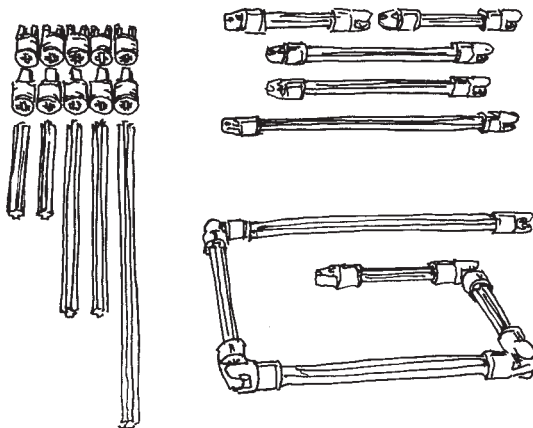


Notice the little flag clipped to it to show who owns it.

Here's some cover:



Here's a 9-long ruler:



The 6-long ruler is just the same, minus the longest piece.

BRICKLINKING

how i buy mechs ::

My Lego-buying process for mechs goes like this:

1. I make a tentative list of parts I want.
2. I find several possible stores.
3. I fill parallel shopping carts.
4. I buy the ones I want!

1. A tentative list of parts I want

These days I buy parts for a whole but naked mech, then parts for a variety of attachments.

For a whole but naked mech, in gray, I buy this list:

- 1x Brick, Modified 1 x 1 with Headlight (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 2x Hinge, Brick 1 x 2 Locking with 1 Finger on End (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 2x Hinge, Brick 1 x 2 Locking with 2 Fingers on End (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 1x Plate 1 x 2 (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 2x Plate, Modified 1 x 2 with Handle - Type 1 (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 2x Plate, Round 1 x 1 (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 2x Plate, Modified 1 x 1 with Clip Light - Type 2 (thick ring) (Dark Bluish Gray)
- 1x Plate 1 x 1 (Trans-Dark Blue)
- 1x Slope 45 2 x 1 (Trans-Dark Blue)
- 4x Tile, Modified 1 x 1 with Clip (Light Bluish Gray)
- 2x Brick 1 x 1 (Light Bluish Gray)
- 2x Plate 2 x 3 (Light Bluish Gray)
- 1x Slope, Inverted 45 2 x 1 (Light Bluish Gray)
- 2x Slope 45 2 x 1 (Light Bluish Gray)

2. Several possible stores

Let's start on BrickLink, browsing parts to buy:

<http://www.bricklink.com/searchBrowse.asp?itemType=P>

Of the parts I'm looking for, one of the hardest to find is this one: 1x Slope 45 2 x 1 (Trans-Dark Blue)

Let's find several BrickLink stores we can buy it from.

See where it says "Trans-Dark Blue" toward the bottom of the page? Click that. Now we're at a page that says "All Items For Sale: Parts: in Trans-Dark Blue color." We're looking at some whip antennas, not the parts we need.

In the search box, type the description of the part you're looking for; in this case, "Slope 45 2 x 1." Before I hit Go I always pull down to show only new parts, 100 per page.

So now we get a list of stores. Each entry you see is a different store you might buy that part from.

- I'm in the USA, so I choose stores only in the USA. Sometimes rare pieces are much more inexpensive in Europe – but not for me, who has to pay shipping to get them here.

- I have a budget in mind, so I choose stores whose minimum order I'm comfy spending.

- Say I'm putting together 4 mechs. A store that has only 2 of the part I need won't help me. Also, you'll notice that some stores list quantities like this: "600 (x10)." That means that you can buy the piece only in multiples of 10; you can't buy 4 or 11 of them.

• And for our purposes here and now, any of the prices we see listed in the first, oh, 50 stores are reasonable prices. When you're buying in bulk, like I've been recently, your concerns are a little different, but for a half dozen of this particular piece, I figure 8¢ each is basically as good a price as 5¢ each.

So: look down the list and choose the first four or five stores that meet your criteria, open them each in its own window. I always leave my base BrickLink window open too – I might be back to it.

