

# INTRODUCTION

## ***Introduction***

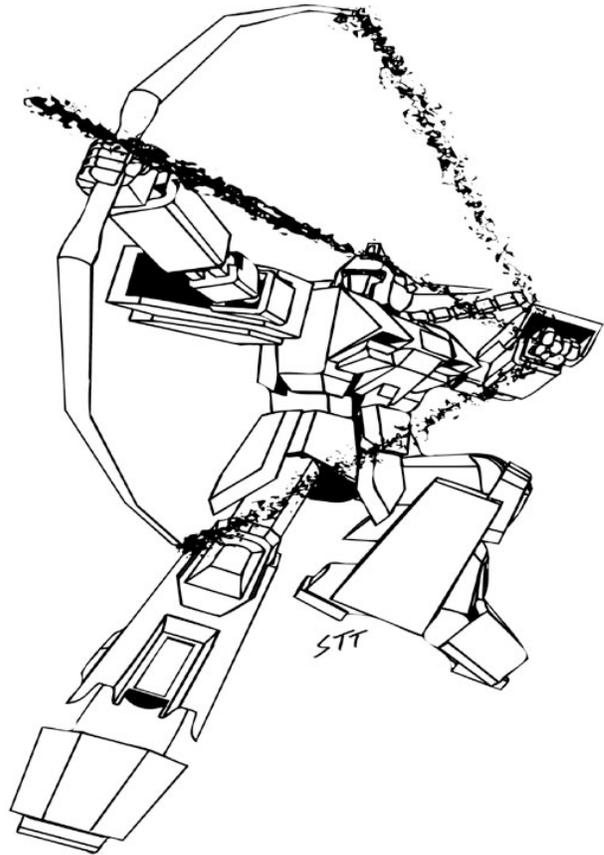
Welcome to Mecha Aces, the FUDGE based RPG based on mecha anime! In this book, you will read how to immerse yourself into the exciting and challenging world of mecha. What are mecha, you ask? This book considers mecha to be any man-made, mechanical vehicle. That means cars, trucks, boats, airplanes, and starships all fall under the jurisdiction of these rules. Most importantly, however, the term mecha refers to large mechanical humanoid vehicles used for war. This is where the bulk of mecha anime places its emphasis.

How will we 'immerse' ourselves, you ask? Well, take a large tub of water then... oops, wrong book, let's try again. In this book, you will learn how to play what is known as an RPG. That stands for Role Playing Game. In an RPG, the players act as characters in a story told by the GM, or Game Master. The point of the rules is that when two forces want to accomplish opposite goals, they can resolve the issue in an objective and logical matter (rather than simply arguing). The rules provided in this book are a great way to represent the serious action and zany antics of mecha anime.

What is mecha anime, you ask? Well, I was just getting to that. Anime is the term used to denote an animated feature that comes from Japan. There is a whole sub-culture in America devoted to this collection of works from half-way-round the world. To be considered a *mecha* anime, this book holds the anime to specific, all be it loose, criteria. First, the anime must contain some sort of mechanized technology. Be that in modern day form (cars, trucks, airplanes) or in futuristic form (fighting robots, huge spaceships). Second, this mechanization must have a proactive role in the story (the robots are used to fight a large scale war, the cars are used for racing, the spaceships are capable of battling one another, etc.). This rule setup may be a little hefty if you only wanted to apply it to the family car, which does nothing but tote the characters around unabated. These are the only two

criteria to apply while determining when to use this book's rules: there exists mechanized technology, and it is used actively to further the story.

This book's rules apply FUDGE as its basic foundation. However, do not mistake this book as another of the myriad of simple campaign settings or sourcebooks for FUDGE. This book only uses FUDGE as its core foundation. The rules are then modified, expanded, and adapted to fluid and practical application for mecha anime. That means that you will see a lot of new and innovative features added on top of the FUDGE foundation that you will not see in any other rulebook. That is the true beauty of Mecha Aces. By taking tested and solid FUDGE rules and breaking new ground with them, Mecha Aces aspires to be the premier mecha RPG.



# CHAPTER 0: MECHA ACES IN A NUTSHELL

## ***Introduction***

Mecha Aces applies the FUDGE rule-set to manage both human and mechanized interaction alike. To accommodate this, Mecha Aces uses generally normal human based rules, and then modifies them for use with mecha. We will now explore the various facets of this game, and provide a basic overlay for its main theme.

## ***What this Book Contains, what it Doesn't***

This book contains all of the rules you will need to run a table-top role-playing game which emulates the plot elements found in mecha anime. This includes character and mecha conception, tips on running an effective game, and even special optional rules such as magic, psychic powers, and techniques. This book also contains four sample settings, so you can have an easier time jumping right into the worlds of mecha anime! There is a lot to explore in this book, and I hope you will enjoy every nut and bolt of Mecha Aces!!!

