

TRANSFORMERS:

The Role-Playing Game



A Scale System RPG

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NIGHTCANOLE IMAGINATIONS

Games from Outside the Box

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LEGAL

The Transformers RPG is an extremely compact RPG system based around the core concepts of the G1 Transformers franchise. It is not in any way intended as a challenge of copyright to Hasbro, Takara, or anyone else who has a vested interest in the success and profitability of the Transformers franchise. It exists because I had a thought about it and couldn't stop thinking about it. It isn't terribly original or special.

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INTRODUCTION

The **Transformers RPG (TFRPG)** is a traditional table-top role-playing interpretation of the classic 1980s Transformers Generation 1 mythos. It allows players to take the role of Autobots (or Decepticons), waging interstellar war over Energon, the precious lifeblood of all transformers, and for domination of their home planet, Cybertron. It can also accommodate stories set later in the timeline of the Generation 1 Transformers, stories focusing upon the heroic Maximals and villainous Predacons as they continue to wage the war for Cybertron in both the past and the future.

What makes these wondrous robots, regardless of their affiliation, unique—what has captured the imagination of the world for over thirty years—is their ability to transform. By assuming alternate modes, often based on vehicles or equipment from their current location, these giant robotic life-forms become more than meets the eye—robots in disguise. Gifted with the skills and abilities of both forms, transformers are the perfect warriors, spies, diplomats, and more. They are just as varied and passionate as any human, and they are perfect heroes (and villains) for all manner of science fiction adventure.

The game uses a collection of polyhedral dice of various sizes, abbreviating the die to roll with a “D” followed by the number of faces on the die. Thus, a six-sided die is referred to as a “D6.”

Aside from these dice, all that is required to play is some paper, a few pencils, and an imagination that is willing and able to explore the worlds of Earth, Cybertron, Chaar, and the various other planets of the Transformers universe.

Like other traditional role-playing games, **TFRPG** requires that one player step up to the responsibility of running the game—a position we refer to as the Narrator. While the players need know only the basics of the game, it is the responsibility of the Narrator to know it all, for he will craft adventures, populate them with dangers, difficulties, and Decepticons, and be responsible for shepherding the enjoyment of the entire group. It is a heavy responsibility, but a worthy one.



GAME CONCEPTS

TFRPG uses very simplified rules, boiling almost all tasks down to the roll of a single die and the addition of a handful of numbers. By understanding the source of the die, and the relative value of the numbers, it is very easy to get a handle on the nature of the game.

Every player (and most of the opposition) in a game of **TFRPG** portrays a Transformer—a living robot with the ability to assume one or more alternate modes. These modes confer additional abilities to the Transformer, granting him new options in battle and on adventures that he would not otherwise have.

Transformers determine if they succeed or fail at actions by rolling a single die and adding the result to one of their **Specifications**. Specifications are measurements indicating the attributes of a Transformer in their various modes. The die that is added can be one of various types—the **Class** and **Sub-Class** of a Transformer determine which kind of die is rolled when the Transformer performs actions. This die is called the **Power Die**.

If the total of the Specification value and the result of the Power Die equals or exceeds the difficulty of an action, the action succeeds. If it does not, the action fails.

Additionally, various modifiers from situations, circumstances, and a Transformer's skills (called **Skill Drivers**) can impact the result of an action. Thus, in difficult situations actions get more difficult, while possessing specialized skill in an area makes it easier for a Transformer to succeed.

When engaged in the furious and hectic battles that so often punctuate the lives of the Autobots and Decepticons, time is measured in **turns**, and in each

turn a Transformer can complete a number of actions based on the complexity of those actions—each Transformer will get a certain number of **clicks** (think of them as steps) to spend on actions in the round, and each type of action costs a certain number of these clicks. Quick-thinking Transformers can accomplish much in a round, while slower ones can only perform an action or two.

Transformers possess a soul—an energy matrix deep within their bodies referred to as a **Spark**. The Spark gives them special abilities, such as the ability to vastly alter their size or to carry large amounts of matter within their cargo holds. They also grant unique powers to some Transformers, but the most important thing a Spark does is translate **Energon**—the fuel of Transformers—into life. Transformers are difficult to kill, but easy to demolish. As long as the Spark survives, repair is possible, and thus Transformers live a long time and almost always return to fight another day.



HISTORY

Generation One

Millions of years ago, when dinosaurs still roamed the Earth, a war raged on the distant planet of Cybertron. In this civil war, the valiant, good-loving Autobots waged desperate battle against the villainous Decepticons under the leadership of Megatron.

When an Autobot expedition left Cybertron searching for new horizons, under the command of the valiant leader Optimus Prime, the Decepticons ambushed the ship, called the Ark, causing it to crash into the side of a mountain on prehistoric Earth. For millions of years, the Autobots and Decepticons alike slumbered in stasis lock, until eventually, in the middle of the 1980s, volcanic activity triggered the Ark's repair routines and it brought all of the Transformers aboard—both Autobot and Decepticon—back online.

The war that had begun on Cybertron sparked anew on Earth, where each of the giant robots adopted an alternate mode based on local technology so as to go undiscovered by the humans of Earth. They warred over Energon, the lifeblood of all Transformers, but also over the technology and resources needed to construct a Spacebridge—a means of returning to Cybertron, calling reinforcements, and discovering what had become of their homeworld during their millennia of sleep.

For 20 years the Autobots battled to reclaim their homeworld, which fell under Decepticon control during the dormancy of the crew of the Ark. Then, in the darkest hour of the Transformers—in the year 2005—everything changed. New leadership emerged when old leaders fell, and the Autobots finally recovered



Cybertron, driving the Decepticons, under the command of the mysterious Galvatron, to a secondary base on the planet Chaar. Lead by Rodimus Prime from the newly-restored Cybertron, the Autobots had won a critical victory—but not the war.

The war will not end for a thousand years or more.

TFRP is, by default, set in the 50 year window of time from 1985 to 2035. What happens beyond this time remains a story yet unwritten...

Or perhaps a game yet unplayed?

Optional: The Beast Era

A less popular, but no less captivating, era in the history of the Transformers makes for another ideal play environment. Many years after the 2035 cutoff point for the default setting, the war on Cybertron had largely evolved.

Massive Transformers were too draining of Energon reserves, and over time, smaller, more compact builds ruled the day. The Autobots evolved into the Maximals, and they spent nearly as much effort exploring other worlds as they did fighting to preserve their own. The Decepticons evolved as well, becoming the Predacons and working to thwart the Maximals at every opportunity. The Autobots of old perished in time, as did the Decepticons, though some holdouts remained, reformatting themselves to fit into the new order.

The story of the Beast Era revolves around the theft of a golden disc from the archives of Cybertron—a theft carried out by a renegade among the Predacons, Megatron—named after the mighty villain of old. Megatron and his team of followers fled aboard their stolen ship, the Darksyde, and were pursued by Optimus Primal and his team of Maximals aboard the exploratory ship Axalon.

After a pitched space battle, both ships crashed out of transwarp. They found themselves on a planet known for quite some time only as “The Beast Wars Planet,” where the natural reserves of Energon were so intense that the power caused Maximals and Predacons alike to short out and fall into stasis lock. To combat this, they adopted alternate modes based on the very-Earth-like animal life on the planet. While these organic animal disguises certainly lacked the firepower and armor traditionally associated with a Transformer’s alternate mode, they had the critical advantage of being able to protect the Transformer from the dangers of Energon over-exposure.

The Beast Wars raged for three years, during which time it was discovered that the Transwarp explosion that marooned them on the planet had thrown them back in time—and that the Beast Wars Planet was, in fact, ancient Earth!

Interference by the alien Vok brought great change to the Transformers of the Beast Wars, unleashing new hybridized machine/beast Transmetal forms upon them, but ultimately, after several fateful and paradoxical brushes with the sleeping forms of the original Generation 1 Autobots and Decepticons, the Maximals bested the Predacons and were able to make their way back to Cybertron through the Transwarp Event...

Except that their journey through the Transwarp Event hurled them too far into the future! Predacon Megatron arrived back on Cybertron well before the Maximals, and in so doing he took control of the planet. A new war had begun, one not between Beasts, but one between the Maximals and their increasingly organic Beast modes and Megatron and his new army of powerful, machine-like Vehicons.







The Beast Machines battles were ones of ideology as much as firepower, and their role in the history of the Transformers is a contentious one at best. But

both the Beast Wars and Beast Machines eras present fantastic opportunities for play as alternate settings using the **TFRPG** rules-set.



CREATING CHARACTERS

When it comes time to play a game of **TFRPG**, players have two options—they can play an existing character from the Transformers universe or they can build a character of their own. While some greatly enjoy one style of play over the other, the truth is that the two are easily interchangeable in this rules-set.

Before a character can be given numbers and game mechanics (what we call the Bio), the player should first consider what alternate modes (if any) he wishes his Transformer to possess. Thoughts about alternate modes will inform many of the decisions made in the character creation process. The player should also determine what side of the great war their Transformer is a part of. The most common affiliations are heroic **Autobot**  or villainous **Decepticon** , but if playing in the Beast Era, a character might choose a heroic **Maximal** from the Beast Wars  or from the return to Cybertron  or a villainous **Predacon** from the Beast Wars  or militaristic **Vehicon** from the return to Cybertron .

