MechWarrior/Classic Battletech RPG/A Time of War is a role-playing game set in the fictional BattleTech universe in which players can assume the roles of MechWarriors (BattleMech pilots) or other individuals in the 31st century. The game has had four editions and many expansions and adventures, the first of which was published in 1986 by FASA Corporation. In addition, numerous novels by such authors as Michael A. Stackpole flesh out the game's fictional world. There is also an animated series.

EDITIONS

The first three editions have been created by FASA Corporation authors. Six years after FASA's bankruptcy (which occurred in 1999) a second printing of the third edition of the game was published by Fantasy Productions LLC (on November 2006). To reduce confusion between WizKids' MechWarrior: Dark Age games and the MechWarrior roleplaying game, Fantasy Productions renamed this reprint as Classic BattleTech RPG. The newest -fourth- edition released by Catalyst Game Labs in the line of Total Warfare is A Time of War:

MechWarrior: The BattleTech Role Playing Game
(first edition: 1986)
The first edition
catered to the early boardgame, and was set in the Third Succession War era.

MechWarrior: The BattleTech Role Playing Game
(second edition: 1991)

The second edition introduced the Clans and reworked much of the basic rule set.

MechWarrior: Third Edition
(third edition: 1999)

Classic BattleTech RPG
(second printing of MechWarrior's third edition: 2006)
The third edition replaced the whole game mechanic and introduced new rules. Classic Battletech RPG is reprint of third edition with an errata.

A Time of War
(fourth edition: 2010)

A Time of War is the fourth iteration of Battletech RPGs. The name "MechWarrior" had been abandoned for the RPG series to avoid confusion with the new MechWarrior: Dark Age.

A Time of War is the fifth volume in the core BattleTech rulebook line and is completely compatible with any level of BattleTech boardgame play. Players can literally move from an RPG experience to the boardgame and back again.

While the BattleTech universe centers around BattleMechs, Classic BattleTech RPG (CBT: RPG) is not just a game in which players take on the roles of BattleMech pilots. In fact, it is quite likely the majority of CBT:RPG characters will never set foot in a 'Mech cockpit. As in the BattleTech and MechWarrior novels, the majority of the action in the universe takes place out of the cockpit and off the battlefield, and there are a multitude of non-MechWarrior characters that play pivotal roles in the power struggles of the Inner Sphere, Clans and Periphery.

To facilitate this concept, the character creation system has been designed to accommodate any kind of character you can imagine. Starting with a chosen affiliation, such as the Draconis Combine, you follow your character’s childhood and early career, building skills and other abilities through actual experiences in the BattleTech universe. In this way, even novice players start the game with not only a complete set of game stats but a fleshed-out character background as well.

Also included are a comprehensive equipment guide and an in-depth primer on the history and culture of the BattleTech universe. Players are offered this detailed look inside the setting to find out what it’s really like to live, love and fight there.
This aspect is reflected on the back cover introduction:

It is the 31st century. Mankind has spread to the stars and spawned titanic stellar empires, each controlling hundreds of worlds across a thousand light years and beyond. Yet the sins of man have followed him from the cradle of humanity.

Political machinations of feudal lords plunge whole sectors into war; unscrupulous merchant starship captains smuggle weapons to their own faction’s enemies; greedy military commanders demand tribute from worlds they’re protecting; animalistic pirate kings harvest high technologies and human slaves in lightning raids; betrayals from oath-bound allies leave honorable soldiers growing cold on forgotten worlds; death at the tip of knife from a concubine turned assassin to avenge a world and love lost: it is a time of war.

What empire will you swear allegiance to: a warrior merchant of House Steiner; the honorbound samurai of House Kurita; the vat-bred warriors of the Clans; a mercenary that fights only for the highest bidder?

Choose your life in the universe: a MechWarrior piloting the thirty-foot-tall BattleMechs that turn the tide of any battle; a spy deep behind enemy lines discovering critical secrets; a merchant carrying critical supplies; a scientist unleashing the latest cutting-edge technologies?

How will YOU become a legend?

**WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?**

A roleplaying game is part improvisational theater, part storytelling and part board game. It is played by a gamemaster who runs the game and a group of players who pretend to be characters. These characters are defined by a set of statistics that represent skills and Attributes developed in the character creation process.

These are then fleshed out with an invented background and personality. The gamemaster presents the setting and situation; through their characters, the players interact with the story line and other characters. Think of it this way: everyone has read a book or seen a movie in which the lead character does something that the reader or viewer finds so utterly wrong that he or she wants to shout out a warning. But no matter what we say, the character will do what the plot demands; we’re just along for the ride. Even throwing popcorn won’t help. In a roleplaying game, the players control their characters’ actions and respond to the events of the plot. If the player does not want his or her character to go through the door, the character will not. If the player thinks the character can talk him- or herself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to that trusty pistol, he or she can talk away. The script, or plot, of a roleplaying game is flexible, always changing based on the decisions the players make as characters. The gamemaster controls the story. He or she keeps track of what is supposed to happen when, describes events as they occur so that the players (as characters) can react to them, keeps track of other characters in the game (referred to as non-player characters, or NPCs), and resolves attempts to take action using the game system. The game system comes into play when characters seek to use their skills or otherwise do something that requires a test to see whether they succeed. Specific rules are presented for situations that involve rolling dice to determine the outcome.

The gamemaster describes the world as the characters see it, functioning as their eyes, ears and other senses. Gamemastering is not easy, but the thrill of creating an adventure that engages the other players’ imaginations, testing
their gaming skills and their characters’ skills in the game world, makes it worthwhile. FanPro publishes game supplements and adventures to help this process along, but good gamemasters always adapt the game universe to suit their own styles. In roleplaying, stories (the adventures) evolve much like a movie or book, but within the flexible story line created by the gamemaster. The story is the overall plot, a general outline for what might happen at certain times or in reaction to other events. It is no more concrete than that until the players become involved. At that point, the adventure becomes as involving and dramatic as that great movie you saw last week or that great book you stayed up all night to finish. In some ways it’s even better, because you helped create it.

NOTE TO MECH FACTORY USERS

We have made the CBT:RPG third edition rules available in searchable format in our app/web page. (We consider this old rules abandonware just like BMR.) Our version doesn't have the lifepath section of the original, because we have a Master Lifepath among our downloadable contents which has way more options than the original. We have also upload a more detailed Affiliations and Occupation lists. You can download these material in our web page's Download section. (Web page, Battletech/Download/Tables)

Master Lifepath

Occupations

Affiliations

Beside the lifepath we have removed the world introduction because our already present background materials are far superior to that.

In our Download section you can find official NPCs (from several modules and sourcebooks) (mixed second and third edition) and some handy background materials.

Characters

Supplementals