## ***Characters***

The player will run their own character, with is their role in the story. This requires the player to talk, act, and speak for their character; the player assumes that identity for the duration of the game. Characters in Mecha Aces are most commonly Mecha pilots. However, depending upon the application of the Mecha Aces rules, your character could be whatever their dreams aspire!

## ***Traits***

In FUDGE, a person is broken down into certain Traits. These Traits are: Attributes, Skills, Gifts, Faults, and Supernatural Powers. Two of these Traits, Attributes and Skills, have levels which describe the character's ability relative to other characters. These levels are:

Superb (+3)

Great (+2)

Good (+1)

Fair (+0)

Mediocre (-1)

Poor (-2)

Terrible (-3)

Also, there are some derived values that will help define your character and assist in Action Resolution. We will examine each of these Traits briefly, so you can get a feel for the general structure of the game before continuing.

## ***Attributes***

Each character has five Attributes. These represent the characters basic physical and mental capabilities compared to other characters. The five basic Attributes are Strength, Agility, Tech, Insight, and Will. Strength is a measure of the character's brute force and physical prowess. Agility is a measure of the character's speed, grace, and dexterity. Tech is a measure of the character's logical and analytical thinking skills. Insight is the character's natural creativity and ability to inflect to solve problems. Will is a measure of the character's tenacity, resolve, and mental toughness. Attributes have levels, as mentioned before. All of a character's Attributes start off at Fair; upon creation a character receives two free levels to boost their Attributes.

## ***Skills***

As the name would convey, a Skill is an ability learned over time. There are nearly 100 different Skills in Mecha Aces. Skills reflect your character's experience and learning before they entered the story. Skills are also developed, honed, and generally improved throughout the course of playing with that

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character. Unlike Attributes, a character does *not* start out as Fair in all of the Skills. Instead, each Skill starts off at some default level, usually Poor, and the character receives 45 points with which to specialize their Skills.

### ***Gifts***

This Trait reflects the unique assets a character has acquired over their lives, or was simply born with. Gifts do not have levels, you simply have them or you don't. However, some Gifts may be purchased multiple times for a better and better effect. There are several Gifts available in the similarly named Gifts chapter. Each character receives two free Gifts at creation.

### ***Faults***

Everyone has their imperfections. This Trait accounts for that human fallibility. A Fault can reflect a physical shortcoming, mental drawback, or simply a bad situation you are in. Purchasing Faults gives your character more points with which to purchase other Traits.

### ***Magic***

Mecha Aces includes a Magic system. This system is optional; the game in no way requires the characters to wield apocalyptic magics of doom. Implementation of the Magic rules is up to GM's discretion. The Magic system includes four sample disciplines, complete with powers for your budding mage's spell list.

### ***Psychic Powers***

Much like the Magic system, the Psychic Power rules are entirely optional, and are up to GM's discretion to implement. Psychic Powers allow a character to develop powerful psionic abilities, and use those tiny corners of the human brain nobody seems to bother with. Psychic abilities are purchased as Skills, with the power of their abilities depending upon that Skill's level.

### ***Techniques***

Pilots often use practiced maneuvers on the foe. From an acrobatic jet fighter trick, to a deliberate and strategic submarine maneuver, a pilot often finds the right stuff to defeat their enemy. As a Technique represents the pilot's basic talents, each Technique is linked to one of the pilot's Attributes. Thusly, a pilot can only have five Techniques. The construction and cost of Techniques is outlined in more detail in the aptly named Technique chapter.

### ***Wound Levels***

This is a reflection of the physical damage a person can endure. This is split into levels, called Wound Levels, which reflect the characters current state of health. These are: Hurt, Very Hurt, Down, and Dead. The base amount of Wound points in each level is equal to Strength + Will + 10. The Hurt level has the base amount available to it. The Very Hurt has double the base amount. The Down level has triple the base amount. Finally, the Dead level has five times the base.

### ***Introduction to Mecha Anime***

The basic form of a mecha is a vehicle that takes on a humanoid shape. This vehicle can be large or small, heavy or light, as long as it looks vaguely humanoid. Often, mecha are operated by a single pilot, which sits in a cockpit somewhere in the mecha (often the chest or head). Mecha can be used for construction, manual labor, or even warfare.

Mecha are used in anime in various ways. First and foremost, mecha are generally the big, weapon ridden vehicles the characters trample around in. This has a place in both military settings or even in lighter anime where anybody may have a mecha available to them. When in shoujo anime, mecha are often the 'backdrop' in front of which character interaction and development takes place. What this means is that the mecha are only an interesting sidepiece to the actual story of romance, drama, and/or comedy. Mecha may kick butt and take names, but the point of shoujo is its compelling story, not its compelling body count. Mecha are usually considered to be technologically

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advanced. That is to say, mecha (at least bipedal war machines) are not existent in today's world. Mecha are usually found in a 'science fiction' type of anime. Despite this, any level of technological vehicle can be represented by Mecha Aces, by balancing the proper Gifts/Faults. In anime, mecha often conotate war, death, and destruction. This is not a necessary connection. Mecha can be utilized for their superior extension of the human body. While a coast guard member may not be able to swim up to a drowning person during a hurricane, their mecha may be able to brave the storm and use its large hand to rescue the unfortunate individual. Even smaller mecha can assist a situation non-violently. A person unable to move their legs from birth would greatly benefit from a small mecha that carries them, while retaining a humanoid enough shape to maneuver in a world built for bipeds. While applying Mecha Aces, be creative and flexible on how much the creation of mecha has benefited society.

