

MECHA POWER CORES

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The d20 Future Mecha rules offer a good basis for detailing humongous walking machines of war, but there are areas where it could be further expanded. One such area has to do with what makes mecha go, the source of their power. Nothing is said in d20 Future about a mecha's power source, so all we can assume is that a mecha has one, it never runs out, and has no other effect on a mecha except to "make it go." Obviously, there is a level of detail here that needs fleshing out. These optional rules are hereby presented to add that extra layer of detail to your d20 Future mecha.

"Mecha Power Cores" is an ongoing project initiated by Sleep Dep Creations and Gallantry Productions, and expanded upon by UKG Publishing. This is an open document, meaning that it is designed to change and expand over time. There is a lot of room for expansion in Mecha Power Cores. If you would like to contribute something new, or suggest improvements, please contact us at:

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THE BASICS

A power core is considered to be part of the mecha chassis. It does not take up any equipment slots unless otherwise noted in the description. A mecha's power core affects its uptime, speed, and reliability. A mecha's power core is one size smaller than the mecha. A power core is a self-contained unit that includes storage space for its fuel and emissions. All base mecha come with a standard Fusion Core. When purchasing a mecha chassis, you may choose another power core in lieu of the standard Fusion Core.

Uptime: the number of hours the mecha can operate before refuelling.

Fuel: what substance the power core consumes for energy. All mecha are considered to have enough storage space for whatever fuel their power core consumes.

Emission: the by-product of the power core's fuel consumption, if any. These are stored internally unless otherwise noted.

Purchase DC modifier: the amount which the power core modifies the Purchase DC of the mecha chassis.

To determine the purchase DC of mecha power core on its own, apply the core's Purchase DC modifier to the base mecha's Purchase DC and subtract 6.

Installing a power core in a mecha superstructure requires a successful Craft (mechanical) check (DC 20) and an investment of time based on the mecha's size: Large 10 minutes, Huge 30 minutes, Gargantuan 1 hour, Colossal 3 hours. If the power core takes up additional slots, double the installation time for each additional slot.

POWER CORES

Electric Power Core (PL 5)

The first mecha, when large mechs emerge in PL 5, run on electricity. These primitive mechs are used primarily for heavy labour and are not suited for combat. This power core requires a constant connection to an external power source, essentially a long extension cord. This cord is expensive (Purchase DC 25 for a 20ft length) and gives mechs a very small operational range.

BACKUPS

It is possible to install more than one power core in a mecha. An additional power core takes up either a torso or back slot (2 torso or 2 back slots on a Colossal mech). This is in addition to any extra slots the second power core takes up. Secondary power cores are often installed as a redundant system, to prevent a lucky hit from disabling the mech. Additional power cores also increase the mech's uptime; when one core runs out of fuel, another takes over. A second power core, therefore, effectively doubles mecha uptime.

This power core is unable to meet the demands of energy-based weapons; such weapons cannot operate on a mecha powered by an Electric power core. This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 15ft and increases the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 4.

Uptime: Infinite as long as it is plugged in.

Fuel: Electricity

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: -8

Solar Energy Processor (PL 5)

Solar power was considered an option to alleviate the need for bulky extension cords. This power core is essentially the same as the Electric Power Core, except that power is received by an arrangement of bulky solar collectors on the mecha's shoulders (these collectors have a hardness of 10 and 5 hit points). The main disadvantage of this power core is its need for direct solar contact to function. The mecha cannot operate in any environment that does not have direct exposure to sunlight.

This power core is unable to meet the demands of energy-based weapons; such weapons cannot operate on a mecha powered by an Electric power core. This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 15ft and increases the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 4. This power core takes up one of the mech's shoulder slots.

Uptime: Infinite as long as it remains in an area with direct exposure to sunlight

Fuel: Solar Energy

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: -7

HEMI Power Core (PL 5)

It was only a matter of time before someone took a truck motor and tried to put it in a mecha chassis. A HEMI engine can only be installed in a Large mecha. This power core is unable to meet the demands of energy-based weapons; such weapons cannot operate on a mecha powered by a HEMI Power Core. This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 10ft and increases the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 2.

