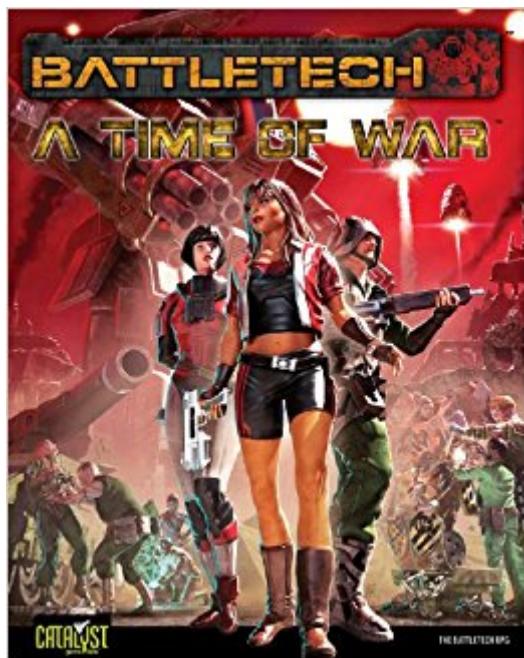


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# Battletech Time Of War



## Synopsis

A Time of War: The BattleTech Role-Playing Game is the one source reference for rules governing the role-playing aspect of the BattleTech universe. It includes a new system, designed from the ground-up for both maximum flexibility and compatibility with the Total Warfare series and its companion volumes, Tactical Operations and Strategic Operations. Series/Type:

**BattleTech/Core Supplement** Compatability: Compatible with BattleTech Total Warfare, Tactical Operations and Strategic Operations. Selling Points: Long awaited edition restores playable compatibility between the role-playing system used in the MechWarrior, Third Edition/Classic BattleTech RPG and the tactical game represented by Total Warfare.

Modular and point-based character creation rules allow players to choose between "organic" character designs or fast "build and play" type characters. An expansive listing of weapons and equipment for virtually any RPG adventure, compiling equipment published across the entire history of the BattleTech universe, updated to new rules. Role-playing expansions on tactical combat, including special pilot abilities and more detailed tactical combat effects on personnel. All new presentation, including hard cover, full-color.

## Book Information

Series: Battletech

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Average Customer Review: 2.9 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Really very good. It can be dense, and there are a lot of opportunities for improvement, but it is well balanced and the rules work well.

Good content for RPGers.

I have really enjoyed playing this with my friends

The last Battletech RPG I tried to use was Mechwarrior 2nd ed. This rewrite is really great! It is similar to D&D's new rule book. It helps players create an entire persona of a character. Don't be intimidated with the initial complexity. I was completely overwhelmed but once I got through creating my first character it all made sense. Like the other core source books for BT this spine is part of a larger mural. worth it just to have the mural on my shelf..

The only down side to this role-playing game book is that "character creation" nearly requires a degree in accounting and knowledge of a spreadsheet program like Excel to make a truly unique character.

This is an awful, awful, AWFUL edition of MechWarrior. The reasons are manifold, but I will try to just address the one that hits hardest: the character creation process is TERRIBLE. It's horrifically too complex, requiring an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of. As proof of the over complex ridiculousness of the system, several of the official sample characters violate the rules as given and are off by a few hundred points. I can't imagine why QA allowed, what is quite possibly the WORST character generation system in tabletop RPG history, go into publication. Previous versions of MechWarrior were not this convoluted, nor required a second "companion book" to address and provide suggestions in not creating an under powered, weakling who doesn't reflect ANYTHING the novels or fluff text of the game setting reflects. It's like NO ONE bothered to play test the thing. Or if they did play test it, everyone had PH.D's in mathematical computation and theoretical numbers. You want to play a young nobleman MechWarrior from 3025? Yea... not happening unless you've got a grasp of quantum math. At best you'll generate some guy who owns a 'Mech, but is dumb as rocks and can't even count to three. That aforementioned 'Mech? It's probably some 35-ton weenie, that's linked to so many negative traits, it's better to leave in the garage and battle enemy 'Mech's with your teeth and knife. Yea... that's what this version of MechWarrior offers you out the gate. Unless you have the combined brain power of Carl Sagan, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawking, and Skynet. With that, you could process the numerical insanity and push out someone who's a total average Joe and "leases" a House owned medium 'Mech. Or maybe... you could just totally ignore the character creation rules as given, and crib some house rules together. But it that