Characters are built (whether they are canonical characters or new creations) using a simple Prioritization system. Each character must assign a Priority of A (highest), B, C, D, or E (lowest) to the following five categories:

CLASS. The Class of a Transformer describes the robot's abilities to take on alternate modes. The **Classes** chapter of this book details the various Classes and the possible Priorities that can be assigned to the Class category to qualify for that specific Class. Most Transformers fall under the Default Class, which can be obtained with Priority D or higher.

SUB-CLASS. The Sub-Class of a Transformer describes specialized modifications to the robot that grant it additional abilities not usually possessed by Transformers. The **Sub-Classes** chapter of this book details the various Sub-Classes and the possible Priorities that can be assigned to the Sub-Class

category to qualify for that specific Sub-Class. Most Transformers fall under the Standard Sub-Class, which can be obtained with Priority C or higher.

SPECIFICATIONS. The Specifications of a Transformer describe their physical and mental capabilities, measuring things like strength, speed, weaponry, and armor. Transformers have 4 Specifications that govern their mental and social abilities, and an additional 4 Specifications linked to each of their modes. The higher the Priority assigned to the Specifications Category, the more points a Transformer will have to spend on these ratings. Specifications are described in greater detail within this chapter.

SKILL DRIVERS. The Skill Drivers of a Transformer describe their areas of specialty and skill. Transformers with more specialized jobs or roles often have significantly more or better Skill Drivers than those who are more generalist characters. The higher the Priority assigned to the Skill Drivers category, the more points a Transformer will have to spend on these ratings. Skill Drivers are described in greater detail within this chapter.

SPARK TRAITS. The Spark Traits of a Transformer describe their unique or unusual abilities to manipulate their physical structure. The various types of Spark Traits are described in this chapter, but the higher Priority assigned to the Spark Trait category, the more powerful or more varied these Spark Traits will be.

PRIORITY	SPECIFICATIONS	SKILL	SPARK TRAITS
A	48	8	3
B	40	5	2
C	32	3	1
D	24	2	1
E	16	1	0



Specifications

Each mode of a Transformer's body has 4 common Core Specification and 4 Physical Specifications that vary based on the nature of the mode. All specifications have a maximum rating based on their Power Die (see chart at right). The Power Die of a Transformer is determined by the Transformer's Class and Sub-Class selections.

POWER DIE	MAXIMUM SPEC VALUE
04	6
06	8
08	10
010	12
012	14
020	16

When assigning points to Specifications, points are spent on Core Specifications first. All of a Transformer's modes share a common set of Core Specifications. Any points remaining after purchasing Core Specifications are spent on each mode's specifications. Thus, a Transformer might spend 12 of his 32 points on Core Specs, then have 20 remaining to spend on robot mode and the same total, 20, to spend on vehicle mode.

Core Specifications

PROCESSORS. The rating that determines the cognitive, intellectual, and problem-solving abilities of a Transformer. Processors are used for a wide variety of tasks, from remembering key details about an encounter to building weapons. In combat, Processors determines the order in which characters take action.

RESPONSE. The rating that determines the speed of a Transformer's mental and physical reactions. Response controls how many actions a Transformer can take in combat, but also helps a Transformer avoid being shocked or surprised.

SENSORS. The rating that measures the perception of a Transformer. Sensors are used to notice and detect things visually, aurally, or using whatever spectrum of detection the Narrator deems appropriate.

TARGETING. The rating that measures the aim and precision of a Transformer when making distance attacks. Targeting is used only in conjunction with a Transformer's Firepower specification—if an attack will deal damage using Strength or Speed, it does NOT use Targeting.

Robot/Mech-Animal Mode Specifications

AGILITY. The rating that determines the speed and fluidity of a Transformer's movement. Agility is used for tasks that involve movement or general dexterity.

ARMOR. The measure of a Transformer's ability to resist damage.

FIREPOWER. The measure of a Transformer's ability to deal damage at range.

STRENGTH. The rating that determines the punching strength and lifting capability of a Transformer. Strength is used for physical tasks which require raw force.

Organic Mode Specifications

AGILITY. The rating that determines the speed and fluidity of a Transformer's movement. Agility is used for tasks that involve movement or general dexterity.

TOUGHNESS. The measure of a Transformer's ability to resist damage.

PROJECTILE. The measure of a Transformer's ability to deal damage at range.

STRENGTH. The rating that determines the punching strength and lifting capability of a Transformer. Strength is used for physical tasks which require raw force.

NOTE: Even though some Transformers have "Organic" modes, they still take damage like a Transformer (see **Action Mechanics**).

Vehicle Mode Specifications

MANEUVERABILITY. The rating that determines the handling capabilities of a Transformer’s vehicle mode. Maneuverability is used to dodge and to perform difficult maneuvers while in vehicle mode.

ARMOR. The measure of a Transformer’s ability to resist damage.

FIREPOWER. The measure of a Transformer’s ability to deal damage at range.

SPEED. The rating that determines the amount of distance a Transformer can travel while in vehicle mode. Speed is used to determine damage when ramming, but is also used to get away or get closer to a target in a hurry.

Stationary Mode Specifications

ADAPTABILITY. This rating is used to measure how well a Transformer’s stationary-mode can perform tasks outside of its designed purpose.

ARMOR. The measure of a Transformer’s ability to resist damage.

FIREPOWER. The measure of a Transformer’s ability to deal damage at range.

UTILITY. This rating is used to measure how well a Transformer’s stationary-mode can perform tasks for which it was designed.

Specification Interaction

There are numerous instances throughout a game of **TFRPG** where an action might require a physical Specification that a character does not have because they are in a specific mode that doesn’t have that Spec. The chart below illustrates how the 4 Specs in each mode interact with one another. As you can see, the first Spec is always the “Dodge” or “Avoidance” Specification. The second

is always the “Soak” or “Resist” Specification. The third is always the “Ranged” or “Distance Combat” Specification. The fourth is always the “Close” or “Melee Combat” Specification.

MODE	DODGE SPEC	SOAK SPEC	RANGED SPEC	CLOSE SPEC
Robot	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
Mech- Animal	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
Organic	Agility	Toughness	Projectile	Strength
Vehicle	Maneuverability	Armor	Firepower	Speed
Stationary	Adaptability	Structure	Firepower	Stationary

Skill Drivers

Some Transformers are simply better at some things than others. To represent areas of expertise, training, or talent, **TFRPG** uses Skill Drivers, rated from 1-3, which add to the result of the Power Die roll when the Transformer is performing actions related to the driver.

The following list of Skill Drivers is not exhaustive—new ones could easily be designed and approved by the Narrator.

COMMUNICATION. Used when attempting to establish communication with another party by signal or transmission. Also used to intercept those communications.

COMPUTER. Used when operating computer equipment. Also used to repair or modify computer equipment.

DEMOLITION. Used when destroying objects with explosives or physical force. Generally not applicable in direct combat situations.

ENGINEERING. Used when designing and building objects and structures.

ESPIONAGE. Used when spying or sneaking.

HISTORY. Used to recall previously studied or experienced events.

LEADERSHIP. Used to rally others to a cause or a plan of action.

MARTIAL ART. Used to improve chances of doing damage in close combat (represents unarmed combat).

NAVIGATION. Used to find the way to a destination.

RACING. Used to improve speed or handling when moving at accelerated speeds.

REPAIR. Used to assist in repairing damage to objects, structures, or Transformers.

SCIENCE. Used to recall or deduce information related to basic laws of physics and other scientific phenomena.

TACTICS. Used to devise or discover a plan of action in combat.

TRAINING. Used to help others learn from your expertise and ability.

WEAPON. Used to improve chances of doing damage in close combat (represents a hand-held weapon).

Spark Traits

Spark Traits are abilities of a Transformer that step beyond ordinary science and into the fantastical realm of super-science. Not every Transformer has all of these abilities—in fact few do. Many will have only one or two of these abilities, with the most common one, Gravity-Shunting, being assigned for free to all Decepticons.

GRAVITY-SHUNTING. The ability to fly in robot mode.

MASS-SHIFTING. The ability to assume an alternate mode that is larger or smaller than a standard automobile or jet.

SPACE-FOLDING. The ability to store or carry another Transformer (of smaller Power Die type) inside one of this Transformer's modes.

UNIQUE ABILITY. A power or ability unique to this Transformer. Unique abilities must be approved by the Narrator. See **Sample Characters** for some sample Unique Abilities. Unique Abilities operate as though they were specification rating 8, should a die roll be required, and may or may not benefit from Skill Drivers, depending on circumstances.

Finishing Touches

Once a Transformer has all of the above characteristics, all that remains is to name the Transformer and calculate its Energon Statistics.

ENERGON CAPACITY. A Transformer can hold a maximum number of Energon Points equal to 5 times its Power Die type. Thus, a Default Transformer has an Energon Capacity of 40.

DORMANCY THRESHOLD. A Transformer falls into Stasis Lock (unconsciousness) when its number of current Energon Points falls below its Dormancy Threshold, which is equal to 2 times its Power Die type. Note that Macromasters have a special Dormancy Threshold of 30 while Micromasters have a special Dormancy Threshold of 5. Transformers can voluntarily spend Energon that would take them below their Dormancy Threshold—they do not succumb to Stasis Lock until after the action is resolved.

