Definitive Inventor Build Guide

By GazeboMimic

NO AI WAS USED IN THE MAKING OF THIS GUIDE

Updated 8/1/2025 (Added light mortar innovation)
Updated 2/5/2025 (Added Guns & Gears remastered changes)
Updated 12/31/2024 (All remaining Tian Xia features)
Updated 12/17/2024 (Tian Xia Character Guide class feats and items)
Updated 10/15/2024 (Player Core 2 update. Let me know if I missed anything via Reddit)
Updated 7/17/2024 (Guns & Gears errata, Howl of the Wild, & formatting update)
Updated 11/8/2023 (Remaster update)

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Introduction:

The inventor is a class unique to Pathfinder, though it shares thematic space with classes such as D&D's artificer. Both have a focus on intelligence, invention, and unreliability. However, 5th ed. largely purports that anything non-magical is worthless and thus the artificer relies on spellcasting, alchemy, and magical items. Pathfinder makes no such claim, and so all of the devices wielded by inventors are stated to include no magical components; even fully autonomous clockwork robots. It is clear that whatever physical laws the world of Golarion relies upon are quite different from our own.

The chemistry side of the artificer is already claimed by the alchemist class, and so the inventor focuses on engineering. In that capacity it is able to represent several forms of anachronistic technology. Trick weapons, power armor, attack drones, and even mecha can all be implemented using the chassis of this class.

In mechanical function, the inventor fills the role of glass cannon. They receive low hit points but can deal high damage either in melee or at range. Unlike most non-magical characters they have ready access to area damage from level one. That same feature is able to bypass the multiple attack penalty that plagues other dedicated martial characters. The inventor comes loaded with flexible offensive tools for targeting various defenses.

Unfortunately, the inventor has a reputation as one of the weakest classes in Pathfinder. Its base proficiencies are inferior to those of its martial contemporaries, it has a tendency to hurt itself randomly, and reaching its optimal damage state costs actions and relies on random dice rolls. In exchange for those downsides, even a well-built inventor using the best feats and innovations can barely match the damage of more durable martial classes. This guide aims to support those interested in using the class anyways, but it does come with the caveat that no matter what build you choose another class could do the job better. Pathfinder 2e is well-balanced enough that you can enjoy an entire campaign as even its worst classes, but the inventor's modest overall power is an important detail to keep in mind as you optimize your character. A good rating here often means that a feature is good in comparison to other inventor features, not that it is a great feature in the context of the game overall.

The inventor is considered uncommon, and thus GM permission must be secured before bringing it to a table. Check with your GM just in case.

Color Grading System:

I'm using a typical color-grading system, as inspired by Treantmonk and RPGbot. Red ratings are exclusively for features that actively work against you or fail to accomplish anything. If there is any benefit to the feature at all, its default rating is yellow. A green rating means that I heartily recommend it, as it is of above-average strength. Blue ratings are reserved for build-defining abilities. Choosing not to take a feat with a blue rating means sacrificing significant power, and should only be done after careful consideration.

Color	Stars	Power Rating
Blue	★★★★	**Incredibly powerful**
Green	★★★	**Pretty good stuff**
Yellow	★★	**Take this if you like it**
Red	★	**Avoid this garbage**

Ancestries:

Alternate Ability Boosts:

Alternate boost made most ancestral ability boosts irrelevant and centralized ancestral power. Ancestries with good generalist features, such as elves and halflings, now tend to be the highest rated ancestries for all classes rather than just the ones their ability scores encouraged.

Alternate boost inventors tend to boost intelligence and either strength or dexterity. Inventors interested in melee combat might instead opt to boost strength and either dexterity or constitution. Construct builds will choose intelligence and either dexterity or charisma.

Default Ability Boosts:

Ability score arrays with flaws remain relevant because you can get an extra point in a more important stat by using the ancestry's default array instead of alternate boost, provided the ancestry has a flaw in a score your class doesn't care about.

Inventors benefit from ancestries that dump charisma. An inventor can also make do with flaws in strength, constitution, or wisdom. However, these three all come with downsides and shouldn't be used without significant consideration.

Flawed strength can be made irrelevant with a ranged build for the first five levels. Padded armor will provide early ranged builds with the maximum possible defense at no downsides: while it lists a strength modifier, there is no penalty for failing to meet it. At fifth level your dexterity will improve to the point where leather will provide better defense, but it does impose a minor penalty to physical skills for failing to meet its zero strength threshold. You might opt to improve your strength at that level, though doing so makes the point of flaws -saving ability boosts for other scores- somewhat moot. If your skills are more important to you, you could instead accept a slightly reduced armor class from wearing padded armor and leave your strength in the negatives. Construct innovators will most appreciate strength flaws. They don't benefit as much from strength due to their low attack frequency and the construct can handle physical skill checks. Gnomes and halflings have this ability score array.

Committed ranged characters with fast movement might also opt to dump constitution. This will preserve your skills, defenses, and offenses, but if you get touched you'll hit dirt fast. Constitution isn't as important in PF2e as it is in D&D because you get more hit points each time you level up, but it still has value to both your hit points and saving throws. Make sure your party has solid frontliners, confirm that your GM owns a big battle map, and prepare to play tactically. Don't bother trying this with a reload weapon unless you have a plan to get Running Reload from an archetype. I'd personally only risk this if the ancestry had a boost to intelligence or dexterity and high speed, such as elves.

Wisdom can be dumped by any build, but is the most tenuous flaw to work with. The inventor's perception is terrible, and dumping wisdom is essentially resignation to blindness. You'll never bother using the seek action to find hidden foes and frequently go last in the turn order. I'd only consider it with a solid plan to circumvent these flaws: invest in stealth as an alternative method of rolling initiative and get darkvision from an ancestry or inventor feature to bypass the need to seek foes in darkness.

Generic Ancestry Feats:

The following is a list of generic ancestry feats shared by several ancestries. To save time, they are collectively reviewed here.

- **Ancestry Battle Forms** ★ A martial character like the inventor has no need for battle forms. Everything offered by battle forms can be better accomplished by your class features. Most of your abilities are contingent on equipment that battle forms remove.
- **Ancestry Cantrip** ★★★ These feats usually offer one cantrip of your choice from a specific tradition. Inventors are not very good at using spells offensively and are best served choosing either guidance or shield.

- **Ancestry Damage Resistance** ★★★★ / ★★★ / ★★ Fire damage is one of the best damage types to resist by default due to the number of enemies that use it. An inventor has additional incentives to become fire resistant due to their high propensity for self-inflicted fire damage, either due to unstable actions or critical failure on overdrive. While other ancestries can purchase rings of energy resistance as soon as they become available, ancestral fire resistance removes the gold tax of playing an inventor.

  Ancestral damage resistances typically fall into one of two types: flat or scaling. Scaling damage resistance is more common and will almost always nullify the entirety of your self-damage. Flat damage resistance typically defaults to five damage and is available at level five. It starts out better than scaling resistance, but falls behind after level eleven. You might retrain it and pick up a greater charm of resistance around that time. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.

  Ancestries with non-fire resistances might choose to use the Variable Core inventor feat to make their self-inflicted damage type match their resistance. Doing so gives you an (arguably) better offensive damage type but a less useful damage resistance, so the trade is fairly even-handed.
  - Fire = ★★★★
  - Poison, Void = ★★★
  - Acid, Cold, Electricity = ★★★ (if using Variable Core)
  - Other = ★★
- **Ancestry Emotion Resistance** ★★★ / ★★ Dozens of ancestries all offer this same feat and heritage: a numeric bonus against emotion effects with the ability to turn success into critical success. They start out rated green but are made redundant by the inventor's eleventh level will proficiency increase. At that point, the feat only provides a minor numeric bonus and drops to a yellow rating. You might wish to retrain them at that point. Heritages and some versions of this feat cannot be retrained; you might avoid them if you expect your game to reach eleventh level. Some versions of the feature lack the numeric bonus and become completely dead feats at that level instead. They should be retrained if possible and avoided otherwise.
- **Ancestry Flight** ★★★★ The inventor is somewhat less likely to appreciate these feats than other classes: both the construct and armor innovations have little trouble flying, and ranged weapon innovators have plenty of range with which to snipe flying targets.

  Ancestral flight comes in two forms that I tend to refer to as "standard" and "superior." Standard ancestral flight allows an ancestry to fly for a few minutes at ninth level and permanently at seventeenth. It's a three star green for the inventor. Superior ancestral flight allows an ancestry to fly for an action at fifth level and permanently at ninth.

  The names are a bit misleading in hindsight because power creep has given "superior" flight to more new ancestries than there are those with the old standard. Either way, these feats are must-pick options for all melee inventor builds and still fantastic choices for other builds. Feel free to ignore everything else on an ancestry's list if you see superior flight feats. Nothing competes with a permanent flight that early.

- **Ancestry Lore ★★** You should have enough intelligence to be trained in the skills you want. If your campaign is themed around the ancestry you have chosen to play, boost this feat's rating by one step to account for the relevance of its scaling ancestry lore skill.
- **Ancestry Unarmed Attack ★★★★ / ★★★ / ★★ / ★** The inventor has better options than an unarmed attack in the vast majority of cases. There is only one exception: the power suit armor innovator. The power suit armor innovator has compelling reasons to seek a free hand for use with athletics checks. Doing so allows them to retain the defensive benefits of a shield. These feats are rated for power suit users according to their damage. Goblins are the only common ancestry to offer a blue-rated unarmed attack.
    - d4 = ★
    - d6 = ★★ (if finesse or no traits)
    - d6 = ★★★ (if any other trait)
    - d8 = ★★★★
- **Ancestry Weapon Expertise ★** These feats have been phased out by the remaster, but inventors never needed them because their own weapon proficiencies exceed it.
- **Ancestry Weapon Training ★★★★ / ★★★ / ★★ / ★** This feat's rating is as diverse as the weapons themselves are. For the most part, ancestral weapons are not worth the feat it takes to get them. There are a few exceptions, but they're very rare. Weapon innovators can't use advanced weapons as their weapon innovations even if they take these feat. As more weapons get released, these feats become less and less valuable. As of the remaster, this feat also unlocks the critical specialization effect of the weapons it offers. It is slightly more helpful to armor innovators because they don't normally get access to critical specialization. However, inventors are not particularly good crit-fishers.

Common Ancestries:

The following ancestries are available in all campaigns. Due to their large number of feats, most of them are very powerful compared to non-core ancestries.

Dwarf ★★

While you might assume dwarves to be well-suited to melee combat, as their classic fantasy archetypes would suggest, I would encourage you to run a dwarf as a ranged weapon inventor. Without a bonus to strength and with a movement speed penalty, a dwarf can struggle to enter melee quickly. They also have a large number of firearm-related feats, though they vary in value.

A dwarf can justify melee combat with the Unburdened Iron feat, which allows them to move as quickly as other ancestries would in heavy armor. A weapon innovator can benefit from that feat by taking the Armor Training general feat or any of the following archetypes: champion, guardian, sentinel, stalwart defender. Unburdened Iron won't help armor innovators because the power suit already nullifies its own movement speed penalty; dwarves have only mediocre synergy with the armor innovation. They could at least use its speed boosting modifications to compensate for their own limitations.

While it can be tempting to use a construct to overcome a dwarf's poor mobility, using a construct innovation as nothing but a horse on which to enter melee is a waste of its power. Pilots

will generally want enough charisma to support their construct's melee strikes with demoralization, and on that front the dwarf has little to offer. They make solid construct innovators so long as they use the construct as an attack drone rather than a mecha.

The advent of the munitions master class archetype does give dwarves a debatable niche. The mortar's maximum speed is 20 feet, so dwarven munition masters aren't taking any penalty they don't already have. Dwarven munition masters will maximize their intelligence and will neglect strength entirely, relying on chain mail and Unburdened Iron to nullify all the penalties bar stealth. They use a stat array of 0, 1, 3, 4, 2, -1. I describe this advantage as "debatable" because other ancestries could accomplish the same thing without needing to spend a feat on Unburdened Iron due to their higher base speed. That said, a dwarf could do the same with heavy armor, giving them one more armor class in exchange for unmitigated skill penalties and at least two feats (Unburdened Iron and either a dedication or general feat to get heavy armor). The mortar also synergizes well with their uncommon ninth level feat Smoke Sight.

The dwarven ability score array is otherwise useful for inventors uninterested in keeping their intelligence maximized. Melee inventors can start with the ability layout 3, 0, 2, 3, 2, -1 and ranged inventors can start with 1, 3, 2, 3, 1, -1. The latter is a good setup for starting with studded leather armor and preparing to get a 14 in strength for use with propulsive or kickback weaponry. If you opt to use alternate boost instead, you're most likely interested in a glass cannon ranged build with a 1, 3, 1, 4, 0, 0 ability score layout. Though I prefer the default array, it is a valid alternative if you are interested.

The clan dagger is predominately flavor. You could declare it your weapon innovation and use complex simplicity to create a unique d6 agile parry weapon; while there are scant few builds for which that is of interest, they do exist. Look to the Dual Weapon Warrior archetype if such a notion interests you.

If you are playing an inventor, odds are good your GM is fine with you taking the uncommon dwarf feats that came from the same book. As such, I will be reviewing their uncommon feats alongside the common ones. They could use the help.

Dwarf Heritages:

- **Ancient Blooded** ★★★ Get a reaction with which to resist magic. As the inventor has few competing reactions, using this every time you need to make a saving throw against magic is a good choice. Remember, this ability applies to the whole round: unlike other magic-resistance ancestry reactions, you don't need to worry about wasting it on a weaker spell if a bigger one is coming.
- **Anvil** ★★ The anvil dwarf heritage only helps with checks made to craft items. It will not help you repair your shield or construct. While the crafting skill is a large part of the inventor's kit, you still only craft items during downtime. A minor bonus to doing so is nothing to write home about.
- **Death Warden** ★★★ For an undead-focused campaign the death warden can't be beat. It is blue in such a campaign. The effect becomes partially redundant with your class features at level seventeen, far later than most other martial classes. Even in campaigns without undead primary antagonists you will be the target of common spells like harm, ensuring this is always a fine pick regardless.

- **Elemental Heart ★★★** While the elemental heart heritage might seem redundant with the explode action, there are advantages to choosing both. If you position yourself to use explode, you are also going to be in a good position to use elemental emanation. Likewise, if you brought a mob of creatures to half health with one, you can explode again on your next round to kill them all.
- **Forge ★★★★** You get fire resistance equal to half your level and treat environmental heat as a step less severe. This feature nullifies the inventor's self-damage. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.
- **Forge Blessed ★★★** You can cast a first level spell from a small list once per week. Bolka offers a healing spell. Soothe is useful to have in an emergency.
- **Oathkeeper ★★** You don't have the charisma to support this fully, but the bonus is strong enough to overcome the ancestral penalty and the inventor has enough trained skills to make a minor diplomacy investment worthwhile.
- **Rock ★★★** You become harder to reposition, shove, and trip. The remaster made these bonuses significantly more practical because monsters no longer automatically succeed when using their push and knockdown abilities. You can also reduce the distance you are moved by half. If you have a reach or thrown weapon, that can often mean being able to keep attacking without needing to move at all. Rock dwarves are best suited to melee combat for obvious reasons.
- **Strong-Blooded ★★★** You shake off poison more quickly and gain resistance to poison damage. With an inventor's modest fortitude saving throws, you are likely to benefit from this ability several times over a campaign. It gets even better as you level because virulent poisons become more common.

1st Level Dwarf Feats:

- **Adaptive Vision (U) ★★** A generic defensive benefit against an effect that will only occasionally come up.
- **Avenge in Glory (U) ★★★** This feat gives you temporary hit points and offensive bonuses when an ally falls, in exchange for your reaction. It is a boost that applies when it matters most.
- **Clan Pistol (U) ★★** The clan pistol is an average pistol of no exceptional worth. It has 20 feet more range than a dueling pistol but it loses the concealable trait. It's not really worth a feat. It also has some niche benefits regarding diplomacy checks. They don't stack with the oathkeeper dwarf heritage.
- **Clan's Edge ★** A weak attempt to justify the clan dagger. Hypothetically, you could use a weapon modification to give your clan dagger reach at very high levels, enabling you to choose more targets before using it. That's in no way worth it.
- **Dongun Education (U) ★★** This alternative lore skill is dubiously worthwhile if the rest of your campaign isn't as high tech as you are. At best, you could convince a permissive GM that explosive lore should apply to explosive spells.
- **Dwarven Doughtiness ★★** This feat allows you to remove fear effects more quickly than average. Unfortunately, it won't do you any good if you are merely frightened 1. I still like this feat because fear effects often have riders such as immobilization or fleeing

for as long as you are frightened. Such rider effects are crippling and resisting them can be a game changer.

- **Dwarven Weapon Familiarity ★ / ★★ / ★★★** Construct innovators won't want to use a melee weapon and don't have the strength for the scattergun. Even if they did, the weapon isn't very good and the scatter trait is likely to hurt their construct. The dwarven scattergun is a first level weapon and can't be used as a weapon innovation. Weapon innovators can choose the dorn-dergar or dwarven waraxe, but they're not worth the cost of the feat. The dwarven dorn-dergar isn't any better than regular martial polearms, while the dwarven waraxe is almost identical to the common advanced gada, which can be chosen as an advanced weapon innovation without this feat. Power suit armor innovators have the most apparent use-case for this feat: using the dwarven war axe on a shield build. Use the shield to block hits from minions. When fighting a shield-shattering boss or shield-bypassing spellcasters, switch to two-handing it for better damage and sweeping as needed. That leaves only the wrecker, a unique two-handed advanced strength-focused combination weapon. A weapon innovator could declare the wrecker their weapon innovation, creating a surprisingly solid base for the entangling form modification with reach and the added benefit of ranged attack options, including ranged trip. With most strength-leaning combination weapons inaccessible to weapon innovators due to their levels, it's a surprisingly tempting pick and likely the best use for this feat.
- **Explosive Savant (U) ★** You are already trained in bombs and firearms.
- **Eye for Treasure ★★** You become trained in a skill of your choice because you are already trained in crafting, and you can use your crafting skill to identify all magic items with the crafting skill. As your crafting skill is always maximized, this can reduce the pressure you might feel to boost one of the four magic tradition skills. An inventor might have a large number of trained skills, but they only receive an average amount of skill boosts. While you usually still want a magic knowledge skill appropriate to your campaign, this feat can mitigate the downsides of choosing not to do so.
- **Fire Savvy (U) ★** You deal a lot of self-imposed fire damage, but oddly none of it ever catches. As inventors are very likely to purchase magic items that grant fire resistance, preventing persistent fire damage is a very low priority.
- **Forge-Day's Rest (U) ★★** The health benefits of the Fast Recovery general feat are null due to the ease with which hit points are recovered in 2e, but the condition removal effects can be very useful.
- **Mountain Strategy ★★★** An inventor's modest armor class and high propensity for multiple attacks makes Mountain Strategy a great choice.
- **Rivethun Disciple (U) ★★** You get bonuses to certain skills when you have certain conditions. Notably, there are minor alchemical drugs (including harmless ones like coffee) you could use to get these benefits on demand. This was likely not the intention.
- **Rock Runner ★★★** Uneven stone and rubble are the most common form of difficult terrain. Ignoring them is generally pretty helpful. It also improves your acrobatics checks made to balance on thin stone walls or cave formations.

- **Stonemason's Eye** ★ Your perception is too low to get value out of this feat, and because you are trained in crafting from your class you'll get a crummy skill feat instead of a new skill.
- **Surface Culture (U)** ★ You have plenty of trained skills and don't have a pressing need for more.
- **Unburdened Iron** ★ / ★★★★ Unburdened Iron removes the movement speed penalty of armor. In most cases, there is no point to doing so because light armor doesn't have movement penalties and any inventor interested in wearing medium armor is strong enough to ignore the penalty. Armor innovations likewise don't impose a movement speed penalty even if you choose to make it heavy armor.

  There are a few uses for this feat. If you've chosen a ranged build without any strength, this feat allows you to wear better armor without the speed penalty. However, it is best used by melee weapon innovators in combination with an archetype or general feat that affords proficiency in heavy armor. A weapon innovator can benefit from Unburdened Iron by taking the Armor Training general feat or any of the following archetypes: champion, sentinel, stalwart defender.

5th Level Dwarf Feats:

- **Blast Resistance (U)** ★ Sonic is one of the rarest damage types in the game and the resistance this feat grants against it is small. Deafened is one of the most toothless conditions, especially for an inventor. There is little justification for this feat.
- **Boulder Roll** ★★★ If this feat didn't cost two actions to use it would be incredible. As is, it is a niche but noteworthy alternative to the shove action, which you can still use with your hands full. If you are already committed to using athletics and don't want to spend a modification adding shove to your weapon, Boulder Roll can be a big help. If you are already able to shove with a free hand or weapon trait, this feat becomes red due to its redundancy.
- **Clan Protector** ★ This is still not good enough to justify using a clan dagger.
- **Defy the Darkness** ★★ You gain greater darkvision at the cost of downsides that do not apply to you. Magical darkness sufficient to block darkvision isn't that common and it can usually be counteracted by your party, but ignoring it entirely is still pretty helpful.
- **Dwarven Reinforcement** ★ / ★★★★ It is ambiguous whether or not this feat can be used on shields. Its rating is entirely predicated on your GM's decision. If it does apply to shields, the feat is blue. If it doesn't, the feat is useless.
- **Protective Sheath** ★ This is still not good enough to justify using a clan dagger.
- **Sheltering Slab** ★★★ You become completely impossible to flank as long as you are adjacent to a wall. The benefit speaks for itself. You must be touching the ground to use it, providing more incentives for dwarves to avoid riding constructs.
- **Spark Fist (U)** ★ This is cute but useless to a class with your weapon proficiencies, and it certainly isn't worth an action. There is one niche build that can make use of it: an armor innovator dwarven ifrit with an unarmed archetype and the Heatwave ifrit ancestry feat. If your GM is permissive enough to allow you both this uncommon feat and an uncommon versatile heritage, you can enjoy ready access to concealment on demand.

- **Tomb-Watcher's Glare** ★★★ This feat is great for campaigns focused on fighting the undead; if you chose the death warden dwarf heritage that serves as this feat's prerequisite, odds are good that you expect to fight a large number of undead. Even in campaigns not specifically themed around undead you will assuredly fight your fair share before the day is done. That said, your construct won't benefit from it, so it is only yellow for a construct innovator.

9th Level Dwarf Feats:

- **Battleforger** ★ This feat is absurdly pointless. At this level a weapon needs more than a potency rune to be effective.
- **Demolitionist (U)** ★ If you took the alchemist archetype or spend most of your treasure budget on alchemical bombs, this is yellow instead.
- **Echoes in Stone** ★★★ With an imprecise sense that the enemy isn't likely to be countering, you can instantly detect the location of stealthy or invisible creatures within 20 feet of you. They remain hidden from you, but that's good enough that you know where to strike or can point them out to your allies.
- **Energy Blessed** ★★★ This feat makes your energy emanation action almost as good as explode: only 3d6 less damage, with equivalent range. Exploding multiple times is useful because if your first explosion knocked all the enemies around you down to half health, the second explosion might kill all of them.
- **Heroes' Call** ★★★ Heroism is a great spell. If you cast it while below half health, you also gain temporary hit points equal to twice your level. That's a hefty amount of temporary hit points: almost enough to soak an entire hit from an even level creature. You do not have to cast heroism on yourself either: if you are below half hit points but an ally is still at full and within your reach, cast it on them instead. That way you get the temporary hit points but your unscathed ally gets the buff, and can keep using the buff for as long as the enemy keeps trying to finish you off. Unlike most temporary hit points there is no listed duration, so if you end a fight with temporary hit points, your allies can heal you after the battle and you get to retain the benefits of both being at full health and having temporary hit points. Technically, you could even ask your allies to beat you half to death at the start of the day, use this ability, and then heal yourself back to full. It is cheesy and wastes the actual spell effect, but mechanically worthwhile. After all, getting two extra hit points per level gives you hit points equivalent to a fighter and obviates the need to spend two actions mid-combat. Enjoy being a weird little masochist.
- **Kneel for No God** ★★ This is a great choice for a campaign in which the antagonists are theocratic or fiendish. Undead also use divine spells, but if you are in an undead-focused campaign you likely took the death warden heritage instead. If your foes are applicable to this feat, up its rating according to their frequency.
- **Mountain's Stoutness** ★★★ Increase your maximum hit points by your level. While the Heroes' Call feat gives you more functional hit points if you only encounter one combat per day, Mountain's Stoutness can allow you to heal your improved hit points between each encounter. If you do so once you break even with Heroes' Call; twice, and you come out ahead. It also doesn't rely on a cheese strategy to function optimally, which

is nice. Couple those benefits with the additional death-resistance this feat offers, and it is the feat to beat.

- **Returning Throw** ★★★ This allows you to avoid spending money on a returning rune or burning a weapon modification on tangle line. I'd be glad to spend an ancestry feat for that, though it has some tough competition at this level. You won't always want to use it because your dexterity is worse than your strength and you'll want to melee as a result, but this is a great fallback option when your stubby dwarven legs won't be able to reach the target. A subterfuge suit innovator with a starknife is the most likely appreciate this feat, but anyone with a thrown weapon could get good use out of it.
- **Rivethun Spiritual Attunement (U)** ★★★ You get an eighth level sorcerer class feat. It is nerfed by duration compared to its true form, but that is still very impressive.
- **Smoke Sight (U)** ★★★ See through smoke and improve its defensive benefits. It works for both Gadget Specialist builds using smoke fans and mortar innovators using Wrapped in Smoke. The latter is preferential due to its much greater access to smoke.
- **Stone Bones** ★★★ You get a 1/5th chance of cancelling out a critical hit. The less armor class bonuses you have, the more likely you are to be critically hit and thus want this feat.
- **Stonewalker** ★ This feat is best used in combination with Stonecunning, which your perception is too low to use.

13th Level Dwarf Feats:

- **Crafter's Instinct (U)** ★★★ Once per day when you fail a strike with a firearm, it deals minimum damage instead of missing outright. It does not gain any of its non-damage effects. As the bonus damage from overdrive is flat damage, you can use this feat to take risky shots and still expect to deal a reasonable amount of damage. The dwarven scattergun can still add the damage from kickback and scatter too, since they are damage bonuses rather than other effects.
- **Explosive Expert (U)** ★ Completely unnecessary for a class with your weapon proficiencies.
- **March the Mines** ★★★★ This feat gives you a burrow speed and lets you stride or burrow twice. It costs two actions. It also lets you drag an ally with you as you move, even if they lack a burrow speed of their own. This won't help you move much faster than usual. However, it will save your allies actions every time you use it. It can also be used to burrow into the earth for safety when needed. This feat gives dwarves some unexpected late-game synergy with the armor innovation, as its speed boost modifications can allow you to ferry allies further than normal. It can also keep allies in range for inventor abilities like Searing Restoration or Helpful Tinkering. Just be sure to pick an extra unstable action so that you have an alternative to explode when friendly fire is a concern.

  Technically, per rules-as-written this feat enables you to cart around even dead, petrified, and unconscious allies. It requires no action on their part, only willingness. Willingness is always up to the player regardless of condition. As this isn't the feat's intent, it isn't factored into its rating.
- **Scrutinizing Gaze (U)** ★★ Your perception isn't high enough to capitalize on this feat, but undead are at least more common than exotic stonework.

- **Telluric Power** ★★★ Those who enter melee should always take this feat. It is a free damage bonus, and the inventor's willingness to attempt multiple hits makes it a natural fit. The only complication is that you must be touching the ground to benefit from it. As such, those who ride their construct or intend to take Soaring Armor at level fourteen should give this a pass.

17th Level Dwarf Feats:

- **Forge-Blessed Shot (U)** ★★★★ Classes dedicated to archery get similar feats at lower levels, but the inventor receives no such benefits. As such, this is an incredibly useful feat for any inventor with a ranged weapon. It also works slightly differently than the class feat versions. While those versions are their own actions, Forge-Blessed Shot is a free action which applies a modifier to your next shot: meaning it works with any unusual strikes you might have acquired through an archetype or other source. A fine capstone for a ranged weapon build, and one that synergizes well with the Megaton Strike feat.
- **Stonegate (U)** ★★★ You gain an upcast magic passage spell once per day that only works on stone. It's useful but not overwhelmingly so.

Elf ★★★★

Elves have a near-perfect ability score layout for ranged inventors. A boost to both dexterity and intelligence is highly covetable. However, their low ancestral hit points and constitution flaw make them fragile, especially due to the inventor's lower-than-average hit points and propensity for self-destruction. An elven inventor using their default ability array should avoid entering melee.

As a ranged inventor, the elf excels: with an improved base movement speed, elves are unsurpassed at kiting foes. Many of their best feats double down on backing down, with various options for even faster movement or better ability to disengage. Elves are the only ancestry for which I can tentatively agree to the use of a longbow, as they are able to sprint outside of volley range with little difficulty.

Elves also possess two-handed finesse weapons on their weapon list. Such weapons are useful to mid-level subterfuge suit finesse builds because they are able to receive offensive boosts, though their value has been a bit undercut with the introduction of common two-handed finesse weapons.

Elf Heritages:

- **Ancient** ★★★★ The ancient elf is beyond amazing. Choose any multiclass dedication feat and take it. You'll typically look for an archetype which doubles down on either your primary offensive stat (strength or dexterity) or an intelligence caster. The only reason not to do this is if you are already in a free archetype game.
- **Arctic** ★★★ If you use Variable Core to change your damage type to cold, you can gain resistance to it from the arctic elf. It'd have been easier to just choose the desert elf and avoid needing the feat, but at least you've got an unusual theme and arguably better damage type to make up for it.
- **Cavern** ★★★ Darkvision is always helpful.

- **Desert** ★★★★ You get fire resistance equal to half your level and treat environmental heat as a step less severe. This feature nullifies the inventor's self-damage. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.
- **Seer** ★★★ The seer elf allows you to sense magic and improves you knowledge skill checks in a variety of situations. An intelligent class like the inventor is well-equipped to take advantage of both.
- **Whisper** ★★★ The remaster reworked this heritage. It is much more useful to inventors now. Reduce the flat check when targeting concealed or hidden creatures. A class with your rock-bottom perception can benefit from that. You can even engineer such conditions with Gadget Specialist and smoke fans, though it isn't quite as useful as other ancestries in that role.
- **Woodland** ★★ You can climb trees better than average and take cover anywhere in the woods. If your campaign is set in a classic fantasy landscape, the bonuses can be fairly reliable. As you level, the environments you adventure in often become more extreme and less mundane. I wouldn't expect this to stay as helpful in the later stages of your career.

1st Level Elf Feats:

- **Ancestral Linguistics** ★★ Gaining an extra language isn't very helpful. Gaining *every* common language is helpful, even if you only "know" it after a delay. There are still campaigns where this will never come up, but it'll usually matter at least a couple times.
- **Ancestral Longevity** ★★ You have plenty of trained level skills and aren't likely to need more, but the ability to tailor your skill list to what is needed can still be handy. I'd probably use this to swap social skills around according to what is needed: if the party was attempting to trick a mob boss, set it to deception. If the party is schmoozing with nobility, set it to diplomacy.
- **Demonbane Warrior** ★ If your campaign is focused on demons or you wrote demons into your backstory, feel free to consider this feat green instead. If neither applies, ignore it. Even if you encounter fiends, there is no guarantee they are going to be demons. The lower planes contain myriad denizens, and while you are sure to encounter some you might not encounter one specific type.
- **Elemental Wrath** ★ Offensive spellcasting.
- **Elven Aloofness** ★ You are a player character and therefore functionally immune to attempts to coerce you. Likewise, the difference between ten minutes of immunity to demoralization and one day of immunity is functionally nonexistent. If an enemy is demoralizing you in combat, either you or it will be dead within ten minutes. It is possible to contrive scenarios in which this feat might come up, but they are so few and far between that most campaigns never see them.
- **Elven Verve** ★★ This feat allows you to shrug off some severe conditions more quickly than usual. While they aren't common, these conditions are so devastating that protecting yourself against them is at least worth considering.
- **Elven Weapon Familiarity** ★ Elf weapons aren't useful to most inventors. They trade damage for the finesse trait. A subterfuge suit inventor might once have appreciated the

elven branched spear as a deadly two-handed finesse reach weapon compatible with their offensive boost. However, the release of the common dancer's spear has rendered the elven branched spear redundant for inventors, as it has the same traits but trades deadly for the more useful sweep trait.

- **Forlorn** ★★★ / ★★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance.
- **Know Your Own** ★ Even more niche than elven lore. Boost its rating if your GM is a dork who made their campaign about the rich history of elven kind, but it never makes it past yellow even in a campaign wholly dedicated to elves.
- **Nimble Elf** ★★★★ This is the elf feat. Improve your movement speed by an additional five feet. It is simple, effective, and relevant every single time you move.
- **Otherworldly Magic** ★★★ You get a cantrip from the arcane spell list. Choose shield.
- **Share Thoughts** ★ Don't choose a niche spell with the additional stipulation that it only works on a tiny fraction of its viable targets.
- **Unwavering Mein** ★★ This is a slightly awkward way to resist mental effects. It only matters if the duration is measured in rounds. If the effect lasts longer than a combat encounter, shaving a round off the duration might as well do nothing. The sleep resistance makes up for it somewhat, but I'd still be more inclined to take Forlorn. Forlorn is more straightforward and applies to more conditions.
- **Wildborn Magic** ★★★ You get a cantrip from the primal spell list. Choose guidance.
- **Woodcraft** ★★ Be honest with yourself. You know full well how often survival comes up in typical play.