case, why even bother with this Tome of Math? Here's a Pro Tip: find yourself a copy of third edition MechWarrior instead. At least THAT was made to be played with by ordinary people.

This is the 5th book in Catalyst Game labs core Battletech manuals. It is pretty, full of short stories, and contains Catalyst Game Labs attempt to improve upon the Mechwarrior RPG (Previously called the Classic Battletech RPG and Mechwarrior). They have failed. Character creation is difficult and confusing. The rules are presented in a disorganized fashion typical of Catalyst that require to flip back and forth to different sections of the book. In summary, the only reason to purchase this book is that the spine, when placed on a shelf next to the other core books, creates a cool looking mural. If you actually desire to play Battletech as a RPG, or, simply give more depth to your Mechwarrior, your time and money are much better spent purchasing the "gold standard" that is Mechwarrior, 2nd Edition along with the Mechwarrior Companion.

To give the Devil his due, this book is a handsomely bound hardback, profusely illustrated, and illuminated with colorful graphs and charts. It also is replete with 'fluff' stories, which personally I could do without, but which some people might find interesting. But this is not supposed to be a collection of short stories . . . this is supposed to be a set of rules for a game. As such one might expect it to describe the rules governing it in a coherent fashion (it does not), or -- at the very least -- to possess an index or table of contents that allows one to look up topics of some importance to the reader (it does, they just are not very useful). A case in point; while attempting to generate a sample Clan character, I endeavored to discover just how many experience points were associated with the appropriate field I had chosen. The text did not seem to indicate the answer. Looking up 'field' in the index, I found six references -- none of which had anything to do with the question I needed answered. So I end up thumbing my way through a 385 page volume, trying to 'accidentally' come across the answer I needed (I did not). As someone who has played and collected Battletech books since the 1980's I have followed not only the evolution of the various stories, but of the game itself. Since that time the game's role-playing rules have evolved from the original Mechwarrior, Mechwarrior 2nd edition, and Mechwarrior Companion, to the final FASA entry of Mechwarrior 3rd edition. While none of these were perfect (each possessed some level of discrepancies or problems) all were eminently readable and capable of being understood -- especially for anyone familiar with pen and paper RPG's. Unfortunately, this is a trait not shared by Catalyst Game Labs entry in the universe of role-playing games. 'Battletech: A Time of War' is so badly put together as to be completely useless as anything other than a doorstop . . . and at 30 some odd bucks, that's one

expensive doorstop! OK, maybe I am being overly harsh . . . no, wait a minute . . . no I'm not. Some of this stuff has been written to be just plain confusing. Starting characters are given 5,000 XP's at creation. But wait . . . ALL characters **MUST** spend 850 XP's for a basic starting point for attributes and skills. So why not just say that all characters start with these basic attributes and skills, and that your allowance of XP's is 4,150? Why make everyone do the math, as a pointless extra step? The whole character creation process reads like a storybook math problem. "10 freight cars going to Albuquerque derail in Dallas, with 8 cars eventually making their way to St. Louis. Add two rail cars from Minneapolis, and then start the train near Chicago." Sound absurd? You betcha . . . but it makes more sense than this book's rules. I am certain the authors intended to provide an authoritative and exhaustive treatment of their subject . . . and they sure filled a lot of pretty looking pages. But the manner in which the material is presented is so badly organized and indexed that it's utility is close to zero. My advice, stay with Mechwarrior 1st, 2nd, or 3rd edition . . . take your pick. Any one of them will provide you more fun, and less frustration than this dud. You have been warned.

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