

Heroic Vehicles Plug-In for Fuzion™

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This is a Plug-In system for the Fuzion game system, which essentially adapts the Vehicle rules for the HERO System™ into Fuzion. This Plug-In also utilizes a few of the rules options presented in *The Ultimate Vehicle*, or at least uses mechanics which make options from *TUV* usable, making that book much more relevant to the Fuzion system.

Because of its generic nature, the Heroic Vehicle Plug-In should be usable for all types of vehicles, from automobiles to starships, from flying carpets to giant robots, and from flying skateboards to the Death Star, from motorboats to time machines. Even all-new vehicle types, never before seen, can be created. The scope is really limited only by the user's imagination.

However, it should be noted that only the vehicle itself is detailed in this Plug-In. Weapons and other equipment should be built with a Powers Plug-In, as noted below.

Affording the Vehicle

A vehicle is bought by a character using Option Points. For every OP spent on a vehicle, it may have either 1 point, 5 points, or 10 Vehicle Points, depending on the level of realism and other factors in the campaign. Each Vehicle point may then become 1 Characteristic Point, 1 Power Point, or 5 Option Points. The maximum CP, OP, and PP that a Vehicle may have is, in most cases, the same value as the PC has (except that if the campaign doesn't use PP for PCs, the PP total should equal the PC's CP).

In some cases, a GM may allow a player to take a self-aware vehicle (that is, one with all three Mental Characteristics) as a PC. In this case, the vehicle gets as many CP, OP (including OP from Complications), and PP as any other character.

Whether the vehicle is a PC or bought by a PC, it may have Complications, just as a character may have them. Points taken by Complications may only add to OP, though these OP may be transferred for extra CP or PP with the GM's permission.

Vehicular Characteristics

A vehicle is similar to a character, in that it has Primary and Derived Characteristics. However, the specifics of these Characteristics are somewhat different. The Characteristics that a vehicle uses are listed below.

Primary Characteristics

As with those for characters, vehicles' Primary Characteristics are arranged into four groups; even the groups themselves are the same. However, one of the four groups is optional, and some of the specifics are different.

Mental Group (optional):

INTELLIGENCE (INT): Some vehicles are capable of operating themselves, usually thanks to either computer technology or magical enhancement. The intelligence with which it performs its operations is defined by this Characteristic. It can also be used to represent the computer's (or enhancement's) ability to perform more than one task at the same time; and if the vehicle also has the other two Characteristics in this Group, it can function almost

identically to how INT works for a character. If a vehicle has any Mental Characteristics at all, it has this one.

WILLPOWER (WILL): This represents a vehicle whose computer (or enchantment) has the ability to initiate action. As with characters, it represents determination and courage. A vehicle with WILL must have INT, but doesn't necessarily have to have PRE.

PRESENCE (PRE): A vehicle with this Characteristic in addition to INT and WILL (and it must have both of the other two to have this one) has a full-fledged personality, much like that of a character. Except for a few specifics, all three Characteristics can then be used just as though the vehicle actually was a regular character.

Combat Group:

REFLEXES (REF): This is the vehicle's response time and handling. As with characters, this Characteristic is used to represent its ability to strike a target, whether on its own (using an onboard computer as represented with INT) or guided by an operator, and whether directly or using a weapon of some sort. A vehicle operates at its own REF or that of its operator, whichever is less.

MANEUVER VALUE (MV): This is the vehicle's basic maneuverability. As with DEX for characters, this Characteristic is used to represent how well the vehicle can avoid being hit. A vehicle operates at its MV or at its operator's DEX, whichever is less.

TECHNIQUE (TECH) (OPTIONAL): A Vehicle with this Characteristic has arms and hands with which it can manipulate things. This Characteristic represents the quality with which it can use those arms and hands.

Physical Group:

STRENGTH (STR): This is the vehicle's general power and ability to exert force, relative to other vehicles of its size. The stronger the vehicle is, the more it can lift, carry, tow, etc., and the more powerful its blows are when it rams or sideswipes a target.