Uptime: 2 hours

Fuel: Diesel fuel

Emission: Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide gases. Mecha equipped with a HEMI power core must have an exhaust port to release these emissions. These gases appear as a black cloud and confer a +10 bonus to Spot checks made to spot the mecha.

Purchase DC modifier: -10

Universal Fossil Fuel Combustion Engine (UFFCE) (PL 5)

Developed in late PL 5, this engine briefly

revolutionized the energy industry before the perfection of fusion power. This highly efficient combustion engine accepts all types of fossil fuels, including natural gas, diesel, and propane. This power core is unable to meet the demands of energy-based weapons; such weapons cannot operate on a mecha powered by a UFFCE power core. This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 10ft and increases the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 2.

Uptime: 8 hours.

Fuel: Any fossil fuel

Emission: Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide gases. Mecha equipped with a UFFCE power core must have an exhaust port to release these emissions. This gas cloud is visible in cold weather and confers a +5 bonus to Spot checks made to spot the mecha in a cold environment.

Purchase DC modifier: -6

Nuclear Power Core (PL 5)

When the military began to consider mecha for combat applications, their first prototypes ran off nuclear reactors similar to those found in submarines. Though dangerous, these nuclear mechs proved to the military the effectiveness of mecha as a combat platform. On a successful critical hit, there is a 50% chance that core containment is breached and the crew suffers radiation damage. This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 5ft.

Uptime: 20 hours

Fuel: Uranium rods.

Emission: Radioactive waste. This material is incredibly dangerous and will deal radiation damage if not disposed of properly.

Purchase DC modifier: -4

Wireless Power Receiver (PL 5)

Based on the work of Nikolai Tesla, this simple mecha power system receives electric power wirelessly from a transmitter. As long as the mech is within the transmission radius of the power source (referred to as a "wireless power field"), it can operate indefinitely. Without any backup systems, however, this mecha cannot operate outside of a wireless power field. This core takes up so little room that the mecha gains an additional torso slot (2 additional torso slots on a Colossal mech). This power core decreases the mecha's base speed by 10ft and increases the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 2.

Uptime: Infinite as long as it remains inside a wireless power field

Fuel: Electricity

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: -4

Wireless Power, as well as many other inventions of Nikolai Tesla, are detailed in the upcoming d20 supplement "Tesla's Legacy," from Gallantry Productions and Sleep Dep Creations.

Fusion Core (PL 6)

The basic power core of all mecha, fusion cores work on the same principles that power our own Sun. A self-contained chamber fuses atoms of one elemental material (usually hydrogen) together to form another elemental material (helium, in the case of hydrogen fusion). Fusion cores must be configured for the element which they are using for fuel, and come configured for hydrogen by default. Configuring a fusion core for a different

element requires a Repair check (DC 20) and an hour of work. The fusion process creates a large amount of energy, perfect for the high demands of a mecha.

Uptime: 40 hours.

Fuel: A quantity of a single, pure element (usually hydrogen).

Emission: A quantity of another single, pure element (usually helium).

Purchase DC modifier: +0

Fusion-Fission Combined Reactor (PL 6)

A marvel of Fusion Age efficiency, the Fusion-Fission reactors combine two complementary technologies in one package. It is essentially a Fusion Power Core that vents into a special Fission Reactor, which splits the emission back into the same pure element used as fuel in the Fusion Power Core. The combined reactors manage to compliment each other enough that the Fission process is nearly effortless, overcoming the typical laws of conservation that limited such a process in the past. Essentially, this power core recycles its own waste. This conservation of materials isn't perfect, as some matter is lost, and refuelling is still a necessity (although it is needed far less often). Mecha equipped with Fusion-Fission Combined Reactors benefit from a tenfold increase of uptime compared to a normal Fusion Power Core. The only downside is the amount of space this unit takes up. A Fusion-Fission Combined Reactor takes up a torso slot (2 torso slots on a Colossal mech). Both the Fusion and Fission reactors must be configured for the elements they will fuse and fission, respectively; they come configured for hydrogen and helium by

default. Configuring a Fusion-Fission Combined Reactor for different elements requires a Repair check (DC 20) and an hour of work for each half of the unit; one for the fusion core, and one for the fission core.