A Note on Social Dynamics: There are no specifications or other mechanics in TFRPG for dealing with social dynamics—there exists no Transformer version of the old RPG-standby Charisma.

If your game is to feature more social politics (perhaps alongside copious amounts of transforming and explosions?) the best rule of thumb is to use Processors plus the Leadership Skill Driver vs. Target's Processors to tackle social actions. Failing this, you could fall back on the old Transformers toy-specs and invent a fifth Core Specification, Rank, which could serve as the social muscle of the game.

CLASSES

Transformers all belong to a Class. When building a Transformer, the first step is often to select what Class your Transformer will be.

Anachronist

An Anachronist is a Transformer who, for some reason, does not possess any Alternate Modes. Strictly a living robot of impressive size, Anachronists are uncommon but do still exist on Cybertron and on distant worlds.

ANACHRONIST	
Priority	A, B, C, D, E
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot
Advantage	+3 Skill Drivers
Disadvantage	No Transformation Cog Function
Exemplar	Alpha Trion

City Master

A City Master is a massive Transformer with the ability to assume a total of three modes. They possess 1 robot mode, 1 stationary mode (city), and either 1 vehicle mode or 1 mechanical animal mode.

CITY MASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	D20
Modes	Robot, Stationary, (Vehicle or Mech-Animal)
Advantage	Siege Damage Class
Disadvantage	No Mass Shifting
Exemplar	Metroplex



Combiner

A Combiner is a Transformer who possesses a robot mode, a vehicle mode, and a third, specialized mode, which allows it to combine with 4-5 other Transformers of the same Combiner team to create one massive robot (a Gestalt, see below). Highly powerful when combined, Combiners are otherwise no different from Default Transformers on their own.

COMBINER	
Priority	A, B
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot, (Vehicle or Mech-Animal)
Advantage	Can use Merge Action to form Gestalt
Disadvantage	No free will while Merged
Exemplar	Constructicons

Gestalt Form: When a Combiner team merges, players of the Combiner characters democratically control the Gestalt. The Gestalt uses the average of all component robot Core Specifications and adds the highest individual robot value and lowest individual robot value of each physical Specification to determine its physical specifications (maximum value of 14). Gestalts use a **D12 Power Die**, have access to all component robot Skill Drivers, and operate at the **Massive Damage Class**. Gestalts cannot assign damage to the Transformation Cog or Energon Spark function. When the Gestalt is formed, it has a full reserve of Energon points and all of its Functions are undamaged. Damage taken by the Gestalt and Energon spent by the Gestalt should be recorded—even if the Gestalt Separates and then later in the same session Merges again, the reduced Energon and damaged Functions remain. Note that a Combiner’s personality is absorbed when it merges, meaning that while combined (and therefore accessing its greatest powers) it cannot pursue its own private agendas.



Default

A Default is a Transformer who possesses a robot mode and one alternate mode, usually a vehicle but sometimes a mechanical animal or stationary mode. The most common kind of Transformer.

DEFAULT	
Priority	A, B, C, D
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot, (Vehicle or Mech-Animal or Stationary)
Advantage	None
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Bumblebee

Deployer

A Deployer is a Transformer who possesses two modes: 1 ambulatory (robot, vehicle, or mechanical animal) and 1 stationary. Deployers are often bonded to a Deployer Master (see Sub-Classes) and are stored, in their stationary mode, within the Deployer Master's Space-Folding Spark Trait.

DEPLOYER	
Priority	N/A
Power Die	D4
Modes	Stationary, (Robot or Vehicle or Mech-Animal)
Advantage	Free Mass-Shifting and Stationary Gravity Shunt
Disadvantage	Only 16 Spec Points and 3 Skill Drivers
Exemplar	Ravage

Deployers are not player characters, and are not built the same way as player characters, instead using the information in the Deployer summary table to determine their Specifications, Skill Drivers, and Spark Traits. The Deployer class is additionally used to build robot or human partners for many other Sub-Classes of Transformers, including Headmasters and Targetmasters. Deployers cannot have a Sub-Class.



Duocon

A Duocon is a Transformer who possesses a robot mode and the unusual ability to become two separate vehicle modes at the same time. The robot separates into two vehicles, one airborne and one land-locked, which it controls simultaneously. The Vehicle modes have different Specifications.

DUOCON	
Priority	A, B, C, D
Power Die	D8 Robot, D6 Vehicle
Modes	Robot, (2 Vehicles or 2 Mech-Animals)
Advantage	Can use Separate Action to break into both vehicle modes at the same time.
Disadvantage	Must use Merge Action to return to robot mode.
Exemplar	Battletrap

When dividing, the Transformer splits its Energon points between the two modes however the player wishes, and damaged Functions from vehicle modes do transfer back to the robot mode.

Microcombiner

A Microcombiner is a Transformer of the Micromaster Sub-Class who possesses a robot mode and the unusual ability to become half of a vehicle, requiring a Merge with another Microcombiner in order to create a whole vehicle. While in vehicle form, the two Microcombiners share command of the vehicle mode with

MICROCOMBINER	
Priority	A, B, C, D, E
Power Die	D6 Robot, D8 Vehicle
Modes	Robot, (Front Vehicle or Rear Vehicle)
Advantage	Can more tightly focus Specification points in vehicle mode
Disadvantage	Must use Merge Action to transform to vehicle mode
Exemplar	Astro Squad

both personalities active. When creating the character, determine if your Microcombiner is a Front or a Rear. Front Microcombiners only assign vehicle mode Specification points to Maneuverability and Firepower, while Rear Microcombiners only assign points to Armor and Speed. Any two Microcombiners can combine to form a vehicle mode (as strange as that seems) as long as 1 is a Front and 1 is a Rear. When Merged, Microcombiners add their Energon values together (ignoring Energon Capacity). When

Separating, the Transformer splits its Energon points between the two robots however the players wish, and damaged Functions from vehicle mode do transfer back to both robot modes.

Mutant

A Mutant is a Transformer from the Beast Era who possesses two organic modes but no robot mode. Mutants are often insane, but they occasionally manifest small legacies of their former robotic nature, such as a robotic face hidden somewhere on their body or a limited amount of cybertronian weaponry.

ORGANIC EXPLORER	
Priority	A, B, C, D, E
Power Die	D8
Modes	Organic, Organic
Advantage	Organic mode protects from Energon Surge effects
Disadvantage	No Mass Shifting. Organic modes have a maximum Projectile Spec of 8
Exemplar	Icebird

Organic Explorer

An Organic Explorer is a Transformer from the Beast Era who possesses a robot mode and an alternate mode that simulates an organic form (such as an animal or, less

ORGANIC EXPLORER	
Priority	A, B, C, D
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot, Organic
Advantage	Organic mode protects from Energon Surge effects
Disadvantage	No Mass Shifting. Organic mode has a maximum Projectile Spec of 4
Exemplar	Rat Trap



commonly, a plant).

Transmetal

A Transmetal is a Transformer from the Beast Era who was modified by the Quantum Surge unleashed by the Vok. Transmetals started out as Organic Explorers but, upon being affected by the Quantum Surge, experienced a change in their organic mode, causing it to become a mech-animal mode able to assume a mode very similar to a vehicle.

ORGANIC EXPLORER	
Priority	A, B, C
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot, Mech-animal, Vehicle
Advantage	Mech-animal mode gains +2 Armor (may exceed maximum)
Disadvantage	No Mass Shifting, may only Transform to vehicle from Mech-animal mode
Exemplar	Transmetal Waspinator

Triplechanger

A Triplechanger is a Transformer who possesses a robot mode and two alternate modes, usually two different vehicles but sometimes a vehicle and a mechanical animal or stationary mode.



TRIPLECHANGER	
Priority	A, B, C
Power Die	D8
Modes	Robot, (Vehicle or Mech-Animal), (Vehicle or Stationary)
Advantage	Extra mode
Disadvantage	Must have 4 damaged Functions before choosing to assign damage to Transformation Cog
Exemplar	Blitzwing

SUB-CLASSES

Transformers all belong to a Sub-Class. When building a Transformer, the second step is to select the Sub-Class to which your Transformer will belong.

A Note on Bonding: Several of the Sub-Classes use the words **Bond** and **Binary-Bond**. A **Bond** is a connection between two Transformers that allows them to interact with each other in a special way (most notably the bond between Combiners within a team or the bond between Deployers and their Deployer Master). This Bond is a game-mechanics way of saying that the Transformer cannot interact in the same way, physically, with robots with whom it does not share such a bond. A Constructicon cannot merge with a Predacon, for instance.

A **Binary-Bond** is a very specific bond between a robot and a smaller robot or lifeform, a bond which creates a radio-telepathic link between the two. Ordinary Bonds do not confer this link.

Action Master

The Action Master process increases the power of a Transformer at the expense of removing his Transformation Cog—Action Master characters must be of the Class: Anachronist. Action Masters are binary-bonded with a semi-intelligent partner that, unlike many other Class: Deployer characters, can take a

ACTION MASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requirement	Anachronist
Partner	Binary-Bond to a Deployer (Robot/Vehicle or Robot/Stationary).
Advantage	+2 all robot mode Specs, max exceed maximums
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Rollout

vehicle mode in place of a stationary mode. Action-Master partners are subservient characters (always under the control of the Action Master player).