BODY (BODY): This represents the vehicle's general toughness, and its ability to continue operating when damaged. It can also be used as a minor modifier for Size (below), representing the vehicle's relative size within its class.

SIZE (SIZE): This is literally how big the vehicle is, in terms of size class. Each pip of SIZE represents a doubling in the vehicle's mass from the human norm. Since most STR feats (including striking targets) is done in relation to the vehicle's Size, this can be a very significant Characteristic. It also has its downside, however, since larger vehicles are easier to hit. A vehicle's SIZE has other effects on combat and other considerations as well; this is discussed in full detail later. (*Note:* SIZE is also the only Characteristic which may have a negative value without crippling the vehicle; however, all Derived Characteristics which derive from it must still be above 0.)

DEFENSE (DEF): This represents how tough the vehicle's outer shell. It functions identically to the *Armor Power*, in that it protects from both Killing and Stun damage equally well, except that it always gives equal KD and EKD even if EKD is a separate consideration in the campaign. (To have different values, the *Armor Power* must be taken.)

Movement Group:

MOVEMENT (MOVE): This represents the vehicle's basic ability to move from one place to another. As a rule, it represents ground movement, though certain modifiers can change this.

Derived Characteristics

Vehicles have some of the same Derived Characteristics as Characters, and some that are different.

Standard Derived Characteristics

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE POINTS (SDP) [(BODY+SIZE)×5]: This represents how much damage the vehicle can take before it starts to lose its ability to function.

TAXI [MOVE×2M]: This represents how fast the vehicle can go in a combat situation, avoiding attacks.

SPRINT [MOVE×3M]: This represents how fast the vehicle can travel at a flat-out maximum.

EFFECTIVE STRENGTH (ESTR) [STR+SIZE]: This represents the vehicle's STR for purposes of carrying things, doing damage, and other combat effects.

TARGET SIZE (TSIZ) [MV-(B×SIZE)]: This represents the base DV that the Vehicle has in regards to being hit. For most purposes — certainly for purposes of combat — it can be used in place of DEX.

Optional Derived Characteristics

These Characteristics won't be appropriate for all campaigns. Most will depend on whether the GM is using that particular Characteristic in the campaign at all; some will also depend on whether the vehicle has the Characteristic on which the Derived Characteristic is based.

LUCK [INT+REF OR (IF THE VEHICLE HAS NO INT) REF×2]: This operates exactly as it does for characters.

SPEED (SPD) [REF/2]: This functions just as it does for characters, and should be used in a campaign where characters have SPD. A vehicle operates at its own SPD or that of its operator, whichever is less.

RESISTANCE (RES) [WILL×3]: This operates exactly as it does for characters. It should only be taken by vehicles with WILL, and generally only by those with all three Mental Characteristics.

HUMANITY (HUM) [PRE×10]: This operates exactly as it does for characters, except that self-aware vehicles do not take "humanity" damage by having their parts replaced (since this is a normal part of being a machine).

Improving Derived Characteristics

As with characters, it is possible to increase the value of one or more Derived Characteristics on a vehicle. This uses the same standards; if the GM has altered the costs of increasing Derived Characteristics from those shown in the Basic Fusion rules, then these costs should be adjusted in the same manner.

For 5 OP or 1 CP, a vehicle may have any of the following:

- +5 SDP
- +2 Luck
- +½ SPD (requires 2 CP or 10 OP to increase by +1)
- +3 RES
- +10 HUM

If the GM permits, HITS and HUM may be taken on a prorated scale; that is, 1 OP can buy +1 Hit or +2 Humanity.

While theoretically possible, the GM should generally not allow a vehicle to have Derived Characteristics that are "bought down" — that is, taken at a lower value to get more than the normal CP or OP. If this is allowed, then no more than one Derived Characteristic may be "bought down."

Vehicular Skills

There are certain cases where a vehicle can have what amounts to a Skill. As a general rule, if the vehicle has a Characteristic for a Skill to operate with and the physical equipment to use it, then it may have the Skill.