3. Parallel shopping carts

Each of those BrickLink stores looks just the same. In the narrow left-hand column you've got navigation, in the big panel you've got what you're currently doing. Click around, check it out. You can browse by piece or by color.

Your goal is to go through the list of parts you want and find all of them, in the right quantity, in this store. Add them to your cart as you find them.

Your secondary goal is to learn the names of parts you may want in the future. If you're already a Lego person, you no doubt have your own names for the parts - like at my house we call part "Plate, Modified 1 x 2 with 1 Stud" a one-bumper. I maintain a reference list, an Excel spreadsheet, matching my names for parts with their BrickLink names.

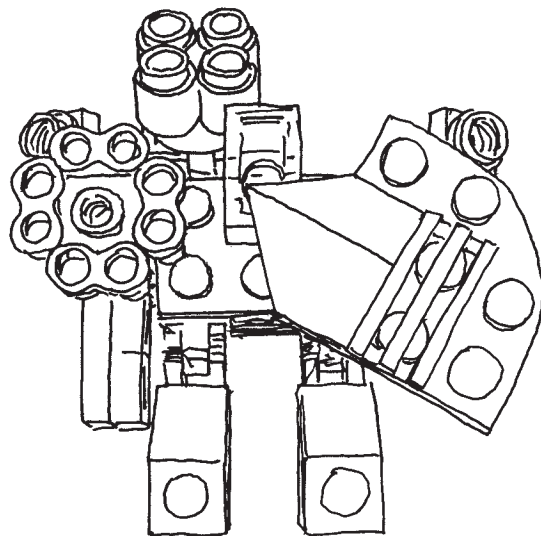
Anyway but fill your cart with the pieces you need. Fill your cart at each of the several stores you're browsing, until you're satisfied with what you've found. Some stores will turn out to be useless to you - they have lots of cheap windshields, but no arms legs or bodies - and if that's happening a lot you'll want to go back to your main BrickLink page and add new stores to the mix.

I don't usually wind up buying my list exactly - that's why I call it tentative. Usually alternatives catch my eye instead.

Oh and every store you order from, you're going to play a couple bucks shipping and handling. If you can buy all the parts you need from one store instead of two, you'll save, even if all the parts there are a little more expensive. It's pretty rare I find all the parts I need at one store, but sometimes.

4. Buy!

Compare your full carts and buy the one or the ones you want.



SUMMARY

SETUP ::

Determine army size:

- 2 players: 3 stations, 4-8 mechs
- 3 players: 2 stations, 3-6 mechs
- 4-5 players: 1 station, 2-4 mechs

build your mechs:

- up to 4 attachments
- movement attachment: 1 green d6
- defense attachment: 1 blue d6
- comms/surveillance attachment: 1 yellow d6
- hand weapon: 2 red d6 at hand to hand range
- direct fire weapon: 2 red d6 at direct fire range
- artillery weapon: 2 red d6 at artillery range
- one-shot rockets: 1 red d8 at direct fire range
- no direct fire or artillery weapons: 1 green d8

build your stations

determine your points per:

- start at 5 points per
- most mechs? subtract 1
- most attachments? subtract 1
- fewest mechs? add 1
- fewest attachments? add 1

determine your starting score:

- mechs plus stations, times points per
- highest starting score is the defender
- lowest starting score is the attacker

lay out the battlefield

place your armies: defender then attackers then defender

set the doomsday clock to 11

PLAY ::

start the round in initiative order

on your turn:

- roll your dice
- assign blue or white to your defense
- resolve the outstanding attack, if there is one
- assign red or white to your attack
- assign green or white to your move
- move then attack, or attack then move
- resolve your attack, switching to combat order
- assign yellow or white to your spotting

after everyone's turn, tick down the doomsday clock

each player: tick it down an extra tick?

WINNING ::

your current score always equals the things you own (mechs
plus stations) times your points per

at doomsday, the game ends

highest score wins