Uptime: 400 hours

Fuel: A quantity of a single, pure element (usually hydrogen)

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: +2

Constant Kinetic Energy Generator (CKEG) (PL 7)

Thanks to the breakthrough of gravity induction that defines PL 7, the CKEG is a revolutionary power core that eliminates fuel consumption. Using gravity inductors to keep a series of turbines in perpetual motion, a CKEG power core is safe and efficient. It also allows for faster and more maneuverable mecha, something especially useful for the Gargantuan and Colossal mecha that emerge in PL 7. The only downside is that the perpetual motion of the core wears down on parts, and the whole core usually requires replacement after a hundred hours. This power core increases the mecha's base speed by 10ft and reduces the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 2.

Uptime: 100 hours

Fuel: None

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: +4

Matter-Antimatter Reactor (MAMR) (PL 8)

The MAMR power core represents a major leap in energy generation. The combination of pure matter and pure antimatter in a controlled

environment yields a massive amount of energy with no by-products. This power core increases the mecha's base speed by 20ft and reduces the mecha's Dexterity penalty by 8.

Uptime: 1600 hours

Fuel: Bulk matter and antimatter

Emission: None

Purchase DC modifier: +12

POWER CORE GEAR

These are similar to gadgets, but apply exclusively to power cores. The Purchase DC modifiers apply to the mecha's base Purchase DC.

Extra Fuel Tank (Universal)

Some mecha builders choose to sacrifice component space to fit in additional fuel. Adding this option takes up two additional slots on the mecha: one for the extra fuel, and one for the extra emissions (a power core that produces no emissions only requires one extra slot for the fuel). An extra fuel tank increases a mech's uptime by a number of hours equal to half the power core's base uptime. This addition may be applied several times. Each Extra Fuel Tank takes up additional slots and adds additional hours to the mech's uptime.

Equipment Slots: 1 or 2 slots (see above); must be any combination of back, torso, belt, or leg slots.

Purchase DC modifier: +1

Water Processing Plant (PL 6)

Mecha equipped with a Fusion Core can be fitted with this simple device. When immersed in water, this equipment will gather hydrogen to be used

as fuel in the reactor. The mecha must remain motionless whilst operating the Water Processing Plant for at least 2 hours to refill its fuel tanks.

Equipment Slots: 1, must be torso or legs.

Purchase DC modifier: +2.

Matter Sieve (PL 6)

With the advent of fusion technology, the problem of finding fuel became less of an issue. A Mecha fitted with a Matter Sieve can process the very air around it to extract pure hydrogen for use as fuel within its Fusion Core. Therefore, the mecha's fuel is effectively unlimited. The Sieve If the Mecha is operating in a vacuum or hydrogen free atmosphere this device will not work.

Equipment Slots: 2, must be torso or back.

Purchase DC modifier: +4.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

Injection Unit (PL 5)

This form of core enhancement injects a richer mixture of fuel into the core chamber. This increases the mecha's base speed by one-half (rounded down), but reduces the mecha's uptime by half. This equipment can only be installed on a mecha whose power core uses fuel (that is not electricity).

Equipment Slots: 1 (equivalent).

Activation: None.

Duration: Persistent.

Purchase DC: 16.

Restriction: None

Turbo Booster (PL 5)

The most basic form of core performance enhancement, the turbo boost increases the Mecha speed by one half (rounded down) for short bursts. This addition can be activated each round, but for each round of use, there is a cumulative 5% chance of core failure (e.g. if used for 3 consecutive turns, there is a 15% chance of failure). Each time the Turbo Boost is used, roll a d%. If the roll is in the failure range, the core will fail. This failure can range from a complete loss of power to a catastrophic meltdown and explosion, depending on the core and the cruelty of the GM.

Equipment Slots: 1 (equivalent).

Activation: Free Action.

Duration: 1 round.

Purchase DC: 12.

Restriction: None.

