



Mechanomancy

A Free Preview of New Magic for the D20 System™
from the pages of *The Ascension of the Magdalene*

by Rick Neal

CORIOLIS

Requires the use of the *Dungeons & Dragons*® Player's Handbook,
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Mechanomancy is steampunk magic, a new type of magic based on obsessive tinkering with the new scientific principles of clockworks, gears, spring drives, and other such innovations. These new sciences and crafts mesh with the will of the Mechanomancer, producing animated objects of great variety, durability, and sophistication. The most advanced clockworks can be indistinguishable from living creatures until the covering is broken.

Because of the weird, obsessive focus required to produce Mechanomantic clockworks, Mechanomancers cannot practice other forms of magic. The mindset needed for Mechanomancy precludes any other understanding of magic, as the scientific basis for the art contradicts the mystical teachings of other magical traditions.

This is the first truly modern school of magic in the world, the first school to embrace the modernist traits of reason, repeatability, and the exclusion of folklore and tradition from the pure act of creation. It is a conscious break with the past, and a complete rejection of the medievalist magic practiced by sorcerers, wizards, and clerics. Many Mechanomancers don't even believe they are practicing magic at all. They believe they have discovered fundamental principles of the physical world, perhaps expressed as "the Aether," or in the hopeless vagaries of perpetual motion.

Yet it is magic, and magic must be powered with something insubstantial. Mechanomancy is powered with the user's own memories. In rejecting the past and the denying the true and magical nature of reality, the Mechanomancer sacrifices his or her own memories to power each clockwork creation.

Mechanomancers would destroy their own past to create their future anew.

The Mechanomancy Feat

To perform Mechanomancy, a character must take the Mechanomancy feat. This feat intro-

duces the character to the mysteries of clockwork construction and the secrets of imparting life through the sacrifice of memories. It requires a fundamental shift of viewpoint that forever renders the Mechanomancer unfit for using any other type of magic, including psionics.

NEW FEAT: MECHANOMANCY [GENERAL]

You can learn the Mechanomancy skill and begin building clockworks.

Prerequisites: Non-spellcaster, non-psionic

Benefit: You know how to gather charges, the power which allows you to imbue your clockwork creations with life. You can now take skill ranks in the Mechanomancy skill, which allows you to build the physical forms of the clockworks that you can then imbue with mystical life and awareness.

Normal: Without the Mechanomancy feat, no character can learn the Mechanomancy skill.

Special: Once the Mechanomancy feat is taken, you may never learn to cast divine or arcane spells, nor may you learn to use psionics.

Charges

Charges are the units of power that the Mechanomancer must accrue to empower his or her creations. These are discrete packets of mystical power, gained through the use of the Mechanomancy feat, that are implanted into the clockwork construct to give it life. Charges are used by Mechanomancers instead of the experience points that spellcasters expend for their spells.

There are three different grades of charge: minor, significant, and major. Each major charge may be broken into ten significant charges, and each significant charge may be broken into ten minor charges. Minor charges cannot be combined to form significant charges, nor can significant charges be combined to create a major charge.

MINOR CHARGES

Minor charges are gained by spending a day laboring on a clockwork. The minor charge is then available to spend on the clockwork to bring it to life.

SIGNIFICANT CHARGES

Significant charges may be gained by sacrificing one minor memory from your past. This can be a sunny day, a party, an argument, or a fight. All details of the event are gone forever. This can be somewhat traumatic, and requires a Will save (DC 15) to avoid permanently losing a point of Intelligence or Wisdom score (GM's choice, depending on the memory). The memory sacrificed should be appropriate to the function of the clockwork: sacrifice a memory of a childhood game to build a toy, or a memory of a mugging for a weapon.

A safer way to gain charges is to use an historically important item in the construction of the clockwork. The item should be non-magical, or possessing only minor magics, but should have played a part in a significant historical event. The horn that sounded the charge at the battle that won the king his crown, or the ring of the bishop who manipulated the king from behind the throne are examples. Again, the item should be appropriate to the function of the clockwork. The horn might be built into an attack clockwork, while the ring might be a good piece to build into an advisor.