In most cases, the Skill is operated by an onboard computer, which would require the INT Characteristic (if not WILL and PRE), but there are cases where a Skill can be simply the application of an independent electronic or mechanical system. Anything reasonable along these lines should generally be allowed, but it's up to the GM to adjudicate it on a case by case basis.

There are a few cases where a Skill might be called for where the vehicle does not have the Characteristic on which it's normally based. For instance, a vehicle might have a system whose function amounts to **Lockpicking**, even though vehicles do not have a TECH Characteristic (which is what that Skill is based on). In these cases, the GM may either let the Skill be used with a different Characteristic, declare that the Skill uses a base Characteristic value of 0, or let the vehicle have the Characteristic anyway (with no extra CP). In the latter case, buying up the Skill to a reasonable level is still cheaper than buying up the Characteristic.

Vehicular Perks

Perks are available to vehicles just like they are to characters, but are generally less appropriate for them. Of course, as with characters' Perks, the specifics tend to be quite campaign-dependent, and the final cost for any given Perk is up to the GM.

Most Perks work just like they do for characters, but are usable by whoever has current charge of the vehicle. Only a vehicle that is self-aware can use its own Perks; others require an operator to administer them. At that, the vehicle's Perks usually have less impact than the corresponding Perks for characters, since they affect only the vehicles themselves; the multiplier for Impact should be one step lower for a vehicle than it would be for a character, and if the multiplier is already ×1 then it should become ×½.

While most Perks operate just like their counterparts for characters, there are a couple for which special notes are called for.

MEMBERSHIP/AUTHORITY: This Perk generally has somewhat less impact than if the operator himself had it. A military-owned vehicle, for instance, can use certain military facilities even if it's being operated by non-military personnel (such as an intelligence agent, who might have both the right and the reason to do such a thing), but generally won't afford the operator himself any more than minimal influence.

WEALTH: This Perk typically represents a special fund for the vehicle's care. The discretionary power of the administrator is limited to things related to that.

Vehicular Talents

Most Fusion Talents are appropriate for vehicles, and may be taken at their stated OP cost. The main exceptions, along with

others that have special characteristics, are noted below. (If a Talent isn't listed here, either information on it wasn't available to the author when this was written, or it operates normally for vehicles.)

AMBIDEXTERITY: Vehicles don't normally have a handedness, so this Talent is inappropriate.

ANIMAL EMPATHY: Animals are normally neutral regarding vehicles, so this Talent is normally inappropriate for vehicles. There may be exceptions to this, however; the GM may allow it if the situation warrants.

BEAUTIFUL/HANDSOME: A really nice-looking car or other vehicle can be impressive under the right circumstances, though the benefits may not be worth 3+ points.

COMMON SENSE: This only works if the vehicle has a computer (INT), and may require something a little more advanced (WILL) to warn the operator.

DIRECTION SENSE: This is easy enough to buy, as a compass.

DOUBLE JOINTED: This can be used to represent articulated vehicles, though the function then becomes somewhat different from what's given in the main Fusion rules.

EIDETIC MEMORY: This can represent built-in audiovisual recording equipment.

HIGH PAIN THRESHOLD: Vehicles normally don't feel pain anyway, so this Talent is inappropriate.

IMMUNITY: Vehicles are normally immune to poisons and diseases, rendering this Talent inappropriate. However, there may be certain computer viruses or other conditions (such as rust) for which this could be appropriate, if the GM approves.

INTUITION: As with **COMMON SENSE**, this only works if the vehicle has a computer (INT), and may require something more advanced (WILL) to inform the operator of hunches.

LIGHTNING CALCULATOR: Any computerized vehicle probably should have this Talent as a logical extension, since a computer is just an advanced calculator.

LIGHT SLEEPER: This can represent something that causes the vehicle to start its ignition when disturbed. While not always advisable, it can be done if the player really wants it.

RAPID HEALING: Vehicles don't heal on their own, so this Talent is inappropriate.

TIME SENSE: This can represent an on-board clock.