5th Level Elf Feats:

- **Ageless Patience** ★★★★ You can use this feat without issue on the overwhelming majority of your checks. You can technically even use it on overdrive, making overdrive two actions in exchange for improved odds and complete immunity to critical failure. The ability to avoid self-damage can save your life when it has to. This particular function is best for ranged weapon users due to the single action left to you: which is fine for elves, who shouldn't be moving into the melee anyways.
- **Ancestral Suspicion** ★★★ Resist the controlled condition and spot when others are under it. The bonus is much higher than I would guess, which is nice for rare conditions like controlled.
- **Elven Instincts** ★★★★ This feat provides one of the largest and most reliable bonuses to initiative in the game. An inventor is especially keen on it as a means of compensation for lackluster perception.
- **Forest Stealth** ★★ Assuming you are in a forest, you can hide with a big bonus from cover. The effect is powerful but region locked.
- **Martial Experience** ★ You need more than trained proficiency to use a weapon effectively.
- **Wildborn Adept** ★ You get dancing lights and two offensive cantrips. Skip it.

9th Level Elf Feats:

- **Brightness Seeker** ★★★ You cast augury once per day and gain a bonus against any effects involved in pursuing the course of action you specified. The long cast time can

make it difficult to use, but it is still a good effect: especially because the reaction doesn't have any limit on use except a 30-minute duration. I'd be sorely tempted to cast augury on stupidly broad events like "proceed through this dungeon" to fish for the bonus as much as possible.

- **Elf Step** ★★★★ When you step you step twice. This is incredibly helpful for the general elven strategy of kiting as much as possible, because it allows you to step out of range of reach melee attacks before booking it with your improved speed.
- **Expert Longevity** ★★★ This feat is very interesting. In addition to providing you with a flexible expert skill, it allows you to permanently adjust your skill proficiencies over time. If your party is about to attend a ball, flip off some of your skills to become proficient in social skills for the event. Once you no longer need them, train them away again. This is a fantastic way to get the skills you need when you need them, even for a class with as many trained skills as the inventor.
- **Otherworldly Acumen** ★★★★ This feat is astonishingly flexible. Gain any second level spell from the same tradition as your cantrip, with the ability to swap it to any other spell during your daily preparations. Some good choices: comprehend language, darkvision, humanoid form, invisibility, mirror image, resist energy, see invisibility, spider climb, water breathing. Leave it on mirror image when you don't know what is coming. Swap it to one of the others if you expect to need it.
- **Tree Climber** ★★ You gain a slow climb speed.

13th Level Elf Feats:

- **Avenge Ally** ★★★ You gain a special strike when your companions are dying. The strike is a powerful fortune effect. This feat provides another good reason to use an elf for a subterfuge suit build. It has excellent synergy with deadly weaponry such as bows or elven branched spears.
- **Universal Longevity** ★★★★ You gain expert level skills on demand once per day. A class with your high number of trained skills but typical number of skill boosts can get great use out of this feat.
- **Wandering Heart** ★ You swap your elf heritage to one appropriate to the environment. Unfortunately, this process is automatic and you have no say in the matter. If your heritage changes to one that does not resist your self-damage, you gain an advantage against local hazards but no longer have protection against yourself. If you have Variable Core, you can also swap your damage type to match your new heritage. However, doing so means swapping your damage type to that which is resisted by the local monsters and crippling your own offense as a result.

17th Level Elf Feats:

- **Magic Rider** ★★ This is a great way to improve the reliability of teleport spells that include you, but teleport is uncommon and your allies might not even have it in the first place.

Gnome ★★★

The gnome gets low-light vision, a boost to constitution and charisma, and a strength flaw. While they could work as a ranged inventor invested in demoralization, the strength flaw reduces their defensive options and the charisma bonus is likely to go underused. The gnome excels most as a pilot due to their charisma boost and inability to maximize both intelligence and dexterity. Their small size allows them to pilot a medium size construct for improved maneuverability, and their charisma boost allows them to demoralize on the construct's behalf without advancing its multiple attack penalty. Likewise, they have several feats that synergize with the construct innovation playstyle very well. If you are evaluating ancestries based solely on their ability to serve as pilots, the gnome is clearly among the best. As pilots, gnomes are blue. The following feat and heritage ratings assume you are using that build unless stated otherwise. Gnomes have the unfortunate distinction of being the only common ancestry with no common capstone feats despite years of new releases. Ouch.

Gnome Heritages:

- **Chameleon ★★★** You can gain a substantial circumstance bonus to your stealth checks, which is redundant with the subterfuge suit overdrive modification bonus but useful if you don't take that modification or are using a ranged weapon innovation.
- **Fey-Touched ★★★** You get a free cantrip from the primal spell list and you can change it once per day. I'd typically just leave it on guidance unless I had a pressing need for a different cantrip.
- **Kijimuna ★★★** You get better climbing or a swim speed. Climbing will be better for most campaigns and can benefit from the improved movement speeds of an armor innovator. Choose the swim speed if you are in a nautical campaign.
- **Sensate ★★★** A good way to bypass the need for a perception check against invisible creatures, which is handy considering your atrocious perception.
- **Umbral ★★★** Darkvision is always helpful.
- **Vivacious ★★** You gain resistance to void damage and treat your doomed condition as one lower. The resistance is low and the doomed condition is rare, but in the right campaign this is about as useful as the others.
- **Wellspring ★★★** You can get the shield cantrip through this heritage, but would otherwise be better served by Fey-Touched for its flexibility.

1st Level Gnome Feats:

- **Animal Accomplice ★★★** You gain a familiar. See the familiar master archetype if you want a full breakdown of uses for familiars.
- **Animal Elocutionist ★★★** You can talk to animals and gain a small bonus to doing so. As most gnomes will spring for demoralization mecha builds with decent charisma, you can get solid milage out of this feat.
- **Empathetic Plea ★** This feat is most helpful to support-focused casters. The inventor is a martial class and will be taking hostile actions against the enemy side at every opportunity; even compared to other martials, the inventor is less able to use this feat due

to their multitarget area abilities. If your GM rules that your construct's actions do not reflect on you for the purposes of "hostile actions" this feat improves massively.

- **Fey Fellowship** ★★ The bonuses are mostly social, but you at least also receive a bonus against saving throws caused by fey.
- **Fisheye** ★★ Carry around dead fish heads to eat their left eyes and temporarily gain the Breath Control feat. It defends you against inhaled and olfactory effects and helps you stay underwater. The collective effects are just enough to get a yellow rating, but I'd still only take it if I knew my campaign was going to take place around water.
- **First World Magic** ★★★ Use this to snag the guidance cantrip.
- **Gnome Obsession** ★★★★ This feat is fantastic. Get a lore skill in anything you want with a day of downtime. Whatever enemy you face in the current arc of the campaign is your new lore skill. Gnome obsession can replace the functions of wisdom-based nature and religion skills with intelligence-based lore skills.
- **Gnome Polyglot** ★★ You learn three new languages that probably won't come up.
- **Gnome Weapon Familiarity** ★ / ★★★ Gnome weapons are predominately advanced strength weapons. The flickmace has the most to offer. It provides solid damage, reach, and takes only a single hand. It's useful to shield builds as either a weapon innovation or as a weapon held by a power suit armor innovator. If you don't want a shield, use it alongside inventor feats that require a free hand, such as Tamper or Gadget Specialist. Other gnome weapons aren't worth the feat investment when compared to common equivalents.
- **Grim Insight** ★★★ Your will saving throws are your best saving throws, making Grim Insight surprisingly practical for inventors.
- **Illusion Sense** ★★ Gain a small bonus to perception and will saving throws against illusions. Even with the bonus you aren't likely to see through illusions with perception, but more mental illusions will ask for a will save instead and you have a real shot at those.
- **Inventive Offensive** ★★ This feat is interesting but largely redundant with the benefits that a weapon innovation grants. It lasts until the first hit that deals damage, so if you do add an athletic maneuver trait you can just keep using it until you actually strike with your weapon. Unfortunately, gnomes are not well equipped to use athletics checks and the only benefits that don't do so apply on hit, meaning they're only one-use. It can still be helpful for chance encounters against creatures vulnerable to the right damage types, but can be just as easily ignored. It at least scales with your crafting ability, which automatically scales with your level, and has high thematic relevance.
- **Life Giving Magic** ★★ This gives you a large number of temporary hit points for a reaction but they only last until the end of your next turn. This feat is green if your cantrip is shield, due to that cantrip's optimal usage being in the same scenarios in which you will also want temporary hit points.
- **Natural Performer** ★ This feat could not be more pointless for an inventor.
- **Razzle Dazzle** ★ You do not have any means of blinding or dazzling a creature that would benefit from this feat.

- **Theoretical Acumen** ★★★ This is a fantastic ability for an intelligence class. You can substantially improve your demoralization checks, saves, or armor class, all of which are valuable skills for a pilot to have. Yet more evidence that a gnome was born to ride. Its once-per-day frequency is the only thing holding it back.
- **Unexpected Shift** ★★★★ Assuming you are a construct innovator, this ability is fantastic. You gain a 1/4th chance of significant damage resistance against any damage and can simply give actions to your death robot to bypass the dazzled condition. Don't forget that resistance to all damage means that enemies using attacks with multiple damage types are massively nerfed. Just use recall knowledge on turns where you become dazzled and let your construct handle the fighting.
- **Vibrant Display** ★ There are no gnome builds for which I can recommend feinting.

5th Level Gnome Feats:

- **Briny Beverage** ★ You can drink seawater, either to hydrate or to get an imprecise wavesense for a minute. An imprecise wavesense will only help you find undetected enemies underwater. It doesn't do a thing if your enemy is merely hidden or concealed. It's far too narrow. I wouldn't bother unless my campaign took place entirely underwater.
- **Eclectic Obsession** ★★★ This feat allows you to spontaneously gain any lore you want for ten minutes as an action. It also has the arguably unintended side effect of letting you know when you critically fail a recall knowledge check, and thus when you get wrong information. Choose a lore skill appropriate to whatever you encounter in the day and go wild with recall knowledge checks while enjoying the benefits of intelligence use and reduced DCs for specific lore.
- **Energized Font** ★ You don't have focus spells and so do not need this feat.
- **Gnome Weapon Innovator** ★ Still not good enough.
- **Intuitive Illusions** ★ You don't have any spells to cast.
- **Natural Illusionist** ★★ The use of these spells is largely contingent on how quick the GM is to have NPCs attempt to disbelieve them.
- **Project Persona** ★★ This is a fine way to smuggle your armor innovation into fancy court functions, but it has little other value outside of flavor. Dictating your clothing's appearance at-will is still fun though.

9th Level Gnome Feats:

- **Cautious Curiosity** ★★ You gain misdirection and silence as once-per-day spells. Misdirection isn't very helpful, but silence can be an automatic success on stealth checks if combined with any form of invisibility.
- **First World Adept** ★★★ You gain revealing light and invisibility as once-per-day spells. You won't often land faerie fire but invisibility can be a fantastic spell to cast on either yourself or allies.
- **Fortuitous Shift** ★★★★ This is a powerful upgrade for an already great ancestry feat. The odds of your unexpected shift increase: 50% of all incoming damage gets reduced by your level, and you are no longer dazzled. The dazzled condition didn't matter much to pilots, but removing it is still helpful when you want to target a creature with anything.
- **Life Leap** ★★ This is weird and not very helpful. Unfortunately, you cannot use it to leap from your construct because the only move action you can use while mounted is the

dismount action. If you desperately need to get past an enemy, this at least allows you to do so with no check.

- **Scarlet Strands ★★** Spend a ninth level feat to get a stronger than average rope.
- **Vivacious Conduit ★★** If for some reason nobody in your party has medicine or focus spell healing, this feat allows you to gain similar benefits for yourself. Even if someone does have infinite out-of-battle healing, this can reduce the time your party spends doing so.

13th Level Gnome Feats:

- **Instinctive Obfuscation ★★★** Impose a heavy flat check on enemy strikes once per hour.

Goblin ★★★★

The goblin's ability score layout includes a charisma boost and a wisdom flaw. Unless you intend to be a construct pilot, I recommend using alternate boost; even then, it'd probably be best to use alternate boost to improve intelligence and charisma. That said, it is hardly a deal-breaker. If the campaign were sufficiently lighthearted, I would gladly make no attempt at compensation and simply accept my oblivious, weak-willed character for what it was.

Ranged weapon innovators will appreciate the goblin's mobility options because they can reach sniper spots more easily than other ancestries. Subterfuge suit innovators will love the goblin's substantial advantages in stealth. A goblin in a subterfuge suit can take better advantage of subtle dampeners than most other ancestries, and I strongly encourage them to pick it up. Their charisma boost and small size qualifies them for a construct pilot build, should that appeal to you. They're not quite as good as gnomes and halflings in that role, but they're still much better than a medium ancestry.

Goblins also make incredible power suit innovators. By giving yourself a powerful unarmed bite attack through heritages and ancestry feats, you can keep one hand free to take advantage of the muscular exoskeleton modification and carry a shield at the same time. I'm imagining a goblin that loved biting people so much, he made a mechanical super-suit with a metal-jawed helmet just so he could bite people even better.

Goblin Heritages:

- **Charhide ★★★★** You get fire resistance equal to half your level. Unlike other fire-resistant heritages, you receive no protection against environmental heat. Instead, you become much more likely to stop taking persistent fire damage: such a boon is much more practical for typical play. This feature nullifies the inventor's self-damage. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.
- **Dokkaebi ★★** A charisma and deception based cantrip with a bonus to will saves against illusions. Even pilots don't much care for deception-based actions like creating a diversion because their construct can't benefit from them.

- **Irongut** ★★ You can eat and drink potions even while sickened. You also resist harmful toxins, but only if they came from something you ate. This heritage is not worthless, but it is very niche.
- **Razortooth** ★★★ The razortooth bite attack can become the strongest common unarmed attack with a single follow-up feat. Up until you get a striking rune, it could be a good fallback plan for a ranged weapon innovator who gets caught in the melee. Power suit innovators have the most to gain from this heritage, as the muscular exoskeleton modification encourages them to seek free hands for athletics checks as they double down on durability by using a shield. It is blue for them.
- **Snow** ★★★ If you use Variable Core to change your damage type to cold, you can gain resistance to it from the snow goblin. As with the similar elf heritages, it'd have been easier to just choose the charhide goblin and avoid needing the feat, but you at least get a better damage type to make up for it.
- **Tailed** ★★★★ You can climb without hands. This allows ranged weapon users to climb up a wall and shoot from safety. You'll still need to make an athletics check to climb, so decent strength and athletics is encouraged. For that reason, it has great synergy with weapons that have the propulsive, kickback, or ranged trip traits due to their shared emphasis on strength. Weapon innovators are able to add ranged trip to any thrown or ranged weapon, though the rope shot modification used to add it to ranged weaponry is partially redundant with this heritage.

  The only impediment to this heritage is that it will often fail you in civilized or interior environments, in which smoother worked stone and low ceilings might inhibit your ability to escape melee range. Your default speed is also too low to reliably escape from melee in a single action. Fortunately, this heritage also has a follow-up feat which dramatically improves its function.
- **Treedweller** ★★ The treedweller gains a hefty stealth bonus while in the woods. As you level, this might become less reliable due to visiting more exotic, Mordor-esque villain lairs, and even at low levels this will almost never apply in dungeon environments.
- **Unbreakable** ★★★ The hit points start out great and quickly lose relevance as you level. Fall damage reduction is useful but not overwhelmingly so. The real value of the unbreakable goblin is its access to follow-up feats: unbreakable serves as a prerequisite for four other goblin feats. While some are useful, the heritage itself is still a bit lackluster once you level up. For campaigns that don't expect to go beyond level low level, this heritage is blue.

1st Level Goblin Feats:

- **Bouncy Goblin** ★★ A mediocre feat that serves as a prerequisite to a much better feat.
- **Burn It!** ★ It is tragic that explode does not qualify for this bonus. The only way to benefit from this bonus is through Persistent Boost at level sixteen, and only then if you are using a fire damage type on your offensive boost. Even if you also take Boost Modulation to gain control over your damage type when this feat isn't working out for you, it still isn't worth it.
- **City Scavenger** ★ This feat would only be worth taking if your GM gives you multiple years' worth of downtime to earn income on. If your GM ever asks "how would you like

to spend the next four years" feel free to say "I spend the first four days retraining to get City Scavenger and then root around in garbage for the following one thousand four hundred and fifty-six days." Of course, odds are even then you would be far better off earning income with your crafting skill, which is automatically maximized.

- **Dokkaebi Fire** ★ Offensive spellcasting
- **Extra Squishy** ★★ This is a very niche bonus, but your GM might include squeezing more often than most. It'd work well in tandem with the skill feat Quick Squeeze if that is the case.
- **Fang Sharpener** ★★★★ Your razortooth fangs now make for a shockingly powerful weapon. They deal equivalent damage to a longsword without taking up a hand and never need picking up after falling unconscious. A power suit innovator could find great strength in a chomp this mighty. Put a shield in your off-hand and keep your other hand free, then take the Muscular Exoskeleton modification to use whatever athletics check you want while retaining good damage and a shielded defense. Red for the irongut heritage: there is no way to justify using an attack that weak.
- **Goblin Scuttle** ★★★ When an ally approaches you, you can use your reaction to bail out. This is a great way to kite foes with ranged weaponry or regain distance with polearms. Even if you can't escape the enemy's reach in one step, odds are good you can step again on your turn. It is even better if your ally has reactive strike, and better still if you also took Tamper to drop their movement speed by pantsing them before fleeing.
- **Goblin Song** ★★ You soften up a foe's will save and perception checks. Bafflingly, this does mean you can sing loudly before attempting a stealth check and expect better results. You nonetheless lack the ability to personally capitalize on the will save and have low incentives to invest your limited skill boosts into performance. It can still be useful if you have an enchanter or illusionist on the team.
- **Goblin Weapon Familiarity** ★★★ The dogslicer is an alternative shortsword and is a solid choice for inventors looking to use a shield in melee. You'll want to ignore its finesse trait and use it with strength to capitalize on the repeat damage involved in its agile trait. None of the other goblin weapons are worth using compared to common equivalents. The horsechopper isn't better than any common polearm. Goblin firearms are interesting, but the inventor is not skilled at using crit-fishing reload weapons. Even if they were, the spoon gun and flingflenser aren't convincingly better than their common scatter firearm equivalents. The big boom gun is at best a backup weapon that randomly hurts you. While the inventor is likely to resist the damage, it is a gag weapon and isn't worth discussing in an optimization guide.
- **Hard Tail** ★ You get a tail attack that deals low damage and has no traits.
- **Junk Tinker** ★★ This feat doesn't let you craft level zero items any faster and such items are dirt cheap after the first couple levels. It at least allows you to shave small amounts of gold while crafting higher level items, to the point where you can actually save money from crafting as opposed to just buying an item, but is still of minimal worth.
- **Phantom Visage** ★★ You get an alternate human persona. Since this is active from level one, it could be pretty funny to start play in this form and see how long it takes a party member to see through the illusion.

- **Rough Rider ★** You don't have an animal companion and don't need to make checks to ride your construct. I guess this could come up if you take the cavalier archetype, but it is useless to 99% of inventors.
- **Twitchy ★★★** You gain a hodgepodge of useful bonuses that increase massively if you are up against someone who rolls deception or stealth for initiative, both of which are pretty common. Even in the absence of its massive boost, this is a very useful feat. You are very likely to be the team's trap disarm go-to, and as such will need to prepare for failures. Doing so while improving your initiative is a rare treat, especially as a 1st level feat.
- **Very Sneaky ★★★** This is a powerful bonus to in-combat stealth. Shoot, hide, sneak. Try to stick with that order to maximize the time the enemy spends not knowing your location. On following turns, repeat with the added benefits of enemies being off-guard. This makes using the subtle dampeners armor modification much more practical, and is blue for those who take it.

5th Level Goblin Feats:

- **Ankle Bite ★★★** This is a solid follow-up feat for the Fang Sharpener power suit build. Bite any creature that grabs you. It's a bit situational but can benefit from all of your overdrive and offensive boost damage.
- **Chosen of Lamashtu ★★★** If you are an evil little bastard, this feat allows you to gain a second heritage bonus. I personally like the idea of using both charhide and snow with the Variable Core inventor feat, enabling you to resist two of the damage types that you can switch to depending on what foes you expect to face, but there are better uses.
- **Glorious Gamtu ★★★★** Invisibility for yourself or others with a couple caveats. It requires a bit of set-up. You must conjure a hat, then activate the hat to turn invisible, for a total of three actions. The conjured hat lasts an hour, so if you know you'll run into trouble in advance it's no slower to cast than a regular invisibility spell. If somebody somehow steals the hat the spell ends early, but that should never happen due to attended object rules.
- **Kneecap ★★** You should probably just take Tamper. If you desperately need both of your hands free, you could do worse than this.
- **Loud Singer ★** You really shouldn't be investing this much into Goblin Song.
- **Phantom Visage ★★★** You already have a disguise due to this feat's prerequisite, but this does let you impersonate specific people. Play your cards right and you might not even need to make a deception check to frame somebody.
- **Tail Spin ★★★** You trip a single time and compare the result to two adjacent foes. Once again, I could see that being pretty handy for the power suit armor innovator. It is a shame that Hard Tail is a prerequisite.
- **Torch Goblin ★★★** Your innovation almost certainly qualifies as an appropriate incendiary, making inventors uniquely qualified to… light themselves on fire. Deliberately, this time! This is actually pretty good thanks to the extra weapon damage and contact damage, though your own heritage bonus works against your ability to maintain it. If only you could find a way to deliberately ruin your own chances of recovering from persistent fire damage or light yourself on fire more easily. The best I

can find is a multiclass archetype into flames oracle. That archetype can give you a focus spell which grants an aura that causes anything in the emanation to take persistent fire damage whenever it takes fire damage. As with a normal emanation, you could choose to include yourself in the emanation, thus benefiting from this feat whenever your invention backfires on you.

- **Tree Climber** ★★ / ★★★★ The Tree Climber feat gives you a climb speed of ten feet, enabling you to ascend most surfaces without any check. When you do need to make a check, you receive a massive bonus due to your climb speed. In any environment with walls, tailed goblins shouldn't spend any time on the ground. Let your party trigger the traps and take melee attacks while you rain down fire from the walls: odds are they can take more punishment than you can. While the treedweller heritage qualifies, this is much less helpful for them because they still need to use their hands to climb.
- **Vandal** ★★ You get an extra skill and destroy unattended objects slightly better. The rules for attacking objects are barely developed in the first place, without any clear guidance on AC or other important features. You're better off just using force open when you have to.

9th Level Goblin Feats:

- **Cave Climber** ★★ / ★★★★ If you took Tree Climber, your climb speed now equals your land speed. That's bonkers mobility, and you can completely escape from melee range in a single action. It is yellow for non-tailed heritages unless you have Combat Climber and an armor innovation build with a free hand.
- **Cling** ★★★★ If your enemy moves away, you move with them. Note that this needs a free hand and is synergistic with non-pilot builds that use Tamper or Gadget Specialist as a result. A great pick for melee weapon builds, as it affords you the luxury of rarely wasting actions moving until your foe is dead. This in turn allows you to pull of difficult full-round action combos, such as strike + explode or megaton strike + strike, and makes it more likely you have an action to spare on overdrive.
- **Freeze It!** ★★★ If you need a monster to fail their saving throw against explode or megavolt, you can use Freeze It to make them clumsy. It is a better pick if your allies can also benefit from targeting clumsy creatures, such as other athletic characters with the ability to trip, spellcasters who like to blast, and many others. If you are alone in targeting reflex, you'd probably be better off stabbing whoever you're after before exploding instead.
- **Goblin Club** ★★ You're spending a ninth level ancestry feat to get a club as a backup weapon once per day. There are so many cheaper and more damaging options. This feat's only saving grace is its ghost touch property, which barely saves it from a red rating. I'd never take it outside of undead-themed campaigns.
- **Hungry Goblin** ★★★★ If you put a Wounding rune on your handwraps of mighty blows, your jaw attack now gives you respectable temporary hit points every single time you attack. That is a massive durability boost, and is much better than Unbreakable-er Goblin at level thirteen.
- **Roll With It** ★★★ Cancel a critical hit in exchange for allowing the enemy to fling you 30 feet in any direction. The consequence is negligible to ranged characters who would

rather be far away, but melee characters are more likely to benefit from it in the first place. You could technically use it on regular hits, but the downsides are typically too severe to consider doing so. It is still a great feat for the inventor, as they take plenty of critical hits and have lackluster hit points and mitigation options. As this is not considered forced movement it will provoke reactive strikes, even from the triggering creature. If you would take an attack because of this feat, never use it.

- **Scalding Spit ★** You most likely haven't invested in handwraps of mighty blows as a charhide goblin, making this difficult to justify even as an emergency ranged attack. Keep in mind you must be on fire, making it likely you had to spend an action setting it up with Torch Goblin before using it. With a high action cost and minimal effect, I can't justify giving this anything higher than red unless your game uses the automatic bonus progression variant rule.
- **Skittering Scuttle ★★★** Skedaddle out of the fight when an ally ends their turn adjacent to you. Unfortunately, you now trigger reactive strikes when you choose to do so. Still, plenty of foes don't have such reactions and for ranged weapon users, this is a fantastic way to regain distance.
- **Whispers in the Night ★★** You can conjure darkness and throw your voice. I don't know who thought this deserved to be higher level than the invisibility offered by the Glorious Gamtu.

13th Level Goblin Feats:

- **Unbreakable-er Goblin ★★★** Ten hit points and immunity to fall damage. Neither one is that impressive by now, but both together is pretty solid.
- **Very, Very Sneaky ★★★★** You can hide anywhere and move full speed while sneaking. I imagine that is catnip to many subterfuge suit innovators.

17th Level Goblin Feats:

- **Perfected Gamtu ★★★** Give an ally a minor stealth bonus when they wear the hat and you can swap the hat around to change up who gets the invisibility. You can also upcast the invisibility to make it combat-capable. Your best use of this is to start battle wearing it yourself to enjoy the benefits of upcast invisibility, but swap it onto an injured ally to protect them as needed. Just be sure doing so won't interfere with another ally's attempts to heal the target.
- **Reckless Abandon ★★★** There are plenty of uses to near-total damage immunity on your turn, especially when it can be activated as a free action.

Halfling ★★★★

Halflings have a good default ability score array for both drone and pilot construct innovations. Ranged weapon innovators might or might not also use it. However, most inventors will use alternate boost to avoid the strength penalty. This is especially true for builds looking to use halfling weaponry; whether ranged or melee, they benefit from a positive strength score. Far more important to the halfling is their incredible luck feat line. The power of halfling luck feats is universal and secures them a blue rating on every class.

Halfling Heritages:

- **Gutsy** ★★★ / ★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance. The bad kind.
- **Hillock** ★★ You regain hit points out of combat a little faster than others do: assuming that you have access to a snack. How is this a heritage feature? Do your ancestors have a long history of getting the munchies during surgery? Is that something halfling doctors have to ask when they hand out medical history forms before appointments?
- **Jinxed** ★★ This uncommon heritage sacrifices the best halfling feats in exchange for something that isn't guaranteed to work. It can at least weaken reflex saving throws before an explosion or megavolt, but even so it only barely escapes a red rating.
- **Nomadic** ★★ You gain a few more languages that will probably never come up.
- **Observant** ★★ You gain further benefits to your perception DC, but not your perception checks. Handy, but not overwhelmingly so.
- **Twilight** ★★ Low-light vision is often helpful, especially for a class like yours which could struggle to find a sneaky creature exploiting it. It isn't nearly as impactful as darkvision, but it is better than nothing. It is probably the best of the halfling heritages overall, but not by much.
- **Wildwood** ★★ You ignore foliage-based difficult terrain. Difficult terrain caused by foliage is second in frequency only to difficult terrain caused by rocks, but there are still plenty of encounters where this won't come up. It is also unlikely to matter outside of random encounters in the wilderness: important fights usually take place in caves and other dungeon environments, where underbrush is sparse.

1st Level Halfling Feats:

- **Distracting Shadows** ★★★ Use your companions to hide. This is only useful for ranged inventors, because you won't be able to use your companions to sneak. At best, it can be used to stealth and strike a off-guard opponent. Still, the ability to always have something to hide behind can be pretty handy. Subterfuge suit innovators with subtle dampeners might appreciate this.
- **Folksy Patter** ★★ This becomes increasingly reliable as you level up. Unfortunately, it is also reliant on your deception score, which you have only slight incentives to invest in.
- **Halfling Luck** ★★★★ There are no feats that effectively compete with halfling luck. It is too good to be rivaled by any other halfling ancestry feat.
- **Halfling Weapon Familiarity** ★★ Halfling weapons are solid choices for ranged weapon innovations. Both ranged weapons are martial propulsive slings. If you intend to use a halfling weapon, use alternate boost to remove the strength flaw of the default halfling ability score array. The halfling sling staff is an excellent weapon for ranged weapon innovators intending to make use of the rope shot modification. Its high base damage surpasses that of most firearms and is excellent for use with Megaton Strike. Unfortunately, the sling staff is rendered completely obsolete by the harmona gun, which functions identically for mid-strength builds but has better range. The sling staff's only implied advantage is being quieter than a firearm. Its value increases substantially in the rare campaigns that allow inventors but ban firearms. This feat is green for weapon innovators in such campaigns. You can also pick up Titan Slinger using Ancestral Paragon to boost its damage die in certain encounters; see its entry for details.

The spraysling is less impressive but has some use for builds interested in keeping a free hand, such as those with Tamper and Gadget Specialist. Both slings have reload and benefit greatly from getting Running Reload from an archetype. They also both have propulsive; if you have less than two strength you would be better served by an arbalest in the first case and a dragon mouth pistol in the second. Using either to its full potential requires you to use alternate boost to avoid the halfling's strength penalty.

The halfling melee weapons are a mixed bag. Fighting sticks don't compare favorably to mundane weaponry like warhammers, but they're only intended to be nonlethal bludgeons for occasions you don't want to kill your foe. The filcher's fork has rock bottom damage, but it is a throwable one-handed finesse melee weapon able to receive the subterfuge suit's offensive boost. It even has multiple traits to help make up for its terrible damage. Provided you are confident in your ability to remember all of its traits, it can be an admirable upgrade from the starknife for subterfuge suit innovators. Be sure to pick up a returning rune at the first available opportunity. Subterfuge suit innovators of ninth level and up can consider this feat green.

- **Innocuous** ★★ A handy bonus which is unfortunately reliant on a skill you have low incentive to invest heavily in.
- **Prairie Rider** ★ You don't need the bonus or more trained skills.
- **Sure Feet** ★★★ You can climb and balance more quickly and aren't off-guard when you do. A welcome bonus.
- **Titan Slinger** ★★★ Using the general feat Ancestral Paragon to pick this up after taking Halfling Weapon Familiarity gives you a very powerful tool against large creatures. This is one of the only methods in the game to get a 1d12 on a ranged attack. Weapon innovators interested in using Megaton Strike to its full potential should be salivating at the thought. Despite costing two feats, this strategy is borderline blue. If you can get Running Reload from an archetype it might as well be.
- **Unassuming Dedication** ★ By taking this uncommon feat, you gain a bonus to downtime activities. I guess you could retrain for it during protracted downtime.
- **Unfettered Halfling** ★★ Become better at resisting grappled, restrained, and immobilized. It's useful but situational.
- **Watchful Halfling** ★★ You gain a slight bonus to notice possession or enchantment. To be honest, these things tend to be pretty overt the majority of the time. You can also help improve an ally's save if they are already enchanted, but enchantments important enough to try are rare and might not even allow further saving throws.

5th Level Halfling Feats:

- **Cultural Adaptability** ★★★★ The versatility of this feat is beyond reproach. If you can come up with a backstory to justify it, you can go wild with this. Several human feats are tempting, such as Natural Ambition.
- **Easily Dismissed** ★★ To be honest, I'm not sure there is a GM alive that wouldn't allow any player to try some crowd-blending. At least this allows you to guarantee that the roll is stealth-based, rather than a GM's on-the-spot call for either deception or stealth.

- **Halfling Ingenuity** ★★ You have plenty of trained skills and are unlikely to need this feat, but maybe it can bail you out of a social situation from time to time.
- **Shared Luck** ★★★★ Yet more evidence that the luck build is the way to go.
- **Step Lively** ★★ You can shuffle around -not away from- large creatures that end their movement near you. Occasionally helpful for flanking with allies, but you shouldn't be trying to melee as a halfling.

9th Level Halfling Feats:

- **Cunning Climber** ★★★ Gain a climb speed of ten feet. A useful way to ascend without heavy strength investment, which is perfect for a ranged halfling looking for a sniper point.
- **Dance Underfoot** ★ There isn't really any good reason to share a space with an enemy unit. You don't gain any cover bonus or anything from doing so. If your GM rules otherwise, you could boost this feat by a rating.
- **Fade Away** ★★★ Any feat that gives you invisibility is worth considering. Unfortunately, it has a mediocre prerequisite in Easily Dismissed.
- **Guiding Luck** ★★★★ The luck build grows stronger with each passing feat.
- **Helpful Halfling** ★★★ Further improve the aid action when you critically succeed, and do not penalize them when you critically fail. Might have been nice a few levels ago; by now, critical failures are very rare. This is still helpful when your ally needs to get something done.
- **Irrepresible** ★ If you aren't gutsy this feat will be redundant with your class features in just two levels. If you are gutsy, it is yellow. You won't critically fail will saves that often between your decent proficiency and ancestral wisdom boost.
- **Unhampered Passage** ★★ You can cast freedom of movement, which means you don't suffer from most movement penalties and can automatically escape from nonmagical grapples and restraints. You might as well ignore the bit about being able to escape magical restraints, because this version of the spell never scales up. Handy, but the Unfettered Halfling feat from 1st level probably has it beat due to being preventative rather than reactive and sidestepping the need for actions to activate.