MAJOR CHARGES

To generate a major charge, you must give up a major memory or string of memories. This would be like forgetting a spouse, a sibling, or a parent. This is dangerous; it's our memories that define our personalities, so giving up valuable memories will have a serious impact on your character. When you give up such a memory, you automatically lose one point from each of Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma score permanently, and must make a Will save (DC 30) to avoid

losing two more from each attribute. A second Will save (DC 25) is required to avoid becoming insane as though affected by the *insanity* spell.

There is a much safer way to generate a major charge, which is to obtain a complete, historically significant, and still-functioning piece of machinery and incorporate it into the clockwork. This might be the first arquebus ever produced, or the bellows and gear device that raises the Emperor's throne in the audience chamber. As with significant charges, the machinery should relate to the function of the clockwork.

The Mechanomancy Skill

The actual construction of clockworks depends on the Mechanomancy skill. This is the technical knowledge needed to assemble the clockwork.

MECHANOMANCY

(NO ATTRIBUTE BONUS; TRAINED ONLY; REQUIRES MECHANOMANCY FEAT)

Use this skill to assemble clockworks from component parts.

Check: When you build a clockwork, check against a DC of 21 to see if it is functional. If the roll succeeds, spend the necessary charges to empower the device. If the roll fails, no charges are spent.

Retry: Each check requires a full day of work, but failure does not expend charges or materials. Mechanomancers can take 10 with this skill, or take 20 when spending 20 days working on the clockwork.

Special: Clockworks require 50 gp worth of materials for each minor charge used in construction, 500 gp for each significant charge, and 5000 gp for each major charge. These materials are in addition to any items incorporated into the clockwork for charges.

General D20 Clockworks

	Tiny Clockwork Construct	Small Clockwork Construct	Medium Clockwork Construct
Hit Dice:	1/2 d10 (2 hp)	1d10 (5 hp)	2d10 (11 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)	+0
Speed:	50 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
AC:	14 (+2 Size, +2 Dex)	14 (+1 Size, +1 Dex, +2 Natural)	14 (+4 Natural)
Attacks:	Slam +1 melee	Slam +1 melee	Slam +2 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d3-1	Slam 1d4	Slam 1d6+1
Face:	2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft.
Reach:	0 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
SA:	See text	See text	See text
SQ:	See text, DR 2/-	See text, DR 5/-	See text, DR 8/-
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -5	Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -5	Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 10, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 12, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
Feats:	See Text	See Text	See Text

	Large Clockwork Construct	Huge Clockwork Construct	Gargantuan Clockwork Construct
Hit Dice:	4d10 (22 hp)	8d10 (44 hp)	16d10 (88 hp)
Initiative:	+0	-1 (Dex)	-2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.	20 ft.
AC:	14 (-1 size, +5 natural)	13 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)	12 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +8 natural)
Attacks:	Slam +5 melee	Slam +9 melee	Slam +15 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d8+4	Slam 2d6+7	Slam 2d8+10
Face:	5 ft. by 10 ft. (long) 5 ft. by 5 ft. (tall)	10 ft. by 20 ft. (long) 10 ft. by 10 ft. (tall)	20 ft. by 40 ft. (long) 20 ft. by 20 ft. (tall)
Reach:	5 ft. (long) 10 ft. (tall)	10 ft. (long) 15 ft. (tall)	10 ft. (long) 20 ft. (tall)
SA:	See text	See text	See text
SQ:	See text, DR 10/-	See text, DR 12/-	See text, DR 15/-
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4	Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3	Fort +5, Ref +3, Will 0
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 20, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1	Str 24, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
Feats:	See Text	See Text	See Text

Clockworks

The goal of Mechanomancy is the creation of clockwork devices to perform tasks for the Mechanomancer. These clockworks are imbued with limited intelligence and life by the magic the Mechanomancers use, but must be wound and maintained like any machines. As-

sembling a clockwork is relatively simple; it is the expenditure of charges that make the devices special.