All-Spark Oracle

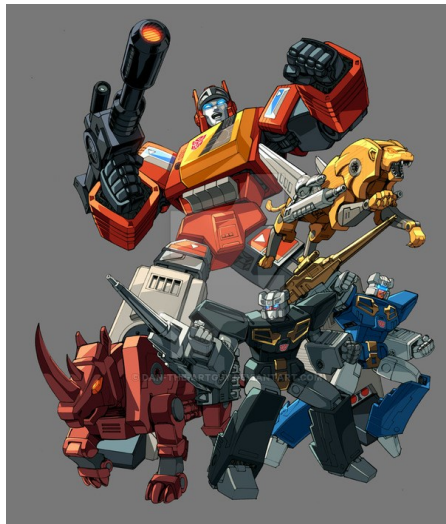
The All-Spark Oracle process grants a Transformer of the Organic Explorer Class a mystically altered form of transformation and unique abilities. It is recommended that Narrators only allow All-Spark Oracle in Beast Era games.

ALL-SPARK ORACLE	
Priority	A
Power Die	D10
Pre-Requisite	Class: Organic Explorer
Partner	None
Advantage	Unique Ability. Immune to Energon Surge effects in all modes. Eliminates Class Disadvantage. Robot is now Soft-8.
Disadvantage	Transform Actions take 4 clicks instead of 3
Exemplar	Blackarachnia

Deployer Master

The Deployer Master process grants a Transformer the ability to store, launch, and mentally communicate with Class: Deployer Transformers that are bonded to them. A Deployer Master's bonded Deployers are subservient (under the control of the Deployer Master's player). The Narrator may choose to allow the Deployer Master to maintain 2 additional Deployers at his or her discretion.

DEPLOYER MASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	Bond to 2 Deployers.
Advantage	Space Folding
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Soundwave



Drone

The Drone process creates a Transformer with minimal mental faculties and a limited form of spark, instead focusing on brute force. This Sub-Class is common amongst Vehicons.

DRONE	
Priority	A, B, C, D, E
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	All mode Specs have their max increased by 2
Disadvantage	All core Specs have their max decreased by 4
Exemplar	Jet Drone

Firecon/Monsterbot

The Firecon process (sometimes called Monsterbot or Sparkabot process) grants a Transformer the ability to project flame in their non-robot mode. This flame projection makes Firecons particularly good at bypassing enemy armor and can have unfortunate collateral damage effects on the surrounding battlefield.

FIRECON/MONSTERBOT	
Priority	A, B
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Non-robot mode Firepower +2 (may exceed max)
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Cindersaur



Fuzor

The Fuzor process gives a transformer with an organic mode both enhanced combat abilities and an unconventional combination of attributes. The organic mode of a Fuzor is the fusion of two different animals, such as a wolf and an eagle. These forms often have increased projectile capabilities.

FUZOR	
Priority	A, B, C
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	Class: Organic Explorer
Partner	None
Advantage	Eliminates Class Disadvantage, organic form must be mixture of two animals
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Silverbolt



Headmaster

The Headmaster process binary-bonds a Transformer with an alternate mode to a human partner wearing a power-suit that allows the partner to convert into the Transformer's head when the character is in robot mode, while serving as the vehicle mode's pilot. Headmaster partners are subservient characters (always under the control of the Headmaster player). The player should maintain a character sheet for the Headmaster partner.

HEADMASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	Binary-Bond to Deployer (Organic/Stationary)
Advantage	Touch partner to use partner's Skill Drivers, in robot mode, add partner's Core Specs to own (may exceed max)
Disadvantage	Partner is Soft-4. Without partner present, may not Transform to robot mode
Exemplar	Highbrow

Macromaster

The Macromaster process grants a Transformer a larger-than-normal robot mode (usually with a correspondingly large vehicle mode). Macromasters are roughly the same size as Combiner Gestalts, standing double the size of a Default

MACROMASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	D10
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Massive Damage Class, Mass Shifting
Disadvantage	Dormancy Threshold 30
Exemplar	Omega Supreme

Transformer. Macromaster characters gain the Spark Trait: Mass-Shifting for free (which they use to offset the fact that their vehicle modes are often even more ridiculously large than their oversized robot modes). Macromaster vehicle modes are typically only “disguises” in specialized situations—giant space rockets and aircraft carriers only *belong* in certain places!

Micromaster

The Micromaster process grants a Transformer a smaller-than-normal robot mode (usually with a correspondingly compact vehicle mode). Micromasters are roughly the same size as humans in robot mode, and some elect to purchase the Mass-Shifting Spark Trait in order to add bulk

MICROMASTER	
Priority	A, B, C, D, E
Power Die	D6
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Dormancy Threshold 5
Disadvantage	May not Enhance Damage Class beyond Massive.
Exemplar	Tailwind

to their vehicle form. Only Micromasters can be of the Class: Microcombiner. Micromasters are extremely energy-efficient. Micromaster is a common Sub-Class for Beast Era transformers.

Omnibot

The Omnibot process grants a Transformer the ability to activate an enhanced version of their vehicle mode by taking a Transform/Change Mode action while in Vehicle mode. This enhanced version grants the advantages listed below, and the Transformer can convert directly from enhanced vehicle mode to robot mode

OMNIBOT	
Priority	A, B
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Enhance vehicle mode by taking a Transform Action and adding 2 to one vehicle Spec OR a new form of movement
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Camshaft

without first converting back to “standard” vehicle mode. An Omnibot’s enhanced vehicle mode can, at the player’s discretion, add 2 points to any one physical specification OR possess an alternative locomotion technique (granting a car the power of flight, or a jet fully-functional land travel ability, for example). These modifications are variable, and what enhanced configuration will be activated is determined when the Transform action is taken.



Powermaster

The Powermaster process binary-bonds a Transformer with a vehicle mode to a human partner wearing a power-suit that allows the partner to convert into the Transformer's engine when the character is in robot mode, while serving as the vehicle mode's pilot. Powermaster partners are subservient characters (always under the control of the Powermaster player). The player should maintain a character sheet for the Powermaster partner.

POWERMASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requirement	None
Partner	Binary-Bond to Deployer (Organic/Stationary)
Advantage	While in robot mode, partner may use Energon to pay for Empowering robot's Tasks. Partner generates 1 Energon per hour.
Disadvantage	Partner is Soft-4. Without partner present, may not Transform to robot mode
Exemplar	Slapdash



Pretender

The Pretender process grants a Transformer the ability to encapsulate their robot mode in a protective shell by taking a Transform/Change Mode action while in robot mode. This pretender shell grants the advantages listed below. The Transformer cannot convert directly from pretender shell to vehicle mode—they must first change mode back to standard robot mode before assuming any other modes.

PRETENDER	
Priority	A, B
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Transform while in robot mode to activate shell. Shell adds +2 to either Firepower or Armor. Autobots with Mass-Shifting can pass as humans in shell. Decepticon shells have Intimidation 2 Skill Driver
Disadvantage	When shell is active, Unique Ability may not be used
Exemplar	Skullgrin



Standard

A Standard Sub-Class Transformer has no particular modifications that set it apart from any other Transformer beyond mechanical and mode variations described by its Specifications, Spark Traits, and Skill Drivers.

STANDARD	
Priority	A, B, C, D
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	None
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Jazz

Targetmaster

The Targetmaster process binary-bonds a Transformer with an alternate mode to a human partner wearing a power-suit that allows the partner to convert into the Transformer's gun when the character is in robot mode, while serving as the vehicle mode's pilot. Targetmaster partners are subservient characters (always under the control of the Targetmaster player). The player should maintain a character sheet for the Targetmaster partner.

TARGETMASTER	
Priority	A
Power Die	As Class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	Binary-Bond to Deployer (Organic/Stationary)
Advantage	Touch partner to use partner's Skill Drivers, in robot mode, add partner's Targeting and Firepower Specs to own (may exceed max)
Disadvantage	Partner is Soft-4. Without partner present, robot mode Firepower and Targeting are -2
Exemplar	Missfire

Throttlebot

The Throttlebot process grants a Transformer the ability to drastically reduce the amount of time required to transform between modes.



THROTTLEBOT	
Priority	A, B, C
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	Transform Actions cost 1 click instead of 3
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Goldbug

Transmetal 2

The Transmetal 2 process, created through the application of a Vok Transmetal Driver to a Transformers spark, utterly transforms a Transformer into a larger, more powerful form. The process has two kinds of effects, depending on if the recipient was Class: Organic Explorer or if they were Class: Transmetal.



TRANSMETAL 2 (VERSION 1)	
Priority	A
Power Die	D10
Pre-Requisite	Class: Organic Explorer
Partner	None
Advantage	Unique Ability. Organic mode becomes Mech-Animal mode.
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Ramulus

TRANSMETAL 2 (VERSION 2)	
Priority	A
Power Die	D12
Pre-Requisite	Class: Transmetal
Partner	None
Advantage	Massive Damage Class
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Optimal Optimus

Triggerbot


The Triggerbot process grants a Transformer the ability to share his full weapons complement between robot and vehicle modes.