13th Level Halfling Feats:

- **Ceaseless Shadows** ★★★★ Hide and sneak anywhere regardless of cover. This is a great pick for the subterfuge suit innovator, as it enables a halfling to receive real combat value out of subtle dampeners.
- **Cobble Dancer** ★★ You can step into difficult terrain and enemies in difficult terrain are off-guard to you. Interesting combo potential with the augmented impediments modification at level fifteen, but it is too little too late to make that build work.
- **Incredible Luck** ★★★★ The final luck feat continues to be a luck feat.
- **Toppling Dance** ★★ Your strength isn't good enough to reliably use this feat, and even if it was you should be trying to avoid the melee whenever possible.

17th Level Halfling Feats:

- **Shadow Self** ★★★★ Once per hour when you succeed at a stealth check to hide or become hidden you turn invisible. That is quite the benefit on its own, but this feat also

allows you to leave a duplicate of some sort behind. The nature of this duplicate isn't clear. The feat lacks any magical trait, so apparently it isn't an illusion. Whatever it is, it makes for a fantastic capstone for the stealth builds.

Human ★★★

The human is a decent choice for every class. It has an exceptional feat list but lacks any base abilities whatsoever. The advent of alternate ability boost dropped the rating of humans because it shared their versatility advantage with everyone else. Without any base ancestry features to make up for it, they only have a few exceptional feats to draw an optimizer's eye.

I decided to include certain uncommon human feats due to the high number that have regional access clauses. As these clauses are easily fulfilled with an appropriate backstory, they're functionally not uncommon at all.

Human Heritages:

- **Skilled ★★★** While you don't need any extra trained skills, it's nice that this one advances to expert level.
- **Versatile ★★★** You get a general feat. Armor Training, Incredible Initiative, Fleet, and Toughness are all good choices. Note that while this heritage seems powerful at first glance, many of these choices are inferior to the innate abilities of other ancestries. For example, if you choose Fleet, you would have been better served by playing an elf to get the same speed boost as base speed, with superior sensory abilities and the option to further improve your speed by taking Fleet in the future. Toughness likewise competes with ancestries that have higher base ancestral hit points but can also take Toughness, though the gulf in power is slight in this case. Those other ancestries also enjoy their own heritage bonus in addition to these features.
- **Wintertouched ★★★** You gain cold resistance. If you want to be resistant to your own damage type, you can use Variable Core to change your damage type to cold.

1st Level Human Feats:

- **Adapted Cantrip ★** You don't have spellcasting.
- **Arcane Tattoos (U) ★★★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. Choose abjuration to get shield.
- **Cooperative Nature ★★★** The aid action is very powerful. It is easy to overlook because it doesn't work very well at the start of the game, but at higher levels you can hand out free bonuses on attack rolls every round for a single action and reaction. The inventor has few conflicting reactions that might get in the way, making this easy for them to use. This bonus is particularly massive, enabling you to jumpstart the process. You can even aid your construct innovation, though Lock On provides it a more reliable circumstance bonus later.
- **Courteous Comeback (U) ★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. You can attempt to escape the consequences of critical failure on a diplomacy check… once per month.
- **Devil's Advocate (U) ★★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. A social and defensive bonus that applies exclusively against devils. It is better if you expect to encounter a large amount of devils over the course of your campaign.

- **Dragon Spit** ★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. Offensive spellcasting.
- **General Training** ★★★★ Gain another general feat. Good options include Armor Training, Fleet, and Toughness. Many humans will simply keep choosing this feat.
- **Gloomseer** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. You gain low-light vision.
- **Haughty Obstinacy** ★ This feat becomes redundant with your class features beyond level eleven, and half the feat is completely pointless because you can't be coerced.
- **Keep Up Appearances (U)** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. A fun bonus that allows you to pretend you weren't affected by an emotion effect. Unfortunately, it isn't the best fit for an inventor due to their low social skills.
- **Know Oneself (U)** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. You can use your reaction to turn critical failures against emotion effects into regular failures. This is never redundant with your class features, but it might be more helpful on a class with worse wisdom saving throws. Wisdom saves are your strongest save.
- **Natural Ambition** ★★★★ This feat always ranks near the top of optimization guides. Spending an ancestry feat to get a same-level class feat is almost always a good trade.
- **Natural Skill** ★★ This is very unnecessary for a class with your number of trained skills, but maybe if you are going for a melee build your initial intelligence could allow you to justify using this.
- **Quah Bond (U)** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. Gain a trained skill and assurance in that skill. Choose athletics, intimidation, or medicine for best results.
- **Saoc Astrology (U)** ★★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. Use an action to give yourself a bonus on your next skill check. You could even use this for overdrive if you needed to ensure you weren't going to hurt yourself, though there is a slim chance you make your odds even worse.
- **Tupilaq Carver (U)** ★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. You don't have spellcasting.
- **Unconventional Weaponry** ★★★ Humans don't have their own ancestral weaponry. Instead, they can poach whatever weapon they want. Weapon innovators might snag a breaching pike since they can't use advanced weapons. Construct innovators don't make enough weapon attacks for a new weapon to be worth the investment. Power suit innovators might be interested in a gnome flickmace. Subterfuge suit innovators can take a filcher's fork or elven branched spear, but they could also use this feat to pick up shuriken as backup ranged weaponry. Shuriken can be drawn without spending an action due to their zero reload value (for some reason). Use potency crystals on them to add damage when you can't reach a foe with your shortsword; this makes for a solid hybrid ranged/melee setup with consistent overdrive output and a free hand for feats like Tamper and Gadget Specialist.
- **Viking Shieldbearer (U)** ★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. Completely redundant with your existing proficiencies.
- **Witch Warden (U)** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. Gain a bonus against curses as well as witches or hags. It is very unlikely to come up. Take it if you put a witch or hag in your backstory.

5th Level Human Feats:

- **Adaptive Adept ★** You can't cast spells.
- **Clever Improviser ★★** You most likely don't need this, but it never hurts to be able to try anything.
- **Darkseer ★★★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. Gain darkvision.
- **Ornate Tattoo ★★★** Gain a first level arcane spell of your choice. It must match your Arcane Tattoo school. Schools no longer exist as of the remaster, so your GM will have to take intent into account.
- **Sense Allies ★★** This is much more useful for spellcasters who can target allies with buff spells. If you invest heavily in abilities like Overdrive Ally and Helpful Tinkering, this can still have use to an inventor.
- **Wavetouched Paragon ★★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. You gain a swim speed.

9th Level Human Feats:

- **Cooperative Soul ★★** You never fail on checks made to aid using skills you are expert in. By this point, you'll only fail aid checks on critical failure.
- **Dragon Prince ★★★** Ethnicity/nationality locked. More area damage is always handy. I'd always try to get a cone-shaped breath weapon rather than a line.
- **Group Aid ★★** This benefit applies almost exclusively out of combat due to its restrictions on aid involving the attack trait.
- **Hardy Traveler ★** If you need to improve your bulk buy a bag of holding. If you need to improve your overland travel speed, don't bother. Your travel speed only matters if your whole party is just as fast.
- **Heir of the Saoc ★★★** Your astrology improves substantially. The benefit of this feat is very impressive and powerful.
- **Incredible Improvisation ★★** Once a day you gain expert proficiency in something you are untrained in.
- **Multitalented ★★★★** Gain a free multiclass archetype, and if you are a half-elf you can even ignore the ability score requirements. I particularly like using it to improve perception through the gunslinger, investigator, or ranger, but there are plenty of good uses.
- **Shory Aeromancer ★★★** Cast fly once per day. Though accomplished through the medium of a spell, this is equivalent in effect and duration to other ancestral flight feats.
- **Virtue-Forged Tattoos ★★★★** Transmutation allows you to get time jump, which is an extremely helpful one-action spell that allows you to stride twice with immunity to reactions. You might prefer haste if your battles tend long. Invisibility is a great pick for those with illusion, and if you have been pushing your knowledge skills, you can also use organsight through divination. Those who took the shield cantrip will probably prefer warding aggression for its defensive benefits. Schools no longer exist as of the remaster, so your GM will have to take intent into account.

13th Level Human Feats:

- **Advanced General Training ★★** To be honest, most of the best general feats are available right from the get-go.

- **Bounce Back** ★★★ Ignoring the wounded condition is very unusual and very useful. For a class as fragile and offensive as the inventor, getting back into the fight after hitting zero with no additional risk is great.
- **Irriseni Ice Witch** ★★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. It is also great, enabling you to both better resist your cold self-damage and cast a powerful spell once a day.
- **Shadow Pact** ★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. You get a crummy creation spell that evaporates in bright light. At-will object creation is still pretty helpful. If an ally has a darkness focus spell or some other means of creating dim light or darkness easily, this might be more helpful to you.
- **Shory Aerialist** ★★★ Ethnicity/nationality locked. The more flight you have access to, the better this feat becomes. If you only have flight from the prior Shory feat, this is only slightly useful to you. You are only one level out from Soaring Armor for permanent flight, but doing so makes its prerequisite feat redundant.
- **Stubborn Persistence** ★★ You get a small chance to avoid becoming fatigued. Fatigue is rare as far as conditions go, and is not a severely debilitating one.
- **Unconventional Expertise** ★ Completely unnecessary for inventors.

17th Level Human Feats:

- **Heroic Presence** ★★ You give yourself and your allies temporary hit points and improve their will saving throws. By the standards of capstone ancestry feats, it leaves a bit to be desired. The temporary hit points will be obliterated in a single hit with interest, but the will saving throw bonus is still useful.

Leshy ★★

Leshy have only modest synergy with the inventor class. Their default ability array is off the table due to its intelligence flaw, so leshies will need to make do with alternate boost. They were made from the ground up to be rangers and druids, as one would expect from an animate plant. Leshy have plenty of great choices, but unlike other common ancestries they lack any must-pick feats.

Leshy Heritages:

- **Cactus** ★★ The unarmed attack is alright if you are a power suit armor innovator.
- **Fruit** ★★★ You produce healing fruit which you or an ally can eat to regain hit points. The more you think about that, the weirder it gets.
- **Fungus** ★★★ You gain darkvision.
- **Gourd** ★★★ You can store objects in your head. You can also quick draw the item in your head and use it with the same action. Great for storing smaller weapon innovations or emergency alchemical bombs.
- **Leaf** ★★★ Immunity to fall damage is a powerful bonus that opens up new avenues of movement.
- **Lotus** ★ You can walk on water. You can only do so slowly and if the water is moving you'll need to make a check. This will matter once a campaign and might not even work.
- **Peachchild** ★ You look like a human child and can talk to domesticated animals.

- **Root** ★★★ You get a couple extra hit points and become harder to shove, reposition, and trip.
- **Seaweed** ★ As with most water themed ancestries and heritages, you should know whether or not you need this. If your campaign is not nautical in nature, pass on this heritage.
- **Vine** ★★★ You can climb without hands. This allows ranged weapon users to climb up a wall and shoot from safety. You'll still need to make an athletics check to climb, so decent strength and athletics is encouraged. For that reason, it has great synergy with weapons that have the propulsive, kickback, or ranged trip traits due to their shared emphasis on strength. Weapon innovators are able to add ranged trip to any thrown or ranged weapon, though the rope shot modification used to add it to ranged weaponry is partially redundant with this heritage.

  The only impediment to this heritage is that it will often fail you in civilized or interior environments, in which smoother worked stone and low ceilings might inhibit your ability to escape melee range. Your default speed is also too low to reliably escape from melee in a single action. Unfortunately, a leshy has no way to gain a climb speed.

1st Level Leshy Feats:

- **Ageless Spirit** ★★ Pillaged from the elf list. You have plenty of trained level skills and aren't likely to need more, but the ability to tailor your skill list to what is needed can still be handy. I'd probably use this to swap social skills around according to what is needed: if the party was attempting to trick a mob boss, set it to deception. If the party is schmoozing with nobility, set it to diplomacy.
- **Childlike Plant** ★ Pass yourself off as a human child. It's not like leshy face discrimination and need to hide, and you still explicitly look like you so it won't help you commit crimes.
- **Grasping Reach** ★★★ Reach is well worth a die size drop with the right weapon. The ability to revert or extend a weapon with an action can be useful in plenty of situations. This is especially true for melee weapon innovators with greataxes or the aerodynamic construction modification.
- **Harmlessly Cute** ★ You are unlikely to have the charisma needed to use this feat.
- **Leshy Superstition** ★★★ Pillaged from the orc list. A fantastic and easy feat which you should use every time it becomes available.
- **Seedpod** ★★ You gain an unarmed ranged attack with rock bottom damage and a low range increment. It'll at least benefit from overdrive.
- **Shadow of the Wilds** ★ You almost never need to worry about hiding your trail during exploration mode.
- **Undaunted** ★★★ / ★★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance.

5th Level Leshy Feats:

- **Anchoring Roots** ★★★ You gain even more powerful bonuses against shove and trip, but you must spend an action to activate the effect. The enemy can always choose not to shove or trip you if it sees you anchor yourself.
- **Leshy Glide** ★★ The raw effect of this feat is unlikely to matter. When you fall you'd usually rather hit the ground quickly and become able to act more quickly. Your GM

might allow you to get creative with it: for example, if you attempt to use an ally's magical wind spells to launch yourself skyward.

- **Ritual Reversion ★★** You become a plant. It is impossible to distinguish you from a normal plant through perception, but some enemies might be able to see through your disguise with nature or survival. You also gain the downsides of being a plant, such as becoming unable to move and dodge.
- **Speak with Kindred ★** You can talk to plants. Your leshy heritage determines how useful this feat is to you. Fungus can be found in cities and the wilderness, while gourds are pretty much exclusive to farmland. Unfortunately, your charisma is garbage.

9th Level Leshy Feats:

- **Bark and Tendril ★** You get a spell that makes you weak to fire and an offensive spell.
- **Green Dash ★★** Get a special, faster move action when you start your move next to a plant. It has to be pretty big, so just walking across a lawn won't do. The exact size is a bit unclear, but the word "occupies" implies the plant needs to be big enough to physically block the space. This probably only works with trees.
- **Lucky Keepsake ★★★** Pillaged from the orc list. This is still a great feat, though you might not need it if you don't have many reactions that would conflict with its prerequisite.
- **Solar Rejuvenation ★★★** By the power of photosynthesis, you passively regain hit points while in sunlight. Unless you are a fungus leshy, in which case you should not bother because you don't generally have a large pile of dead plants to eat.
- **Spore Cloud ★★★** You can dazzle all creatures in an emanation around you. Counterpoint: you could instead explode. Jokes aside, this is a fine feat. If you find yourself surrounded let it loose, especially if you already used an unstable action.
- **Thorned Seedpod ★** Not good enough to use seedpods.

13th Level Leshy Feats:

- **Call of the Green Man ★** You gain a new form in which you cannot use most of your equipment-based inventor abilities.
- **Cloak of Poison ★★** Passively deal poison damage to any creature who melees you without a reach weapon. Poison is a poor damage type, but you can choose not to activate it when fighting something immune to poison.

17th Level Leshy Feats:

- **Flourish and Ruin ★★** You get one healing spell and one offensive spell. Choose Regrowth instead.
- **Regrowth ★★★** Regenerate is a great healing spell, and is higher level than many capstone feats available to other ancestries.
- **Return to the Seed ★★** Cheat death once per month. Regenerate from the Regrowth feat is much more preventative and you can do it every day.

Orc ★★★

Orc ferocity gives orcs an incredibly strong start on any class. The inventor is no different. Orcs are also very magic-resistant, with several feats and heritages that diminish magic's bite. They

are best as melee inventors owing to a large number of feats built to support melee combat and increase durability, but are flexible enough to serve other roles if desired.

Orc Heritages:

- **Badlands** ★ A near useless set of abilities even in the appropriate environments.
- **Battle Ready** ★★ Intimidation isn't amazing for an inventor, and is particularly difficult for an orc to use due to their ability spread.
- **Deep** ★★★ Combat climber is a very nice skill feat.
- **Grave** ★★★ You gain resistance to void damage and a bonus to saving throws against undead. For undead themed campaigns, this is blue.
- **Hold Scarred** ★★★ The hit points will become irrelevant in short order, but diehard is a nice benefit at any level.
- **Rainfall** ★★★ You gain nice numeric bonuses to climb and swim, along with a lesser bonus against disease. A smattering of respectable boosts.
- **Winter** ★ Completely unnecessary bonus to skills and circumstances that will rarely matter outside of tundra campaigns. Even then, you can usually just wear warm clothing like the rest of your party.

1st Level Orc Feats:

- **Beast Trainer** ★ You are an engineer, not a Disney princess.
- **Iron Fists** ★ Your unarmed attacks stop being nonlethal (even if you want them to be) and gain the shove trait. Totally useless to a class with your proficiencies.
- **Hold Mark** ★★★ You get a permanent status bonus to saves against a tradition of your choice and a skill.
- **Orc Ferocity** ★★★★ Some ancestries are defined by certain feats. The orc is defined by ferocity. This feat is so good that little else compares to it. It is especially useful to the inventor due to their low hit points and moderate defenses.
- **Orc Superstition** ★★★ A fantastic and easy feat which you should use every time it becomes available.
- **Orc Warmask** ★★ You get an extra recall knowledge skill and Dubious Knowledge with that skill. You can also spend 50 gp to gain a small numeric bonus.
- **Orc Weapon Familiarity** ★ / ★★★ Weapon innovators could take the butchering axe as an advanced weapon innovation, but they have no incentive to do so. They can create an objectively superior weapon by applying the hefty composition modification to a mundane greataxe. The butchering axe is most appreciated by power suit armor innovators because it maintains the highest possible damage alongside shove and sweep, enabling them to go for damage or use their muscular exoskeleton modification without releasing their grip. The orc necksplitter is a one-handed advanced weapon useful to shield builds, whether on a power suit armor innovator or weapon innovator build. It scorns any athletics checks in favor of pure damage output through traits that enhance damage and accuracy.
- **Tusks** ★★ I am always surprised that orc tusks are finesse weapons. A subterfuge suit innovator can use these.

5th Level Orc Feats:

- **Athletic Might** ★★★ Improve your athletics checks made to climb and swim.
- **Bloody Blows** ★★ A mediocre critical effect for mediocre unarmed attacks.
- **Defy Death** ★★ This is a handy effect that applies in rare scenarios.
- **Mask of Power** ★★★ Sure strike, with the option to choose two other worse spells.
- **Mask of Rejection** ★★★ A very big magic resistance bonus against spells of your mask's tradition.
- **Scar-Thick Skin** ★★ You become twice as likely to end persistent bleed damage, which is among the most common persistent damage types. Of course, the ifrit can get this benefit for acid, bleed, and poison persistent damage at first level.
- **Victorious Vigor** ★★★★ An offensively tuned inventor can output significant damage. They are very likely to be the ones bringing enemies to zero hit points. This feat applies in a scenario applicable to their strengths and compensates for their weaknesses. An excellent fit.

9th Level Orc Feats:

- **Death's Drums** ★★★ When you suffer persistent damage or have the wounded condition, you gain a bonus to fortitude saving throws. This is best used in combination with orc ferocity for obvious reasons.
- **Dragon Grip** ★ You don't have an animal companion with which to take advantage of this feat.
- **Mask of Pain** ★★ More intimidation bonuses which an orc inventor will struggle to capitalize on.
- **Pervasive Superstition** ★★★ You always get a bonus to your saving throws against magic. You might not actually need this unless you get pelted with multiple saving throws a round, seeing as the inventor has few conflicting reactions that would interfere with the prerequisite feat.
- **Undying Ferocity** ★★★ You gain enough temporary hit points that even accidentally dealing self-damage will allow you to stay up, if only just.

13th Level Orc Feats:

- **Ferocious Beasts** ★ It is too bad these only apply to animal companions, rather than construct companions.
- **Incredible Ferocity** ★★★ You're damn hard to kill, provided somebody has medicine to get rid of your wounded condition.
- **Lifeblood's Call** ★★★★ Gain a damage bonus when you are wounded or doomed. The inventor's frailty ensures it frequently gains those conditions, and Orc Ferocity ensures it can keep fighting when it does. If you have feats like Diehard and no redundant sources of circumstance bonuses to damage, I might even deliberately beat myself to death in the morning and heal up with an inventor feat like Searing Restoration to get this bonus for the rest of the day. What absurd masochism.
- **Mask of Fear** ★★★ You can burn your mask to instantly remove the frightened condition. Your will saving throws might be your best saving throws, but the effect is still powerful.

- **Spell Devourer ★★** You get short-term temporary hit points after succeeding at a saving throw against magic. It might be better on a class with better saving throws.

17th Level Orc Feats:

- **Rampaging Ferocity ★★★★** You get to make a melee attack roll whenever you use Orc Ferocity. A great fit for any inventor thanks to their high damage, especially those with large weaponry.

Uncommon Ancestries:

The following ancestries are only available with GM permission.

Athamaru ★★

You can be a stinky fish person. Like other aquatic ancestries, they get a better swim speed than land speed and are best in campaigns that can take advantage of that fact. Unlike most aquatic ancestries, most of their feats function on land and they don't dehydrate if they leave water for too long. While they're still most useful in nautical campaigns, athamaru are more flexible than their rivals and can work in a land-based campaign.

That said, little about them is exceptionally useful to an inventor. All of its heritages besides Hopeful are pretty useful for the class, but other than that there's little of note. I especially like the Kaleidoscopic heritage's synergy with smoke fans created by Gadget Specialist.

Azarketi ★

Azarketi get a bad land speed, a need to immerse yourself in water once a day, and a feat list hobbled by a dozen feats that don't function on land. This ancestry is only of use in nautical campaigns. If you really want to make it work, try the Mistbreath heritage because it fixes your crap land speed or go for a pilot build. Maybe your GM will let you have a bathtub atop your robot.

Catfolk ★★★★

The catfolk feat list that secures the catfolk a universal good rating, as they have numerous excellent options. Among catfolk feats are numerous options of interest to finesse melee builds. While these features are far from their best ones, if you are determined to use a finesse approach to melee combat catfolk are among the best ways to do so.

Their actual best feats are the luck feats, but you shouldn't try to grab all of them. You can only use luck once a day, and each expansion reduces your ability to make use of the other expansions. Decide which ones are important with you and stick to a couple luck feats; until seventeenth level at which point you can use luck much more frequently.

Catfolk Heritage:

- **Clawed ★★★** These are impressive unarmed attacks. Either armor innovator could get good use out of claws.

- **Flexible ★★** You can squeeze and escape from grapples slightly better.
- **Hunting ★★★** You gain imprecise scent with a 30-foot radius. Having scent can bypass the need for a perception check to determine which square a creature is in, which in turn means not relying on your terrible perception. This is doubly true for catfolk due to their wisdom penalty.
- **Jungle ★★** You ignore difficult terrain caused by undergrowth, which is usually helpful in low-stakes random encounters far removed from dungeon environments. Still, it is reasonably common and sufficient to save it from red.
- **Liminal ★★★** You get the detect magic cantrip and a niche but strong bonus to occultism checks, both of which are nice.
- **Nine Lives ★★★** Critical hits don't automatically send you to dying 2. If you are building a melee character, this is a handy way to keep yourself alive when an encounter goes wrong. It stacks nicely with other death-resistance abilities because it is such a unique effect.
- **Sharp Eared ★** You are not the party member with the perception needed to point out hidden enemies. Just hold your turn until an ally figures out the enemy's location if you have to.
- **Winter ★★★** You can use Variable Core to turn your damage type to cold and gain resistance to self-inflicted injury through this feat.

1st Level Catfolk Feats:

- **Cat Nap ★★★★** The temporary hit points you get from this feat are exactly enough to soak a self-inflicted injury from one of your inventor features.
- **Catfolk Dance ★★★** Circumstance penalties to saving throws are extremely rare; this might be the only one accessible to players. As such, it stacks with the penalties inflicted by the clumsy condition. If you have an ally able to inflict clumsy, you can dramatically impede the enemy's reflex saving throw. Doing so renders them much more vulnerable to several unstable actions, including explode, Megavolt, and Deep Freeze. You will need good acrobatics to pull it off, serving as a soft nudge towards finesse melee.
- **Catfolk Weapon Familiarity ★** Completely unnecessary for a class with your weapon proficiencies. The whip claw is outclassed by the common dancer's spear.
- **Cat's Luck ★★★★** Like the halfling's luck feat, Cat's Luck allows you to reroll a saving throw. Unlike halflings, the catfolk version only applies to reflex saving throws. Also unlike halflings, you can choose to use the better result. Reflex saving throws are your worst saving throws, so you can expect to get frequent use out of this feat.
- **Saberteeth ★★** You gain a jaws attack. It has no traits, and if you are a power suit innovator, you'd have been better served by taking the Clawed Catfolk heritage.
- **Well-Met Traveler ★** Hobnobber is a terrible feat that makes you worse at getting accurate information, and you don't need the extra trained skill.
- **Winter Cat Senses ★★** You see through snowfall, but it isn't likely to come up.

5th Level Catfolk Feats:

- **Catfolk Weapon Rake ★** Still not enough to justify using catfolk weapons.

- **Climbing Caws ★★** You gain a slow climb speed. Odds are good you have the strength to climb simple obstacles, but it can still be handy from time to time.
- **Expanded Luck ★★★★** You can use Cat's Luck on any type of saving throws and a couple of skill checks. Strength inventors are very focused on using athletics checks to control the battlefield and will appreciate this even more.
- **Focused Cat Nap ★** Despite the superficial similarities between some of your abilities and focus points, you still can't repair your innovation with this feat.
- **Graceful Guidance ★★** You spend an action and a reaction to grant an ally a bonus on reflex saving throws. It is tricky to set up and will prevent you from using luck if you also get caught in the blast, but it is handy when you pull it off.
- **Light Paws ★★** Step and stride while ignoring difficult terrain.
- **Pride Hunter ★★★** Use your companions to hide. This is only useful for ranged inventors, because you won't be able to use your companions to sneak. At best, it can be used to stealth and strike a off-guard opponent. Still, the ability to always have something to hide behind can be pretty handy. Subterfuge suit innovators with subtle dampeners might appreciate this.
- **Springing Leaper ★★** The vertical jump won't matter that much, but you can at least bypass short climbs at times. The long jump bonus lets you spring off short ledges with relative ease, but the bonuses are pretty niche
- **Well Groomed ★★★** You get some bonuses against diseases and poisons.

9th Level Catfolk Feats:

- **Aggravating Scratch ★★** There are plenty of creatures immune to this ability, but there are also plenty that it still applies to. It still only works on a critical hit though.
- **Evade Doom ★★** You have a tiny chance of avoiding the doomed condition, which is itself pretty rare.
- **No Evidence ★★** About as unlikely to matter as most survival checks, especially because someone in your party can usually cover the other task. It'll at least expand your ability to use stealth as initiative, which is important considering your general inability to perceive anything.
- **Predator's Growl ★** You aren't going to have the perception or the charisma necessary to capitalize on this, and you'd need both.
- **Sense for Trouble ★★★★** You can use luck to roll initiative twice and take the higher result.
- **Luck of the Clowder ★★★★** When you use luck to reroll a saving throw, every creature of your choice within ten feet that fails also gets to reroll their saving throw. Unlike other luck feats, this improves the base effect rather than conflicts with its use, and thus is extraordinarily useful even if you chose other luck feats.
- **Silent Step ★★★** You get a free step whenever you want to hide or sneak. It is a great pick for any ranged build.
- **Wary Skulker ★★★** This feat is similar to No Evidence, though I do like it more.

13th Level Catfolk Feats:

- **Black Cat Curse ★★★★** You gain anti-luck which does not compete with your luck usage. While it can be tempting to use this to force enemies to reroll saving throws against your own abilities, you will most likely see the best results from using it to reroll any saves against powerful single-target spells cast by your allies.
- **Caterwaul ★★★★** You give an ally the effect of orc ferocity, keeping them at one hit point when they would otherwise fall unconscious. This is actually better than orc ferocity because there are more applicable targets, though it is a much higher-level feat.
- **Inspirit Hazard ★★** This very strange feat allows you to remotely rearm a trap that you previously disabled, assuming you are able to watch a creature take an action that would trigger it. The odds of a monster deliberately doing something that might trigger its own trap are vanishingly small, but you are likely to be your teams designated trap disarmer. If any class is able to take advantage of this, it'd be you or the rogue.

17th Level Catfolk Feats:

- **Elude Trouble ★★★** This is an amazing kiting feat suitable for ranged builds of any sort. When an enemy misses you with an attack, bolt away.
- **Reliable Luck ★★★★** You can use your luck once every hour, dramatically expanding its value and the value of the alternative luck feats.
- **Ten Lives ★★** You get a small chance to escape death. This ability notably lacks the usual clause about instant-kill death effects, so you can use it to escape some implausible fates. It is of greatest use in campaigns themed around necromancy, due to the strong association between void energy and death effects.

Centaur ★★★★

Centaurs are large size, which is more of a problem than a boon. It will expand the radius of their explosion, but that's about where the benefits end. You're going to be a bigger target on the battlefield, can't ride any construct innovation, and won't always fit in spaces designed for medium creatures. That said, the centaur's innate speed is high and their features are among the best in the game. Their downsides pale in comparison to their advantages.

Centaurs make for versatile inventors. Any build can be based on fleetwind or ponygait heritages, which are universally incredible. Armor innovators should check out the ironhoof heritage, as at time of writing it's one of the most powerful attacks in the game and has fantastic synergy with overdrive. A single feat propels it to a d8 unarmed strike with the agile trait. That's outright stronger than any one-handed martial weapon in the game. Even advanced weapons don't compete. A power suit innovator reliant on the ironhoof unarmed strike and the centaur's fantastic athletic feats is incredibly powerful.

Still, it'd be irresponsible to evaluate the centaur without at least mentioning its common-sense narrative limits. Nothing about the centaur's statblock explicitly says that it can't climb a ladder, but it's pretty obvious that a creature with a centaur's body plan wouldn't be able to do so. Your GM has every right to enforce that and other common-sense limitations based on your unique physiology. It might be worth asking how your GM wants to handle a centaur player character before entering the game.

If your GM relies strictly on the rules-as-written and allows you to climb and otherwise operate in defiance of common sense, the centaur is one of the best ancestries in the game. If they impose physiological limits, it's still an uncommonly powerful ancestry that more than earns its rating. The inventor can easily compensate for many such hurdles with features like Explosive Leap, Gadget Specialist, and Soaring Armor.

Centaur Heritages:

- **Budding Speaker** ★★★ Standard ancestry cantrip. Divine or primal.
- **Fleetwind** ★★★★ Typical speed improvement. Always good.
- **Ironhoof** ★★★ / ★★★★ Standard ancestry unarmed attack. It further has the option to upgrade with a 1st level feat, at which point it becomes one of the most powerful unarmed attacks in the entire game. This is blue for power suit armor innovators because of its ridiculous upgrade feat, Steelhoof.
- **Mottle-Coat** ★★ It'll be tough to take advantage of stealth due to your large size, but a subterfuge suit innovator might be able to benefit from this thanks to synergy with the camouflage pigmentation 7th level modification. Even in that context its redundancy with the subtle dampeners modification does it few favors.
- **Ponygait** ★★★★ Remove all the downsides of being large and gain an *unqualified +1 bonus to all reflex saving throws*. There aren't any other heritages that come close to a saving throw bonus this broad, and I'm baffled this one made it to print.
- **Stoutheart** ★★ Get a negligible amount of hit points and a reflex save bonus that applies in narrow situations. Anyone who chooses this instead of ponygait is a fool.

1st Level Centaur Feats:

- **Centaur Weapon Familiarity** ★ There are no centaur weapons.
- **Practiced Brawn** ★★★★ You get huge bonuses to the shove action. It provides both a flat bonus and improves degree of success, which is borderline unheard of when it comes to ancestry feats. This massively expands the area you can shove enemies into, and has excellent synergy with both the melee weapon innovations and power suit armor innovations.
- **Skilled Herbalist** ★★★ An easy way to get the Alchemical Crafting feat for making alchemical items during downtime.
- **Steelhoof** ★★★★ Standard ancestry unarmed strike. That's underselling it. A d8 agile unarmed attack is better than any one-handed weapon in the game and has incredible synergy with the inventor's overdrive and offensive boost.

5th Level Centaur Feats:

- **Accommodating Mount** ★★★ An ally can ride you without losing actions. You still lose one action. It's not ideal for an action-intensive class like the inventor, but it does have good synergy with the speed modifications available to the armor innovator.
- **Distant Archer** ★★ Reduce range penalties with bows. This is just overkill, as bows already have enough range to cover any tabletop battle map. If your GM uses big digital maps, this might be slightly more valuable to you.
- **Proud Mentor** ★★ Get temporary hit points when an ally critically succeeds on a check you aided them on. An inventor is unlikely to spend much time aiding their ally owing to

their focus on personal damage output, and the trigger for this feat is pretty uncommon even if they are.

- **Speaker in Training** ★★★ Get a spell. Ranged builds and construct innovators will prefer bless from the divine faithspeaker option, while melee builds will opt for fleet step from the primal greenspeaker.