In game terms, clockworks are Constructs based on a general stat block, with customization added by the Mechanomancer. The more customized the clockwork is, the more charges

General D20 Clockworks

Colossal Clockwork Construct

Hit Dice:	32d10 (176 hp)
Initiative:	-3 (Dex)
Speed:	20 ft.
AC:	11 (-8 size, -3 Dex, +12 natural)
Attacks:	Slam +25 melee
Damage:	4d6+13
Face:	40 ft. by 80 ft. (long), 40 ft. by 40 ft. (tall)
Reach:	15 ft. (long), 25 ft. (tall)
Special Attacks:	See text
Special Qualities:	See text, DR 17/-
Saves:	Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 28, Dex 4, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
Feats:	See Text
Climate/Terrain:	Any land and underground
Organization:	Tiny: Group (4); Small: Pair; Medium-size, Large, Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal: Solitary
Challenge Rating:	Tiny 1/2; Small 1; Medium-size 2; Large 3; Huge 5; Gargantuan 7; Colossal 10
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	-

Combat:

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Damage Reduction: Clockworks are constructed out of metal, and thus have a Damage Reduction based on their size.

Customization: Clockworks may be customized in various ways; see text.

you need to build it. You get to determine what your clockwork looks like, but it must have the proper components for its function: something without legs or wheels cannot move, and something without limbs cannot grab.

MINOR CHARGE EFFECTS

For a single minor charge, you can create a Tiny Clockwork. This item can obey one simple order X words long. X equals twice the amount by which your Mechanomancy roll exceeded the DC of 21. Thus, if you rolled a 24, the item could obey a command no more than 6 words long. The order given when the clockwork created is the only one it can ever obey: minor clockworks are one-trick ponies. If the item isn't built for combat, it can perform a single function, although it can be one that normal machines cannot. It can serve as amusement, like a dancing or singing doll, or can carry out a simple chore, like oiling and sharpening a sword.

SIGNIFICANT CHARGE EFFECTS

The expenditure of a significant charge allows you to create a Medium-Size Clockwork. At the time of creation, you can decide whether the clockwork looks human, animal, or like a clockwork monstrosity. You can also choose whether the device can obey one simple command at a time, or whether it can only perform a single skilled task.

If you create the clockwork to obey simple commands, it does so mindlessly and without any specific skill. It can speak only to repeat what you tell it to say. The clockwork has no skills apart from its attack bonus, although it can be ordered to repeat simple patterns, like dancing in a set routine or playing a song on an instrument.

If you create a skilled construct, it can perform only a single skill, but has ranks in that skill equal to half your Mechanomancy roll when you create it.

MAJOR CHARGE EFFECTS

By spending a major charge, you can give a mind to your clockwork; it gets an Intelligence ability, unlike lesser clockworks. You can duplicate any race or creature that has a corporeal body; the resulting clockwork has all the Ability scores of the normal creature (except for Constitution) as well as the Construct immunities. Hit dice are d10, and the clockwork receives no benefit for Constitution, as it has none. The clockwork you build has none of the Extraordinary, Supernatural or Spell-Like abilities of the original, nor does it have any of its feats, although it has all of its physical skills (those that are Con, Dex, and Str-based). You can also give it any mental skills (those based on Int, Wis, and Cha) that you yourself possess, at the ranks you possess them. You can even duplicate people that you know or have known, like lost loved ones or enemies. A major construct's default size is the size of the original creature.

Customizing Clockworks

Once the basic form of the clockwork has been created, it can be customized by the expenditure of additional charges to improve the various capabilities. These customizations vary in cost depending on the type of improvement and the base type of clockwork.

Customizations are built into the clockwork. Increasing the movement rate means building in extra legs, wheels, or another means of motive power, and increasing the natural armor means building in metal plates. The physical structure of the clockwork is integral to what abilities it can use.

MINOR CHARGE CUSTOMIZATIONS

For a single minor charge, a Mechanomancer can customize a minor clockwork by increasing the speed by 5 ft., adding a single hit point, or increasing the save bonus of one category of saving throw by one point. For two minor

charges, the natural armor of a minor clockwork may be increased by one point, the base attack bonus may be increased by one point, or the damage inflicted by a successful attack may be increased by one point. Three minor charges lets the Mechanomancer add one point to an Ability score. Three minor charges can also increase the size of the minor clockwork to Small, and another three minor charges can raise it to Medium-size.