Vehicular Powers

Most abilities in the official *Superpower Plug-In* from *Champions: The New Millennium* (including stuff in the errata in *Alliances* and *Bay City*) are available. Alternately, if you're using some other Powers Plug-In (such as Jason Dour's *Heroic Abilities Plug-In*), then Powers (and modifiers) from that Plug-In should be available instead.

There are a few cases, however, that need special treatment:

ADJUSTMENT POWERS: Most Adjustment Powers aren't appropriate for vehicular use.

MOVEMENT POWERS: Regardless of what else is said in whatever Powers Plug-In you're using, Movement Powers on vehicles do not cost END to use.

END RESERVE: If the vehicle has one or more Power that costs END to use, this may be handled one of two ways: either the Power gets a "Zero END" Adder for +2, or the vehicle has to take an END Reserve. If the Powers Plug-In you're using doesn't have a rule for this, use the following: 1PP gives the vehicle 50 END and 5 REC to work with; the REC will only work when "plugged in" to an energy reserve of some sort, and then replenishes that much END per turn. For a larger reserve, +1PP gives either +50 END or +5 REC.

MULTIPLE INSTANCES: A vehicle can have more than one item of the same type. For every doubling of the number of identical devices, the vehicle pays +1 point. (The GM should watch this modifier to make sure it isn't abused; for example, it should not be allowed for Force Field generators or other devices which add their effect without any defense. Its primary purpose is for weapons and similar devices.)

FOCUS: All devices on vehicles that have this Limiter (if it's being used) get an extra -2 as a Limiter. This represents the fact that it's designed for vehicular use, and cannot be picked up by a character (except under unusual circumstances).

Other Vehicle Components

There are other Plug-Ins which, if the GM should desire, may be applicable to vehicles. The following notes are given primarily in regard the type of abilities involved, and (for the most part) should be applicable regardless of the specific Plug-In used.

COMBAT RESOLUTION: If some alternate combat resolution system is being used for characters (such as a "diceless" one, or one which resolves through the use of playing cards), then that same system should be used with vehicles.

MAGIC: Merging vehicles with magic will have varying degrees of success. On one hand, a high-tech jet aircraft, even with a self-aware personality emulator, would probably be unable to cast any magical spells. At the other extreme, though, one could define certain magical devices as vehicles, the most common of which would probably be the flying carpet. Of course, this is largely a matter of defining the "special effects" of the vehicle's functions from technological to magical, but it might also be possible for that carpet to have some spells of its own.

If mechs and magic are existing side by side in the same world, it's up to the GM as to whether a robot (or a particular type of robot) can cast the same spells as humans. (What's recommended is that only the self-aware robots, with WILL and PRE as well as INT, be allowed to do this.)

MARTIAL ARTS: If the vehicle is a mech (giant robot), then the GM may allow it to have some built-in skill in martial arts. This is more likely for self-aware vehicles than others, but a robot could be designed with combat-effectiveness in mind.

Alternately, characters who operate giant robots (mecha) may have martial arts specifically designed for use with their mecha. The GM may either require that such martial arts be learned completely separately from normal hand-to-hand martial arts, or require only a 2-point Weapon Element, depending on the tone of the campaign and the specific Martial Arts Plug-In used.

MENTAL POWERS: Because most vehicles don't have minds, Mental Powers typically don't work on them. Even computerized and self-aware vehicles can be argued to not have actual minds, but merely electronic simulations.

Of course, this depends on the campaign. There are cases where a "cyberkinetic" character might be able to control and otherwise affect computers and other machines, including the computer controlling a vehicle, with his mental powers. The GM may either allow this freely, or declare that Mental Powers against computers be bought as separate abilities. In the latter case, INT is used in place of WILL to resolve Mental Power use.

Conversely, it may be possible to stage "mental" combat in the virtual arena of computer vs computer. Mental Powers can be redefined to represent the electronic equivalent, and computers can buy them this way. Essentially, anything applicable to a desktop computer or a mainframe should be applicable to a vehicular computer.

Vehicular Complications

Mechanically, Complications work for vehicles just as they would for characters. They have **Frequency**, **Intensity**, and **Importance**, which are calculated in exactly the same way to reach the final **value** as they would be for a character.