9th Level Centaur Feats:

- **Herbal Forager** ★★★ You get a free healing item every day. I recommend a soothing tonic, but anything with the healing tag is available.
- **Fierce Competitor** ★★ Challenge an ally to accomplish something athletic and get a +2 bonus on checks made to achieve it. Unfortunately, the bonus is going to be redundant with the power suit's more reliable muscular exoskeleton modification. Melee weapon innovators can boost the rating by one step, as their access to weapon traits is much more compatible with this feat. It also grants a demoralization bonus if you succeed, but it's tough to make an inventor able to take advantage of both parts of this feat.
- **Mentor of Legends** ★★★ Cast heroism on an ally and give them temporary hit points. It's a good thing for a melee build to use when you can't move to an enemy on the first turn.
- **Ride On** ★★ Delay fatigue for a bit. Fatigue is far too rare for this to be a practical choice. This feat borders on a red rating due to that rarity.
- **Speaker's Defense** ★★ These spells are less useful than the centaur's earlier spells. They'd be better on a class with high hit points or actual spellcasting proficiency.
- **Stubborn Defiance** ★★★★ Get another flat saving throw bonus; this time against mental effects, which might as well mean all will saves. You can also spend a reaction to roll twice and take the higher result on any mental save, and you can even do so once per hour. To put this in perspective, catfolk -themselves a top-rated ancestry- have to spend a 5th and 17th level feat to get the same effect with the same frequency for reflex saves, and they don't get a flat bonus. Between this and the ponygait heritage, centaurs are among the most magic resistant ancestries in the game.

13th Level Centaur Feats:

- **Camouflage Coat** ★★ You can hide or sneak without cover or concealment. I'm not inclined to view this feat favorably despite its power; other ancestries like the halfling get a superior version of it at the same level, and they are small size ancestries for which stealth has been practical up to this point. This is a heck of a pivot on a build that doesn't have much incentive to use stealth before this point.
- **Incredible Sprint** ★★★ Stride three times for two actions. It's a fine way to enter melee or escape danger to attack at range.
- **Miraculous Medic** ★★★★ Raise the dead once every day. Your party can play much more recklessly with this card in your hand.
- **Trample** ★★★ A great feat for mobility-boosting armor innovators using the Steelhoof feat. Deal your unarmed attack damage to everyone in a wide area that won't touch your friends.

17th Level Centaur Feats:

- **Merge with the Source** ★ Standard ancestry battle form.

- **Starshot Arrow ★★★** Make a ranged attack that reduces the enemy's speed and can immobilize them on crit. Unless you have a special strike like Megaton Strike that could compete with this feat for the actions, you might as well turn every shot into a starshot arrow.

Fetchling ★★★

Edgy humans receive a special form of darkvision that retains the ability to see color. That's the only noteworthy thing about them. They're able to serve any role and will excel or falter at none of them.

Fetchling Heritages:

- **Bright ★** You have darkvision and would only need to cast light for your allies. If nobody on your team decided to compensate for their own visual impairments, you could get some use out of this, but for your own sake this is pointless.
- **Deep ★★★** It doesn't fit as well as resistance to void damage, but you can use this heritage to resist cold damage. If you set your damage type to cold with Variable Core you will nullify your self-inflicted damage. If you do choose void damage, you won't be disappointed either: there are plenty of hostile creatures that wield it, even if it doesn't protect you from self-inflicted damage.
- **Liminal ★★** This can compensate for your poor perception by reducing the flat check needed to target creatures you can't see.
- **Resolute ★★** This feature is entirely redundant with your class features from level eleven on, but before then it is pretty good.
- **Wisp ★★** You get a trained skill and some minor bonuses to squeezing.

1st Level Fetchling Feats:

- **Hard to Fool ★★** A slight improvement to your will saving throws and perception checks against illusions.
- **Shadow Blending ★** You don't possess the ability to create your own darkness, and a creature that lives in darkness won't need to make the flat check at all. At best a ranged build might be able to hide far away from the battle, but odds are you won't get attacked at all in that case: your teammates will make for far better targets. You could maybe bump this up to yellow if you get Extinguish Light at fifth level.
- **Shrouded Magic ★★★** You can choose shield or guidance from the occult spell list. The choice is contingent on whether you are interested in combat power or skill utility respectively.
- **Shrouded Mien ★★** You get a trained skill and a charisma skill feat.
- **Slink ★★** This is just a copy of the generic ancestry stealth feat, with the additional qualifier that you must be in dim light or darkness to use it. It at least works even if the creature has darkvision, unlike Shadow Blending.

5th Level Fetchling Feats:

- **Clever Shadow ★★** Your shadow can perform simple actions, but it can't hold items or perform any checks. This feat is mostly useful for opening doors with your hands full.

- **Extinguish Light ★★** This can be a good way to manufacture the darkness that so many of your other feats rely on. You'll get the most use out of this feat if you are in an urban campaign where the population is of a species that does not have darkvision. In an outright thieves' guild campaign, I could even bump this up to green.
- **Lightless Litheness ★★** You can never become stuck while squeezing and can wiggle out of grapples slightly more effectively. It has nothing to do with darkness, so I guess the name is just to commit to the theme.
- **Shadowy Disguise ★★★** A once-per-day disguise is pretty handy, especially if a party member with the same capability can handle the talking for you.

9th Level Fetchling Feats:

- **Hefting Shadow ★★★** You can hide small objects in your shadow. With a two-bulk limit, it can carry any weapon you please. Great for smuggling weapon innovations into fancy events. If you have a small construct innovation and take Collapse Construct, you might even be able to convince your GM to let you hide your construct in it. Unfortunately, it technically isn't an object.
- **Sculpt Shadows ★★★** You are most likely to use this making ladders, ropes, and other climbing gear, but the sky is the limit. If you suddenly need to hide your face, you can make a mask. The only real limit on this feat is your creativity. This is way better than the similar thirteenth level human feat, Shadow Pact.
- **Shadow Sight ★** Once per hour you can see through upcast magical darkness. While theoretically helpful, you'll be lucky if it comes up more than once a campaign. Unlike the dwarf version, it is also higher level, not constant, and requires an action to activate.

13th Level Fetchling Feats:

- **Shadow's Assault ★** Not only is this low-damage offensive spellcasting, it also affords the target their choice of saving throw. You are very unlikely to land it with any frequency.
- **Skirt the Light ★★★** You'll be able to get consequence-free travel out of this spell once. After you do so, your GM will have shadow-plane encounters prepped and ready. At that point, this becomes a "fast travel, but guaranteed random encounter" spell. It is still very helpful if your campaign features frequent long-distance travel.

Hobgoblin ★★★

Hobgoblins can serve as any type of inventor. Their feats are biased towards teamwork in melee combat, but they still play well with a ranged build thanks to their smokeworker heritage.

If you intend to play a melee hobgoblin, seek an alternative to explode. Most hobgoblin feats, particularly at higher levels, encourage the character to bunch up with allies. Taking advantage of those ancestry feats and using explode can be difficult due to the high risk of friendly fire. More precise alternatives such as Megavolt and Megaton Strike can mitigate this issue.

The hobgoblin's breaching pike is an incredible weapon for a melee weapon innovator. Playing a weapon innovator and turning down the breaching pike is a tragedy; it is one of the best based for a melee weapon innovation in the game.

Hobgoblin Heritages:

- **Elfbane** ★★★ The Elfbane Hobgoblin gains a simple but useful reaction that improves their saving throws against magic. Saves against magic are the overwhelming majority of saving throws, and this heritage grants an improved bonus against arcane spells.
- **Runtboss** ★★ You get a mediocre skill feat and a social bonus against goblins. This borders on red.
- **Shortshanks** ★ You do not need the ride feat to ride a construct. If your campaign is a hexploration game and you are not a construct innovator, improve this rating to yellow if you coordinate with your party to improve your collective movement speed with mounts.
- **Smokeworker** ★★★★ You get fire resistance with which to resist your self-damage and become able to see through smoke as if it did not impose the concealed condition. This heritage almost singlehandedly carries the hobgoblin's rating.

  There are two main methods by which an inventor can use the smoke sight of this heritage: the mortar innovation's Wrapped in Smoke feat and the class feat Gadget Specialist. The former can generate smoke much more often, but gets less out of it because they don't need to ignore concealment when launching their area-of-effect mortars. Gadget Specialists can generate smoke less often but are more likely to want the effect because they actually need to target foes. They also require a free hand to use their smoke fans, limiting their weapon choices to one-handed melee weapons, pistols, hand crossbows, or bows. Those interested in other builds will need to rely on archetypes such as Bastion to regain the use of an occupied hand.

  I prefer using the smokeworker on a ranged build, whether bow or mortar. Using the smokeworker in melee can result in you blinding your own allies. Using it at range will just impose penalties against anyone shooting back at you.
- **Steelskin** ★★ You get better odds of reducing almost all forms of persistent damage. That said, many of these damage types do not feature persistent damage with any frequency. Persistent damage resistances available through the orc, goblin, and ifrit are more specialized, but apply to the types of persistent damage which are dramatically more common, making their more powerful bonuses more reliable in practice.
- **Warmarch** ★ This is a terrible heritage.
- **Warrenbred** ★ Reduce flat checks for targeting concealed or hidden creatures underground and squeeze through small spaces more easily. Only works underground. This is a niche ability with a niche qualifier.

1st Level Hobgoblin Feats:

- **Alchemical Scholar** ★★ It's not that good now that common formulas aren't necessary for crafting.
- **Cantorian Reinforcement** ★★★ This is a good pick for melee inventors due to their high likelihood of getting injected with poison. Your fortitude saves are pretty good, but they aren't your best. Reducing poison more quickly when you do save can be a big help.
- **Hobgoblin Weapon Familiarity** ★★★★ The breaching pike is a powerful one-handed reach weapon that is outclassed by the infamous gnome flickmace in most all cases. The inventor is the exception. There is a key difference between the two: the flickmace is

advanced, but the breaching pike is martial. A weapon innovator can thus declare a breaching pike their weapon innovating and apply the entangling form modification to it. Their other hand can be used for a shield or feats like Tamper and Gadget Specialist. Hobgoblins are currently the only ancestry capable of pulling this off.

The phalanx piercer bow is a longbow that gains damage at the cost of gaining the reload trait. It can't be a weapon innovation because it is a first level weapon and wouldn't be worth choosing even if it could. There are no inventor builds interested in it. A weapon innovator could choose the advanced capturing spetum as a weapon innovation, but they have no incentive to do so. They can create an objectively superior weapon by applying the hampering spikes modification to a mundane martial ranseur. A power suit armor innovator might appreciate it, but the breaching pike is better.

- **Leech-Clip** ★★★ A two-action strike that drops a target's speed. Use it whenever you have a specific reason to drop an enemy's speed. Using it as a primary strategy in the absence of any specific impetuous is a waste of the inventor's offensive power, but sometimes the bad guy needs that 10 feet to get to an ally of yours or reach a plot-critical item.
- **Remorseless Lash** ★★★ You don't need to be the one that causes the frightened condition to use this feat to maintain it. If you have an ally with intimidation, you can capitalize on their abilities by making melee attacks on targets they paint for you. The more allies you have that use fear tactics, the better this feat is.
- **Sneaky** ★★★ Like its goblin equivalent, this is a major boon to those with the subterfuge suit and subtle dampeners modification. Unfortunately, hobgoblins don't get access to a follow-up feat from it.
- **Stone Face** ★★ Gain a bonus against fear effects with an extra bonus that applies exclusively to demoralization effects. A broader benefit against emotion effects in general probably would have been warranted, but this is fine too.
- **Vigorous Health** ★★ You gain a small chance of not getting the drained condition. Due to the rarity of the drained condition and the small chance of success, I'd only look twice at this feat in a campaign where I knew full well the antagonist was a vampire or something.

5th Level Hobgoblin Feats:

- **Agonizing Rebuke** ★★ Even in the best-case scenario you aren't the best pick for personally demoralizing foes. It is hypothetically useful if you intend to pilot your construct, but it doesn't justify the hurdles of doing so on its own: especially because a pilot can't use Remorseless Lash because their construct strikes would not extend the bonus.
- **Expert Drill Sergeant** ★★ Your allies gain slightly better bonuses when they follow the expert with you as the expert. This would be better on a class that got more expert skills than you, but it is still occasionally useful.
- **Formation Training** ★ If you actually have a full party of hobgoblins this feat would be blue, but you will never have a party full of hobgoblins.
- **Hobgoblin Weapon Discipline** ★ There is no point.

- **Recognize Ambush** ★★★ Draw a weapon whenever you roll initiative as a free action. Whenever you would be ambushed, save yourself an action.
- **Runtsage** ★★★ You can compensate for the hobgoblin's poor feat list by pillaging the goblin's feat list instead. It gives you Adopted Ancestry as well as an immediate first level goblin feat. All told, it dramatically expands your feat pool. There are several good choices for higher level goblin feats, though it brooks mentioning that the hobgoblin feats finally start to improve after these levels as well.

  Melee weapon users should choose Goblin Weapon Familiarity or Twitchy. Goblin Weapon Familiarity allows you access to the dogslicer. At ninth level, you might also consider Cling if you are already running a build with a free hand.

  Ranged weapon users will most likely use Runtsage to get access to Very, Very Sneaky at ninth level. Unfortunately, the only way to gain access to Very, Very Sneaky is using Runtsage to take its prerequisite, Very Sneaky. Very Sneaky is identical to the first level hobgoblin feat Sneaky, so getting it this way is a bit wasteful but ultimately well worth it. Now please, shoot me if I say the word sneaky again.

9th Level Hobgoblin Feats:

- **Cantorian Rejuvenation** ★★ You spend two actions to gain twenty-four hit points on average: about exactly as much as a single strike from an even-leveled creature at this level. It adds twelve more hit points at 15th level, which is exactly enough to boost it to taking a single hit at that level as well. At any other level, monsters will probably undo your effort in one hit. The two-action cost is a significant hurdle, but so long as you can make at least one attack on the round you can use this it will be worth considering. You might be better off using those actions to run away, take cover, or otherwise proactively defend yourself.
- **Fell Rider** ★ Your construct does not qualify for the benefits of this feat. Even if your GM was willing to make an exception, your construct does not have a support benefit with which to use it.
- **Pride in Arms** ★★ Whenever an ally downs an enemy, you can give them a tiny amount of temporary hit points as a reaction. The temporary hit points might be paltry, but you're handing them out as a reaction and they are triggered by something that happens in every single fight involving more than one creature. There is also no limit on how often you can use this feat. Over the course of an adventuring day, it adds up. Most importantly, unlike Cantorian Rejuvenation it does not undermine your action economy. Unfortunately, the temporary hit points only last until the end of the target's next turn. They will go to waste if the surviving enemies don't target your ally on that turn.
- **Squad Tactics** ★★★★ / ★★★ / ★★ / ★ The more polearms on your side of the battlefield, the better this ancestry feat is. If none of your party members use reach weapons, this is red. For each reach weapon wielded by your party (including you), improve this feat's rating by a color grade. With three or more reach weapons on your side, off-guard enemies will be constant. It works well with backstabber weaponry, so you should consider adding backstabber to your polearm with the inconspicuous appearance weapon modification.

13th Level Hobgoblin Feats:

- **Can't Fall Here** ★★★ You give any ally adjacent to you the equivalent of orc ferocity. The inventor is likely to be in melee with allies. Choose this feat if your party includes characters with useful auras, such as champions and divine spellcasters.
- **Formation Master** ★★★ This is a useful feat if your party is willing to play ball. I'd be most inclined to take it with a holy champion on the same team, as you and your allies should generally want to stick near them regardless.
- **War Conditioning** ★★ You gain an impressive climb speed or swim speed. By this level you should have vertical mobility solved in some way, and while a 20-foot climb speed is impressive you still need two hands to climb. Even if you supplement it with Combat Climber, your weapon is likely two-handed. If you did take Combat Climber and are using a one-handed build with Tamper, a free-hand weapon modification, or a one-handed ranged weapon like a bow, consider this feat green instead.
- **We March On** ★ I can't help but chuckle at the thought of anyone choosing this. I wouldn't even spend a first level feat to get forty extra minutes of power walking.

17th Level Hobgoblin Feats:

- **Azaersi's Roads** ★★ A bog-standard ancestral plane shift feat.
- **Cantorian Restoration** ★★★ If an ally dies within 60 feet of you, you can use a reaction to restore them to life instantly and give them a chunk of hit points.
- **Rallying Cry** ★★★★ You give all of your allies temporary hit points equal to your level and quicken every single one. The bigger your party the better this feat, but even in a typical party of four this is amazing.

Kholo ★★★★

Kholo (formerly gnolls) make for amazing melee inventors. Their feats and features are especially well suited to power suit armor innovators. The wisdom penalty of their default ability score array isn't a complete dealbreaker because the abilities it boosts are strength and intelligence. You still might consider using alternate boost because wisdom is critical to many checks like perception and will saves. If you choose to leave your wisdom low, be certain to become proficient in stealth and use it at every opportunity. Stealth is the most reliable way to bypass using perception for initiative.

Kholo Heritages:

- **Ant** ★★★ Becoming small size does make the ant kholo a better at being a construct pilot, but that build doesn't play to their ancestry's strengths. This heritage also gives a bonus to deception checks made to feign innocence. This is only useful if you actually commit crimes, so take that into account before committing.
- **Cave** ★★★ Darkvision.
- **Dog** ★★★ You can improve your movement speed if your hands are completely free. It's better than the ratfolk version because kholo can get one heck of a bite attack, but you're still losing a shield to use it. Also, hyenas aren't canines at all -they just convergently evolved to look like dogs- so this name is a complete misnomer.

- **Great** ★★★★ This heritage is the best reason to play a kholo. You get extra hit points and a perpetual circumstance bonus to shove and trip. This bonus is redundant with the bonus of the muscular exoskeleton modification, but that just means you're free to pick some other modification. The speed boost is recommended.
- **Sweetbreath** ★★ You get some diplomacy bonuses.
- **Witch** ★★ You get a cantrip and some minor deception bonuses.

1st Level Kholo Feats:

- **Ask the Bones** ★★★★ Once per day you can recall knowledge as a free action. You get a bonus on the check if the source of the bone you carry was knowledgeable about the subject. To my frustration, there is no written guidance as to what subjects your ancestor was knowledgeable about. For all I know, you could invent a backstory about a genius ancestor who studied everything to get the bonus on every check.
- **Crunch** ★★★★ Crunch makes your jaws strike equal to the best one-handed weapons and giving it the grapple trait. Doing this on a great kholo secures easy bonuses to three of the best athletics checks in the game: shove, trip, and grapple. For anything else, they can use a free hand.
- **Hyena Familiar** ★★ You get a hyena familiar, but it will never get more than the default two abilities. This severely curtails its options. I'd be most inclined to give it manual dexterity and independent, then hand it a healing consumable and tell it to administer it if I ever fall unconscious.
- **Kholo Weapon Familiarity** ★ You get access to a spirit thresher. It's an advanced copy of the greataxe with an extra damage type. The idea of spending a feat to get the versatile trait is laughable.
- **Pack Hunter** ★★ You get a bonus to aid checks.
- **Sensitive Nose** ★★★ You get an imprecise sense with a solid range. You already have hearing as an imprecise sense, but most creatures lack the means to take precautions against scent. Hearing can be foiled by normal stealth checks.

5th Level Kholo Feats:

- **Absorb Strength** ★★ You get some temporary hit points when you spend an action in battle while standing next to a dead enemy. It doesn't hold a candle to the Cat Nap feat, which provides the same amount of temporary hit points, with the same frequency, with a longer duration, at a lower level, without the strict situational requirements, and no mid-battle action cost, but it's alright.
- **Affliction Resistance** ★★★ You get some bonuses against disease and poison.
- **Distant Cackle** ★ You get ventriloquism as an innate spell. You don't have the spellcasting proficiency needed to capitalize on it.
- **Pack Stalker** ★★★ Bypass the need for a high stealth skill for both yourself and an ally provided you stick to difficult terrain. It's a good way to stay sneaky with the moderate dexterity of a melee build. You can eventually hide your entire party at high level.
- **Left-Hand Blood** ★★★ Add some persistent poison damage to your next strike as an action. You can do so once per hour.

- **Rabid Sprint ★★** Move even faster for two actions when you have your hands free. As with its prerequisite, it's only useful to unarmed armor innovators.

9th Level Kholo Feats:

- **Ambush Hunter ★★★** You can scout and avoid notice at the same time. Handy if your GM uses the exploration mode of play. It's a great way to improve your initiative through stealth.
- **Breath Like Honey ★** You get enthrall as an innate spell. You don't have the spellcasting proficiency needed to capitalize on it. You also get a boost to diplomacy.
- **Grandmother's Wisdom ★★★** You can cast augury twice per day. Seeing the future is always handy.
- **Laughing Gnoll ★★★** Pilot builds are the most inclined to use demoralization but they won't be able to benefit from the legendary proficiency effect of Battle Cry. It is still useful because you can retrain Intimidating Glare and get free demoralization checks at the start of battle.

13th Level Kholo Feats:

- **Ancestor's Rage ★** Standard ancestry battle form. You can only choose canine form, which is funny because hyenas are more closely related to cats.
- **Bonekeeper's Bane ★★★** A creature that starts its turn near you becomes worse at attacking for as long as it remains near you.

17th Level Kholo Feats:

- **First to Strike, First to Fall ★★** Inventors have the worst initiative in the game and won't be able to use this ability much. It requires you to target an enemy that hasn't acted yet. It's best for ranged builds that have heavily invested in stealth and regularly use it for initiative, for which this rating improves one step. It has great synergy with the Ambush Hunter feat at ninth level.
- **Impaling Bone ★** Standard ancestry offensive spellcasting.
- **Legendary Laugh ★** A big boon for demoralization builds, but only pilots are likely to have the charisma needed to use it. Unfortunately, even pilots have likely abandoned demoralization in favor of Lock On, Scare to Death, or both by this level.

Kitsune ★★

Kitsune don't have any synergy with the inventor. Their only locked ability boost is to charisma, meaning they must sacrifice either their intelligence or their primary offensive ability score. They don't excel at any particular innovation and are highly reliant on innate spellcasting in their heritage feats.

There is still some value to be found, however small. Those looking to use their charisma for demoralization could try to use the Dark Fields Kitsune heritage as a large construct pilot or ranged weapon innovator. Like other ancestries, a Frozen Wind Kitsune could use the Variable Core inventor feat to power their equipment with cold damage and resist their self-damage. Almost all of their feats are reliant on deception, spellcasting, and shapeshifting, all of which is of limited value to a non-magical, gear-reliant, modest charisma class like the inventor.

Kobold ★★★

The kobold has a constitution flawed array that boosts charisma. Ordinarily I would also recommend the pilot build to a small size character with a charisma boost, but the kobold's fragility works against it. They're likely best deployed with a bow and a drone-style construct. Using alternate boost is recommended for any other builds.

Kobold Heritages:

- **Caveclimber ★★★** You can climb without hands. This allows ranged weapon users to climb up a wall and shoot from safety. You'll still need to make an athletics check to climb, so decent strength and athletics is encouraged. For that reason, it has great synergy with weapons that have the propulsive, kickback, or ranged trip traits due to their shared emphasis on strength. Weapon innovators are able to add ranged trip to any thrown or ranged weapon, though the rope shot modification used to add it to ranged weaponry is partially redundant with this heritage.

  The only impediment to this heritage is that it will often fail you in civilized or interior environments, in which smoother worked stone and low ceilings might inhibit your ability to escape melee range. Your default speed is also too low to reliably escape from melee in a single action. Unfortunately, the caveclimber kobold has no way to gain a climb speed.
- **Cavernstalker ★★★** It is unfortunate that this feature is locked to a heritage rather than a typical ancestry climb speed feat, and thus incompatible with caveclimber. If for whatever reason you do not wish to use caveclimber but still want to climb, this is a fine pick.
- **Dragonscaled ★★** Four extra hit points and bonuses against specific effects. The hit points are welcome at first level but rapidly become irrelevant. It's great for low-level one-shots but outclassed otherwise.
- **Elementalheart ★★★★** Standard ancestry damage resistance. Pick fire.
- **Spellhorn ★★★** Arcane cantrip of your choice. Take shield for best results. This can also lead to the dragon disciple archetype for those interested.
- **Strongjaw ★★** This unarmed attack is legitimately impressive, and if it were not shackled to a frail kobold I would recommend it heartily. As is, to gain real benefit from this heritage you would need to be a power suit armor innovator, and thus expose yourself to substantial risk. If you are determined to be a power suit kobold and work against the constitution penalty, you can consider this green.
- **Tunnelflood ★★** You don't need a swim speed so badly that you'd lock in your heritage to get it.
- **Venomtail ★★★** This tail toxin is noticeably better than other ancestral poisons, such as the Venomous Anadi. It is best deployed when you have the actions to do so and are near certain of a hit.

1st Level Kobold Feats:

- **Cringe ★★★★** Reduce all critical damage using your reaction. A great feat for a fragile class with little use for its reaction. The big draw is its complete lack of a

frequency limit. Its only flaw is its mental trait, which prevents it from working against mindless creatures.

- **Draconic Sycophant** ★★ Cute, but dragons are too rare for this to matter with any frequency.
- **Dragon's Presence** ★★★★ Your will saving throws are pretty good, so this will work in your favor more than it works against you. It also has pleasant synergy with the expected kobold inventor build, which relies on demoralizing foes before shooting them.
- **Kobold Breath** ★★★ The damage is a bit on the low side, but you can use it every few rounds rather than once per day. Figure out how many creatures you personally need to make using this the mathematically superior option and have at it. This is best chosen by a kobold who did not choose to become fire resistant, because fire is a terrible damage type.
- **Kobold Weapon Familiarity** ★★ A damage-focused weapon innovator could use a tricky pick as their innovation, but I'd only recommend doing so with a large number of melee allies with which to capitalize on its backstabber trait. Like most one-handed weapons it is best used with either a shield or inventor feats like Tamper and Gadget Specialist. The flying talon's low damage works against it, but it has myriad traits and might be useful to a subterfuge suit innovator with a very specific plan in mind.
- **Scamper** ★★★★ If you start your action next to an enemy, you can run away from them more quickly and gain a bonus to armor class against any reactive strikes they might have. This provides a good option for ranged inventors as it helps them kite when it matters most.
- **Slither** ★★ Squeezing is super important you guys, no really.
- **Snare Setter** ★★★ You certainly have the crafting necessary to take advantage of this feat. The real draw is getting access to three unique kobold snares.

5th Level Inventor Feats:

- **Ally's Shelter** ★★★ Use an adjacent ally's saving throw modifier instead of your own. This feat's rating can vary wildly depending on your build and those of your allies. Seeing as the inventor's saves are ever so slightly below average, I'll hand this a blanket green rating but evaluate your own circumstances before choosing it.
- **Duck!** ★ Huge creatures aren't that common, especially at the level you can choose this feat. If your campaign is about dragon slaying, boost this feat's rating as appropriate.
- **Friend of the Family** ★ You get some bonuses to charisma skills an inventor is ill-suited to using. Boost its rating a step or two for pilot builds.
- **Grovel** ★★★★ Grovel allows you to feint at range, making it incredibly useful to ranged weapon innovators with the advanced rangefinder modification. If you have decided to play a social inventor, this feat allows you to branch out from demoralization to deception.
- **Snare Genius** ★★★★ You gain free snares and can prepare three per day for free. For the price of a fifth level ancestry feat, that is pretty great.
- **Winglet** ★★ Though worded oddly, this feat effectively gives you the benefits of the Powerful Leap and an inferior version of the Quick Jump feat. You don't need both of

them, so you might as well have just chosen the one you wanted back at level one. It serves as a prerequisite to some unusual flight feats.

9th Level Kobold Feats:

- **Between the Scales** ★★ Sadly, it is far easier for you to get the backstabber trait from your weapon modifications than it is to attain it through this feat. If you are trying to make the power suit bite build work for you, this does at least apply to your unarmed strikes.
- **Briar Battler** ★★★ You can always take cover in difficult terrain. Cover only you can use is very nice: it is guaranteed not to get in your way and will only serve to protect you.
- **Close Quarters** ★★ If you have a large number of small party members this could conceivably matter once a campaign.
- **Dragonblood Paragon** ★★★★ All four of the features improved by this feat are worth enhancing.
- **Dragon's Breath** ★★★ Another fine improvement to kobold breath, albeit at the cost of less frequent use. It is best used by those with cone-shaped breath attacks, as the extra distance of the line rarely nets additional targets.
- **Evolved Spellhorn** ★★★ Pick any two arcane spells you want, one first level and the other second level. Sure Strike and Tailwind.
- **Fleeing Shriek** ★★★ Deal some damage to everything around you and book it. It doesn't provoke reactive strikes from creatures that fail their save against the damage. It's a great pick for ranged builds because it gives you a sound exit strategy when surrounded by a mob of enemies, if somewhat redundant with the explode action as a blast.
- **Snare Commando** ★★★ The kobold gets yet another reason to invest in a charismatic ranged build, becoming able to create a diversion or demoralize a creature that triggers a snare.
- **Winglet Flight** ★★★★ It's no secret this is outclassed by the same-level permanent flight feats offered by avian ancestries. I may not be a fan of deliberately unbalanced options, but this is still flight and an incredible repositioning tool on those grounds. It's way better than the other feats available at this level and a great boon to all builds lacking in mobility.

13th Level Kobold Feats:

- **Imperial Dragon Potion** ★★★★ Get a free **greater** potion every day. That's a level seventeen potion every day for a level thirteen feat. The potion's DC is 37. At level twelve. This is most likely a mistake; it was only clarified as a greater potion in Pathfinder Society. They most likely meant for it to be moderate. Expect errata to come for this feat sooner or later.
- **Kaiju's Footfalls** ★★★ Enlarge yourself twice per day, getting more reach and damage in exchange for worse armor class. You can also try to knock enemies prone if you land next to them. Use the Gadget Specialist inventor feat to get blast boots by which to leap around the map and trigger the effect with every move.
- **Resplendent Spellhorn** ★★★ Pick two more arcane spells of 3rd and 4th rank.

- **Tumbling Diversion ★★** You can combine tumble through and create a diversion. The inventor isn't well-poised to take advantage of these benefits and doesn't need to tumble through all that often. A fine feat, but not for this class.
- **Vicious Snares ★★★** Your snares deal extra damage.

17th Level Kobold Feats:

- **Benefactor's Majesty ★★★** You get some temporary hit points and become very difficult to target with hostile actions. It's a solid capstone for a glass-cannon class like the inventor, as it will mitigate your limited defenses.

Lizardfolk ★★★

Lizardfolk have the dubious honor of being the only humanoid ancestry to suffer an intelligence penalty. You'll always use alternate boost to ignore it.

A power suit armor innovator can achieve good results with the muscular exoskeleton modification. The lizardfolk bite attack is second only to that of the kholo. Because they will also be enhanced by handwraps of mighty blows, your claws might even come in handy from time to time when you absolutely must land a follow-up attack. Viewed holistically rather than on an individual basis,

The final, most unorthodox lizardfolk build relies on its cliffscale heritage. If you prioritize your physical ability scores and accept an intelligence score of just fourteen, you could attempt to exploit its wall-clinging abilities to strike from safety. Thanks to its high speed, low-level climb feat it can shoot from secure positions remarkably easily. It would outperform any other heritage in that role if it were not for its intelligence flaw.

Regardless of your build, you might ask your GM if you can use the optional flaw rules to drop your charisma and either your constitution or wisdom in exchange for intelligence.

Lizardfolk Heritages:

- **Bakuwa ★★** Get a natural equivalent to a breastplate that you can sleep in. It also has aquadynamic, negating the armor penalty for swim checks, but you have no business choosing this heritage if you don't even meet the strength score to carry your own skin.
- **Cliffscale ★★★★** You can climb without hands. This allows ranged weapon users to climb up a wall and shoot from safety. You'll still need to make an athletics check to climb, so decent strength and athletics is encouraged. For that reason, it has great synergy with weapons that have the propulsive, kickback, or ranged trip traits due to their shared emphasis on strength. Weapon innovators are able to add ranged trip to any thrown or ranged weapon, though the rope shot modification used to add it to ranged weaponry is partially redundant with this heritage.

  The only impediment to this heritage is that it will often fail you in civilized or interior environments, in which smoother worked stone and low ceilings might inhibit your ability to escape melee range. Your default speed is also too low to reliably escape from melee in a single action. Fortunately, this heritage also has a follow-up feat which dramatically improves its function.

- **Cloudleaper** ★★★ Immunity to fall damage is a powerful bonus that opens up new avenues of movement.
- **Frilled** ★ This heritage normally ranks among the best available to lizardfolk. Unfortunately, a lizardfolk inventor does not have the ability score boosts needed to bolster their charisma to the point where demoralization is practical.
- **Makari** ★ You get your choice of two mediocre cantrips.
- **Sandstrider** ★★★★ You get fire resistance equal to half your level and treat environmental heat as a step less severe. This feature nullifies the inventor's self-damage. Lizardfolk might use overdrive less than other inventors due to their low intelligence, but unstable actions are far more likely to hurt you than overdrive is so this feature's rating is largely unchanged. While some prefer to save up for a charm of resistance and nullify the damage almost entirely, I see value in never spending money to upgrade the rings. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.
- **Unseen** ★★★ You can change your color like a chameleon. You get a significant bonus to stealth checks.
- **Wetlander** ★★ You gain a swim speed. The inventor has numerous means of gaining a swim speed if it actually comes up.
- **Woodstalker** ★★ You can take cover anywhere in the woods. You can also automatically pass stealth checks in woodland difficult terrain. If your campaign is set in a classic fantasy landscape, the bonuses can be fairly reliable. As you level, the environments you adventure in often become more extreme and less mundane. I wouldn't expect this to stay as helpful in the later stages of your career.