TRIGGERBOT	
Priority	A, B, C
Power Die	As class
Pre-Requisite	None
Partner	None
Advantage	All modes share the same Firepower Spec (spend points only one time), Firepower max increases by 2
Disadvantage	None
Exemplar	Backstreet

SAMPLE CHARACTERS


Below you will find several sample Transformers from the classic continuity, built using **TFRPG** rules.

Name: Optimus Prime		Affiliation: Autobot 		
Modes: Robot, Vehicle (Semi-Truck)		Power Die: d8(d10)		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Standard		
Core Specs:	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
	6(7)	6(7)	5(6)	7(8)
Robot Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
	6(8)	5(7)	7(9)	6(8)
Vehicle Specs:	Maneuverability	Armor	Firepower	Speed
	6(8)	9(11)	3(5)	6(8)
Skill Drivers	Spark Traits	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Leadership	Unique Ability*	40 (50)	Unique Ability is the Matrix of Leadership, which grants all parenthetical values for 24 hours when activated.	
3	Space-Folding	Dormancy Rating		
History 2		16 (20)		

Optimus Prime benefits from an extremely powerful Unique Ability—one that he will eventually pass on to Hot Rod. Aside from the effects of the Matrix (which he was given for free by the Narrator), he is easily built using the following priorities: Specs(A), Skills(B), Class(C), Sub-Class(D), Spark(E).




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Name: Megatron		Affiliation: Decepticon 		
Modes: Robot, Stationary (Pistol)		Power Die: d8		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Standard		
Core	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
Specs:	5	5	4	9
Robot	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
Specs:	6	5	8	6
Stationary	Adaptability	Armor	Firepower	Utility
Specs:	2	5	10	8
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Leadership 1	Gravity-Shunting^(Free)	40	Unique Ability is Power Blast, which elevates an Engage Firepower action by Megatron's Pistol mode to the Siege Damage Class regardless of target damage class. Mass-Shifting accounts for Pistol mode to be held by other Transformers or humans.	
	Mass-Shifting	Dormancy Rating		
	Unique Ability	16		


Megatron's Unique Ability is extremely powerful—a more restricted version (elevating to Massive Damage Class) would be a very reasonable power for a player character. Megatron is built as follows: Specs(A), Spark(B), Class(C), Sub-Class(D), Skills (E).



Name: Grimlock		Affiliation: Autobot (Dinobot)		
Modes: Robot, Mech-Animal (T-Rex)		Power Die: d8		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Firecon		
Core Specs:	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
	5	6	4	5
Robot Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
	7	7	7	7
Mech-Animal Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
	5	7	6(8)	10
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Leadership 1	Gravity-Shunting	40	As a Firecon, Grimlock uses parenthetical Firepower value when in T-Rex mode. Grimlock's Weapon Skill Driver is meant to represent his teeth in T-Rex mode.	
Weapon 2		Dormancy Rating		
		16		


Not actually a Firecon by canonical sources, Grimlock does have the ability to project firebolts while in dinosaur mode, so the sub-class seemed appropriate. Grimlock is built as follows: Specs(A), Sub-Class(B), Skills(C), Class(D), Spark(E).



Name: Starscream		Affiliation: Decepticon 		
Modes: Robot, Vehicle (Jet)		Power Die: d8		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Standard		
Core	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
Specs:	7	8	6	8
Robot	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
Specs:	4	4	7	4
Vehicle	Maneuverability	Armor	Firepower	Speed
Specs:	4	3	6	6
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Engineering 1	Gravity-Shunting (Free)	40	Unique Ability is Null Ray, which can be triggered after a successful Engage Firepower action instead of doing damage. Null Ray tests against target's Response. If successful, Target's Response is reduced to 0 for 3 rounds. Target may pay 5 Energon to end this effect at any time.	
Leadership 1	Unique Ability	Dormancy Rating		
Espionage 1		16		
Treachery 2				
		Treachery Skill Driver is unique to Starscream.		

Starscream showcases the most common type of Unique Ability—the “triggered Firepower effect.” He also possesses a special Skill Driver, Treachery, to represent his many attempts to wrest control of the Decepticons from Megatron. He’s good at Treachery, but not quite good enough, obviously... Build: Specs(A), Skills(B), Sub-Class(C), Class(D), Spark(E).




Name: Arcee		Affiliation: Autobot 		
Modes: Robot, Vehicle (Cybertronian Car)		Power Die: d8		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Headmaster		
Core Specs:	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
	4	5	4	7
Robot Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
	7	3	7	3
Vehicle Specs:	Maneuverability	Armor	Firepower	Speed
	7	4	1	8
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	Notes:	Energon Capacity		
Training 1	Binary-Bonded to Daniel (see below). While in Robot mode, Arcee can use Daniel's Skill Drivers and adds his Core Specs to her own. Unique Ability is Sharpshooter: Activate after Arcee rolls a successful Target Lock action against a target. Until she fails a Firepower roll against that target, she does not need to roll additional Target Lock actions.	40		
Repair 2		Dormancy Rating		
<u>Spark Traits</u>		16		
Unique Ability				




Arcee is presented here as she is at the end of Season 4 of the Animated Series. Her Binary-Bonded partner, Daniel, is depicted below. Arcee's build: Sub-Class(A), Specs(B), Skills(C), Class(D), Spark(E).

Daniel is a Headmaster partner—not powerful and not very interesting, but he makes Arcee a bit cooler when he's with her! Also note the omitted stats for Daniel's head mode. If it comes up, it's Adaptability 1, Armor 1, Firepower 0, Utility 3. Daniel's stats are on the next page.




Name: Daniel		Affiliation: Autobot 		
Modes: Organic, Stationary (Head)		Power Die: d4		
Class: Deployer		Sub-Class: N/A		
Core	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
Specs:	3	4	2	2
Human	Agility	Toughness	Projectile	Strength
Specs:	2	2	0	1
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Racing 2	Mass-Shifting (Free)	20	Binary-Bonded to Arcee. Soft-4 (4 damage kills Daniel).	
History 1	Gravity-Shunt (Free)	Dormancy Rating		
		8		

Name: Laserbeak		Affiliation: Decepticon 		
Modes: Mech-Animal (Condor), Cassette		Power Die: d4		
Class: Deployer		Sub-Class: N/A		
Core	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
Specs:	1	2	5	2
Mech-Animal	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
Specs:	2	1	2	1
<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Communication 1	Mass-Shifting (Free)	20	Bonded to Deployer-Master (Soundwave).	
Espionage 2	Gravity-Shunt (Free)	Dormancy Rating		
		8		

Laserbeak is one of Soundwave's Deployers. Note that Laserbeak, as a Deployer, is not really built to stand up to a full-size Transformer in a fight. Also note the omitted stats for Laserbeak's cassette mode. If it comes up, it's Adaptability 1, Armor 1, Firepower 0, Utility 4.



Name: Soundwave		Affiliation: Decepticon 		
Modes: Robot, Stationary (Cassette Deck)		Power Die: d8		
Class: Default		Sub-Class: Deployer Master		
Core Specs:	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting
	7	5	8	6
Robot Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength
	2	3	5	4
Stationary Specs:	Adaptability	Armor	Firepower	Utility
	2	3	2	7
Skill Drivers	Spark Traits	Energon Capacity	Notes:	
Communication 2	Gravity-Shunting (Free)	40	Bonded to 4 Deployers at a time (Ravage, Laserbeak, Rumble, Frenzy most commonly). Mass-Shifting represents Soundwave's ability to assume a cassette deck form in scale with humans.	
Computer 1	Mass-Shifting	Dormancy Rating		
	Space-Folding (Free)	16		

Soundwave is a very simple character to build: Sub-Class(A), Specs(B), Skills(C), Class(D), Spark(E). A deliberate game design decision was made to omit Soundwave's Unique Ability: Telepathy. Perhaps he can buy that when next he upgrades?



ACTION MECHANICS

TFRPG is a game of action and excitement. The previous chapters have painted the details of how a Transformer character is created and assigned values for its various capabilities—but how do those numbers impact the action of the game?

The Action Mechanics chapter highlights the various actions a Transformer can take, both in combat and outside of it—and presents flexible rules that should be applicable to almost any situation that the Narrator concocts.

Tasks

To achieve success at a task, a Transformer simply rolls their Power Die and adds the result to one of their Specifications. The resulting number is compared to the difficulty of the task. If the result equals or exceeds the difficulty, the task is successful.

While many tasks are rolled against a difficulty number determined by the Narrator, tasks that are directly opposed by the actions of other beings generally use the Specification value of the opponent as the difficulty. These tasks are referred to as rolling “versus target’s ____” in the body of these rules.

The most common tasks are described on the Action Chart, below. The actions on this chart can additionally be used to help Narrators determine the specifics of actions undertaken by Transformers that do not appear on the chart by simple comparison and choosing the action most similar to the intended task.

Difficulties

Difficulty numbers in **TFRPG** are determined from a specific range of numbers. If the action is happening on a low-tech planet (such as Earth or Chaar) the difficulties range from 7-13. If the action is occurring on a more advanced world such as Cybertron or Quintessa, or in space, the difficulties range from 14-20. In this way, the game holds the action of lower-powered Transformers to smaller scale events, reserving success on the epic stages for those Transformers most proficient and experienced.