As far as this RPG is concerned, the definition of mecha is infinitely flexible. By balancing Gifts, Faults, and Attributes, this RPG can generate nearly any form of machinery, vehicle or otherwise.

In several cases, mecha represented by Mecha Aces will be as mundane as cars, airplanes, or even robot butlers. The Mecha Aces system provides the flexibility to be used on anything mechanical from a tinkerer's pocket watch robot to a huge space station. For anime with various forms of magic or paranormal powers, Mecha Aces can keep pace with a set of optional Supernatural Power Gifts and Faults.

### ***How do I pilot this thing, anyway?!?!***

Piloting a mecha is a difficult task. Much like riding a bike, piloting becomes easier with time, and it is a skill you never forget. Normal people, provided they have never seen a bicycle before, wouldn't know how to ride one right away. The same concepts apply to mecha piloting. Because Mecha Aces characters wouldn't be able to simply jump into a mecha and know what they are doing, a collection of Mecha Skills has been provided with Mecha Aces. Characters may purchase levels of Mecha Skills with skill points, as with any other skill. These skills cover the various

facets of piloting a mecha, and are provided in the Skills chapter.

### ***Mecha, and all their bits and pieces***

In Mecha Aces, the abilities and features of a mecha are explained by their Traits. Traits are qualitative representations that reflect the build and functionality of a mecha.

The first Trait we will deal with, Attributes, will explain the abilities of a mecha compared to other mecha of its size. There are five Attributes: Servo, Gyro, Comp, Build, and Maintenance. Each Attribute reflects the performance of that facet of the mecha's abilities. Attributes have a qualitative range, which exactly reflects its performance. That range is the same of that in Mecha Aces, being:

Superb (+3)

Great (+2)

Good (+1)

Fair (+0)

Mediocre (-1)

Poor (-2)

Terrible (-3)

The numbers in parenthesis after the range indicate the bonus or penalty incurred to an Action Resolution check that uses that Attribute. All Attributes start as Fair, and are altered during Mecha Conception.

The next Trait we will deal with is called Gifts. Gifts are the special features a mecha has that set it apart from the standard bipedal vehicle. Gifts also help determine the exact physical form. The functionality granted from a Gift is beneficial. Several Gifts are provided in the Gifts Chapter, but any beneficial feature a mecha has can be considered a Gift. Feel free, with GM discretion, to consider any such feature as a Gift.

The final Trait we will deal with is called Faults. Faults (like Gifts) are special features built into a mecha that set it apart from the norm. However, a

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Fault's functionality is considered to be detrimental to the proper function of the mecha. In other words, while a Gift makes a mecha better, Faults make the mecha worse. Accepting Faults into a mecha's design yields more points with which to purchase Gifts or Attribute points. As with Gifts, any feature on a mecha that is considered abnormally unhelpful can be considered a Fault. That is to say, any design flaw that other mecha wouldn't normally possess can be considered a Fault. Several Faults are provided in the Faults Chapter, but feel free, with GM discretion, to create a few Faults of your own.

### Scale

Scale reflects the difference in measure between the Traits of things of varying form. That is to say, characters and/or mecha of different sizes will have different scales, which means Action Resolution between them will be modified. Frame, which is a basic measure of a mecha's size, plays a dominant role in determining scale. Having levels in either the Too Small or Too Big Faults will affect it as well. Between Mecha Aces characters and mecha themselves, a few helpful conversions may be necessary. One point of damage to a mecha is equal to 20 points of damage to a Mecha Aces character. When contesting mecha, Mecha Aces characters are considered to have a scale of Small - 5. When contesting Mecha Aces characters, mecha are considered to have a scale of +10 for Small mecha, +15 for Medium mecha, and +20 for Large mecha.

### Damage Levels

To reflect how much damage a mecha can take, we can determine a mecha's Damage Levels. Each mecha has four Damage Levels. They are: normal, -1, -2, and down. Each damage level has a certain number of Damage Points it can take. That number is equal to:  $[(\text{Build} + \text{Maintenance}) (\text{min} = 1) * 10] + 20$ . The note of  $(\text{min} = 1)$  in the equation means that when a mecha's Build and Maintenance are added together, the total is considered to be one if the sum is negative or zero. This insures a mecha will have at least *some* Damage Points in each Damage Level.