1st Level Lizardfolk Feats:

- **Bone Magic** ★★★ Learn an occult or primal cantrip. This also determines the tradition of your other lizardfolk spellcasting feats.
- **Consult the Stars** ★★★ You gain an adjustable trained skill. Unlike some other ancestral roaming skill proficiencies, you can set it as a ten-minute activity rather than at the start of the day. However, it must be a mental skill. An inventor has plenty of trained skills and isn't likely to need this feat, but it can be helpful from time to time. First level is the right cost for it.
- **Crocodile's Twin** ★★ Get a tiny crocodile as a familiar. It's also your literal sibling, which seems weird.
- **Lightning Tongue** ★ You can retrieve objects from slightly further away. It is as useful as it sounds.
- **Marsh Runner** ★ This will matter once a campaign.
- **Parthenogenic Hatchling** ★★ You starve more slowly and gain some handy bonuses against diseases. The first bonus will never matter but the second might.
- **Razor Claws** ★★★ This is a good choice for power suit armor innovators looking to make up for their lost overdrive damage, but only after getting Sharp Fangs first. If you have both you can make a jaws strike with your first attack and a claws strike with your second.

- **Reptile Rider** ★ You don't need this feat unless you coordinate with your whole party to get mounts in a hexploration game.
- **Reptile Speaker** ★ You don't have the charisma needed to use this feat.
- **Sharp Fangs** ★★★★ The only ancestral unarmed attack better than this one is the kholo's.
- **Tail Whip** ★★ Sharp Fangs and Razor Claws are both better choices than this feat.

5th Level Lizardfolk Feats:

- **Envenom Fangs** ★★ Add some poison damage to your next fangs strike. Poison is a bad damage type, but the fangs are so good that getting this bonus on occasion won't hurt.
- **Flexible Tail** ★★ Your tail can perform simple actions, but it can't hold items or perform any checks. This feat is mostly useful for opening doors with your hands full.
- **Gecko's Grip** ★★★★ This feat gives Cliffscale heritage lizardfolk a climb speed of fifteen feet, enabling you to ascend most surfaces without any check quickly enough to escape the reach of most medium creatures. When you do need to make a check, you receive a massive circumstance bonus due to your climb speed. In an interior dungeon environment, you shouldn't spend any time on the ground. Let your party trigger the traps and take melee attacks while you rain down fire from the walls: odds are they can take more punishment than you can.
- **Guided by the Stars** ★★★★ Once per day you can roll twice and take the better result on a skill check or saving throw. If you can see stars you also get a small bonus. This is exceptionally useful for making sure that your athletic maneuvers land or your overdrive check succeeds.
- **Iruxi Glide** ★★ The raw effect of this feat is unlikely to matter. When you fall, you'd usually rather hit the ground quickly so that you can take the actions you want to. Your GM might allow you to get creative with it: for example, if you attempt to use an ally's magical wind spells to launch yourself skyward.
- **Iruxi Unarmed Cunning** ★★ Gain the brawling critical specialization effect for your myriad unarmed attack options.
- **Shed Tail** ★★ Once per week when a creature grabs you, you can rip your own tail off to immediately escape and stride away. For the week afterwards you suffer balance penalties. The effect is impressive, reliable, and powerful, but the once a week frequency and the prerequisite Tail Whip feat keep it just shy of a green rating.
- **Swift Swimmer** ★★ You gain a swim speed, or a faster swim speed if your heritage already gave you a swim speed. The inventor can usually get a swim speed when it needs to.
- **Tongue Disarm** ★ An inventor interested in disarming at reach with no free hands is likely already able to do so via a polearm with entangling form or a ranseur.

9th Level Lizardfolk Feats:

- **Ancestral Form** ★ Standard ancestry battle form.
- **Bone Caller** ★★★ You can summon dinosaurs to serve as messengers or mounts. This is a handy pair of utility spells.

- **Dangle ★** If you were interested in shooting from a wall, you could have done so from level one with the appropriate heritage. It would have been a tough sell as a first level feat. As a ninth level feat this is sorely lacking.
- **Feet to Fins ★** Cast feet to fins as a free action when you enter water. It's overlevelled and you could just take Swift Swimmer to get a swim speed without crippling your land speed.
- **Read the Stars ★★★** If you have astrology lore or chose occultism as your primary magical recall knowledge skill, this allows the GM to give you hints.
- **Terrain Advantage ★★★★** Creatures around you are off-guard if in difficult terrain. At fifteenth level, an armor innovator can choose automated impediments to make all terrain around them difficult terrain, thus keeping their enemies permanently off-guard.

13th Level Lizardfolk Feats:

- **Bone Investiture ★** You gain access to a battle form in which you cannot use your equipment-based inventor abilities.
- **Ferry Through Waves ★★** If your party's nerd wizard insisted on not taking athletics this will help you move them through water.
- **Iruxi Spirit Strike ★★** Your unarmed strikes all gain a free ghost touch rune. This is a bit high level for its effect, but it can still be a lifesaver and won't take up a rune slot. Consider checking to see if your GM will let you take the uncommon Spirit Coffin iruxi feat for the same effect at first level.
- **Primal Rampage ★★★** You gain two very useful buff spells. This borders on a blue rating, especially because you can compress their actions to cast them both at once (though you usually don't need or want to).

17th Level Lizardfolk Feats:

- **Fossil Rider ★** Offensive spellcasting.
- **Scion Transformation ★★** You become permanently enlarged. This gives you more reach and damage at the cost of worse mobility and defense. To mitigate the latter issue, this feat also throws in a few extra hit points. It is still lackluster as a capstone feat.

Merfolk ★

Like Azarketi, but with the flaws exaggerated.

Minotaur ★★★★

One of the many super-powered ancestries released in Howl of the Wild is the minotaur. Though not quite on the level of the awakened animal or centaur that it released alongside, it's still a powerful ancestry by any reasonable standard. The minotaur must also contend with its large size, though like the centaur this flaw can be circumvented with the proper heritage.

You might expect a minotaur to be well-suited to a melee weapon or power suit innovation. You'd be right, as the minotaur has plenty of great feats for entering and staying in melee. It even outright poaches class feats from the fighter and barbarian lists and turns them into ancestry feats.

The power suit is particularly well-suited to using the minotaur's powerful horn strikes, which come pre-loaded with the highest possible damage of any ancestral unarmed attack. At time of writing, the minotaur is the only ancestry to receive such an attack with no supplementary feat investment. While other ancestries -such as the centaur- can ultimately achieve more powerful unarmed strikes, minotaur horns are the strongest ancestral attack before such costs are factored in.

That all said, minotaur have a surprising amount of synergy with the subterfuge suit. They possess a handful of incredible stealth feats that they find difficult to use due to their large size making it difficult to find cover for hiding. However, inventors can use a subterfuge suit to hide without cover or create appropriate cover through the use of smoke fans created by Gadget Specialist. They're shockingly capable of stealth should you build them for it.

They have the least synergy with the construct, as they're too large for pilot builds and don't have any particular value to the drone build. Still, their supreme capability and surprising flexibility nets them a fantastic rating.

Minotaur Heritages:

- **Ghost Bull** ★ A pair of extremely niche abilities; a cantrip and a bonus against confusion.
- **Glacier** ★★★ You gain cold resistance. If you want to be resistant to your own damage type, you can use Variable Core to change your damage type to cold.
- **Littlehorn** ★★★★ Reclaim the advantages of being medium size and make your horn agile for a minor damage drop. Either bonus would have been worthwhile on its own. It's a great heritage for those looking to capitalize on overdrive's flat damage through multiple attacks, and is especially useful if you can get an action compression feat from somewhere that incorporates multiple attacks; for example, Monk's Flurry from the monk archetype.
- **Roaming** ★★ A minor bonus to survival and mobility in a specific type of terrain. Boost its rating one step if your campaign is heavily themed around a particular type of terrain.
- **Slabsoul** ★★★ A bog-standard ancestral area damage ability. It is indirectly boosted over those of similar ancestries by the minotaur's large size, which makes it cover more area.
- **Stalker** ★★ You can hide without cover in a certain type of terrain. This mitigates issues with trying to be sneaky while large size, but the only inventor with exceptional stealth synergy is the subterfuge suit innovator, which can get the same bonus regardless of terrain type at 7th level. If your campaign is heavily focused on a single type of terrain, boost this heritage's rating by one step and consider it a means of freeing up that modification slot for more speed boosts.

1st Level Minotaur Feats:

- **Artisanal Crafter** ★★ A generic ancestry crafting feat, but you can't choose the most useful option: alchemy. Without that option, it accomplishes little.
- **Cattle Speech** ★ The odds of a cow being able to tell you anything useful are low.

- **Eye for Masonry** ★★ A mediocre variant of the already-mediocre dwarven ancestry feat Stonemason's Eye.
- **Friendly Nudge** ★ Move an ally out of the way. It'll still advance your multiple attack penalty, so you might not be able to do much once you do. You can also only shove them directly away from you, so you can't push them to the side so as to get to a monster. I'm not seeing the value.
- **Keen Nose** ★★★ You gain imprecise scent with a 30-foot radius. Having scent can bypass the need for a perception check to determine which square a creature is in, which in turn means not relying on your terrible perception.
- **Minotaur Weapon Familiarity** ★ There are no minotaur weapons.
- **Pantheon Magic** ★★★ Standard ancestry cantrip.

5th Level Minotaur Feats:

- **Alarming Disappearance** ★★★★ This feat is pretty ridiculous. An inventor can manufacture concealment with which to use it through greater smoke fans created through the Gadget Specialist feat. A littlehorn minotaur can achieve this sooner with a regular smoke fan. Once done, hiding creates a fear effect that has no save and affects every enemy present. The only limit is temporary immunity on creatures already affected by it. This feat is comparable to class feats like the barbarian's tenth level Terrifying Howl class feat, and it's a mere fifth level ancestry feat. It doesn't require any intimidation investment and -unlike other fear effects- targets perception; it can thus be used in scenarios other fear effects aren't effective in. All of those benefits are layered atop the standard benefits of hiding, which are themselves worthwhile. A must-pick for any subterfuge suit innovators or ranged weapon innovators.
- **Beast of Burden** ★★ Increase your bulk limits substantially. You can also rest in medium armor. The two together are decent, but not noteworthy.
- **Labyrinthine Echoes** ★★★ It doesn't start that impressive, but it scales. Once you can change your voice and throw it for up to an hour, this feat starts to look very nice.
- **Natural Orienteering** ★ Mediocre bonuses to mediocre skill checks. Track doesn't even have a critical success effect and receives no benefit from this feat. Only sense direction receives any benefit, and you need to sense direction once a campaign if you're lucky.
- **Puzzle Solver** ★★★ Make a recall knowledge check about a creature and gain a bonus to your next skill check against that creature regardless of success or failure. It's a good boon to an intelligent class like the inventor, and it has especially great synergy with the Tamper feat. Armor innovators are less inclined towards this feat, as they can get more reliable circumstance bonuses to combat skills like athletics and stealth from their armor modifications. This feat is somewhat redundant for them.
- **Stretching Reach** ★★★ Give a two-handed weapon reach. Errata immediately reigned this in by turning it into a stance rather than a perpetual bonus. Even so, spending an action to give yourself reach for an entire fight is a fine boon to have in your back pocket. It is especially good if you can get Reactive Strike from an archetype, such as a fighter multiclass archetype. The inventor has no competing stances and benefits greatly from more reliable delivery of overdrive damage. It'll also do a better job of letting you work around allies than Friendly Nudge, as you can reach over their heads to hit enemies.

9th Level Minotaur Feats:

- **Friendly Fling** ★★★★ A copy of an eighth level barbarian class feat offered as a ninth level ancestry feat is an extremely generous deal. The paltry addition of minor piercing damage on the ally thrown is borderline irrelevant unless the ally is literally dying, and it removes the need for a free hand. Unlike the class feat, you can even use it out of battle because it lacks the rage trait. I wouldn't hesitate to call this a superior feat on those grounds alone.
- **Goring Charge** ★★★★ The Sudden Charge barbarian/fighter feat, but it gives bonus bleed damage and must use your horns. The Sudden Charge feat is amazing and this feat is too. It's a shoe-in for armor innovators.
- **Siphon Torment** ★ Curses are too rare to be worth taking a feat over. You might bump its rating up a step if your campaign leans towards gothic horror, but I wouldn't.
- **Stone Passage** ★★★★ Phase through solid stone walls as if they didn't exist. It has a generous once-per-hour frequency. You can't end your movement in a wall, but it's still a damn impressive feat.

13th Level Minotaur Feats:

- **Phantom Charm** ★★ Turn a misfortune effect into a circumstance bonus once per day. Misfortune effects are pretty rare, but it's a free action that works without any check.
- **Shift the Little Ones** ★★★ An excellent choice for any melee build. Move an ally out of the way so you can stab a foe. Drop its rating one step if you are playing a littlehorn heritage minotaur, as your allies are much less likely to get in your way.
- **Threatening Pursuit** ★★ When unobserved, you can use this action to demoralize every creature in range. A fine feat to supplement Alarming Disappearance, as it can reinstate the fear that wore off between your turns, but it seems worse than the earlier ancestry feat. This feat demands actual intimidation investment, has a shorter range, happens later in the stealth process, and reveals your position. It feels like it should have been the 5th level feat and Alarming Disappearance should have been the 13th level feat. Still, it's an incredibly good feat all the same.

17th Level Minotaur Feats:

- **Begin Stampede** ★★★ Stride twice and make a horn strike. Every ally can move towards you and gets a bonus on their next attack roll. Avoid this if you prefer explosion over other unstable actions. Assuming you have a less indiscriminate unstable action ready, it's a great feat for armor innovators.
- **Into the Labyrinth** ★★★ You can cast quandary, but it has the pre-remaster flavor of an extradimensional maze and even carries over pre-remaster mechanics, like replacing the occultism check with a survival check to escape. This makes it slightly better than its origin spell, because it removes the intelligence option for escaping and replaces it with a skill very few monsters are even trained in. If an enemy is reliant on a sub-par perception score, it might stay in the maze for a couple rounds even despite your modest DC. At bare minimum, this feat removes something from the battlefield for a bit without exception, which is valuable in its own right.

Nagaji ★★

No nagaji heritages or feats are red or blue. Choose whichever other feats and features appeal to you. The only exceptions are Breath of Calamity, which is offensive spellcasting of limited worth to the inventor, and Metabolic Control, which is worthless for most games because of how trivial Pathfinder's survival systems are. Feel free to pick anything else that appeals to you. Nagaji have a decent array of unarmed attacks for either type of armor innovator, but little else about them stands out.

Ratfolk ★★★

Ratfolk have low-light vision, a boost to dexterity and intelligence, and a strength flaw. They're a natural fit for any of the three dexterity builds: ranged weapon innovation, subterfuge suit armor innovation, or construct innovation. Unfortunately, their feats are pretty awful. I recommend compensating with a versatile heritage if any are available in your campaign.

Ratfolk Heritages:

- **Deep** ★★★ Darkvision. Don't knock it, it comes up. Most versatile heritages grant this bonus, so if you are able to access them you should consider them instead.
- **Desert** ★★ You can improve your movement speed if your hands are completely free. Even in the best-case scenario they will not be free within combat, but your GM might give you occasional bonuses out of battle. You also get some other useless benefits and are penalized in cold weather.
- **Longsnout** ★★★ You gain a generous 30-foot imprecise scent, allowing you to occasionally circumvent the need for a perception check. It'd be better on an ancestry able to enter the melee to sniff out foes, but it is still pretty good for ratfolk.
- **Sewer** ★★★ Resist both diseases and poisons. This is actually really nice. Most of the time you have to choose one or the other.
- **Shadow** ★ You are slightly better at scaring animals. Also, all animals now hate you forever. Why would you do this to yourself?
- **Snow** ★★★ Snow rats get bog-standard ancestry bonuses for cold resistance. Like all other cold-resistant heritages, it is of use if you intend to take Variable Core to make your self-inflicted damage type cold.
- **Tunnel** ★★ A typical ancestry squeeze feat.

1st Level Ratfolk Feats:

- **Cheek Pouches** ★ You can store small items in your cheeks. The benefits of doing so are negligible, as they aren't especially well hidden or easy to reacquire.
- **Pack Rat** ★ This doesn't actually help you or a pack animal carry more weight, so it makes no functional difference.
- **Rat Familiar** ★★ You get a rat familiar, but it will never get more than the default two abilities. This severely curtails its options. I'd be most inclined to give it manual dexterity and independent, then hand it a health potion and tell it to administer it if I ever fall unconscious.

- **Ratspeak** ★★ You can talk to rats. If you specifically seek out rats, your GM will probably create some hiding around. Unlike many "talk to animals" feats this one can come up even in an urban campaign, which is appreciated. Due to the sheer ubiquity of rats, this is borderline green.
- **Skull Creeper** ★★ You get a free skill feat and an easy bonus to intimidation. Ratfolk don't have a charisma boost, but with an unmitigated strength flaw they might have a point or two left over for charisma. You could do much worse than this feat.
- **Tinkering Fingers** ★ You can repair items without using a repair kit. You'll be lucky if this comes up even once over a campaign.
- **Vicious Incisors** ★★★ You improve the damage of your jaws and give it the backstabber trait. As far as finesse ancestral unarmed attacks go, this is pretty dang impressive.
- **Warren Friend** ★ Odds are your backstory already covers introductions to whatever ratfolk are in your home city, and if you desperately need to fill large amounts of downtime you can just retrain into this feat and remove it when done. There is no reason to take it for a typical adventuring day.
- **Warren Navigator** ★ You don't need to buy a compass if you take this feat. Congratulations on spending a feat to save yourself one gold.

5th Level Ratfolk Feats:

- **Cornered Fury** ★★★ Any larger foe that critically hits you becomes off-guard against your attacks. Because Pathfinder does not automatically equate monster size with power, there are actually some high-threat small size monsters out there. The overwhelming majority are still bigger than you and odds are good you'll get crit a decent amount. It pairs well with backstabber weaponry, so ranged weapon innovators interested in this feat should use the advanced rangefinder modification.
- **Gnaw** ★★ You use your whole turn to deal double jaws damage to an unattended object.
- **Lab Rat** ★★★ You gain benefits against poison, which do stack with the effect of Sewer Rat. You might not need that many redundancies against poison, but this is still a good pick in general. It technically becomes redundant with your class abilities at the highest levels of play.
- **Plague Sniffer** ★ This feature won't let you know if a creature is capable of inflicting a disease, only whether or not it is sick with one. It won't even tell you anything if the disease is at the carrier stage, so this won't help you identify which allies failed their saves after an encounter. What a disappointing let-down. The restrictions placed on it killed any functionality it might have had.
- **Quick Stow** ★ The remaster made it possible to swap weapons with a single Interact action and killed what little functionality this feat had.
- **Rat Magic** ★★ You can cast animal messenger once per day. Technically this also summons a rat, if you are having trouble finding a rat to talk to with Ratspeak.
- **Ratfolk Roll** ★ I don't really see how this would matter. It certainly won't help you in combat. Maybe if you were in a chase encounter, your GM would give you some benefits for doing this.

- **Big Mouth ★** This is one bulk short of being able to store a small size collapsible construct in your cheek pouches. That wouldn't be very useful, I'm just pointing it out. Though it does brook mentioning that Fetchlings have been able to hide more bulk without chewing on it and with concealment bonuses since level five.

9th Level Ratfolk Feats:

- **Overcrowd ★** You probably don't need this even if you are running a melee build.
- **Rat Form ★★★** An inconspicuous form that you can assume as many times per day as you please. Useful for scouting or just fitting into tiny areas, and it even has just a one action casting time. What a great feat.
- **Uncanny Cheeks ★★★** Getting two of the retroactive purchase feats for one ancestry feat is pretty handy, though you'll also need the Cheek Pouches feat before you start getting anything worthwhile. Still, you can hand out saliva-coated scrolls, replacement lockpicks, potions, and talismans to your party whenever you please. The value of this is apparent, though contingent on you and your party's understanding of the game's consumable item list.

13th Level Ratfolk Feats:

- **Shinstabber ★** You can now share a space with a medium ally. This might be slightly useful on a melee build, but you are a ranged inventor. These feats certainly aren't enough to justify entering melee.
- **Skittering Sneak ★★★** You move at your full speed when sneaking. That's very handy for ranged characters.
- **Warren Digger ★★★** You gain a burrow speed. Not many ancestries get such a speed. If you are ever in trouble and standing on a surface you can burrow into, odds are this will keep you completely safe for the remainder of the fight. Very little beats total cover.

17th Level Ratfolk Feats:

- **Call the Swarm ★★★** A 30-foot burst that deals damage and continues to deal damage in the area over time. The damage is a bit low -not much more than a basic fireball- but there's no save.
- **Ratfolk Growth ★★★** Enlarge your entire party at once. It's a great damage and reach bonus for all of you. Its value sharply declines if your allies are casters, who get little from being bigger.

Samsaran ★★★★

Samsarans enjoy the same ability score boosts and penalties that dwarves do. They receive a generous base feature package that gives them bonuses to untrained skill checks, low light vision, and the ability to be raised from the dead much easier. Like dwarves, their ability score array disposes them towards ranged combat with low strength.

Samsaran Heritages:

- **Healer ★★★** You get a skill and can heal yourself more effectively.

- **Mountaineer** ★★★ Standard ancestry cold resistance. Like all other cold-resistant heritages, it is of use if you intend to take Variable Core to make your self-inflicted damage type cold.
- **Oracular** ★★★ Standard ancestry cantrip from any list besides primal.
- **Sanctuary** ★★★ Get advantage on a recall knowledge check.
- **Wilderness** ★★ You ignore difficult terrain caused by undergrowth, which is usually helpful in low-stakes random encounters far removed from dungeon environments. Still, it is reasonably common and sufficient to save it from red.

1st Level Samsaran Feats:

- **All This Will Happen Again** ★★★★ Reroll an emotion save you fail. It's much better than the usual ancestry emotion resistance because it saves you from the disastrous consequences of failure rather than the modest effects of success.
- **Elucidating Vision** ★★★ Standard ancestry darkvision.
- **Innate Understanding** ★★★ Take in tandem with the Untrained Improvisation skill feat to become effectively trained in every skill. It's a bit less useful to a high intelligence class like the inventor.
- **Remnants of the Past** ★★★ Get the scaling lore skill of whatever ancestry is most relevant to your campaign. You also get their feat list.
- **Samsara Weapon Memory** ★★★ Pick any two weapons from any other ancestry. It's the human feat Unconventional Weaponry but you get two in exchange for a slightly reduced selection. See Unconventional Weaponry for good choices.

5th Level Samsaran Feats:

- **All This Has Happened Before** ★★★★ Plus four to your initiative and you become quickened for recall knowledge checks on your first turn. Either of those benefits would have been worth a feat on its lonesome.
- **And Will Do So Once More** ★★★★ All This Will Happen Again can be used for any save.
- **Blood Life Water** ★★ Reduce the flat check to end persistent bleed damage.
- **Thousand Year Grudge** ★★ A rad feat that improves the effects of demoralization. Sadly, samsarans don't have much synergy with pilot builds and are unlikely to have the charisma needed to use it, and it's once per day.

9th Level Samsaran Feats:

- **I Will Return** ★★★★ The human feat Bounce Back, but offered four levels early with extra bonuses against death effects and a free Diehard feat.
- **Life's Blood** ★★ Hurting yourself with your inventions wasn't enough for you. This feat allows you to sacrifice your hit points to heal others an equal amount. It takes two actions and only works on adjacent creatures. Have you considered just buying healer's gloves or some soothing tonics?
- **Memory of Skill** ★★★ Once per day, you improve your proficiency in a skill for a minute.

- **Secrets of the Past ★★★★** This is a fantastic benefit for a class with your mental prowess, especially because the inventor doesn't receive any recall knowledge improvements by default that this ancestry feat would otherwise compete with.

13th Level Samsaran Feats:

- **Memory of Mastery ★★★** Use Memory of Skill once per hour.
- **Water to Water ★★★★** Teleport once per day. It's not quite as useful as the nephilim version because it uses the 4th level version and as such can't go through walls. It instead gets niche bonuses to its use while in water. It's still a 120 foot teleport which can get you out of all sorts of bad situations.

17th Level Samsaran Feats:

- **The Cycle Continues ★★★** A typical death-avoidance feature that lets you heal at zero hit points. Its only unique feature is its ability to circumvent death effects.
- **This Too Shall Pass ★★★** You can use All This Will Happen Again once per hour rather than once per day.

Tanuki ★★★

Nothing about the tanuki jumps out as especially powerful, and many of their feats rely on a good deception score. That said, nothing about them is bad either. As inventors, the only bad feats are the spellcasting feats, which aren't intended for martial characters in the first place. Take whatever you want from their list outside of the spellcasting.

Tanuki Heritages:

- **Ascetic ★★★** You get an imprecise sense with a solid range. You already have hearing as an imprecise sense, but most creatures lack the means to take precautions against scent. Hearing can be foiled by normal stealth checks. You also get flavorful but mostly irrelevant bonuses to find food.
- **Courageous ★★** You can act while fleeing and use a reaction to flee from effects that cause fear. It's a fine enough way for a ranged character to regain some distance when it triggers and borders on a green rating for such builds. A campaign about menacing enemy types like fiends could make this a bit more tempting.
- **Even-Tempered ★★★ / ★★** Standard ancestry emotion resistance.
- **Steadfast ★★★** This heritage gives you your choice of alternate forms: an easy disguise or the ability to become any tool you want. I prefer the latter for most builds, but a pilot or other unusually charismatic build might favor the former.
- **Virtuous ★★★** You become poison resistant, can eat and drink while sickened, and automatically win all drinking contests because you're immune to the negative effects of alcohol.

1st Level Tanuki Feats:

- **Everyday Form ★★★** You get a human alter-ego. Just let somebody else do the talking and you'll be fine.
- **Iron Belly ★★★** A forceful d6 unarmed attack. It's not quite as good as a d8 unarmed attack, but it's the next best thing. A power suit armor innovator will greatly enjoy using this. It's also hilarious.

- **Scorched On the Crackling Mountain** ★★★ You more readily shed persistent fire damage and get a version of orc ferocity that only works for fire damage. It's a handy stop-gap to keep your own explosions and unstable actions from killing you, but not as good as proper fire resistance.
- **Teakettle Form** ★★★ You can become any tool. It's an easy way to become manacles or a shovel when one becomes unexpectedly useful. This is my favorite tanuki feat. You'd be amazed the amount of problems you can solve with a bit of creativity.

5th Level Tanuki Feats:

- **False Priest Form** ★★ You assume the form of a priest and can use deception to recall knowledge about religion. You also get some fake divine cantrips. Maybe a pilot would use it, but I can't imagine anyone else would.
- **Hasty Celebration** ★★★ Prematurely celebrate your victories to give allies buffs. This feat is best for classes heavy on area damage because a big blast makes it very likely that at least one enemy critically fails their save and triggers it. The inventor just so happens to have a big explosion that is well worth celebrating, making them among the best martial class for use of this feat.
- **Ponpoko** ★ This feat requires spellcasting to have an effect.
- **Statue Form** ★★ You turn into a large statue that's harder to move. It's also harder to tell it's you. This feature isn't very action-effective defensively and relies on charisma for its other effects. The deception bonus is unusually generous, granted.

9th Level Tanuki Feats:

- **Many Faces** ★★ You can disguise yourself as another person using shapeshifting three times per day. Your Everyday Form provides a much lower level alternative provided it is used sparingly.
- **Mud Boat's Passage** ★ Walk on water for extremely short distances. Water walking is one of the most overvalued effects in the game. Its use-cases are extremely rare but it doesn't become available via ancestries any sooner than flight does.
- **Phantom Orchestra** ★ This feat is reliant on spellcasting and deception. Even pilots won't use deception because their construct can't take advantage of it.
- **Rolling White Bottle Form** ★★★ Becoming prone lets you crawl a couple times without provoking reactions. Knockdowns are common, so it's a pretty nice effect for preventing enemies from taking advantage of your situation.

13th Level Tanuki Feats:

- **Combined Form** ★★ Give up your own ability to act in exchange for giving an ally minor buffs as they transform into a battle form. You'd want to use this feat when you're in danger, but your ally will want to have their polymorph effect up early to get the most use out of it. It's not a bad feat, but the situation has to be right before you'd want to use it. Certain party compositions, such as a party containing a mutagenist or untamed druid, will value this more highly due to their greater transformation frequency. Boost the rating as appropriate to your cirucmstances.
- **Ponpoko-pon!** ★★ A cone of surprisingly modest damage. Seeing as the inventor already has plenty of area damage, I can't recommend this alternative.

- **Splendid Illusion ★** You're not a spellcaster and enemies will easily see through your lackluster illusion.

17th Level Tanuki Feats:

- **Landscape Form ★★** Turn into a building. This feat's flavor is incredible fun but its practical application is lacking. The most practical uses I can think of are turning into a bridge for your allies to walk across or hiding your allies beneath a discreet hill. If you feel creative and have a permissive GM, you might bump the rating of this feat up a bit. For the most part, I find the challenges answered by this feat are only trouble for adventurers of much lower level.
- **Start the Festival! ★★★** Generate a bunch of partying tanuki in an area that deals damage to foes. The damage is low for its level but completely unavoidable. Enemies have no choice but to leave the area or take it.

Tengu ★★★★

Tengu are a powerful heritage. They get low-light vision and a respectable unarmed beak attack. Their ancestral hit points are also quite low. Between that and the dexterity bonus, you might prefer a ranged weapon build. This preference is not particularly ironclad, and a tengu is perfectly capable in the melee if they so choose.

A tengu is somewhat unique in that they can use their Class DC as their innate spellcasting DC through the Tengu Feather Fan feat, which radically alters the usual assessment regarding offensive spellcasting.

All of this is largely irrelevant. Tengu are an avian species and were afforded superior flight progression as of Player Core 2, culminating in permanent flight at ninth level. The optimal choice is always to follow the flight progression feats to get that bonus. No matter how interesting the Tengu Feather Fan feat line is, it has been made irrelevant by flight.

Tengu Heritages:

- **Dogtooth ★★★** Double down on your beak by making it equivalent to a rapier. It still isn't enough to justify using a dexterity melee build from an optimization perspective, but at this point it is a good choice even for strength-based power suit innovators looking to retain a free hand.
- **Jinxed ★★** A collection of bonuses against several esoteric conditions. It would probably be of greater use in a horror-themed campaign, in which doomed, curses, and misfortune are more common.
- **Mountainkeeper ★** Offensive spellcasting is of limited worth to the inventor. Offensive spellcasting that only works on select creature types even more so. Improve its rating to yellow if you take Tengu Feather Fan at fifth level, and again to green if your campaign is undead themed.
- **Skyborn ★★★★** Immunity to fall damage is a powerful bonus that opens up new avenues of movement. This heritage also grants access to superior flight progression, and is therefore a must-pick.

- **Stormtossed** ★★★ You gain resistance to electricity damage and can see through rain and fog. You can use this to resist your self-damage by using Variable Core to turn your damage type into electricity. It also comes with a nice visibility rider, which is better than the usual environmental protection bonus offered by cold and fire resistant ancestries.
- **Taloned** ★ You gain a useless unarmed attack.
- **Wavediver** ★★ You gain a swim speed, which is only useful if your campaign is sufficiently nautical.

1st Level Tengu Feats:

- **Mariner's Fire** ★ You gain a mediocre offensive cantrip. Improve its rating to yellow if you also take Tengu Feather Fan. It would be best chosen by a character other than a weapon innovator, as weapon innovators already have easy access to fire damage thanks to their overdrive. Non-weapon innovators might appreciate being able to target fire weaknesses via a means other than explode from time to time.
- **One-Toed Hop** ★★ The odds of this mattering are close to zero, but it does have synergy with Greater or Major Blast Boots, which massively improve your leap actions. As such, this feat is a good pick for those with Gadget Specialist.
- **Scavenger's Search** ★★ Simple bonuses to search for objects.
- **Squawk!** ★★ You aren't likely to be trying to make these checks in the first place, but if you are it is nice to have a fallback plan when you screw up.
- **Storm's Lash** ★★ You gain the best offensive cantrip in the game, but it is still an offensive cantrip powered by your charisma. Improve its rating to green if you take Tengu Feather Fan.
- **Tengu Weapon Familiarity** ★ None of these weapons are worth the feat, especially considering the power of your beak.
- **Uncanny Agility** ★★ You get a skill feat that rarely comes up and can step into difficult terrain.
- **Waxed Feathers** ★★ You improve your saving throws against water effects.

5th Level Tengu Feats:

- **Dogfang Bite** ★★ Your beak is d6, deadly d8, and versatile S, giving it the best traits of a shortsword and a rapier. This is a good fit for those interested in using the muscular exoskeleton modification of the power suit innovator along with a shield.
- **Eat Fortune** ★★ Fortune effects are very rare on monsters. It is typically players that use them, making it difficult to justify choosing this feat outside of PvP.
- **Long-Nosed Form** ★★ Even flawed as it is, having an instant disguise can always be pretty handy. This is doubly true if your companions can do the talking. I might even be inclined to spend most of my time in this form, if I were not reliant on my beak. Doing so allows you to interact with the world in an overt way, then revert to an arguably less conspicuous true form.
- **Magpie Snatch** ★★ This is handy for picking up your weapon after falling unconscious, and then beating a hasty retreat. It has little use outside of that circumstance, but it can be handy for snatching a plot artifact every once in a while.

You'll need a free hand, so it fits well with Tamper builds or a weapon innovation with the integrated gauntlet modification.