Note that all descriptors in the chart at right are written from the perspective of an average Micromaster. What is considered improbable for a small Transformer is not nearly so daunting for a larger robot. If a Transformer is routinely overcoming improbable difficulties in the standard column, the Narrator may elect to elevate the game to the advanced column even if the action is still centered on Earth or another “standard-difficulty” setting.

STANDARD DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTOR	ADVANCED DIFFICULTY
7	Easy	14
8	Average	15
9	Modest	16
10	Tricky	17
11	Hard	18
12	Complicated	19
13	Improbable	20

A Note on Modifiers: Many games feature lists of modifiers that can be used to increase or decrease difficulties. If the Narrator wishes to add modifiers to the game, he or she is of course welcome to. In general, a good bonus or penalty should be +/- 2 in a Standard Difficulty setting and +/- 4 in an Advanced Difficulty setting.

Combat

Combat only differs from any other set of tasks or actions in the sense that it happens with a greater feeling of urgency. When the action of a story escalates to a combat situation—or any other time that the pace of things accelerate to a point where every second counts—combat rules take effect.

During combat, Transformers take actions in an order determined by their Processors Specification. The character with the highest Processors rating goes first, then the character with the next highest, and so on. Ties are broken by Sensors Specification ratings.

Each round of play, a Transformer gets a number of action points, called clicks, equal to his Response rating. The Action Chart, below, indicates how many clicks different kinds of actions require.

For the purpose of combat, Transformers measures movement in an abstract measure called zones. Zones are roughly 20 square yards. The maximum range of a Transformer's Firepower attacks is equal to his Targeting specification, while close-combat attacks can only be made against targets in adjacent zones.

The actual length of a combat round is assumed to be about 30 seconds.



A Note on Scale: The **Transformers Role-Playing Game** is not written with the intention of becoming a scale-accurate battle simulator. Even within the canonical material from which all of our understanding of the Transformers universe originates, scale is always a matter of debate and inconsistency. As such, we do not think our ruleset holds up very well to detailed maps and miniatures.

The zone system does, however, allow for generalized maps. Note, of course, that things at a human scale must have very small Agility ratings to prevent them from running at speeds in excess of a hundred miles per hour!

A Note on Speed: Top speed in combat for a Transformer in vehicle mode is easy to calculate, for those who like to have a miles-per-hour understanding of things. A Transformer in combat moves at an approximate rate of $[\text{Speed} \times \text{Response} \times 1.8]$ miles per hour.

In non-combat situations, vehicle modes add their Racing skill driver to their Speed for this calculation.

Aircraft in non-combat situations can move sub-sonically at will, achieving a rate of $[\text{Speed} \times \text{Response} \times 7.5]$ miles per hour. Aircraft (including spacecraft) can move faster than the speed of sound by expending Energon—the number of points of Energon spent allows the vehicle mode to achieve an equivalent Mach speed (3 Energon would grant a speed of Mach 3, or roughly 2300 miles per hour). This speed can be maintained for one hour before Energon must again be spent to facilitate the speed. The maximum Mach an aircraft-mode Transformer can reach is equal to its Speed rating.

Obviously this means no Transformer can achieve faster-than-light speed, since such an effort would require more than 14,000 points of Energon. That must be why they work so hard to build Space Bridges!

Sample Action Chart

ACTION	CLICKS	DESCRIPTION
Activate Unique Ability	1	Allows a Transformer to engage their Unique Ability Spark Trait
Assume Defensive Stance	4	Allows a Transformer to roll his Power Die and add its result to all Specs for the purpose of resisting Engage Firepower, Engage in Close Combat, Entangle, Ram, and Target Lock Actions.
Communicate	1	Allows a Transformer to verbally or electronically communicate a reasonable amount of dialogue
Deploy/ Recall	2	Allows a Deployer Master to eject one Deployer into an adjacent zone, where it immediately takes its place in the order of events based on its Response rating. Recall deactivates any number of Deployers and removes them from the field of battle
Engage Firepower	2	Requires successful Target Lock. Roll Firepower (or Projectile) vs. Target Soak Spec. Success deals damage
Engage in Close Combat	3	Requires zone adjacency. Roll Strength vs. Target Soak Spec. Success deals damage
Engage Sensors	1	Roll Sensors vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to notice, spot, or search their surroundings
Entangle	3	Requires zone adjacency. Roll Agility vs. Target Close Spec. Success cancels benefits of target's Assume Defensive Stance Action and prevents target from using Move Agility Value or Move Speed Value Actions
Hold Action	0	Allows a Transformer to "roll over" unused clicks to the next round.
Merge	5	Allows Transformers with access to this action to merge into combined form, activating the new form's Core Information. This action auto-delays until the slowest-moving member of the combiner team uses their Merge action, at which point the Gestalt forms but can take no actions until the following round
Move Agility Value	2	Allows a Transformer to move a number of zones equal to his agility value
Move Speed Value	1	Allows a Transformer to move a number of zones equal to his speed value
Perform Adaptability Task	3	Roll Adaptability vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to perform any reasonable task NOT directly associated with its stationary mode's designated function

Sample Action Chart, Continued

ACTION	CLICKS	DESCRIPTION
Perform Agility Task	2	Roll Agility vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to perform any physical finesse-based task such as opening locks or playing games
Perform Processor Task	2	Roll Processors vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to perform any cognitive task such as study, research, evaluation, conversation, or invention
Perform Strength Task	2	Roll Strength vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to perform any physical force-based task such as lifting or moving heavy objects
Perform Utility Task	1	Roll Utility vs. Difficulty Number. Allows a Transformer to perform any task directly associated with its stationary mode's designated function
Pick-Up/ Drop Object	1	Allows a Transformer to pick up or drop a weapon or object from its zone
Ram	1	Must be performed immediately after a Move Speed Value action. Roll Speed vs. Target Dodge Spec. Success deals damage to target, failure deals damage to this Transformer
Separate	2	Allows a Gestalt to return to component robot forms, activating the individual forms' Core Information. Separated forms can take no actions until the following round
Take Cover/ Change Position	1	Allows a Transformer to drop prone to the ground or take shelter behind relevant cover within its zone. Raises difficulty of actions versus this Transformer by 2, but penalizes actions taken by this Transformer by 2 as well. Using this action again negates both the bonus and the penalty, returning this Transformer to a standard position
Target Lock	2	Requires line-of-sight. Roll Targeting vs. Target Dodge Spec. Success allows Engage Firepower actions to be taken by this Transformer against the target for the remainder of this turn.
Transform/ Change Mode	3	Allows a Transformer to switch between any two of his prescribed modes

Taking Damage

Transformers have an incredible ability to survive injury and damage. Essentially, it takes 8 successful attacks against a Transformer to permanently destroy them. Unlike other games, TFRPG does not measure damage in points— if an attack deals damage, it simply disables one of the 8 Functions of that Transformer.

The Function chart, on the next page, explains what the Functions are and what happens if one of them is damaged. When a Transformer is damaged by an attack, the robot taking damage chooses which Function to assign the damage to—once damage is assigned to a Function it is considered damaged until repaired (see below).

NUMBER OF TIMES DAMAGED	EFFECT ON SOFT-4 TARGET	EFFECT ON SOFT-8 TARGET
1	None	None
2	All Specs -2	All Specs -1
3	All Specs halved	All Specs -1
4	Dead	All Specs -2
5	Dead	All Specs -2
6	Dead	All Specs halved
7	Dead	All Specs halved
8	Dead	Dead

If the total of the attacker's relevant Specification and Power Die exceeds the target's Armor by 10, the attacker can choose which Function the damage is assigned to (but may not choose Joint Coupling or Energon Spark unless they are the only Functions remaining, in which case they must be chosen in that order).

Organics (living beings, such as humans) do not have Functions. They are called **Soft** targets. Instead of losing functions, they are able to take damage a specific number of times (most humans are Soft-4; they can take damage four times. Some entities are Soft-8, and they can take damage eight times). The

effects of taking damage on Soft targets are described in the table (above). Any time a line on the table says to halve Specs, numbers should be rounded down.

FUNCTION	REPAIR DIFFICULTY	EFFECT WHEN DAMAGED
Energon Spark	N/A	Damage to the Spark Function results in Transformer death. Spark Function damage can never be repaired. This is (usually) the last Function a Transformer assigns damage to.
Hydraulic Assembly	6	Damage to the Hydraulic Function will reduce a Transformer's Agility and Maneuverability by 2.
Joint Coupling	8	Damage to the Coupling Function results in a Transformer being blown to bits—it becomes completely disabled. The upside is that a Transformer with a damaged Coupling Function can still be put back together (eventually).
Optic Cortex	10	Damage to the Optic Function will reduce a Transformer's Sensors and Targeting by 2.
Plasma Conduit	12	Damage to the Conduit Function will reduce a Transformer's Firepower rating by 2. Additionally, a Transformer with a disabled Conduit Function cannot use his Unique Ability.
Relay Hub	10	Damage to the Relay Function will reduce a Transformer's Processors and Response ratings by 2. Additionally, a Transformer with a disabled Relay Function cannot access any Skill Drivers.
Structural Integrity	6	Damage to the Structural Function will reduce a Transformer's Armor, Strength, and Speed by 2.
Transformation Cog	8	Damage to the T-Cog Function will cause a Transformer to lose the ability to switch between Modes and will reduce a Transformer's Adaptability and Utility by 2.