Additionally, two minor charges can be used to allow a minor clockwork to fly at its base speed, with poor maneuverability. Each additional minor charge can be used to increase either the base speed by 5 ft., or the maneuverability by one step.

By spending a minor charge, the Mechanomancer can change the attack of any

clockwork. By adding blades, needles, or other weapons, the Mechanomancer can change the attack type from Slam to whatever the new weapon is, and change the crushing damage to slashing or piercing, as desired. Adding a ranged weapon requires two minor charges.

SIGNIFICANT CHARGE CUSTOMIZATIONS

Significant charges may be spent to customize significant clockworks in the same ways that minor charges are spent on minor clockworks. The main difference is that the default size of Significant clockworks is Medium-size, and therefore three significant charges would increase it to Large, and so on.

In addition to these customizations, a Significant charge may be used to increase a skill by

Sample D20 Clockworks

The Squire (Minor Clockwork)

	Tiny Construct
Hit Dice:	1/2 d10 (4 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	50 ft.
AC:	14 (+2 Size, +2 Dex)
Attacks:	Sword +1 melee
Damage:	1d4-1
Face/Reach:	2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks:	None
Special Qualities:	See text, DR 2/—
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -5
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

The Squire is a nicely functional minor clockwork that cleans and maintains weapons and armor. It appears as a tiny man made of brass, with a brass satchel on its back containing polish, cloth, oil, and a whetstone. When wound up and placed be-

side armor and weapons, it proceeds to sharpen swords, oil weapons, polish metal, and generally perform basic martial maintenance. A typical winding lasts about an hour, which is sufficient to service one sword, one shield, and a breastplate. More armor and weapons requires multiple windings. Chain armor takes an especially long time, as the Squire cleans each link individually.

The Squire is not built for combat, but does have a little bronze sword that it draws and uses in defense of itself or the gear it is servicing.

The construction of the Squire required two minor charges and 100 gp worth of materials.

Combat:

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

one rank. Two significant charges can add any feat for which the clockwork meets the prerequisites. These must not be metamagic or item creation feats. Only Significant or Major clockworks may be customized in this manner.

Any clockwork can also have an additional attack added at the cost of one Significant charge. Unless the appropriate feats are also bought, this is considered a secondary attack and has a -5 penalty to the clockwork's base attack bonus.

MAJOR CHARGE CUSTOMIZATIONS

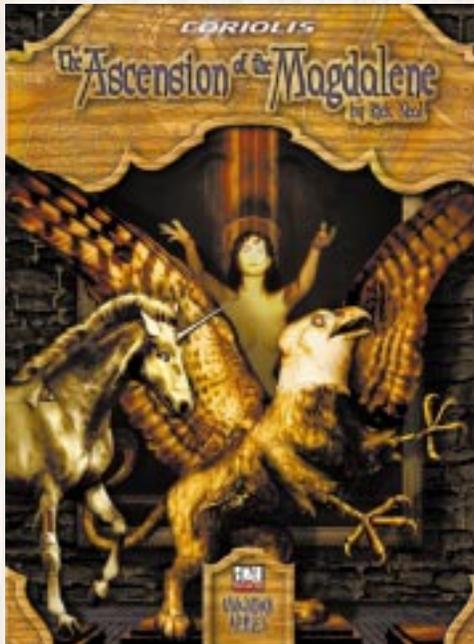
Each additional Major charge can add one of the original form's Extraordinary or Supernatural abilities to the clockwork, provided that the Mechanomancer is able to construct a mechanism to duplicate it. Thus, to add the fiery breath weapon of a red dragon, the clockwork requires a reservoir of fuel, a bellows to shoot it out the mouth, and a pilot light to ignite it.

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Atlas Games
PO Box 131233
Roseville, MN 55113
USA

web www.atlas-games.com
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