- **Soaring Flight** ★★★★ Superior ancestral flight feat, except that it is heritage-locked.
- **Tengu Feather Fan** ★★★ The Tengu Feather Fan would be easy to dismiss as offensive spellcasting, but it has a unique caveat: all ancestral cantrips and certain spells cast through the feather fan can use your Class DC. This massively improves the inventor's access to innate spellcasting, because your class DC scales reasonably well and off of intelligence. This feat also does not distinguish between tengu feats and those of versatile heritages. Any heritage-based ancestral cantrip can be converted through this feat, thus granting you easy access to offensive cantrips of all sorts.
- **Tengu Weapon Study** ★ You don't need this feat.

9th Level Tengu Feats:

- **Eclectic Sword Training** ★ You already have proficiency with anything you could get from this feat.
- **Wind God's Fan** ★★ This allows you to cast wall of wind from your fan. It is of limited use to you because you won't be able to shoot through it. Means of circumventing this penalty include ancestral cantrips and the inventor feat Megavolt, both of which are unaffected. If planned for, it can smoothly integrate with your build. It is best used along with allied spellcasters.
- **Soaring Form** ★★★★ Superior ancestry flight progression, except that it is heritage-locked.

13th Level Tengu Feats:

- **Eclectic Sword Mastery** ★ This still is not necessary.
- **Harbinger's Caw** ★★★★ Once per day, force a creature to roll twice and take the lower result on an attack or skill check.
- **Jinx Glutton** ★ Fortune and misfortune effects are too rare for this to matter.
- **Thunder God's Fan** ★★★★ You can cast a fifth rank lightning bolt with your fan, though it will not scale. At 6d12 damage, this is better than Megavolt until 14th level, and you can also activate your feather fan an additional time per day. That's two lightning bolts per day.

17th Level Tengu Feats:

- **Favor of Heaven** ★★ You can cast spirit blast. Spirit blast is a powerful offensive spell, but it is still an offensive spell. You also gain minor resistance to alignment damage, which can be helpful against certain end-bosses. Improve this feat to green if you have a Tengu Feather Fan.
- **Great Tengu Form** ★★★ You gain enlarge and fly. This is a fourth rank enlarge, meaning you gain massive reach, damage, and significantly improve your explode radius. Flight helps you deal with the mobility issues of being so big, since you can fly over the medium creatures that would otherwise impede you.
- **Hurricane Swing** ★★ When you critically hit with a slashing weapon, you can shoot a powerful lightning bolt once per day. It is reliant on critical hits.
- **Trickster Tengu** ★★ More innate spellcasting. Aerial form is okay for flight and party transport, though you might not want to fight in it due to how reliant on gear you are.

Baleful polymorph will only work on insignificant opponents due to its incapacitation trait.

Tripkee ★★

Tripkee have a strength flaw in their ability score array and are small size. Those intent on using their ability scores will find they work well as construct innovators. Poisonhide Tripkee will be the heritage you want. It provides a handy reaction that allows you to retaliate against monsters that touch you. You can gain darkvision at first level with Nocturnal Tripkee.

If you take the Gadget Specialist inventor feat you can combine a net launcher with Tenacious Net. This interesting combo helps keep enemies at range, while also making them off-guard against your ranged attacks. It is nice in combination with a weapon innovation using the advanced rangefinder modification, as it deals bonus damage to off-guard foes. This all leads into the Envenomed Edge capstone, which rewards you for critically hitting your debuffed foes. Following that specific build renders the Tripkee as fine a pick as most green ancestries, but it is quite narrow. You'll want to use a shortbow as your weapon innovation to ensure you have a hand and actions for the net launcher.

Vanara ★★★

Vanara are monkeyfolk with feats dedicated to mobility. They're best for wall-crawling ranged builds and are rivalled only by lizardfolk in that capacity.

Vanara Heritages:

- **Bandaagee ★** You ignore difficult terrain from crowds. You can go a whole campaign without seeing this benefit.
- **Lahkgyan ★★** The subterfuge suit innovator might consider this heritage, but few others will. Unlike many other ancestral unarmed attacks there are no feats with which to improve it.
- **Ragdyan ★★★** You gain a divine cantrip of your choice. Choose guidance or shield.
- **Wajaghand ★★★ / ★★** Standard ancestry emotion resistance.

1st Level Vanara Feats:

- **Canopy Sight ★★** You gain low-light vision.
- **Climbing Tail ★★★** You gain a great bonus on climb checks and don't need hands to climb. The only ancestry to receive a better climb bonus as a first level feat is the kashrishi. This is especially useful to drone construct innovators and ranged weapon innovators, who can wall-crawl while firing ranged weaponry from safety.
- **Sudden Mindfulness ★★** You gain some specific benefits against the fascinated and dazzled conditions. It's unlikely to come up.
- **Vanara Weapon Familiarity ★** Most of these weapons are common. You already have access to any you might want to use. You don't even need this feat to access the gada, as a weapon innovator could declare one their innovation without needing this feat due to its status as a common weapon.
- **Whitecape ★★** You get better balance and can step on difficult terrain.

5th Level Vanara Feats:

- **Darting Monkey** ★★★ Striking a creature automatically prevents them from flanking you until the start of your next turn or they move. That's a welcome defensive bonus to a fragile class like the inventor, and makes getting into a good explosion spot a bit safer.
- **Jungle Runner** ★★ You can ignore difficult terrain caused by plants and take cover in forests regardless of context. This feat's value is contingent on the themes of your campaign, though even in the best-case scenario it will not matter much in dungeon environments.
- **Ragdya's Revelry** ★★ Use a reaction to steal from a creature that misses you with an attack. You can't use it to disarm foes of held weapons, but you can steal backup ranged weaponry a creature has stowed. It might be helpful to keep flying or wall-climbing allies safe.
- **Skillful Climber** ★★★ You gain a ten-foot climb speed and can move your land speed when climbing trees. Removing the athletics check from the climb action makes wall-crawling much more practical for snipers using Climbing Tail.
- **Tail Snatch** ★★★ You can make disarm checks without needing a free hand. This is an excellent feat as of the remaster, which substantially bolstered the disarm action.

9th Level Vanara Feats:

- **Dangle** ★ You don't gain any benefits from hanging upside down.
- **Legendary Size** ★★ Grow and shrink once per day each. I suppose if your construct was medium sized, this could let you opt into riding it. Having enlarge in your back pocket can also spare you the need to take Titan Wrestler to use athletics checks on huge opponents.
- **Ragdya's Dance** ★★★ Use a once-per-day reaction to switch places with an adjacent creature if they fail a save. This can get you out of a flank quickly and force other enemies to spend an action chasing you around.
- **Rakshasa Ravaged** ★★ Occult magic isn't overly common, but the needs of your campaign may inflate this feat's value.

13th Level Vanara Feats:

- **Monkey Spirits** ★★★ This odd feat not only gives you the spellcasting proficiency you need to cast it, it also allows you to replace the spell's DC with your own thievery modifier for a certain use of the spell. This is a handy way to bypass the usual issues with inventor spellcasting.
- **Unbound Freedom** ★★ You gain a small chance of ignoring the controlled condition.
- **Vanara Battle Clarity** ★★★ You get the deny advantage feature of rogues and barbarians. That is very useful to a frail class like the inventor. You might not choose this if you sprung for a ranged wall-crawl build, but this is a shoe-in otherwise.

17th Level Vanara Feats:

- **Unfettering Prankster** ★★★ You and your allies can ignore difficult terrain for an hour.

Wayang ★★★

Wayang make for pretty good subterfuge suit innovators. They have feats that work well with finesse weaponry and stealth.

Wayang Heritages

- **Courtier** ★ You get performance-based skill feats and features.
- **Hermit** ★★★ Standard ancestry cantrip
- **Sailor** ★★ You can convert swim checks from athletics to acrobatics checks by balancing on the surface of the water. It's a nifty boon for dexterity builds, but too situational to be recommended outside of nautical campaigns.
- **Smith** ★★★ Once per fight you can inflict the dazzled condition on a strike. It takes one action to set up and isn't compatible with any other special strikes you have, such as the inventor's Megaton Strike.
- **Wanderer** ★★★★ Typical speed improvement. Always good.

Wayang 1st Level Feats:

- **Aegis of the Dissolution** ★★ Modest bonuses to saving throws against effects that often don't rely on saving throws at all.
- **Dance of the Mousedeer** ★ This feat doesn't make investment in performance a good idea.
- **Inherit the Dreaming Heirloom** ★★★★ You get once-per-day training in one of two lore skills and can cast guidance all day. Seeing as guidance is one of the best cantrips in the game, getting it with the additional bonus of a free lore skill is excellent.
- **Refined Motion in Darkness** ★★★ This is a powerful bonus to in-combat stealth. Shoot, hide, sneak. Try to stick with that order to maximize the time the enemy spends not knowing your location. On following turns, repeat with the added benefits of enemies being off-guard. This makes using the subtle dampeners armor modification much more practical, and is blue for those who take it.
- **Wayang Weapon Familiarity** ★ You are already proficient in all these weapons. At best a subterfuge suit innovator could use it to get the critical specialization of some finesse weapons.

Wayang 5th Level Feats:

- **Dissolution's Clarity** ★ You don't have focus points.
- **Shadowplay** ★★ After striking, you can tumble through the foe to flank with your own shadow. This only works when you have a full three actions free to dedicate to offense, though an armor or weapon innovator can work around that through Clockwork Celerity. This feat is best for subterfuge suit innovators, for whom its rating improves one step. Other innovators are too strength-focused to make good use of it.

Wayang 9th Level Feats:

- **Dance of the Tiger** ★ This feat doesn't make investment in performance a good idea.
- **Dissolution's Sight** ★ Once per hour you can see through upcast magical darkness. While theoretically helpful, you'll be lucky if it comes up more than once a campaign. Unlike the dwarf version, it is also higher level, not constant, and requires an action to activate.

- **Rouse the Dreaming Relic** ★★★ You get an extra use out of a magic item in your possession. Nice.
- **Shadow Tempo** ★★★ Use a reaction to follow an ally into battle. It's a great way to save yourself an action on your turn. Just be sure you have an alternative to explode that won't cause friendly fire.

Wayang 13th Level Feats:

- **Dalang's Ally** ★★★ Make all enemies around you off-guard to your attacks for an action. It works only once per hour. Still, it has decent synergy with the inventor's propensity for multiattacks.
- **Dance of the Jester** ★ This feat doesn't make investment in performance a good idea.
- **Palm-leaf Silhouette** ★★ You can move through areas usually reserved for tiny size ancestries… once per day. Doing so also requires a minute of prep time and only lasts a minute. You become completely unable to attack, though you can technically still use unstable effects like explode because they aren't "activating" an item. Even with that workaround, this feat is essentially a more restrictive version of the second level shrink spell available at a much higher level ancestry feat than a 2nd rank spell would normally appear.
- **Slay Giants Unseen** ★ It only works when you critically hit a large size foe while in an area of darkness. Three qualifiers for any effect. The effect is great when you can actually pull it off, but there's just too many things that need to go your way.

Wayang 17th Level Feats:

- **Dissolution's Sovereignty** ★ Offensive spellcasting.
- **Sever the Dreaming Shadow** ★★★ Use two actions to deal a big heap of mental damage. If it would kill the target, it instead puts the target into a coma with some weird caveats that allow it to wake up. It's very flavorful, but its mechanics are mostly irrelevant outside of the damage. If you do knock the target out, I give it 50/50 odds you just kill them while they're unconscious. It's only a matter of time before the target's runaway shadow runs into something that can obliterate it and wakes your victim up.

Rare Ancestries:

As of the Tian Xia Character Guide I will no longer be reviewing or updating rare ancestries unless they have exceptional thematic relevance to a class. When I started there was less than twenty ancestries so reviewing them all was no big deal. Now there are so many that they take up the majority of my guide-writing time.

Anadi ★★★

Anadi can transform into their giant spider form and use that form's fangs for offense. However, the anadi's unarmed attacks have lower-than-average synergy with the armor inventor's playstyle because their spider form lacks hands, and therefore cannot make athletics checks or carry a shield. As such, the spider form is largely useless to an inventor until they get Hybrid Form at fifth level.

Anadi work best as one of the ranged builds: ranged weapon innovator, subterfuge suit innovator, or construct innovator. Their default ability scores are useable, if very risky, by such builds. Put your free boost into intelligence and follow the strength-dumping build. They have some great heritages, but their feats are lacking.

Anadi Heritages:

- **Adaptive** ★★★★ If you want to optimize, you should always choose human as your adoptive ancestry. As humans have no physiological traits as far as the game is concerned, you will never trip that clause of the Adoptive Ancestry feat.
- **Polychromatic** ★ This could not be more pointless if it tried.
- **Snaring** ★★ Snaring adds trip and grapple to your fangs, which at least alleviates the issues of using an anadi for a power suit innovator.
- **Spindly** ★★★★ The spindly anadi has an improved movement speed. Increasing your movement range is important for all inventors. You will most likely use it to kite foes.
- **Venomous** ★ You'd almost certainly be better off making a second strike or activating overdrive than using your action on this feature.

1st Level Anadi Feats:

- **Reassuring Presence** ★★★ Use your reaction to reduce the severity of an ally's frightened condition by one. Reducing any ally's fear by one is more useful than reducing your own fear automatically: there are more targets for which this is applicable.
- **Skittertalk** ★★ You can talk to spiders. It is possible this might come up, especially if you encounter giant spider foes.
- **Studious Magic** ★★★ Feel free to nab the shield cantrip. It'll be the optimal choice most of the time.
- **Web Walker** ★★ This is such a narrow bonus that it might never matter. It is technically a benefit, but such a rare one that it is borderline red for uselessness.
- **Web Weaver** ★ There are so many limits on this feat that it might as well provide no benefit at all. Spending a day to save less than one silver piece could not be less relevant.

5th Level Anadi Feats:

- **Friendform** ★★★ Do crime. Frame your friends. Profit. Jokes aside, this is a very good feat. It grants you three to five at-will disguises. Pulling switcheroos with your own allies can be a big help for tricking or misdirecting enemies that know you. You could impersonate them for a duel, a social function, or other event, causing the enemy to attempt incorrect countermeasures. For example, they might target a big burly barbarian with a will save.
- **Hunter's Fangs** ★★ If you are trying to make the fangs work, this gives you their critical specialization.
- **Hybrid Shape** ★★ Climb without being off-guard while in a form with hands, or use your fangs without losing your hands. Plenty of other ancestries don't need to spend a feat to make this combo work, though they can't climb as fast as anadi with Strand Strider can either. Perhaps a slide pistol build with Combat Climber could work.

9th Level Anadi Feats:

- **Disorienting Venom ★** Off-guard is a great condition, but it isn't nearly good enough to justify using venomous anadi as an inventor.
- **Strand Strider ★★★** You gain a very generous climb speed at a good level. It is useful for getting into a sniper spot or bypassing the need for an athletics check, especially in tandem with Hybrid Shape and Combat Climber to improve action economy.
- **Studious Adept ★★★** These two spells are both very useful to an inventor, though you may struggle to capitalize on humanoid form if you do not invest in deception.
- **Web Hunter ★★★** You gain tremorsense. On the off-chance a creature is standing on anything that resembles a web, the distance improves greatly. If you using a ranged weapon, this is less likely to matter due to its short range.

13th Level Anadi Feats:

- **Webslinger ★★★** You recreate a second level spell with a 13th level feat, but it at least scales off of your class DC rather than your innate spellcasting DC. Therefore, the usual gripe about charisma isn't present. You can also do so once every ten minutes, which is uncommonly generous.

Android ★★★★

Androids have the perfect ability score spread for inventors: a boost to dexterity and intelligence with a flaw in charisma. They get low-light vision, resistance to poison and disease, and fantastic feats. In addition to the usual charisma penalty, you are further penalized specifically in the context of diplomacy, performance, and sense motive. Odds are you were garbage at those things anyways. An android is a top-tier pick for any inventor build.

The only thing holding an android back is their uniformly mediocre heritage options. Their feats are amazing, and the nanite surge feat chain is particularly notable. While the nanite surge feats are fantastic for any class, the inventor is particularly likely to use skill-checks mid combat.

Android Heritages:

- **Artisan ★★** This gives you a benefit when crafting specific items. While thematically appropriate, you are more likely to use crafting to repair shields or your construct and make overdrive checks. Actual crafting is both less frequent and less important.
- **Impersonator ★★** You become trained in deception and can pretend you are human. It is pretty rare that you need to bother: the bonuses only apply to checks to pretend you are a human version of yourself. Androids aren't common enough to be persecuted and you can't use this to avoid drawing attention to yourself because you are still recognizably yourself.
- **Laborer ★★** You get an extra trained skill and a garbage skill feat.
- **Polyglot ★★** You learn a couple new languages that will probably never come up.
- **Warrior ★** Useless to a class with your proficiencies.

1st Level Android Feats:

- **Cleansing Subroutine ★★★** A fine benefit for those intending to enter the melee, where injected poisons are more common.

- **Emotionless** ★★★ / ★★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance.
- **Internal Compartment** ★★★ It is unlikely you are using a weapon of light bulk, but if you are (most likely to benefit from agile) this is a great feat. It essentially grants you quick draw with that weapon, allowing you to both draw and strike with it on the same turn. Saving yourself action taxes is vital to capitalizing on agile weaponry.
- **Nanite Surge** ★★★★ Once per hour, you can gain a large status bonus on any skill check. Ranged and construct builds will use this to enter overdrive, while melee builds will use this to improve athletics checks. Either way, the feat is sky blue.
- **Nightvision Adaptation** ★★★ Darkvision is always helpful. If the rest of your team is low on darkvision, choose Radiant Circuitry instead so that the whole team can see.
- **Proximity Alert** ★★★ You gain the effects of the incredible initiative general feat. Always helpful, though slightly less so if your team frequently uses the scout exploration activity due to the partial redundancy.
- **Radiant Circuitry** ★★★ Spend a feat to become a nightlight. If the rest of your team has darkvision, choose Nightvision Adaptation instead.

5th Level Android Feats:

- **Advanced Targeting System** ★★★★ You can cast sure strike once per day, which is a fantastic boon for any martial character. The inventor is no exception. It is blue for every build, but is especially useful for those who have deadly or fatal weapons. Ranged builds are also more likely to have the actions needed to use it in the first place. Fortunately, most ranged weapons are also deadly or fatal. It can also be used to ignore concealment.
- **Inoculation Subroutine** ★★ Diseases can be nasty, but they are slightly less common than poisons. I am surprised this is a higher-level feat than Cleansing Subroutine.
- **Nanite Shroud** ★★★ You become concealed. Concealed is a powerful defensive benefit, but keep in mind that it can backfire if your allies are unable to target you with buffs or healing. If you are going to use this feat, it would be best to do so proactively rather than reactively. Activating it at the start of a fight can be a daunting action cost, but doing so means receiving its defensive benefits for your entire hit point total. If you only use it when you might go down, it both has less time to apply and is more likely to render you unable to be healed by an ally.
- **Protective Subroutine** ★★★ You are able to use your nanite surge on saving throws as well as skill checks. Handy, but it will consume your use of nanite surge and therefore prevent you from using it on overdrive or athletics.

9th Level Android Feats:

- **Internal Respirator** ★ You can hold your breath for a very long time. A deeply insignificant bonus, especially to an inventor with access to feats like Diving Armor or modifications that give their construct a swim speed.
- **Offensive Subroutine** ★★★ You are able to use your nanite surge on attack rolls. I'd personally favor Advanced Targeting System: the bonus is far better and it won't consume a use of your nanite surge. This is at least a reaction rather than an action.
- **Repair Module** ★★★ Spend an action to gain fast healing. While it prevents use of nanite surge for its duration, you most likely used nanite surge on the first turn of combat anyways. After doing so, you can activate this without concern for the downsides. With a

one-action activation, it is cheap to start up. Most importantly of all, if you fall unconscious, it will resuscitate you each round. While this can backfire if your wounded condition starts to rapidly add up (such as due to persistent damage) the vast majority of the time keeping yourself in the fight is far more important, especially for a class as fragile as the inventor.

13th Level Android Feats:

- **Consistent Surge** ★★★★ You can use nanite surge as frequently as other characters use focus spells. This is a fantastic boost and should be chosen by any android who took nanite surge.
- **Revivification Protocol** ★★★ You can use a thirteenth level feat to gain an inferior version of orc ferocity. While this is a free action, I'm still somewhat baffled that this feat comes after Repair Module. Repair module can give you the same effect multiple times per fight. Still, they can both be used only once per day so if you do find yourself getting into multiple life-or-death struggles the effect is still pretty good. It is always handy to have a backup plan when you go down before activating Repair Module as well. On a melee build with a tight action economy, I might even grab this feat without taking Repair Module first.

Automaton ★★★★

Automatons have low-light vision and lack a humanoid creature type. Despite that, automatons don't receive any construct immunities, lack any bonus to constitution, and only claim average ancestral hit points. They are no more durable than most other ancestries. Their locked strength boost renders them well-suited to the melee, but can also be used to wield kickback or propulsive ranged weaponry. The automaton is well-suited for most inventor builds as a result, though it will not be able to maximize both its dexterity and intelligence as a construct innovator would prefer.

The automaton is arguably best suited to the power suit armor innovation thanks to its host of unarmed attack options, which collectively allow it to maintain a free hand, attack at range, and wield a shield without sacrificing any athletic options. Investing in multiple unarmed strikes is costly in terms of feats, but cheap in terms of gold, as they are all empowered by the same handwraps of mighty blows. Failing that, the sharpshooter or mage heritages enable them to excel in any role.

Automaton Heritages:

- **Hunter** ★★ You cannot effectively capitalize on this because it demands you keep your hands free. A power suit innovator might at least consider it with appropriate investment in unarmed ancestry feats, but even so you won't be able to use a shield making the benefits negligible at best. If you do use the hunter automaton, you essentially accept improved movement speed in exchange for lacking damage and durability. As the inventor is already a glass cannon, it is a risky proposition: especially since your damage will never exceed typical one-handed damage. There are much better ways to get ancestral speed boosts. The only reason it secures a yellow rating is its excellent

follow-up feats, which might make one willing to accept a mostly useless heritage feature.

- **Mage** ★★★ You gain an arcane cantrip of your choosing. For optimization purposes you will want to choose shield, but there are plenty of flavorful options if the mood suits you.
- **Sharpshooter** ★★★ You can spend extra actions to ignore range increment penalties. This is a very powerful benefit, and is absolutely fantastic for weapon innovators with thrown weapons, pistols, and scatter weapons. One action is what you would have spent moving into melee; this just allows you to stay at a safe distance.
- **Warrior** ★★ The warrior automaton is special among ancestry-granted unarmed attacks because it improves your default unarmed attack, rather than giving you a new one. This has an interesting side effect: the "fist" unarmed strike actually refers to any generic unarmed strike, such as kicks and headbutts. As such, nothing prevents a warrior automaton from adopting a unique combat style themed around making a weapon attack before following up with an agile unarmed kick or shoulder bash.

  Doing so will never exceed the expected damage of striking twice with a two-handed weapon, but it does create an explicit damage upgrade over a conventional sword-and-board build. The only impediment occurs when you level up: supporting the runes on both a weapon and your handwraps of mighty blows is unforgivably expensive.

  However, it is technically possible to circumvent this issue as well. You can improve the Automaton Armament pincer damage through Lesser Augmentation to be equal to that of a one-handed weapon at ninth level. As your pincer is also an unarmed attack, it will benefit from the bonuses of handwraps of mighty blows. This gives you the same effective damage as wielding a longsword in one hand with an agile shortsword in the other, but you don't actually need to carry any weapons to do it: put a shield in your off-hand, retain the benefits of a free hand for athletics checks with your other hand, and still enjoy the benefits of a powerful agile strike.

  This unique build synergizes well with the power suit armor innovation. Not only does the power suit have the most to gain from a free hand, the armor innovation also applies its ninth level offensive boost to all of your unarmed strikes. Unlike other builds, you can circumvent commitment to a single weapon entirely. If you also choose to take Energy Beam, you can even gain a ranged unarmed attack that is also enhanced by your handwraps of mighty blows, though sadly it cannot use your offensive boost. The sheer number of options this build has each turn threatens to be overwhelming, even before taking advantage of the free hand with inventor feats like Tamper. For power suit innovators, the warrior automaton is blue.

1st Level Automaton Feats:

- **Arcane Communication** ★★★ You can communicate telepathically with any creature you touch and share a language with. This is useful for discussing plans in front of antagonists, as the effect has no signifiers. Just rest your hand on an ally's shoulder and have at it. If you are sufficiently paranoid or just want your character to feel less conventionally humanoid, you might well carry most one-to-one conversations in this manner.

- **Arcane Eye** ★★★ Darkvision is always helpful.
- **Automaton Armament** ★★ This is very handy for power suit innovators looking to capitalize on the muscular exoskeleton modification. You can choose either a minimum-damage agile claw attack or a low-damage pincer with grapple. The claw attack isn't any more damaging than a typical unarmed strike and should be ignored by default, though Lesser Augmentation can make it more viable later. However, outside of highly specialized builds the pincer is a much better choice. It has respectable damage which can also be enhanced, and has the grapple trait.
- **Energy Beam** ★★★ You gain access to a fire damage ranged unarmed attack. While the damage is minimal and the damage type is poor, this ability does have use for melee builds. If you absolutely need a ranged attack, you always have one at the ready. It can benefit from overdrive. You can also fire off a beam when you encounter something that might be weak to fire, such as a plant, which is useful for weapon innovators as a test to determine whether or not turning their overdrive damage into fire damage is worthwhile.
- **Reinforced Chassis** ★★ This essentially grants you the ability to "sleep" in a breastplate. While helpful, it is not mandatory. Your inactive state only lasts for a couple hours anyways, making it unlikely that the obligatory once-per-campaign ambush happens during your nightly reboot in the first place. Armor innovators can consider this red because its benefits do not apply to your armor innovation.

5th Level Automaton Feats:

- **Arcane Safeguards** ★★★ You improve your saving throws against magic, and if the magic is arcane, you can turn success to critical success.
- **Integrated Armament** ★★★ You integrate a one-handed weapon or shield into your body. Despite the cool factor of a collapsible shield, you should choose a weapon. A shield is already strapped to your arm and can't be dropped. Gaining those benefits on a weapon is a good boon.
- **Magical Resistance** ★★★ You gain damage resistance of a type you choose. Two of the damage types -cold and electricity- are available as damage types from the Variable Core inventor feat. These damage types don't scale by default, but they can be improved or broadened with Lesser Augmentation.

9th Level Automaton Feats:

- **Arcane Camouflage** ★★★★ These are two extremely helpful spells. It is a shame this is shackled to the hunter automaton heritage.
- **Arcane Propulsion** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression, though for whatever reason the duration is half that available to other ancestries. Five minutes to ten minutes usually doesn't make a difference, so it is a bit of a moot point.
- **Arcane Slam** ★★★ This feat has interesting potential with the entangling form polearm build. While the assumption of this feat is clearly that you are grappling the enemy with your own body, there is no actual restriction that the foe must be grappled by a limb. As such, this feat allows you to use a two-action trip alternative against a grappled creature, at the cost of the grapple. Notably, Arcane Slam lacks the attack trait. Nothing stops you from using Arcane Slam on a grappled creature and then immediately re-grappling the enemy without MAP. The grapple would have needed to be renewed at

the end of your turn anyways. Doing so means that the enemy now literally cannot hurt you unless it has reach: it would need to escape, stand, and stride just to get in range. Of course, entangling form already has the trip trait so this feat really only allows you to spend an extra action to bypass the multiple attack penalty. It also deals slight damage and targets fortitude rather than reflex, so it technically also improves the reliability of your trip attempts. Despite its partial redundancy, I consider it blue for weapon innovators running the entangling form modification on a polearm.

- **Core Attunement** ★★★★ The mage automaton gains a first and second level arcane spell of their choice. At a glance I recommend sure strike and a defensive spell like blur or invisibility, but you can surely find something better if you dig deep enough.
- **Lesser Augmentation** ★★★ You improve one of your lower-level ancestry feats in some manner. You can also swap it for another upgrade with one week of downtime, but unless you are playing in an ancestral paragon variant rule campaign or using the ancestral paragon feat, you will only have two options. Some notable examples:
    - **Arcane Eye** ★★ You can swap to this if you somehow manage to get a week's notice before fighting an invisible creature.
    - **Automaton Armament** ★★★ You can boost your pincer attack to the maximum damage available to a one-handed weapon, which is incredibly valuable to power-suit innovators looking to retain a free hand.
    - **Energy Beam** ★★★ You get a free-hand ranged attack with respectable damage dice. This makes your energy beam almost on-par with a shortbow, barring its inferior range. Of course, you didn't need to spend two feats on a shortbow.
    - **Reinforced Chassis** ★★★ You get a free fortification rune. For a class with your fragility and mediocre defenses, this is a very nice benefit. It is a shame it is shackled to the Reinforced Chassis base feat.
    - **Arcane Safeguards** ★★★ You gain a small number of temporary hit points when you use the reaction the base feat grants you.
    - **Magical Resistance** ★★★ Now this is an interesting beast. If you did take Variable Core, you will be faced with a choice: you can either turn your flat damage resistance into a scaling resistance or you can resist multiple energy types. If you choose to resist both electricity and cold damage, you can swap between both damage types with Variable Core when facing enemies appropriate to either and have modest protection from both. This means if your campaign takes you to the tundra, you can set your damage type to electricity without losing cold resistance. If you make your preferred damage type scaling, it will instead protect you more completely in a less versatile manner. Either option is contingent on the needs of your individual campaign.
- **Rain of Bolts** ★★ It seems the earlier assumption that this damage was unavoidable due to lacking any type of saving throw was a mistake, though the modern feat still does not specify what type of save this effect is. I assume it was meant to be a basic reflex saving throw. The damage is low, but it at least synergizes with explode if you get surrounded. Unfortunately, the sharpshooter automaton heritage is not likely to get surrounded due to

its extreme engagement distance. It also doesn't scale well when compared to other ancestry features such as the dwarven energy blessed.

13th Level Automaton Feats:

- **Arcane Locomotion** ★★ You could fly four levels ago and can teleport at this level. Why would you bother with climbing or swimming, especially when you have so many other great options?
- **Astral Blink** ★★★★ Cast translocate once per hour. This feat is amazing: what a great way to enter the melee, avoid cover against your ranged attacks, escape from grapples, and do any number of other useful things.
- **Core Rejuvenation** ★★★ You gain a version or orc ferocity at a much higher level that only gets you back into the fight after you already fell unconscious and dropped all of your gear. Self-reviving is still a very useful feature, especially if you are following one of the automaton's unarmed builds and won't need to pick up your weapons after using it.
- **Enlarged Chassis** ★★★ You become permanently enlarged, which improves your reach and damage but reduces your defense and mobility. If you are any of the three ranged builds this feat won't give you enough value to justify choosing. This is yellow for melee builds, who can benefit more from improved reach. It can even be used to reap the full benefits of an entangling form weapon without using a polearm. Becoming enlarged also improves the effective coverage of explode, which is favored by melee characters who frequently wind up surrounded. It is green for weapon innovators with entangling form polearms because the total area they can control is massive. However, the defensive and mobility issues remain glaring enough that it is difficult to recommend, especially if your GM makes heavy use of pre-made maps likely to feature five-foot hallways.

17th Level Automaton Feats:

- **Core Cannon** ★★★ Not content with turning a construct into an immobile cannon, you have now found a method by which you can turn yourself into a cannon as well. Unlike other unarmed attacks this one still scales its accuracy with the potency runes of your weaponry and thus is more readily accessible to any build. It also must be mentioned that if you did take a large size Prototype Companion and do intend to pilot it, there is absolutely nothing stopping you from turning into turret mode and using the construct as your legs (though you cannot command it and must rely on its free action to move). At this level, you could even reconfigure your existing innovation into a construct for that purpose.
- **Greater Augmentation** ★★★★ Let's take it from the top:
    - **Arcane Camouflage** ★★★★ This is a great upgrade to two already great spells. Greater invisibility twice per day means all enemies are off-guard against you.
    - **Arcane Propulsion** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression, though with the option to swap it out if you want to.
    - **Arcane Slam** ★★★ If you made Arcane Slam part of your regular combat strategy, you could do worse than adding some damage to it. By this point, you'll likely need to start ignoring size penalties as well.

- **Core Attunement** ★★★★ You get a fifth and sixth level spell of your choosing. I am certain you can find something useful. Melee characters might appreciate blink charge and anyone could use wall of force.
- **Rain of Bolts** ★★ Add more damage and special metals to your rain of bolts action.
- **Astral Blink** ★★★ As a free action, you can replace your movement actions for one round with teleportation covering the same distance. With a quickened armor innovator, you could teleport up to four times a round. However, if you need to move more than once, or if two movement actions would take you less than 120 ft., you might have rather just used the regular version of the feat. Unlike the base spell, this will not trigger flat checks caused by deafness, grapples, or restraints due to its lack of components.
- **Core Rejuvenation** ★★★ You gain enough temporary hit points to take a (non-critical) hit from all but the toughest boss monsters.
- **Enlarged Chassis** ★★★ You restore your armor class back to where it was before you became large size. It is nowhere near as flashy as the other options, but there is no denying its effectiveness.

Awakened Animal ★★★★

The awakened animal is flat-out stronger than typical ancestries. Its heritage options alone are expressly superior to those of other ancestries; they all give a powerful unarmed attack in addition to unusually powerful other benefits. Most of the heritages penalize your speed, but the Running Animal heritage doesn't even do that; it's about equivalent to two heritages on any other ancestry.