Repairing Damage

Any Transformer with a Repair Skill Driver may attempt to repair damaged Functions on a robot. To do so, they make a Repair Function action rolling Processors + Repair versus the Repair Difficulty from the table above. A Repair Function action takes 20 minutes (40 rounds) and thus is not useful in combat situations.

Organics cannot be repaired using the Repair Skill Driver—damage to them must be healed naturally, at a rate of one week per damage taken.

Damage Classes

Some robots are just bigger than others. The Specifications of these robots work somewhat differently than ordinary Transformers, operating at different Damage Classes. There are 4 Damage Classes, with the vast majority of Transformers falling into the **Basic Damage Class**, which has no effect on game play. The other Damage Classes are described below.

Macromasters, Transmetal 2s, and Combiner Gestalts are **Massive Damage Class** beings. Their armor automatically defeats attacks from characters who are not Massive Damage Class or higher. Their weapons do Massive Damage, which means successful hits against Basic opponents cause 3 Functions to fail instead of 1. Massive Damage characters treat one another no differently than Basic characters treat one another.

City Masters are **Siege Damage Class** beings. Their Armor ignores attacks from characters who are not Siege Damage Class or higher. Their weapons do Siege Damage, which means successful hits against Basic

opponents cause 5 Functions to fail instead of 1. When Siege Damage is done to Massive Armor, it works the same as when Massive damage is done to Basic characters.

Epic Damage Class is the largest Damage Class. So far, only one known being falls into this class – Unicron, the mighty transforming planet. Epic Damage Class Armor ignores non-Epic Damage Class damage. Epic Damage Class hits on standard characters cause all 8 Functions to fail.

The Damage Class Matrix, below, shows how many Functions are damaged in various combinations. To read the matrix, find the attacker’s Damage Class in the first column then read across that row to the column that matches the target’s Damage Class. The number that appears there is the number of Functions that fail if the attack is successful.

DAMAGE CLASS MATRIX	BASIC	MASSIVE	SIEGE	EPIC
Basic	1	0	0	0
Massive	3	1	0	0
Siege	5	3	1	0
Epic	8	5	3	1

Using Energon

Transformers may spend their Energon points to accomplish a number of interesting effects. There is no limit to the number of Energon points which may be spent in a single turn or upon a single action, but remember that after an action that leaves your current Energon equal to or less than your Dormancy Threshold, your Transformer shuts down until someone Bestows Energon upon you. With the exception of Activate Unique Ability, all uses of Energon cost 0 clicks to perform.

Energon may be used for the following effects:

Bestow Energon. Spend an Energon to add that point to a target Transformer in an adjacent zone.

Empower Tasks. Spend an Energon to add an additional Power Die to your action.

Mitigate Damage. Spend an Energon to ignore the damage from an Engage Firepower Action at the Basic Damage Class. Note that this effect cannot be used to eliminate damage from Engage in Close Combat or Ram Actions.

Activate Unique Ability. Spend an Energon to turn on your Unique Ability Spark Trait.

Reduce Damage Class. Spend 5 Energon to reduce Damage from one Damage Class to the next lower Damage Class, and do this multiple times at once to reduce multiple levels. Thus, 10 Energon would reduce Siege to Massive to Basic, and then you could spend a single point to Mitigate Damage. Note that Reduce Damage Class cannot reduce Epic Damage below Massive.

Enhance Damage Class. When battling an enemy who operates at a higher damage class than you, you may spend 3 Energon after rolling a successful Firepower test to step up one Damage Class (you may elevate multiple Classes by making multiple expenditures, but you may never elevate higher than the Damage Class of the target).

Upgrading Transformers

At the conclusion of a game session, or a series of game sessions that are tightly connected into a singular story, the Narrator should award each Transformer an Upgrade.

Upgrades can be spent on the Transformer itself or on a subservient Transformer (a bonded Deployer or a Binary-Bonded Headmaster partner, for instance).

To install an upgrade, a Transformer rolls its Power Die and adds the result to the number found in the table below, based on what characteristic the player is trying to upgrade. The resulting total is the number of Energon points that must be spent by the Transformer to upgrade.

Since Energon is restored to full at the conclusion of a game session, most Transformers will have sufficient Energon to pay for their Upgrade—but they will begin the next session of play at an Energon disadvantage. If the Energon cost of the upgrade would push the Transformer below its Dormancy Threshold, the Upgrade cannot be taken and this opportunity to upgrade is lost.

Upgrade cannot push a Transformer's Specifications past their maximum (based on the Power Die) unless permitted by some other game mechanic.

CHARACTERISTIC	COST
Core Specification +1	10
Mode Specification +1	8
Skill Driver +1	5
Gain New Spark Trait (ex: add Unique Ability)	12
Replace Dead or Destroyed Partner (ex: Headmaster)	10
Add Subservient Character (ex: Deployer)	15
Change Sub-Class (ex: become Targetmaster)	19
Change Class (ex: become Transmetal)	23



UNUSUAL DANGERS

The most common conflicts in which Transformers become involved are those between Autobots and Decepticons—but Decepticons are not the only opposition out there that can cause harm to the valiant Autobots.

This chapter details some general guidelines on non-Transformer threats, showcasing the ways in which the system can be used to represent organic enemies, large enemies, dangerous traps, and super science. This chapter is intended for Narrator use only.

Organics

The living beings that populate the universe, made of flesh and blood instead of steel and servos, are often at the center of intrigue and conflict. Ranging from ordinary people to organic monsters and more, organics can be built exactly like Transformers with only a few modifications.

Small organics, like humans, are Soft-4 Targets. They use Core and Organic Specifications, although they may call them by different names (Processors might be Intelligence, for instance).

Large organics, of a similar scale to a Transformer, are Soft-8 Targets. Like with small organics, Specifications may have different names, but they will generally have the same typical attributes as a Transformer's Core and Organic Specs.

Organics can probably not use Energon or access Spark Traits, but perhaps they can based on their degree of scientific accomplishment (see Super Science,

below). Organic Transformers (such as All-Spark Oracle characters and Binary-Bonded partners) can most assuredly use Energon.

Large Enemies

Big robots are a very common problem for Transformers—from robotic squids to construction machines, such beings lack the ability to transform (and thus have only 7 Functions—no T-cog) but are in all other ways just as formidable and capable as a Transformer.

To represent the size and destructive power of some large non-Transformer robots, consider making them Massive or (much more rarely) Siege Damage Class. This adds a tremendous amount of danger to the threat, especially when coupled with a larger-than-default Power Die.

Dangerous Traps

Deathtraps and natural dangers such as pitfalls and falling boulders can be a danger to Transformers just as they are to any hero in an adventure game. When creating such effects, the Narrator need only assign the trap Specifications that are relevant to its function. At minimum, it might benefit from a set of Stationary Mode Specifications and a Response and Processors rating.

Alternatively, a trap could simply be assigned a single number, from 1-12, to use as all of its relevant Specification values and, in turn, as the difficulty to detect, disarm, or avoid the trap for Transformers who happen to come across it.

Super Science

One of the most common themes throughout Transformers stories is the idea of crazy super science, in the hands of Transformers and organics alike, that has dangerous potential.

Super Science can do anything you want it to do. It can give non-Transformers the powers of Transformers (usually best emulated through the Unique Ability Spark Trait and a finite amount of Energon Points) and it can travel across space, through time, and more.

Items of Super Science should always require large amounts of Energon to function—this creates a cap on the usage of such items and makes acquiring the necessary energy to power the device a key motivation for hero and villain alike.

Most importantly, Super Science should be destroyed at the conclusion of a story unless it will have an important role to play later. If a certain friendly alien has a time travel machine that was not destroyed at the end of the story in which it was discovered, this will always present an option or a temptation to players to slip back to that alien and use the machine to undo mistakes. Super science is dangerous stuff, and its existence must be carefully controlled for the sake of the game!

Energon Surges

One of the defining features of the Beast Wars Planet was its massive supply of unstable Energon. While on most worlds, Energon is processed and refined from other energy sources, such as oil, in some rare places Energon naturally occurs as a crystalline structure.

Transformers are remarkably vulnerable to contact with unstable Energon. At the conclusion of each round of play in a region that contains unstable Energon, a Transformer must spend 1 Energon or he will fall into Stasis Lock. This form of unconsciousness is identical to what happens when a Transformer's Energon supply falls below his Dormancy Threshold.

Luckily, there are some ways to deal with Energon Surges—the most basic of which is to be a Transformer of the Class: Organic Explorer. While in organic mode, a Transformer is immune to Energon Surges. By the same token, Binary-Bonded partners that are organic are also immune to Energon surges.

Vok Events

The mysterious and alien Vok will stop at nothing to explore, investigate, and understand the universe. These aliens are masters of Energon, and they can find any number of ways to use Energon to torment and entangle Transformers in their schemes.

The Vok are a particularly powerful foe because they are known to unleash events into their environment that can change the very nature of a Transformer—altering Classes and Sub-Classes at a whim!

Depleted Foes

Given the amount of time and energy spent scavenging for Energon in most Transformers eras, it seems unlikely that every Transformer running around in your setting will be at his or her full Energon reserve. To add a touch of mystery to the game (and give the player characters a break), consider reducing the Energon reserve of a Transformer enemy by, at minimum, a roll of their Power Die.