Overdrive (PL 6)

The overdrive unit provides the mech with a burst or power that doubles its speed for one round, but at the cost of using one hour's worth of fuel in that one round. Additionally, there is a cumulative 10% chance that the core will fail (e.g. if used for 3 consecutive rounds, there is a 30% chance of failure). Each time the Overdrive is used, roll a d%. If the roll is in the failure range, the core will fail. This failure can range from a complete loss of power to a catastrophic meltdown and explosion, depending on the core and the cruelty of the GM.

Equipment Slots: 1 (equivalent)

Activation: Free Action.

Duration: 1 round

Purchase DC: 18.

SAMPLE MECHA

XM5 Abrams Suit (a.k.a. "Rad Man") (PL 5)

The US Military's first prototype Mech, the XM5 Abrams helped proved to the world the effectiveness of Mechs in conventional warfare. However, it did not help prove the viability of nuclear reactors in such Mechs. The XM5 was often nicknamed the "Rad Man" because of the dangers presented by its Nuclear Power Core. Though all precautions were taken, test pilots for the XM5 often ended up with severe radiation poisoning. There was also the catastrophic Ilsa Hona disaster, where an XM5's core breached during combat exercises and exploded, decimating the island and contaminating the surrounding water.

Size: Large (-1 size)

Power Core: Nuclear

Uptime: 20 hours

Superstructure: Alumisteel

Armor: Duraplastic

Armor Penalty: -4

Str Bonus: +8

Speed: 25ft

Hit Points: 100

Hardness: 10

Bonus to Def: +3

Reach: 10ft

Dex Penalty: None

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's cockpit (head and torso), Bulwark Tactical Shield (left arm), Warpath Recoilless Rifle (right arm), M-53 Firestar Rocket Launcher (shoulders), 6-rocket pack for M-53 (back), Life Support System (boots), Comm system (no slots).

Fully-Equipped Purchase DC: 45

Restriction: Mil (+3)

Dervish-Class MRF Mech (PL 7)

The Dervish-Class MRF (Multi-Role Fighter) Mech is exactly what it says: an excellent multirole fighter. It can dominate both land and sky and engage in both melee and ranged combat.

Size: Huge (-2 size)

Power Core: CKEG

Uptime: 100 hours

Superstructure: Neovulcanium

Armor: Crystal Carbon Armor

Armor Penalty: -8

Str Bonus: +16

Speed: 40ft

Hit Points: 200

Hardness: 20

Bonus to Def: +8

Reach: 10ft

Dex Penalty: None

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's cockpit (helmet and torso), Thruster Boots (boots), Jet-Assist Wings (shoulders), Class V Sensor System (visor), Barricade Tactical Shield (left arm), PS-25 Tiger Claws (left hand), M-300 Rhino Mass Cannon (right hand and right arm), Chrysanthemum Laser Array (back), Advanced Diagnostics (belt), Comm system (no slots).

Fully-Equipped Purchase DC: 48

Restriction: Mil (+3)

Killgore-Class CQB Mech (PL 7)

This command Mech is the personal ride of one particularly sadistic senior officer who loves to "get his hands dirty". The CQB sports twin claws as its

main weapon – the pilot's favoured tactic is to rip and shred the enemy to pieces. Combined with enhanced sensors for greater target acquisition and a "souped-up" fusion reactor, the CQB brings a fearsome intensity to the battlefield. The CQB usually leads a squad of Dervish-Class MRF

Size: Gargantuan (-4 size)

Power Core: Fusion Reactor

Uptime: Unlimited (except in areas with no ambient source of hydrogen, in which case the uptime is 20 hours)

Superstructure: Neovulcanium

Armor: Resilium Armor

Armor Penalty: -5

Str Bonus: +24

Speed: 75ft

Hit Points: 550

Hardness: 20

Bonus to Def: +2

Reach: 15ft

Dex Penalty: -2

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's Cockpit (Torso), Enigma Sensor Suite (Belt), Class V Sensor System (Left Leg), Barricade Tactical Shield (Left Arm), 2 PS-25 Tiger Claws (Left & Right Hands) 2 T-95 Cavalcade Chainguns* (Shoulders), Matter Sieve (Back), Injection Unit (Right Leg), AX3 Dragon Flame-Thrower (Boots), LX-20 Antishock Array (Cranium), 3 Structural Enhancement (Visor, Helmet, Right Arm), Comm system (no slots)