As far as the unarmed attack options, the inventor will almost always choose the tail. It provides the highest damage and gets one more trait than any other unarmed attack. If you don't want a tail attack, any other d6 strike is a fine choice.

You get to choose your size. As an inventor, you'll want to be either tiny or medium. If you're planning to use a melee build, go medium for the two extra hit points that medium awakened animals get. If you're planning to use a ranged weapon build, you might as well go all-in with tiny rather than small, as doing so will let you pull narrative shenanigans based around fitting into smaller spaces or taking cover more easily. Small also works if you want to be able to reach the top shelf of a bookcase or something. Large is going to cause more trouble than it's worth.

Finally, you can talk to animals of your kind and allow yourself to be affected by spells that only target animals. These features are mostly irrelevant, but there might be niche uses for the latter I'm not aware of.

Awakened Animal Heritages

- **Climbing Animal** ★★★★ You get an extremely good climb speed and a low land speed. No other ancestry can get a climb speed that good this early. It's the weakest of the

non-aquatic animal heritages, but you're still getting both an unarmed attack and a ridiculous early climb speed for a single heritage bonus.

- **Flying Animal** ★★★★ You get immunity to fall damage and a low land speed. The heritage itself isn't terribly useful, but it unlocks permanent flight sooner than every other ancestry in the game, so who cares.
- **Running Animal** ★★★★ You get a fast land speed. It's the best heritage before the flying animal gets permanent flight at 9th level.
- **Swimming Animal** ★★ You can choose to be aquatic or water-dwelling. Unless your campaign is fully underwater, the choice is obvious. The water-dwelling land speed is low, but the aquatic variant doesn't have a land speed at all.

1st Level Awakened Animal Feats

- **Awakened Magic** ★★★ Standard ancestry cantrip.
- **Fascinated by Society** ★ An extra mediocre version of a lore feat.
- **Land Legs** ★★ Imperfectly remove your heritage curse.
- **Learn by Watching** ★★ An inventor has plenty of skills and shouldn't need to follow the expert.
- **Natural Senses** ★★★★ You can get a precise sense for a first level feat. Other ancestries have to make do with crummy senses like imprecise scent. The radius is terrible, but who cares. Melee builds become immune to pretty much all forms of stealth. You might drop this feat's rating by one step for a ranged build because enemies will often be out of echolocation range, but it's still an amazing tool you can use to bypass stealth and all forms of visual illusions.
- **Sea Legs** ★★ Get a swim speed. It's not much, but you might choose it if your campaign is in a watery environment.
- **Take Flight** ★★★★ This would be good if it was just a 15 foot leap, but a 15 foot fly speed for a first level feat is a great deal. No other ancestry gets to ascend 15 feet straight up with no check for a price this low; it eclipses even first level climb speed feats for speed despite being significantly more versatile.
- **Tooth and Claw** ★ Get an extra unarmed attack that isn't much different from the one you already got from your heritage.
- **You're So Cute!** ★ A performance skill feat.

5th Level Awakened Animal Feats

- **Fierce Grasp** ★★★ A great feat for an athletic melee build. It's especially appreciated by weapon innovators going for a grapple-reach combo.
- **Late Awakener** ★★★★ Get a heritage bonus if you have a versatile heritage. Seeing as the awakened animal heritages are very strong, and rather integral to the flavor of being an awakened animal, it's nice of them to allow you to get the heritage bonus through a feat. It's a bit ambiguous what your speed is before this point as a versatile heritage awakened animal, but your GM will presumably figure something out.
- **Natural Ambassador** ★★ Talk to all animals and get a bonus to do so. It becomes an even bigger bonus against your own kind.

- **Scurry** ★★★★ A start-of-battle ability that lets you move to cover as soon as you roll initiative. This is a great way to spread out your party before a high-initiative fireball or other blast can hit the whole team, or simply keep yourself safe from incoming attacks. The inventor is quite fragile and benefits from making itself a less appealing target.
- **Strong of Wing** ★★★★ Your not-quite-a-fly-speed is now 25 feet. It has fully replaced your default stride actions, and you can ignore all difficult terrain, hazardous terrain, cliffs, and pits, for the low cost of a 5th level ancestry feat.
- **Urban Jungle** ★★ You can track at full speed and use survival or society to track when in a city. It's fine, but tracking tends to be a once per campaign need at best.
- **Wild Stride** ★★★ Spend two actions to move twice with a minor speed boost. The boost gets better if your hands are free, which might actually be the case for an armor innovator.

9th Level Awakened Animal Feats

- **Animal Summoner** ★★★★ You can cast summon animal. It automatically heightens to half your level rounded up, but spell rank and level aren't equal. If taken literally, this feat gives you a spell as high rank as the highest level a caster of your level can cast. This feat is both lower level and explicitly better than the summon feat available to the nephilim, and lacking the same restricted selection makes it massively more versatile. I might get some flak for this rating because summon spells aren't that good for combat, but I don't care. As long as you don't expect to summon an extra martial character to the team, you can get quite a bit of mileage out of this feat with just a bit of creativity and a whole lot of research to know what animals are available.
- **Full Flight** ★★★★ The final no-brainer flight feat. You get a full fly speed a full eight levels earlier than typical ancestries.

13th Level Awakened Animal Feats

- **Digger** ★★★ A 15-foot burrow speed gives you a near-flawless escape hatch on any loose soil. Nobody will be able to target you with any ability if you dive 15 feet straight down and thus block their line of effect with solid earth. It's a bit terrain-dependent, but extremely powerful in its element.
- **Sharpened Senses** ★★ Extra free seek actions every round. The inventor's perception is the worst in the game.

17th Level Awakened Animal Feats

- **Awakened Stride** ★★ Move extra fast when using Wild Stride and get concealment while you move. It's a bit underwhelming for its level, especially considering most maps that could need such speed won't fit on your table.
- **Fearsome Form** ★★ Offensive spellcasting.
- **True Senses** ★ You gain a non-magical version of a truesight spell. It's a bit unclear what your counteract check is based on, as unlike the general feat version of this feat it doesn't specify what you use for your perception for the counteract check. Assuming it is perception, this is a terrible feat for the inventor.

Conrasu ★★

Conrasu boast high ancestral hit points, an ability boost in both constitution and wisdom, and a once-per-day out-of-combat self-heal. They also have a charisma flaw, which is fine by an inventor. A conrasu inventor won't be able to maximize both their intelligence and their primary offensive ability. I recommend building them as melee inventors to compensate, as many melee inventors aren't able to maximize their intelligence regardless. Unfortunately, their feats are below average and limited.

As far as heritages, Rite of Invocations gives you a free cantrip from either the arcane or occult list. You'll most likely choose shield or guidance. Rite of Knowing grants a fortune effect that allows you to roll twice on recall knowledge checks once per day, which is a great boon to a class with your intelligence.

None of their first or fifth level feats are anything extraordinary, though Ceremony of Fortification is decent. You could have just taken the shield cantrip from Rite of Invocations though. Ceremony of Growth at thirteenth level is arguably the best version of any enlarge ancestry feat. Nothing else really merits discussion.

Fleshwarp ★★

While fleshwarps are not bad at any particular role, they only excel as specific power suit armor innovation builds thanks to their solid array of unarmed attack options. Cataphract fleshwarp can give a melee weapon innovator or pilot construct innovator heavy armor. The fleshwarp feat list is lacking. It even has offensive spellcasting, and unlike some physiology themed spells found on other ancestries the fleshwarp does not offer the choice to use class DC instead of spell DC. While little besides the spellcasting stands out as a poor choice, you might want to look into a versatile heritage or the Adopted Ancestry general feat to expand your feat list. Its default options leave a bit to be desired.

Fleshwarp Heritages:

- **Created ★★** You can't starve and gain a bonus against diseases. At least the bonus is pretty powerful.
- **Discarded ★** Transmutation is pretty rare as an offensive spell type. As of the remaster, it also doesn't exist.
- **Mutated ★★★** There are plenty of monsters able to make you bleed. This makes you twice as likely to stop bleeding each round.
- **Shapewrought ★★** You gain resistance to mental damage. Mental damage is far less common than other damage types.
- **Surgewise ★★** A generic skill and skill feat. It's at least an intelligence skill.
- **Technological ★★★ / ★** Standard ancestry emotion resistance.

1st Level Fleshwarp Feats:

- **Abberation Kinship ★** Mindlink is already a niche spell. The ability to target only a single creature type with it once per day is unforgivably narrow. Most aberrations will attack on sight and won't even be valid targets for this ability, which requires a willing

creature. You won't need to spend two actions, a feat, and a once-per-day cast to just to reduce the duration of a conversation with them.

- **Deepvision** ★★★ Darkvision is always helpful.
- **Living Weapon** ★★★ This feat is good if you choose the horn, jaws, tusk, or tail option. As with all unarmed strikes this is only of use to power suit armor innovators. While you can take this feat twice there is little benefit to doing so. The agile weapon is too weak to rely on, especially in light of the follow-up feat Mutate Weapon.
- **Startling Appearance** ★★ You are unlikely to have the charisma necessary to use demoralization. If you have doubled down regardless, this is fine.

5th Level Fleshwarp Feats:

- **Finned Ridges** ★★ You gain a swim speed at a reasonable level. The inventor still has better ways of getting a swim speed.
- **Gaping Flesh** ★★ Use your reaction to force a melee attacker to make a fortitude saving throw or become sickened. The creature can't recover from the sickened condition while adjacent to you. Unfortunately, it only works once per day. If you want to make the most of this you might consider getting reactive strike through the fighter archetype.
- **Mutate Weapon** ★★★ You can spend one action mutating your unarmed strike. It gains bonus damage and either reach or accuracy. This makes it into one of the most powerful unarmed strikes in the game, but the action cost prevents it from securing a blue rating.
- **Powerful Guts** ★★ You can reduce your sickened condition by an extra point when you succeed at the saving throw. This might come in handy at higher levels when the condition has a larger number attached, but sickened is not particularly common and monsters might have abilities that prevent you from trying to reduce it in the first place.
- **Transposable Compliance** ★★ The bonus to medicine checks isn't worth the self-inflicted damage. Using this feat is a net loss to your team's hit points. There might be circumstances in which you have plenty of hit points to spare, but I'm sure you can find a better way to restore those hit points to an ally than this. Even buying a dirt cheap lesser soothing tonic would be better. This feat is incompatible with Battle Medicine, so it is useless in emergencies.
- **Uncanny Awareness** ★★★ Imprecise motion sense is an extremely weird and useful skill to have. Creatures will almost never have countermeasures against it, so you'll usually have at least a general idea of where your target is.

9th Level Fleshwarp Feats:

- **Captivating Curiosity** ★ Offensive spellcasting.
- **Coating of Slime** ★★ A mediocre critical effect for a good unarmed attack, which is sadly only available four levels after other critical specialization effects. The improved accuracy you get from Mutate Weapon makes you more likely to critically hit, so I am inclined to be generous.
- **Eerie Compression** ★★ This at least makes squeezing combat viable.
- **Embodied Dragoon Subjectivity** ★★ You get two reflavored spells that both don't need spellcasting proficiency to be effective. This feat helps you escape fall damage and improves your overland travel speed.

- **Gripping Limbs** ★★★ You gain a good climb speed.
- **Slip the Grasp** ★★★ This feat improves your ability to use the escape action. When you escape in this way, you either succeed and get a free action or fail and get to attempt to escape again. In either case, your multiple attack penalty is suspended until you are done. That is a fantastic boon that can get you out of a lot of trouble. This feat would be blue if the escape action occurred just a bit more frequently.

13th Level Fleshwarp Feats:

- **Augment Senses** ★★ The inventor's lackluster perception makes them ill-suited to capitalize on this, but at least it can make you immune to flanking.
- **Spew Tentacles** ★ Offensive spellcasting.

Ghoran ★★

The ghoran grants extra skills and spellcasting. The former is a bit helpful, but the inventor has plenty of trained skills. The latter isn't much use to an inventor. Unless there is a particular spell you want, it is worth pointing out the ghoran stole many of its features from humans and elves; they're exact copies. You can usually just play one of them to get the same benefits with a much larger feat list.

Goloma ★★

Goloma predominately improve perception, but they also offer finesse unarmed attacks and flanking immunity. This is the only way for a subterfuge suit innovator to get a finesse unarmed attack on an ancestry with a high base speed. Outside of that, they can improve flanking immunity.

Kashrishi ★★★★

This humble mutant rhinoceros-insect hybrid is easily one of the strongest ancestries in the game. Just for playing a kashrishi, you get an empathetic sense that automatically alerts you about the presence of creatures around you; already useful to a class with inventor perception. You also get a horn that glows whenever you cast an ancestral innate spell or use an ancestral occult action. Neither of those are what makes a kashrishi strong. The kashrishi feat list is incredible. It receives feats entire level tiers ahead of other ancestries and has the single strongest unarmed attack in the game.

That last point is particularly noteworthy to subterfuge suit innovators. In addition to being just as damaging and having more athletic traits than heavyweights like the kholo/gnoll, the kashrishi horn has finesse. The kashrishi horn is outright more powerful than finesse weapons, despite being an unarmed attack that doesn't take up a hand. Only elves are competitive with kashrishi in the field of subterfuge suit innovation builds.

Kashrishi Heritages:

- **Athamasi** ★★★ You can climb without using your hands. Unlike other ancestral feats which allow you hands-free climbing, it provides almost no other benefit. You can grab an edge with your hands full, but that will matter less than the improved climb results

offered by other heritages. However, it can be supplemented with other ancestral feats like Scuttle Up. Ranged weapon innovators should always choose this heritage.

- **Lethoci ★★** You gain powerful numeric bonuses to swimming.
- **Nascent ★★★** You get an extra first level ancestry feat. Kashrishi have great feats.
- **Trogloshi ★★** You can permanently replicate the effects of a light cantrip for one action.
- **Xyloshi ★★★** You gain an unarmed strike of moderate damage. However, follow-up feats at first and fifth level improve it to the strongest ancestral unarmed strike in the game. Armor innovators should always choose this heritage.

1st Level Kashrishi Feats:

- **Community Knowledge ★★★★** You can burn your reaction to get a powerful bonus on a skill check once per hour. This feat is almost an exact copy of the Nanite Surge android feat and is just as useful. As a status bonus, it stacks with circumstance bonuses granted by muscular exoskeleton modifications and item bonuses granted by potency runes.
- **Crystal Luminescence ★★** You can permanently replicate the effects of a light cantrip for one action. If you already got this bonus from the Trogloshi heritage you expand the radius of the light and can activate it for free, but I recommend choosing something else. Those benefits don't really matter.
- **Emotional Partitions ★★★ / ★★** Standard ancestry emotion resistance.
- **Mental Sustenance ★** Rations are light bulk and last a week each. On the off-chance your GM even bothers to enforce rations, to run out of food and water you would need to be stuck outside for at least 10 weeks and have nobody in your party with a passable survival skill. Keeping yourself fed and hydrated isn't really part of the game.**Open Mind ★★★** You get a cantrip from the occult spell list. Choose guidance.
- **Puncturing Horn ★★★★** A 1d8 finesse unarmed strike. That breaks the power curve of finesse ancestral strikes, which normally cap out at 1d6 with deadly. It's outright stronger than even finesse weaponry. Even if you don't want to use dexterity, it provides an extremely powerful hands-free unarmed strike for use with athletics checks. A kashrishi armor innovator that fails to take this feat has made a mistake. More impressive still, this is not the end of the kashrishi's unarmed strike feats; see Fighting Horn below for details.
- **Scuttle Up ★★★★** Every other ancestry has to wait until fifth level to get a climb speed from a feat. Not the kashrishi, they're too inexplicably awesome for that. Combined with the Athamasi heritage, you can wall crawl to unleash overdrive damage from relative safety.
- **Tough Skin ★★★** Your skin becomes a free always-on breastplate you can sleep in. If you are a lethoci you can also "swim without making an athletics check" but it provides no clear indication of how fast you can swim in the absence of a standard check. It's still a good feat whether or not you can swim. Most ancestries just get the first effect.

5th Level Kashrishi Feats:

- **Empathic Calm ★** The inventor isn't very good at using offensive spellcasting and both of these spells rely on saves. I do want to point out that this feat scales up unlike almost

every other innate spellcasting feat, making them much more difficult to counteract than other ancestral spellcasting. Kashrishi privilege is pervasive.

- **Fighting Horn** ★★★★ The final unarmed strike enhancement, this feat makes the kashrishi's horn into the uncontested most powerful ancestral unarmed strike in the game: add two athletic traits of your choice. Even if you intend to use a weapon, this gives you access to hands-free athletics checks. Combine this feat with a maul as your primary weapon and you can use almost every major athletics check while maintaining maximum weapon damage. The ganzi have to wait until level thirteen to get two athletics traits on their unarmed attack, and they don't get to choose whatever trait they want.
- **Skilled Climber** ★★★★ It provides you a ten-foot climb speed, but it has the same prerequisites as Scuttle Up, a lower-level feat that does the exact same thing. It only provides any value when Scuttle Up is chosen first, because in that case it improves your climb speed to your land speed when climbing caves and trees. There is never a reason to choose this feat in the absence of Scuttle Up, and so it should have simply listed Scuttle Up as its prerequisite and removed the blanket climb speed as a bonus at all. It nonetheless provides a powerful bonus within its specific context. As with other Kashrishi feats, this is just a better version of somebody else's feat: specifically, it is identical to the Vanara's Skillful Climber feat except that it also includes caves. Somebody on staff loved these little rhinos.
- **Unlock Secret** ★★★ You can cast any first level occult spell of your choosing. I recommend sure strike.
- **Well of Potential** ★ You don't have focus spells. If you got them from an archetype, improve this rating to the rating of the spell.

9th Level Kashrishi Feats:

- **Fortified Mind** ★★ You get a small chance to ignore certain conditions.
- **Telekinetic Slip** ★★★ This odd feat allows you to burn your reaction at the start of your turn to give yourself a bonus to Escape checks until you succeed. The bonus is pretty generous.
- **Transcendent Realization** ★★★ You can choose a third level occult spell. Choose heroism and cast it ahead of battle. Haste is another good pick, but the timing is tighter.

13th Level Kashrishi Feats:

- **Kashrishi Revivification** ★★★ You gain a version or orc ferocity at a much higher level that only gets you back into the fight after you already fell unconscious and dropped all of your gear. Self-reviving is still a very useful feature.
- **Reimagine** ★ An inventor can already retrain many features much more quickly than other classes.

17th Level Kashrishi Feats:

- **Cleansing Light** ★★★★ You can spend two actions to give yourself and all of your allies the effects of restoration while dazzling all enemies within 30 feet. They receive no saving throw against this effect.

Poppet ★ / ★★

The poppet is vulnerable its own self-damage. You can negate it with another feat or the Variable Core class feat, but no other ancestry had to make that investment. If you play a poppet, consider using a construct. While you still occasionally burn due to a critically failed overdrive check, all of the fire damage caused by unstable actions will go to your construct. I'm glad that a construct innovation is the role poppets most excel at, because it is easy to come up with great ideas for poppet inventors commanding bigger, scarier toys. You might be an innocent looking teddy bear commanding a torn-up giant teddy bear or a matryoshka doll that pilots a bigger matryoshka doll.

Poppet Heritages:

- **Ghost** ★★★ You get void resistance equal to half your level. Void damage is thrown at players incredibly frequently because it is one of team evil's favorite damage types.
- **Stuffed** ★★★ Immunity to fall damage is a powerful bonus that opens up new avenues of movement.
- **Toy** ★ If you are melee this is red. If you are ranged this is yellow. It can allow you to ride a small size construct, which has advantages. Unfortunately, you won't be able to reach anything outside of your mount's space so those advantages are vanishingly rare.
- **Tsukumogami** ★★★ Change your damage weakness to a different damage type. Pick cold damage. This is going to be the best heritage for the majority of non-construct innovators.
- **Windup** ★ You don't need to eat or drink. Just ask your GM if they will bother to track rations. Most campaigns do not require this feat.
- **Wishborn** ★★★ / ★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance.

1st Level Poppet Feats:

- **Harmless Doll** ★ You can pretend to be a regular non-animate doll. Most GMs would already let you attempt this using the exact mechanics specified by this feat. If your GM rules that you have glowing eye-lights or some other tell unless you take this feat, bump its rating up to yellow. It at least offers trained proficiency in deception, unlike the skeleton version of this feat.
- **Helpful Poppet** ★★★ The aid action is very powerful. It is easy to overlook because it doesn't work very well at the start of the game, but at higher levels you can hand out free bonuses on attack rolls every round for a single action and reaction. The inventor has few conflicting reactions that might get in the way, making this easy for them to use. Getting a bonus to aid checks along with immunity to critical failure is very nice. At early levels, you might actually critically fail the check. You can even aid your construct innovation, though Lock On provides it a more reliable circumstance bonus later.
- **Quadruped** ★★★★ Improve your movement speed by an additional five feet. It is simple, effective, and relevant every single time you move.
- **Shiny Button Eyes** ★★★★ You advance your perception to expert and gain a small bonus to spot illusions. This feat is great until level thirteen, at which point your proficiency catches up and you should retrain out of it. You might try to get it back at level seventeen to get master perception proficiency.

- **Wash Out ★★★** You beat poisons much more quickly.

5th Level Poppet Feats:

- **Cunning Tinker ★** The mending spell can be used to restore hit points to your construct. With its cast time of ten minutes it is almost always be better to use Quick Repair. This does provide you with a bit of weak but reliable out-of-combat self-healing, as the feat allows a special exception for you. The medicine skill will heal you more quickly, but you might still need it if nobody on your team invested in medicine skill feats.
- **Histrionic Injury ★★** You pretend to be far more hurt than you really are and can stupefy enemies that hit you in melee. Those who are smacking you with a melee weapon usually don't care that much about stupefaction, but some monsters and classes do use both.
- **Nothing But Fluff ★★** You gain resistance to precision damage equal to half your level. Monsters tend to employ more force than finesse, but sneak attack isn't too uncommon. If you are a pilot and thus engage in melee, this might save your life.
- **Sealed Poppet ★★** You cease to be weak to fire damage. If you are playing a poppet, you probably chose to play a construct innovator or are using the tsukumogami heritage and don't need this in either case. If you chose another innovation, this is blue.
- **Spark of Independence ★** Quickening minions is weird. While the written rules are dubious, the intent of this feat is clear: spend two actions to give your minion an extra action, with which it can move or strike.

  The inventor is already able to spend two actions to give their construct minion a full three actions. They only need to spend one extra action to do so, unlike this feat. The duration of this feature is one round, so it ends at the start of your next turn and cannot be used to stockpile an extra-long turn on the following round. As both fully commanding your construct and this feat take two actions, it is not possible to use both on the same round. Even Clockwork Celerity can't help you because it must occur at the start of your turn. Your construct takes its actions immediately upon being commanded, and so by the time you can use Spark of Independence it is already done acting.

  It would take an extraordinarily generous GM to allow this feat to apply to the free action an advanced construct companion can take at the end of your turn. Even if that were the case, commanding your construct like normal would still be the better trade. There is definitively no reason to take this feat.
- **Swimming Poppet ★★** You gain a swim speed. Most inventors already have a means of getting a swim speed, whether through diving armor or riding a submersible construct.

9th Level Poppet Feats:

- **Scaling Poppet ★★** You gain a climb speed. It is reasonably quick, if a bit high level for its effect.
- **Wheedle and Jig ★** Offensive spellcasting.

13th Level Poppet Feats:

- **Reanimating Spark ★★★** You gain a version or orc ferocity at a much higher level that only gets you back into the fight after you already fell unconscious and dropped all

of your gear. Self-reviving is still a very useful feature, especially if you are a construct innovator who doesn't care about weapons anyways.

- **Squirm Free** ★★★ You can immediately attempt to escape when a creature grapples, immobilizes, or restrains you. Plenty of monsters use these conditions and can inflict them on hit regardless of your defenses. This gives you a chance to escape before suffering any consequences.

17th Level Poppet Feats:

- **Restitch** ★★★ Regenerate is a great healing spell, and is higher level than many capstone feats available to other ancestries.
- **Soaring Poppet** ★★★ This ancestry flight feat deviates from the norm in that it has no prerequisite feats and is much slower than average. A fair trade, though a poppet inventor is unlikely to need it due to their construct's flight.

Shisk ★★★

You get darkvision. Shisk are a versatile -if simple- chassis for the inventor to base their build upon. The shisk can make your character seem smarter in ways outside of practical engineering, as they primarily bolster recall knowledge checks of varying types. They also have a few finesse unarmed attacks of minor interest to subterfuge suit innovators.

Shisk Heritages:

- **Lorekeeper** ★★★ Gain a lore skill of your choosing, which automatically advances to expert at fifth level. This is a great way to replace a wisdom-based recall knowledge skill such as religion or nature with an intelligence-based skill. Simply choose undead lore or fiend lore and reap the benefits when facing those foes.
- **Quillcoat** ★★★ You gain a handy defensive benefit against melee attackers. This is a great fit for melee weapon and power suit innovators.
- **Spellkeeper** ★★★ You gain an innate cantrip, which is almost certainly going to be shield or guidance.
- **Stronggut** ★ This is a very weak heritage. You can go a whole campaign without these benefits ever mattering.

1st level Shisk Feats:

- **Eidetic Ear** ★ Few classes care about performance, and the inventor is surely not one of them.
- **Shisk Lore** ★★★ Become trained in three lore skills of your choice. You can almost entirely replace the recall knowledge functions of nature and religion through all of these lore skills. Fiend lore and undead lore are the most important, with fey. plant, and animal lore mattering afterwards. Most other important creature types can be covered by an intelligence skill.
- **Spelunker** ★★ The survival bonuses are largely irrelevant, but the extra climbing skill is useful. You'll still need both hands free to climb unless you also take Combat Climber, which this feat is slightly redundant with.

- **Spine Stabber ★★** An unarmed attack that deals mid-tier damage but only has the finesse trait.

5th Level Shisk Feats

- **Bristle ★★** If you wanted an unarmed attack, odds are you only did so to free enough hands to get a shield. You don't need to get an inferior unarmed shield.
- **Inured to the Heat ★★** You get four points of fire resistance and treat environmental heat as a step less severe. At the level you take this feat it will protect you against most of your self-damage, but each time you level up you take one more point of damage. This feat initially spares you the need to buy a charm of resistance, but because it never scales you may decide to purchase a greater or major charm of resistance once your level hits double digits. You can retrain this feat if you choose to do so. See the "Self-Damage and Fire Resistance" section at the end of this document for a more detailed evaluation.
- **Renewing Quills ★★★** This is a handy way to double down on the porcupine build, and like its prerequisite heritage is best for use on a melee build.

9th Level Shisk Feats

- **Dig Up Secrets ★★★★** This is a fantastic benefit for a class with your mental prowess, especially because the inventor doesn't receive any recall knowledge improvements by default that this ancestry feat would otherwise compete with.
- **Piercing Quills ★** A mediocre critical effect for a mediocre unarmed attack, which is available four levels after other critical specialization effects.
- **Quill Spray ★★★** You gain a respectable damaging cone with decent scaling.

13th Level Shisk Feats:

- **Delver ★★★** Getting a burrow speed opens up an entirely new avenue of travel. Useful for scouting, escaping, you name it.
- **None Shall Know ★★** You get a once-per-day use of a fairly situational spell which is best supplemented by charisma skills. However, it does scale automatically, which saves it from a red rating. Unlike many similar spells, this one will not become useless as you level.
- **Secret Eyes ★★★** Prying eye is a great spell, and it is particularly useful for classes with decent recall knowledge because it allows you to see enemies and make your knowledge checks before combat starts.

17th Level Shisk Feats:

- **Fountain of Secrets ★★★★** Once per round you get a free recall knowledge check and receive more information than an ordinary check.

Shoony ★★

You get a bonus to saves against inhaled poisons, low-light vision, and a boost to dexterity and charisma. You also suffer a penalty to constitution on top of low ancestral hit points. Stay as far away from the melee as you possibly can. Take Bloodhound or Thickcoat as your heritage and grab whatever feats you please. None are exceptionally good.

Skeleton ★★ / ★★★★

You'll need to use alternate boost to ignore the intelligence flaw. Unlike the dhampir versatile heritage, a skeleton is a true undead. That means healing is even more challenging than it normally would be. Oddly, the Searing Restoration feat specifies "you or a living creature adjacent to you" so technically you can use it to heal yourself, since it only specifies living for others. However, the feat clearly assumed that player characters are all living creatures making the intent very clear. You'll have to rely on medicine checks and the Stitch Skin feat to get by. It should come as no surprise skeletons work best in campaigns with ready access to harm spells.

Skeleton Heritages:

- **Compact Skeleton ★★** You are a small size skeleton with the Quick Squeeze feat. This heritage is a good fit for construct innovators interested in a pilot build.
- **Fodder Skeleton ★★★★** You improve your movement speed. The justification is flimsy but the effect is powerful. Ranged characters can kite foes and melee characters can get to them.
- **Monstrous Skeleton ★★** You gain a modest but functional unarmed attack. This heritage will be most appreciated by armor innovators, as is the case for most unarmed strikes.
- **Sturdy Skeleton ★★★** You gain four extra hit points and the Diehard feat. This is extra important to undead due to the high likelihood your allies are unable to heal you.

1st Level Skeleton Feats:

- **As in Life, So in Death ★★★★** You can passively hide your undeath and pretend to be a living member of your species. You also gain the adopted ancestry feat for whatever your original ancestry was. This is incredibly convenient and mitigates a major downside of playing undead while simultaneously compensating for your small feat list. It won't protect you against magic or those actively trying to determine your true nature, but choosing this feat is a massive load off your party. Having every civilian react to a walking skeleton gets old fast.
- **Collapse ★★★★** You can cancel the damage of a critical hit. It costs a reaction, an action on your next turn, and briefly makes you off-guard. This is still always worth it unless your opponent has reactive strike, which will be triggered by your attempt to re-form.
- **Play Dead ★** You can pretend to be a regular non-animate skeleton. Most GMs would already let you attempt this using the exact mechanics specified by this feat. If your GM rules that you have glowing eye-lights or some other tell unless you take this feat, bump its rating up to yellow.
- **Undead Empathy ★★** You can dupe mindless undead with your skeletal wiles. Mindless undead typically have bad will saves with which to resist you. So long as you approach them alone, you might be able to redirect them to another room where they won't trouble your living allies. It will become increasingly less useful as you level. More powerful undead are more likely to be sapient.

5th Level Skeleton Feats:

- **Past Life** ★★★ You gain a lore skill appropriate to your past life with automatic scaling. I suggest a tragic past as an undead hunter, now cursed to live as one of them after falling to your hated necromantic foes. That'll give you the undead lore skill, which you can use to replace a major function of your religion skill. If your GM accounts for your backstory at all, other undead are going to show up.
- **Well-Armed** ★★★ You can turn any one-handed weapon into a reach weapon by sacrificing your other arm. This is a fun and hilarious way to balance an ancestral reach feat. I do have to wonder what happens when you use a free-hand weapon in this manner. If your GM allows you to make athletics checks at reach this feat could be very useful. Weapon innovators have easier means of accomplishing the same end result, so it is a bit of a moot point in the inventor's case. Spending this action also makes your enemy off-guard against your first attack against creatures outside your reach, though I'd be sorely tempted to leave my arms in reach mode by default regardless.

9th Level Skeleton Feats:

- **Bone Missile** ★★ You deal damage to yourself to add extra void damage to your next strike with a crossbow or bow. If you are fighting a mob of living foes weaker than you are and have secured yourself an accuracy bonus, you can pull ahead on that trade through occasional critical hits. A more accurate and durable class like the fighter might be a better fit for this particular tactic.
- **Rejuvenation Token** ★★★ You can flip Pharasma the bird and enable life-restoring magic to bring you back as an undead, rather than a living version of yourself.
- **Skeletal Resistance** ★★ You gain a tiny amount of resistance to a variety of damage types. While this includes three of the damage types available through Variable Core, you aren't going to want to rely on them to cancel a meaningful amount of self-damage. I'm pleased to note an armor innovator gains minor resistance to all physical damage between this feat and their armor specialization.

13th Level Skeleton Feats:

- **Skeletal Transformation** ★ You don't need or want an animal form. You won't be able to use your inventor abilities while in a battle form.
- **Skeleton Commander** ★★★ With some investment in religion and either arcana or occultism, you can make yourself four capable minions. They aren't especially powerful but they can serve as expendable servants. Send them to flank for you and open suspicious doors.

17th Level Skeleton Feats:

- **Bone Swarm** ★★ You turn into a flying ball of area damage. It doesn't play nice with your inventor abilities, but it can still come in handy when you want to fit through small spaces, become immune to a few conditions, or move through other creature's spaces.
- **Necromantic Heir** ★★★ You can cast a high-level harm spell. It is a bit underwhelming for its level, but you can at least heal yourself while hurting your enemies.

Sprite ★ / ★★★

Sprites are the only ancestry that is tiny by default. This limits their options as inventors. They're a terrible fit for melee builds because they need to enter the space of their target, incurring reactive strikes and requiring extra movement. The pixie heritage can work around this hurdle, but few other ancestries need to burn a heritage bonus just to overcome an innate flaw. Most sprites are built as ranged inventors. This means using either a ranged weapon innovation or a drone construct build. In either capacity, they are excellent. Their base ability score array is perfect for a ranged build and they have access to excellent non-offensive spells.

