

Robo-Draft

(Working Title)

A Dylan Nelkin Game

Version 0.0

Abstract

Robo-Draft takes place in a world like our own, where a cold war took place, and launched humanity into incredible technical prowess. However, instead of seeking the stars, mankind chose to exert dominance over their own planet through gigantic robots and constructs. Though the world has settled to an uneasy peace, the progress has not stopped. Each year, the greatest scientific minds converge at the “World Invention Fair” where they showcase their creations for glory and prizes. Can you shock the crowd and take the blue ribbon?

Summary of Mechanics

The core gameplay of *Robo-Draft* is the act of drafting. Players have “packs” of cards and pass them around in order, taking one “pick” each time. Players craft their pools of cards by carefully choosing their picks, looking for essential resources and matching synergies. Drafting can be done with 2-8 players.

After drafting, players use the cards they drafted to create inventions like robots or vehicles, or even something of their own creation. These creations are scored based on points, but certain cards can modify these points too! The player with the highest score wins the round.

Platform and Monetization

Robo-Draft would be produced on standard-size playing cards. The game would be released as a box set, and further expansions can be released as either packs of cards, or standalone boxed expansions.

Antecedents and Competitors

The structure of the draft in *Robo-Draft* is derived directly from *Magic: The Gathering*'s booster draft format. In *Magic*, players build a deck through drafting, and duel these decks against each other. *Robo-Draft* focuses only on the drafting portion, but the core concept of forging a deck by passing packs in a group is conserved. There have been a small number of other games that take this approach to drafting a deck and then scoring the result, such as *Sushi Go!*, but *Robo-Draft*'s construction system, scoring system, and theme, are all distinct. There have also been some examples of card games based around the concept of "constructing robots" such as *PBL ROBOT*, *Robots on the Line*, and *RobotLab*. These games all have fundamentally different gameplay, and are limited to only robots, where *Robo-Draft* encourages players to make various different types of inventions.

Detailed Mechanics

Each round of *Robo-Draft* has three stages: the draft, the construction and the judging. A round should take somewhere around 20 minutes. For between 2 and 4 players, less cards should be dealt, or drafting should be done in the “Winston” style. The process outlined here is advised for a pod of 5-8 people. This section references game elements outlined in the “Game Elements” section below.

1. Draft

Each player is dealt 15 cards; this comprises a “pack.” Each player chooses a card from their pack (a “pick”), and passes the remainder of the pack to their left. This process is repeated until each card has been taken from the pack. Players are then to repeat this whole process, except this time, the packs are passed to the right. This is then done one more time, with passes being handed to the left again. During this draft, players should be trying to match cards with the types of cards they already have, and looking for essential components for use in all inventions.

2. Construction

At this stage, each player should have exactly 45 cards. Players now go about using the cards they drafted to create an invention. Each component in an invention must be of the same archetype. Components must be connected to another component in a continuous chain, with link cards connecting each individual component. The placement and shape of components is not relevant,

just as long as each component is attached to the overall invention. Craftsmen cards are placed separately from the invention, but must be visible.

3. Judging

The judging portion ultimately decides the winner of each round. There is preliminary judging, where points are totaled, and then final judging, where totals are modified by any action cards or special effects, and a final score is given to each invention. During preliminary judging, action cards may be played by any player, but once final points are calculated, action cards can't be played any longer. Players randomly determine a player being judged first, and then the order. To total an invention's score, first determine the craftsmanship score, by adding up the craftsmanship points on each card. Then determine the function scores, by adding up the matching function scores. For example, if you had a component with a craftsmanship of 2, a transportation function of 3, and a surveillance function of 5, and then a component with a craftsmanship of 3 and a transportation function of 5, the total scores would be a craftsmanship of 5, a transportation function of 8, and a surveillance function of 5. Once each player's scores are totaled and then modified by actions and special effects, their final score is indicated by their total craftsmanship score, plus their highest function score. The person with the highest score wins the round.

Game Elements

Robo-Draft has 4 different card types: Components, Links, Craftsmen, and Actions.

Components are the key cards of *Robo-Draft*. Components make up all inventions, and are the basis for scoring. Components have 3 archetypes: Military, Infrastructure, and Entertainment. Components may have multiple archetypes. Each component has a subtype that other cards can reference. Components have a craftsmanship score with a value between 1 and 5, and one or more function scores, with a value between 1 and 10. **Blueprints** are a supertype of components. Blueprints do not add to an invention's scores directly, but provide special conditions an invention can meet, and if these are met, the blueprint will provide a unique function and a bonus to the overall score.

Links are the physical connections between parts. Links work for any component. Links may add additional bonuses or detriments, but they are necessary, neutral components for inventions. Players will need to find a balance between picking components and links.

Craftsmen are rare cards, depicting an person of interest with a specific set of skills. These characters will boost specific functions or archetypes, and while they require highly specific conditions, their contributions are significant.

Action cards are not used in creating inventions, but during judging they can produce significant results. Actions may be general or specific, targeting anything from

multiple players to specific types of components. Actions can have effects both beneficial and detrimental.

Aesthetics

Robo-Draft's style is in a word "futuristic." The artistic profile should be creative and fun, but rooted in elements of realism. Individual artists' styles may vary, but the tone should not exceed appropriate levels of humor or explicit content.