WORLDS

Most Transformers adventures take place on either Earth or Cybertron, with Quintessa, Chaar, Junk, and Nebulos appearing less frequently. In the Beast Era, two versions of Historical Earth and a version of Future Cybertron also play important roles.

Bridging the gaps between these worlds requires one of two methods of transportation: Transwarp Ships or a Space Bridge.

Transwarp Ships

Cybertron has Transwarp ships which can make the journey to other planets in relatively short times (assume it takes 24 hours to Transwarp between any two planets). These ships are very large and very valuable. In the 1980s, there are no Transwarp ships on Earth. In 2005 there are 2. By the 2030s, there may be as many as 5. The Energon requirements for such ships are very large.

In the Beast Era, Transwarp ships are somewhat more common, and a Transwarp Event exists, somewhere between Cybertron and Earth, that allows movement through time. Those traveling from Cybertron to Earth always travel backwards in time, while those traveling from Earth to Cybertron always travel forwards.

Space Bridges

Space Bridges are large, elaborate portal devices that can catapult matter from one planet to another almost instantly. Space Bridges have massive Energon

requirements, making them less efficient than Transwarp Ships, but their speed of travel makes them highly desirable. Space Bridges are also highly unstable, and they are periodically rendered unusable because of solar radiation, cosmic interference, or damage at one end or the other of the platform. In order for a Space Bridge to work, both the departure point and arrival point must authorize the transit, making it very hard for Autobots to use Space Bridges to get back to Cybertron during the many years of Decepticon occupation on Cybertron.

Planets

The six major planetary locations for TFRPG games are described below. Remember that Earth (including both Beast Era historical settings), Chaar, and Junk are considered Standard Difficulty worlds, while Nebulos, Cybertron (including the Beast Era futuristic setting), and Quintessa are considered Advanced Difficulty worlds.

Chaar

Chaar is a small, burned-out husk of a planet located in distant space, easily mistaken for a smudge on a map. It apparently supported a civilization at one point, as abandoned structures are seen on the surface. The surface is desolate and lacks vegetation, but some native lifeforms exist, including an enormous spider. Following Unicron's attack on Cybertron in 2005, the Autobots reclaimed Cybertron, and the surviving Decepticons, without their leader, Galvatron, were forced to withdraw to Chaar, where they struggled to eke out an existence, relying on the meager amounts of Energon that could be acquired from other worlds.

Cybertron

Cybertron is considerably smaller than the planet Earth. Entirely metallic on the surface, some of the lowest levels of Cybertron consist of rock and dirt, suggesting a natural beginning to the planet. Its gravity is light enough



that humans are able to traverse the surface without any trouble, and it possesses a breathable atmosphere. Water is not uncommon on the planet - lake and rivers are known to exist, albeit sparingly. Cybertron is orbited by at least two unnamed moons. The moons are mechanical in nature, much like Cybertron, with metallic surfaces. Unlike Cybertron however, the moons do not appear to have any detectable atmosphere. In 2005 both moons of Cybertron are destroyed by Unicron.

In the far future of the Beast Era, Cybertron is a gleaming paradise controlled by Maximal descendants of the Autobots. But when the Beast Wars ended and the Maximals sought to return home, Megatron somehow gained the upper hand, unleashing a virus that disabled or destroyed most of the Transformers on the planet, reformatting many of them into his legions of Drones and Vehicon Lieutenants. Megatron seeks to eliminate all form of Organic life on his future Cybertron, but from the ancient ruins at the center of the planet, the All-Spark calls out to Maximals, and Autobots, to help restore balance to Cybertron.

Earth

Earth is probably pretty familiar to you, reader, since that is where you live. Transformers have been on Earth for millions of years, but the vast majority slumbered in



stasis lock until the 1980s when Teletran 1 awakened them within their crashed ship, the Ark.

During the million-year sleep, the planet experienced two notable shifts. The first shift, as a result of Vok tampering, seeded the planet with literal tons of unstable Energon crystals, creating a dangerous battlefield fraught with Energon Surges upon which the Maximals and Predacons waged the Beast Wars.

Following the destruction of the artificial Vok moon in orbit around Earth, much of the unstable Energon was destroyed, and Vok technology (and the Quantum Surge) unleashed hybridizations of mechanical and organic science upon the planet. At this point of pre-history, heroic forces must protect the beginnings of humanity, and the slumbering Autobots, from the depredations of their enemies who would see history undone.

Junk

Junk is not really a planet in the normal sense of the word, but rather, a landfill in space that has accumulated enough mass to be held



together by gravity. Junk is the home of the lost Autobot clan, the Junkions, and is a marvelous place to make repairs, often providing a bonus to such actions.

Nebulos

Nebulos is an advanced world where powerful technology rests in the hands of the Hive, a group of deranged organic humanoids who terrorize and enslave the other members of their race. It is on Nebulos that Binary-



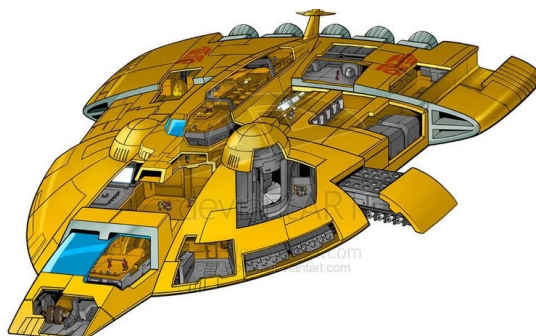
Bonding technology was discovered, and many other advances in Transformer science come from the brilliant minds upon the Energon-rich planet of Nebulos. Nebulos is a very old world, and it is covered in dense jungles populated by hostile organic and inorganic predators.

Quintessa

An artificial spiral-shaped world, Quintessa is the home of the Quintessons, cruel masters of the Sharkticons and their



other mad inventions. The Quintessons are alleged to have been the original creators of the Transformers and the magnificent computer Vector Sigma that gives birth to their Sparks, so it is truly staggering what unknown mysteries their planet might hold. In 2006, Quintessa is destroyed—or at least it appears to be so.



RESOURCES

The TFRPG project is not without many, many people to thank. The following resources were invaluable in the compilation of this game and deserve your patronage:

- [Wikipedia](#) (World information)
- [Pixelsagas.com](#) (Fonts)
- [TFwiki.net](#) (Tons of information about all things TF)
- [Lulu.com](#) (Printing services)
- Dreamwave Comics' Transformers: More than Meets the Eye guidebook series (a terrific tangible resource for character information)
- [Jlschwennen.wordpress.com](#) (my blog, where this project starts, ends, and lives)

Aspiring Narrators may want to check out the following critical resources:

- [Gamemastering](#) (a terrific manual on how to run RPGs, produced by [vagrantworkshop.com](#))
- The 1980s Transformers animated series, Seasons 1-4. If you haven't watched these, your job is very hard.
- Transformers: The Movie. This 1986 animated film is the best resource for this game, period. Watch it every day—you'll be glad you did.

BLANK CHARACTER

Name:	Affiliation:													
Modes:	Power Die:													
Class:	Sub-Class:													
Core Specs:	Processors	Response	Sensors	Targeting										
Robot Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength										
Mech-Animal Specs:	Agility	Armor	Firepower	Strength										
Organic Specs:	Agility	Toughness	Projectile	Strength										
Vehicle Specs:	Maneuverability	Armor	Firepower	Speed										
Stationary Specs:	Adaptability	Armor	Firepower	Utility										
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><u>Skill Drivers</u></td> <td style="width: 20%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><u>Spark Traits</u></td> <td style="width: 20%;">Energon Capacity</td> <td colspan="2" style="width: 40%;">Notes:</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center; padding-top: 20px;">Dormancy Rating</td> </tr> </table>					<u>Skill Drivers</u>	<u>Spark Traits</u>	Energon Capacity	Notes:		Dormancy Rating				
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Dormancy Rating														

APPENDIX

If you are at all like the author of this book, you like to have a book in your hands, not just on your screen. Since it would be wrong (and illegal) for the author to print this book and charge you for the product, since he does not own the IP for Transformers in any way, this appendix contains the directions required to print it yourself at a fabulous online printing company, Lulu (lulu.com).

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4. For Working Title, enter: Transformers: The Role-Playing Game, for Author enter: Jeremiah Schwennen, and select MAKE AVAILABLE ONLY TO ME, click SAVE & CONTINUE
5. Upload this file and create a cover of your choosing (or use the one from where you got this file...) by following the rest of the steps in Lulu's easy user interface.

Please remember: This book **CANNOT BE SOLD OR USED TO GENERATE PROFIT IN ANY FORM.**

VERSION HISTORY

1.0: Original release of complete rules. 60 pages. 8-26-2012

2.0: Release of fully updated rules. Added Beast Era content and expanded/corrected almost everything, most notably re-balancing in Prioritization on Classes and Sub-Classes and adjustment of click costs in combat. 66 pages. 7-1-2015

A Note on Revisions: If you have suggestions or requests for revision or expansion for TFRPG, please send those thoughts to nightcandleimagination@gmail.com or leave comments on the TFRPG hosting page at jlschwennen.wordpress.com/writing-projects/tfrpg