* *These T-95 Cavalcade Chainguns are fire-linked weapons. They fire as a single weapon (using a single attack roll). The fire-linked T-95s deal 10d6 points of ballistic damage on a successful hit.*

Fully-Equipped Purchase DC: 53

Restriction: Mil (+3)

Ballista-Class LDV Mech (PL 8)

The Ballista-Class LDV (Longshot Delivery Vehicle) is a fast Mech that takes advantage of the best PL 8 technology. Designed solely as a delivery system for the LT-5 Longshot, Ballista-Class Mechs typically operate in groups to take large targets down (the idea being to give the enemy too many targets to attack at once). The mech's right "arm" acts as the Mass Driver's ammo reserve. This "arm" is designed for easy removal and replacement; a properly-equipped crew can remove an empty arm and replace it with a fully-loaded one in under a minute. The main drawbacks of the Ballista-Class LDV Mechs are their lack of close-range weaponry and small ammo capacity.

Size: Large (-1 size)

Power Core: MAMR

Uptime: 800 hours

Superstructure: Megatitanium

Armor: Reactive Armor

Armor Penalty: -5

Str Bonus: +8

Speed: 75ft

Hit Points: 100

Hardness: 30

Bonus to Def: +7

Reach: 10ft

Dex Penalty: None

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's cockpit (torso & back), Crackerjack Neural Link (helmet), LT-5 Longshot Mass Driver (left arm & shoulders), 10 rounds LT-5 ammo (right arm),

Injection Unit (boots), Comm system (no slots)

Fully-Equipped Purchase DC: 52

Restriction: Mil (+3)

Ballista-Class Nemo Mech (PL 8)

The Ballista-Class Nemo is a quadruped Mech that takes advantage of the best PL 8 technology. Designed primarily as a first-strike delivery system for the M-87 Talon Missile, Nemos typically operate in groups to annihilate enemy strongholds (the idea being to saturate the enemy with missiles and completely eliminate the target within mere seconds). The Nemo was created from the ground up to operate in the crushing depths of any large body of water. It's superstructure and extraordinary fortification allows to withstand extreme pressures, it's sensor system allows to maintain an one-hundred mile target-detection radius, and it's co-pilot cockpit allows for there to always be an operator at the ready. In fact, due to it's water processing plant and fusion-fission combined reactor, it really only needs to surface to restock on foodstuffs. However, being over one hundred feet long, it has a storage hold able to contain more than one thousand pounds. The main drawbacks of the Ballista-Class Nemo Mechs are their lack of close-range weaponry and small ammo capacity, as well as their extreme size and prohibitive cost. Still, these have found a home in most of the world's largest navies.

Size: Colossal (-8 size)

Power Core: Fusion-Fission Combined Reactor

Uptime: 400 hours

Superstructure: Neutronite

Armor: Reactive Armor

Armor Penalty: -5

Str Bonus: +32

Speed: 70ft

Hit Points: 800

Hardness: 25

Bonus to Def: +0

Reach: 15ft

Dex Penalty: -4

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's cockpit (Belt), Oracle Targeting System Mark IV (Helmet), Class VI Sensor System (Helmet), Medium Fortification (2 slot equivalent), Co-Pilot Cockpit (Back & Torso), Life Support System (Cranium), HV-5 Haven Escape Pod (Torso), Zero-G Stabilizer (Right Leg), Nanorepair Unit (Left Arm), Fusion-Fission Combined Reactor (Torso), Water Processing Plant (Left Leg), Tsunami 480 Plasma Cannon (Right Arm & Visor), 2 M-87 Talon Missile Launchers (Shoulders), 1 4-pack of M-87 Talon Missiles (Left Arm), Comm system (no slots)

Fully-Equipped Purchase DC: 68

Restriction: Mil (+3)

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