There are certain restrictions and modifications, however.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS and **PERSONALITY TRAITS** should only be taken by computerized vehicles with all three Mental Characteristics (those with INT and WILL but not PRE may take them only with the GM's permission, and even then the specific Complications must be approved on an individual basis).

PHYSIOLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS must relate to the vehicle's operation as a vehicle. *Dyslexia*, *Reduced Hearing*, or *Missing Limb* wouldn't be appropriate, but *Reduced Mobility*, *Susceptibility*, or *Vulnerability* would be.

SOCIAL COMPLICATIONS must generally be those that would affect whoever is operating the vehicle, unless the vehicle is self-aware. The exception is *Distinctive Features*, which is always available.

ENEMIES are, as above, those which are focusing on the vehicle, not the operator, even though the operator will be affected by them. Note that a vehicle can be "marked for death," though in this case it's a little more like "marked for destruction."

RESPONSIBILITIES for vehicles are rare, unless they are self-aware. It might be possible for a computerized vehicle to have a certain code of behavior programmed in, or a regular vehicle to have a *Dependent* that the operator (whoever that is) must take care of, but either of these would require special permission from the GM.

COMPULSIVE BEHAVIORS are also generally limited to self-aware vehicles. *Dependence* is the only significant exception. Another possibility is *Mechanical Quirk*, where the vehicle does something odd under certain circumstances (such as slam on the brakes when it reaches 70mph). The vehicle's reaction to the situation is: An annoyance (5). Dangerous (10). Potentially fatal (15). Potentially catastrophic, causing multiple deaths (20).

There are also a new Complication category:

CREW: The vehicle needs something more than one individual with basic **Driving** Skill to operate. The Skill required may be: **Driving** (or some other, related Skill) at a level of 4 or higher (5). A set of at least three Skills with a combined expertise of at least 10 (10). This Complication also gets +5 points for every 2× as many operators are needed to run its systems; multiple operators normally cover various functions, such as movement, weapons, communications, etc.

Instead of using the normal Intensity Table, use the following scale: A reduced number of multiple operators can "cover" each others' functions at -2 to all Skill checks per extra "station" (function) covered by any person (divide by 5). There is only one operator, or any "station" not covered simply doesn't work (divide by 2). All operators (totaling two or more) are required at all times for the vehicle to operate at all (divide by 1).

Vehicular Size

The SIZE Characteristic has nearly as many different effects on play as STR. Every level of SIZE represents a doubling of the vehicle's mass above the human norm; every 3 levels of SIZE represents a doubling of each dimension from that of a standard human. Thus, a vehicle with SIZE 0 is the same size as a human being, weighing 100kg, while a vehicle with SIZE 3 would weigh 800 kg and be twice as big in each direction as a human.

Of course, most vehicles are dominant in their length rather than their height, the main exceptions being giant robots. Thus, that SIZE 3 vehicle wouldn't be 4m/y tall (twice the standard 2m/y height of a human), but 4m/y long.

Each level of SIZE increases the vehicle's Effective Strength (ESTR) by 1. ESTR is used for most feats involving STR; the primary exceptions are those which involve moving around the vehicle's own frame. The GM should use common sense and good judgement when deciding whether to use STR or ESTR for a given situation; for example, a vehicle with 0 STR can't move around at all, no matter what its ESTR.

In addition to this and the vehicle's SDP, its SIZE affects its Target Size (TSIZ), which is used instead of DEX (or MV) for determining if the vehicle is hit by an attack. A vehicle with an MV of 4 and a SIZE of 3 would have a TSIZ of 2 (from the given formula of $4 - (\text{SIZE} \times 3)$), and it is this number, not the MV of 4, that is used for targeting the vehicle. (For other feats related to DEX or MV, however, that MV of 4 is still used.)

In campaigns where Knockback is used, SIZE can reduce the amount of Knockback done by an attack. The sum of the vehicle's SIZE and BODY should be subtracted from the sum of the DC of the attack and 1d6 to determine the amount of Knockback. (Other than this one change, Knockback can be handled — or not — as usual for the campaign.)

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