Sprite Heritages:

- **Draxie** ★★★ You can discreetly communicate with any creature you are touching. Thanks to your tiny size, feel free to ride your companion's shoulder into negotiations. Flit from shoulder to shoulder as needed. It won't look that suspicious for a whimsical fey to do so.
- **Grig** ★★★ Substantially improve you high jump and long jumps, and also gain a moderately useful cantrip.
- **Luminous** ★★★ You can turn yourself into a light cantrip.
- **Melixie** ★★★ Not only can you talk to most insectoid creatures, some of them even start out friendly to you. Insects are ubiquitous in virtually all natural and urban settings, so getting even rudimentary info about your surroundings from bugs can be very helpful.
- **Nyktera** ★★ You do not have the perception needed to capitalize on these bonuses.
- **Pixie** ★ You become small size rather than tiny, which has no intrinsic merit for a ranged build. This accomplishes nothing for you.

1st Level Sprite Feats:

- **Corgi Mount** ★★★ You spend one action to command your familiar and through that action gain 50 feet of movement. Your familiar only has your armor class and low hit points, but it is still great for kiting foes with ranged weaponry.
- **Evanescent Wings** ★★★ This is a very nice way to circumvent the penalties of being tiny size and allows you to better roleplay a fairy. It also serves as an additional prerequisite for standard flight feats. While I am giving this feat a green rating, I honestly can't imagine playing a tiny sprite without this due to the convenience it offers.
- **Fey Cantrips** ★★★★ You get two cantrips. Both of these cantrips have benefited from changes made in the remaster and are substantially more versatile than they were. If you are a grig or a draxie, you get a third cantrip. That's triple the cantrips available through other first level ancestry feats.
- **Speak with Bats** ★ Unlike insects, bats are very rare and typically not awake when adventurers prefer to travel. This will never come up.
- **Sprite's Spark** ★★ The grig and nyktera get the best damage type. Even so, with minimum damage you are unlikely to want to use it instead of a martial weapon.

5th Level Sprite Feats:

- **Animal Speaker ★★** You can speak to all animals permanently and receive a benefit to diplomacy checks targeting them. Handy, but you already had part of the effect due to its prerequisite.
- **Catchy Tune ★** This feat demands investment in performance, and is not sufficiently powerful to justify doing so.
- **Fey Disguise ★** You create a disguise for yourself… but it still has to be within six inches of your height. I don't anticipate you will fool anyone with this.

9th Level Sprite Feats:

- **Energize Wings ★★★** Standard ancestry flight progression with an extra prerequisite.
- **Fey Magic ★★★** You gain two helpful spells, those being faerie fire and invisibility. The latter is the bigger draw.

13th Level Sprite Feats:

- **Fey Skin ★★★** You gain a bunch of extra hit points and passive healing in exchange for a downside that will probably never come up. It'd be a shoe-in if it wasn't competing with Invisible Trickster.
- **Invisible Trickster ★★★★** You can cast a 4th level invisibility spell. This will render all of your enemies off-guard against your attacks and make you very difficult to hit. You can even cast it once per hour, more often than you could cast a lower-level invisibility through the earlier Fey Magic feat.

17th Level Sprite Feats:

- **Hero's Wings ★★★** Bog-standard ancestry flight progression.

Strix ★★★★

Strix get a dexterity bonus and low-light vision. Strix are well-suited to any inventor build, but due to their unique easy access to flight they are best employed as ranged characters. Simply fly above your enemy's heads and rain down strikes from above.

As early flight is the strix's only gimmick, I will not be reviewing their individual feats like I do for other highly rated ancestries. Your feat choice is as follows: any first level feat, Fledgling Flight, Juvenile Flight, and Fully Flighted. Never take Strix Defender as your first level feat because it makes you an antagonistic racist who nobody at the table will like playing with. The other first level feats are all yellow.

Surki ★★

Bug-people with a magic-eating gimmick. So long as you avoid pitfalls like the weapon proficiency feat, Tunnel Roll, and the survival feats, any of their features are fine. As with many rare ancestries, their limited feat list gives them few standout feats to base a build around, but the features they do have are respectably strong.

Vishkanya ★★

The vishkanya are a second snake-person ancestry. They're worse than the nagaji because they're reliant on poison damage, which is useless in certain encounters. It's a welcome damage boost when it works, but constructs and undead stonewall this ancestry pretty hard.

Uncommon and Rare Versatile Heritages:

Versatile heritages are pretty powerful on the whole. You gain a massively expanded feat list at the minor cost of a heritage bonus. If your ancestry lacks low-light vision, you even get a heritage-worthy trait. For that reason, no versatile heritage has a red rating, though the aasimar and undine come close and the dhampir backfires in certain party compositions. Some versatile heritages, such as the ganzi, ifrit, and undine are valuable because they offer something other than low-light vision. Such versatile heritages are useful for ancestries that already possess low-light or darkvision.

Mixed

I'm not going to review every ancestry in combination with every other ancestry's feat list. Even these guides can't be that definitive. The optimal use for this heritage is to connect an ancestry with good base features with those that have a good feat list or patch gaps in which an ancestry only has poor feats available. It is easy to exploit for power-gaming by cherry-picking good features on incompatible lists. Poaching elf feats like Nimble Elf and Elven Instincts is always a good idea. While the mixed heritage is extremely variable, if you use it for optimization above all else it is easy to turn into the most powerful versatile heritage in the game. Of course, that's all assuming your GM will let you make an android-lizardfolk hybrid. They have every right to refuse any combination that isn't half-human and half-elf or orc, no questions asked.

Generic Elemental Feats

As of Rage of Elements there are now seven elemental ancestries capable of drawing from the same feat pool. Rather than copy each feat seven times, I've reviewed them collectively here.

1st Level Elemental Feats

- **Elemental Eyes** ★★★ If you have low-light vision from your ancestry, you gain darkvision.
- **Genie Weapon Familiarity** ★ Wish blades are interesting. The inventor can technically take advantage of them after using explode. 1amlost has pointed out that Explosive Leap, Searing Restoration, Megavolt, and Deep Freeze activate resonant. However, for the wish blade to be competitive with a bastard sword it either needs to trigger a weakness or activate on almost every swing. If it ever fails to do so it loses out compared to a simple bastard sword. As all of those feats and features are unstable, the inventor won't be able to activate it more than once per fight on average; though your other ancestry feats and non-unstable uses of those feats might help out a bit too.

  Sadly, while the weapon innovator's overdrive adds fire damage to strikes, it does not actually gain the fire trait and thus cannot capitalize on the resonant trait. 1amlost has also pointed out that you might be able to eke slightly more value out of the wish blade with the Gadget Specialist feat. Cryomisters have the cold trait, so if you are interested in using a mediocre gadget you might be able to deal cold damage a couple extra times per fight. There is a slight grey area regarding cryomister's ability to activate the resonant trait. While the cryomister does have the cold trait, the last action you took was a

manipulate action to activate the cryomister. Resonant specifies that it is activated by the traits of the last action you took. I personally think this scenario is comparable to the cast a spell action and should activate the resonant trait, but your GM might rule otherwise. It'll still lose to a bastard sword unless it trips a weakness, and the bastard sword didn't cost you a feat.

5th Level Elemental Feats

- **Noble Resolve** ★★★★ You get a permanent circumstance bonus to will saves. It will be redundant with the armor innovation's antimagic plating modification, but they can easily select other modifications.
- **Skillful Tail** ★★ Your tail can perform simple actions, but it can't hold items or perform any checks. This feat is mostly useful for opening doors with your hands full.

9th Level Elemental Feats

- **Miraculous Repair** ★★ You can repair a nonmagical object once per day. It can't fix a destroyed object and it falls apart after ten minutes.

13th Level Elemental Feats

- **Planar Sidestep** ★★★ Get powerful damage resistance once per day. This is a perfect reaction for a fragile class like the inventor. It might be a bit less useful if you use a shield, but most inventors don't.

Aphorite ★★★★

Aphorites are the lawful outsider descendant. Aphorite feats are powerful but impose a heavy tax on your actions, especially early on. As a result, they are best suited to archery. An archer does not need to spend as many actions reloading or moving and can devote more to using aphorite feats. With investment in an appropriate archetype, firearms also work. At higher levels an aphorite becomes more flexible in its approach to combat, so you might choose to rely on your ancestry feats early on and use aphorite feats later if you intend to enter melee.

1st Level Aphorite Feats:

- **Internal Cohesion** ★★ Nobody needs healer's tools to patch you up and you will most likely not need to worry about critical failure ever again. However, these benefits will not apply to Battle Medicine so this is only useful outside of combat, in which case critical failure is just an extra time cost.
- **Intuitive Crafting** ★★ You gain a trained skill of your choice and Specialty Crafting.
- **Lemma of Vision** ★★★ You gain darkvision. This feat lacks the usual qualifier about when you can take the feat and whether or not you can retrain it.

5th Level Aphorite Feats:

- **Crystalline Dust** ★★★ Once per day, you can spend two actions to gain concealment. Its duration scales based on level, but it generally lasts long enough to stick for an entire combat encounter. It is a good skill to have for boss fights, as they will be no better at circumventing the flat check than weaker opponents. A character with a ranged weapon can use this more easily than a melee character due to its action cost, but a melee character will get more use out of it because they are closer to the enemy. I would be

most inclined to split the difference and use it on a mid-range build such as a pistol or blunderbuss. While reload is also an action tax, it can usually be deferred to the round after you activate Crystalline Dust.

- **Intercorporate** ★★★ Once per day you can manually force a new saving throw against poison or disease as one action. If you fail you suffer the effect of the affliction and if you critically fail, its stage advances. Using this on poison delivered by a powerful creature is usually a bad idea, but some poisons and most diseases often only come with condition effects rather than damage. Such afflictions are much safer for the purposes of using this ability. You may want to use recall knowledge checks to identify the effects of the affliction before attempting this, just to be safe. You can alternatively spend an action to force a flat check to end persistent damage, with the benefits of assistance. This is a great benefit because you do not suffer any ill effects on failure and can stop the damage before it reaches the end of your turn. The fact that this feat offers both is very helpful, though you can only choose one at a time and it is a once-per-day ability.
- **Offensive Analysis** ★★★★ Once per day you can cast sure strike. Sure strike is a very helpful spell for martial characters, especially those inclined to crit-fish with deadly or fatal weaponry. Ranged inventors are especially likely to appreciate this, particularly if taken in tandem with the Megaton Strike inventor feat.

9th Level Aphorite Feats:

- **Analyze Information** ★★★★ You can cast hypercognition. Hypercognition is a great way to capitalize on your high intelligence. If you have decent wisdom or lore skills appropriate to your enemy, all the better.
- **Ancillary Motes** ★★★ You can choose this feat multiple times, and each time you do so you gain an additional use of Crystalline Dust per day. I wouldn't choose it more than once. Two uses of Crystalline Dust are sufficient for most purposes, and each time you take it beyond the first it becomes a worse deal from a power-to-level perspective.
- **Crystalline Cloud** ★ This is only helpful if you need to hide your entire party in smoke and don't intend to fight back. Not only that, but it consumes your whole turn and you can't see through it yourself.
- **Preemptive Reconfiguration** ★★★★ You gain powerful physical damage resistance as a reaction. If you have Crystalline Dust, you can expend a use of that rather than a use of this feat. Both serve the same defensive function, but I much prefer this on a melee build due to its lack of associated action cost. That it also allows you to trade uses of Crystalline Dust for it just seals the deal.

13th Level Aphorite Feats:

- **Impose Order** ★★★ Once per day you gain the effects of Assurance as a reaction when you would critically fail a skill check. This is helpful for melee builds reliant on athletics, as it allows you to bypass the multiple attack penalty without giving up your chance to roll. You can also cancel out a misfortune effect, which is a nice if infrequent boon.

17th Level Aphorite Feats:

- **Channel the Godmind** ★★★★ You can enter a state in which you possess incredible senses. You are unlikely to even need a perception check while in this state, which is great because yours is the worst in the game.

Ardande ★★★

The wood elemental heritage. There's little about it that stands out, but it has access to a few useful feats and the good picks from the generic elemental feat list.

1st Level Ardande Feats:

- **Ambersoul** ★★★ All follow up strikes against you take an unavoidable penalty.
- **Grove Harbored** ★★★ You gain a solid collection of thematic defenses.
- **Moldersoul** ★ Spend two actions to destroy natural difficult terrain directly adjacent to you and damage plants. You can only use it once per day.
- **Springsoul** ★★★ You get a short-range cantrip that starts out worthless but becomes pretty good by seventh level.
- **Sunlit Vitality** ★ Rations are light bulk and last a week each. On the off-chance your GM even bothers to enforce rations, to run out of food and water you would need to be stuck outside for at least 10 weeks and have nobody in your party with a passable survival skill. Keeping yourself fed and hydrated isn't really part of the game.
- **Woodworker** ★★ A generic specialty crafting feat of little practical worth to an adventurer.

5th Level Ardande Feats:

- **Read the Roots** ★ You can spend two actions to give yourself an imprecise sense that only works on striding or burrowing creatures and only for a single seek action. There are other ancestries with permanent 30 foot radius imprecise senses at first level. It's good flavor, but lacking substance.
- **Treespeech** ★★ You can talk to trees. Trees are pretty common outside of desert settings, but the value of this feat is contingent on the extent to which the GM gives trees useful information.

9th Level Ardande Feats:

- **Flowering Path** ★★★ Spend two actions to make all terrain you stride over difficult terrain. It's once per day, but there is no listed duration. A modest but functional feat.
- **Kizidhar Magic** ★★ An offensive spell and a utility spell.

13th level Ardande Feats:

- **Summon Wood Elemental** ★★ There are few worthwhile summons within the wood elemental list. You can summon scamps for their fly speed, which helps them serve as messengers and scouts. Wood elementals have few abilities outside of direct combat, but anything you summon with this feat is too weak for that.
- **Wooden Mantle** ★★★ You can get fast healing and an aura that automatically sickens foes around you. It might be tough to find the actions to cast this spell, though.

17th Level Ardande Feats

- **Wood Ward ★★★** Gain cover against an attack as a reaction and reduce the damage of the attack by 30 if it hits anyways. It's good, if a bit underwhelming for a seventeenth level feat.

Beastkin ★★

The beastkin bite attack is terrible and their best feats are sensory. Shapeshifting is little use to a character as focused on equipment as you are. You can get darkvision and echolocation if you've chosen to be a bat person. Pack Tactics is useful for melee builds, especially weapon innovators who have added backstabber to their weapon.

Changeling ★★

You can get guidance from Moon May and power suit innovators can get a claw attack from Slag May. The Called feat effectively gives you a permanent bonus to your will saving throws, as almost all of them are mental effects and thus applicable to this feat. It is among the most powerful ancestral benefits to your saving throws and borders on a blue rating. Nothing else jumps out all that much.

Dhampir ★★ / ★★★★

You gain void healing. While becoming immune to void damage is a massive boon against the correct foes, it comes at the cost of your allies' ability to effectively heal you in every other encounter. Unlike true undead, you are still a living creature and can benefit from the medicine skill, alchemical healing, and non-vitality healing spells. If your party is reliant on those methods of healing instead of conventional vitality spellcasting or the primary antagonists of your game are necromancers, improve the Dhampir's rating due to the defensive power of void healing. I recommend taking the Searing Restoration inventor feat so that you can also contribute to healing in the absence of a divine spellcaster.

Fangs are of interest to power suit innovators. Unlike an orc's dainty tusks, vampire fangs are brutish and lack finesse. This works in their favor because the dhampir replaces the finesse trait with grapple, which is a better fit for the power suit innovator playstyle. Taste Blood makes for an interesting follow-up feat.

Dragonblood ★★★★

Legally distinct dragonborn. You get to choose how dragon-y you look. Feel free to declare yourself a full dragon-human hybrid or take the coward's path by making an attractive human with some scales on their cheeks.

Dragonblood are one of the only versatile heritages to offer something other than darkvision. They get fear resistance instead. I have no idea why. All true dragons have darkvision and none of them are fear resistant. This benefit becomes redundant for most classes once they get will save improvements, and the inventor is no exception. It's the bad version of standard ancestry emotion resistance that provides no flat bonus, but with an even more narrow scope than usual. Still, access to the dragonblood feat list is well worth it.

Dragonblood enjoy superior flight progression, giving them an automatic four-star blue rating. Nothing competes with the flight feats. Pretty much every inventor with this heritage will choose Draconic Resistance with a fire exemplar, Dragon's Flight, and True Dragon's Flight.

1st Level Dragonblood Feats:

- **Arcane Dragonblood** ★★ Get a skill and modest skill feat.
- **Breath of the Dragon** ★★★ The damage is a bit on the low side, but you can use it every few rounds rather than once per day. Figure out how many creatures you personally need to make using this the mathematically superior option and have at it.
- **Divine Dragonblood** ★★★ Get a skill and a bonus to initiative.
- **Draconic Aspect** ★★★ Standard ancestry unarmed attack. The tail is the best one.
- **Draconic Resistance** ★★★★ Standard ancestry damage resistance. Choose fire to resist your self-damage.
- **Draconic Sight** ★★ / ★★★ Get low light vision or darkvision depending on what you already have. Darkvision is green, low light vision is yellow.
- **Occult Dragonblood** ★★ Get a skill and modest skill feat.
- **Primal Dragonblood** ★ Get a skill and some useless benefits to checks that will never come up.
- **Scaly Hide** ★★★ This feat gives dexterity builds the opportunity to completely ignore strength investment without penalty. You can also sleep without losing any armor class from not having armor.

5th Level Dragonblood Feats:

- **Deadly Aspect** ★★ Add the deadly trait to your unarmed attack. The inventor isn't especially good at crit-fishing.
- **Draconic Scent** ★★ You gain imprecise scent with a 30-foot radius. It's identical to other ancestry feats like those of the kholo and catfolk, except it's four levels higher for no reason.
- **Dragon's Flight** ★★★★ Superior ancestry flight progression.
- **Traditional Resistances** ★★★ A solid buff to magic resistance against a chosen tradition. Choose arcane or divine for best results, though a focused campaign could skew it in favor of the other traditions.

9th Level Dragonblood Feats:

- **Formidable Breath** ★★★ Improve the damage and area of your dragon's breath. It's as if you have an extra explode that you can use more often and never hurts you.
- **True Dragon's Flight** ★★★★ Superior ancestry flight progression.
- **Wing Buffet** ★★ You can shove two adjacent creatures at once and deal a bit of damage as you do so. Think carefully: would you rather use your wings for this, or for permanent flight?

13th Level Dragonblood Feats:

- **Draconic Veil** ★★★ You can enlarge yourself for an hour or set up a disguise for the same amount of time. It is both flexible and reliable.

- **Majestic Presence** ★★★ Frighten every creature around you. This includes your allies. Hopefully your allies already know not to stand near you because you are constantly exploding.

17th Level Dragonblood Feats:

- **Form of the Dragon** ★ Standard ancestry battle form.
- **Lingering Breath** ★★★ Your breath weapon creates difficult terrain -even in air- and causes persistent damage.

Duskwalker ★★★

Duskwalkers are not undead. They just have blue-grey skin and came back from dead. Pharasma and her psychopomps would really like you to know that they are not undead, because they hate undead but like duskwalkers. In addition to standard versatile heritage vision progression, you get immunity to actual undeath: insofar as that means anything to someone who is essentially a technically-living revenant created by divine forces playing favorites. Nonetheless, duskwalkers are a fine versatile heritage as inventors.

1st Level Duskwalker Feats:

- **Chance Death** ★ You can reroll a failed death saving throw that would kill you. This is far from a guarantee, only works once per day, and only in a very rare circumstance. If you get killed, odds are good it isn't because your party let your death saving throws run out. It is far more likely that your unconscious body was maimed, you were eaten, you were hit with a death effect, persistent damage took your death saves away, or you failed a saving throw. Of all the myriad ways to die, this feat would only apply in the latter case; and even then, it only grants a reroll.
- **Deliberate Death** ★★★ You gain a final melee attack against any creature that brings you to zero hit points. This is always helpful for melee builds. Falling unconscious is far more common than failing your last death saving throw.
- **Ghost Hunter** ★★ You gain ghost touch on all of your strikes. There is a bit of ambiguity as to whether or not this applies to ranged strikes, but I believe that they do due to similar wording from the ghost ammunition magic item. As it is normally very difficult for a non-magical class to get such an effect on a ranged weapon, if your campaign is even lightly themed around undead this can be a very important quality. Melee characters might be more inclined to purchase a ghost touch rune directly.
- **Gravesight** ★★★ Standard ancestry darkvision.
- **Nosoi's Mask** ★★ You gain a cheap item bonus to intimidation and a very good skill feat.
- **Vanth's Weapon Familiarity** ★ Useless to inventors.
- **Willing Death** ★★ This would be more appropriate on a more durable class, but if the enemy hasn't focused on you for the duration of a fight this can keep an ally up.

5th Level Duskwalker Feats:

- **Lifesense ★★** You gain an imprecise sense with a tiny range that doesn't affect constructs. It can at least bypass stealth within melee, and is harder to circumvent that scent or hearing.
- **Shoki's Argument ★** Innate offensive spellcasting against a single creature type and an unnecessary trained skill.
- **Spirit Soother ★** Even if your perception score was good this would still be a bad feat due to the rarity of haunts.
- **Vanth's Weapon Execution ★** None of these weapons have particularly good critical specialization effects even if you want them.
- **Ward Against Corruption ★★** You gain bonuses against all undead and one obscure type of fiend. This is not as good as blanket bonuses against necromancy, but it can still be handy from time to time.

9th Level Duskwalker Feats:

- **Catrina's Presence ★** You cannot effectively use the spellcasting this feat grants.
- **Duskwalker Magic ★★** You gain two mediocre, but non-offensive, spells.
- **Morrigna's Spider Affinity ★★** You can cast spider climb once per day. You can do other less useful stuff too.
- **Spirit Strikes ★★★★** Undead are not guaranteed to have a weakness to vitality damage in the way that fiends are guaranteed to have a weakness to good damage, but adding one damage to all strikes against everything except for constructs is more than enough to make up for it.

13th Level Duskwalker Feats:

- **Calaca's Showstopper ★** Smash a guitar like a rock star to stun everything within 30 feet of you. While awesome, this is of little use to an inventor because it is offensive spellcasting.
- **Resist Ruin ★★★** You can resist void energy because you're definitely not undead and can cast death ward once per day. Death ward is a great spell to cast on an ally before a fight with an undead creature, cleric, or necromancer.

17th Level Duskwalker Feats:

- **Boneyard's Call ★★** A generic uncommon ancestry plane shift feat.
- **Olethros's Decree ★★★** Once per day, you deal a boatload more damage to a single target you hit with a bow. Effective use of this feature is a balancing act. You want the creature to be powerful enough for this to matter but not so powerful that you might miss two shots. Don't waste it on an encounter against a solo boss or a horde of eight minions. Saving it for when you are buffed or your opponent is debuffed is also wise.
- **Yamaraj's Grandeur ★★★** You get a big breath weapon blast. Besides the persistent damage rider, there is little exceptional about it.

Ganzi ★★★

You gain resistance to a random damage type at the start of each day. It could be acid, electricity, or sonic. None of those are very good resistances by default, with sonic in particular being extremely rare. However, two of those damage types are options available through the Variable

Core feat. Unfortunately, you can't change your Variable Core damage type faster than this ancestry will swap it resistance, meaning that you never have more than a 33% chance of matching your chosen self-damage type.

1st Level Ganzi Feats:

- **Creative Prodigy** ★ This is a disguised lore skill.
- **Ganzi Gaze** ★★★ A generic ancestry darkvision feat, though it can be retrained.
- **Irrepressible** ★ This becomes entirely redundant with your class abilities at level eleven, but it is pretty good before that.
- **Smashing Tail** ★★★ Respectable damage and a good trait make this a viable choice for power suit innovators.
- **Vestigial Wings** ★★ You gain increasing fall damage resistance as your acrobatics improve, making this a decent choice for inventors with good dexterity (or simply high proficiency in acrobatics).

5th Level Ganzi Feats:

- **Amorphous Aspect** ★ You can't critically fail on checks to squeeze. Critically failing just makes you stuck for a minute. It slows you down on an activity which is already measured in minutes. If you also have the Quick Squeeze feat you might improve this to yellow.
- **Skillful Tail** ★★ Your tail can perform simple actions, but it can't hold items or perform any checks. This feat is mostly useful for opening doors with your hands full.
- **Anarchic Arcana** ★★ Some of the spells on this list are very good, and some of them are not. You have no control over what you get.
- **Glory and Valor!** ★★★★ This feat allows you to spend an action to enter a state in which every successful strike heals you for a minute. It ends if you critically fail on an attack roll, so this is best used against a large horde of weaker foes. Weapons favored by those with this feat include shortbows and weapons with the agile, sweep, or reach traits; though be careful, because making multiple attacks each turn increases your odds of losing it on a critical failure. While a high-accuracy class such as the fighter or gunslinger would be even better for this feat, a weapon innovator is not far behind due to their ability to add relevant traits to their weapon.
- **Larcenous Tail** ★★ You gain a minor bonus to pick pockets, to an extent freely determined by the GM.

13th Level Ganzi Feats:

- **Alter Resistance** ★★★★ Change your ganzi resistance to match that of incoming damage. This uniquely allows you to gain two resisted damage types. Because you can do so once per hour, there is technically nothing stopping you from manually setting your damage resistance to a given type at the start of a day. Just buy a dirt-cheap alchemical bomb of your preferred damage type and throw it into an adjacent square, causing the splash damage to hit you and allowing you to alter your resistance to match. You could also spam unstable actions in the morning until you fail your flat check. Either way, you can effectively set your damage type to that of your Variable Core and maintain two damage types, with the additional option to swap your resistance on the fly if an enemy

starts making heavy use of a particular type. Just heal yourself when you are finished and you've effectively mitigated the downsides.

- **Arise, ye Worthy!** ★★★★ Gazi are better healers than aasimar, because they can cure death once every day with just a level thirteen feat.
- **Mischievous Tail** ★★★ Get an item bonus on your tail trip and disarm attempts. Odds are you've been rocking a general-purpose athletics item bonus like the belt of lifting up until now, but this can still be handy if your handwrap bonus is better.

Hungerseed ★★★

You get access to Greater Transformation through this heritage. This gives you easy access to extra reach without the downsides of being large. It also gets some area blasts and bonuses that trigger when below half hit points. A fragile class with a decent class DC like the inventor is well-suited to use pretty much all of the hungerseed's feats. Most of its feats have a three-star green rating, so you should feel comfortable choosing whatever you want.

Ifrit ★★★★

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the ifrit secures itself a good rating simply by offering fire resistance. If your GM is willing to allow you to choose ifrit, you cease to have any incentive to choose a fire-resistant heritage (such as Forge Dwarf or Desert Elf) because the ifrit offers the same bonuses with an expanded feat list. The ifrit has a large amount of synergy with the inventor, but most of its actual feats can be found elsewhere if you look hard enough.

1st Level Ifrit Feats:

- **Brightsoul** ★★★ You permanently shed light and take stealth penalties. Handy in an overt party without darkvision, but otherwise inferior to the heritage's numerous means of getting darkvision and certainly inferior to other means of ancestral light, though you also receive bonuses against light effects and a couple conditions to make up the gap. It is a lineage feat, but as with all of the elemental lineages there are no follow up feats and it implies nothing about your heritage. It might as well be a normal feat for all practical purposes.
- **Cindersoul** ★★★ This powerful bonus puts similar ancestry feats to shame. You resist three forms of persistent damage, though only two in practice. Poison damage is rarely persistent. Instead, it is delivered as an affliction, which operates based on different rules. This feat is still very good. It is a lineage trait, but as with all of the elemental lineages there are no follow up feats and it implies nothing about your heritage. It might as well be a normal feat for all practical purposes.
- **Ember's Eyes** ★★★ If you have low-light vision from your ancestry, you gain darkvision. If you did not, you gain low-light vision. The ifrit gets both this and Elemental Eyes purely due to formatting quirks from its source book, and this feat accomplishes everything that Elemental Eyes does in a more flexible manner.
- **Inner Fire** ★ You gain a bad offensive cantrip.

- **Lavasoul ★★** This ancestral unarmed attack is very interesting, and could be of some use to power suit innovators. It deals minimum damage, but it also adds one fire damage. This allows you to trigger weaknesses from time to time, and makes its damage equivalent to that of d6 unarmed attacks on average. It also has the agile trait. However, far more creatures resist fire than are weak to it, and a power suit innovator can never access the critical specialization effect this unarmed attack offers, preventing this feat from securing a green rating. It is a lineage trait, but as with all of the elemental lineages there are no follow up feats and it implies nothing about your heritage. It might as well be a normal feat for all practical purposes.
- **Sinister Appearance ★★** A generic intimidation feat with an odd rider that allows you to pretend to be a tiefling.

5th Level Ifrit Feats:

- **Firesight ★★★** You can see through smoke. This feature is oddly high level for its effect, considering that other ancestries can get it at first level. Still, if you need more reasons why ifrit have great inventor synergy it does combo with Gadget Specialist for the purpose of seeing through smoke created by smoke fans, and you can only take Gadget Specialist at fourth level anyways.
- **Heatwave ★★★★** This feat allows you to gain concealment every time you take fire damage, even if you resist all of it. There is no class in the game better qualified to take advantage of this feature. Whenever your unstable actions or overdrive go awry, you can immediately compensate with concealment. This will substantially improve your durability, even if once in a great while it backfires due to an ally being unable to target you with a heal or buff. The fact that it only lasts one turn works in your favor in that regard, as it is easy to drop.

  A dwarven ifrit power suit innovator with this feat, the martial artist archetype, and the Spark Fist dwarven ancestry feat can trigger this on any turn they choose, maintaining easy access to concealment alongside a powerful unarmed strike for a very low cost. Your GM must hand out uncommon features like candy if you're able to pull that combo off, but it is extremely useful if you are.

9th Level Ifrit Feats:

- **Charred Remains ★** Unfortunately, this applies exclusively to fire spells and cannot enhance your explode action.
- **Efreeti Magic ★★** You gain a pair of mediocre spells, but at least they aren't offensive.
- **Scorching Disarm ★★★** You gain a hands-free once per day disarm attempt that deals healthy fire damage. I like this feat because you can use weapon modifications to get every athletics trait except for disarm, and then use this on the occasions you want to try. Even if you don't really care about the disarm itself, the fire damage on the attempt is nice. It can even be used in combination with Assurance as a partial MAP-bypass against weaker foes.

13th Level Ifrit Feats:

- **Radiant Burst ★★★** This boon synergizes nicely with the melee inventor playstyle, as it allows you to blind or dazzle creatures around you.

- **Summon Fire Elemental** ★★★ Oddly, your best use of this feat might be summoning a low-level ember fox and using it to give your allies fire resistance.

17th Level Ifrit Feats:

- **Blazing Aura** ★★★ Enemies in the area take minor fire damage and allies in the area become quickened. A great feat, especially if your allies choose capstone class feats other than those that quicken them permanently.

Nephilim ★★★

This new heritage takes the place of the pre-remaster aasimar and tieflings. It also mentions that monitors fall under its purview, but provides none of the feats from the pre-remaster aphorite or ganzi heritages. The only other quirk of the nephilim is their unusually useful lore skill, which can be of an enemy type appropriate to your lineage. It's not enough to get that feat a higher general rating, but it's something. Unfortunately, none of the terrible feats that formerly belonged to the aasimar have been improved. The fiendish lineages have stronger feats than the celestial lineages.

1st Level Nephilim Lineage Feats:

- **Angelkin** ★★ You get an intelligence skill and some extra languages. It is mediocre at best.
- **Grimspawn** ★★★ Diehard is a great feat to have.
- **Hellspawn** ★★ As with most tiefling lineages this grants a skill and a skill feat. The trained skill and its skill feat are okay.
- **Lawbringer** ★★★ / ★★ Standard ancestry emotion resistance.
- **Musetouched** ★★ Become better at the escape action.
- **Pitborn** ★★★★ As with most tiefling lineages this grants a skill and a skill feat. Unlike other lineages, you get to choose any athletics feat you want. This is the best nephilim lineage by a significant margin. Even its follow-up feats are excellent.

1st Level Nephilim Feats:

- **Bestial Manifestation** ★★ You get your choice of a variety of mediocre unarmed attacks.
- **Halo** ★★★ You get a version of the light cantrip that you can only cast on yourself but takes just one action to activate or deactivate.
- **Nephilim Eyes** ★★★ Standard ancestry darkvision.
- **Nimble Hooves** ★★★★ Improve your movement speed.

5th Level Nephilim Feats:

- **Blessed Blood** ★ Not only did this feat make it into the remaster unaltered, it lacks any sort of celestial lineage prerequisite: you can somehow derive holy blood from a fiendish lineage. When a fiend or undead bites you, it takes an insignificant amount of damage. Very few fiends and undead actually have bite attacks. On the off-chance they do, the paltry damage from Blessed Blood is unlikely to deter them from biting. Those who are deterred often have no shortage of other attacks to make. Blessed Blood also gives you a massive bonus to make a useless item.

- **Extraplanar Supplication** ★★ Cast bless or bane. Sustaining either is going to be a heavy action tax on the inventor's already strained action economy. Always choose bless. Bane allows enemies to make a saving throw to resist the effect while bless just works. Bless was also given a larger radius than bane as of the remaster. If your party is already receiving a status bonus to hit from a bard, cleric, or similar source, don't take this feat. I would only consider this feat if both I and an ally were archers.
- **Nephilim Resistance** ★★★ Standard flat ancestry resistance. Choose fire.
- **Scion of Many Planes** ★★ This feat is the tacky backstory enabler. Choose another lineage feat. The rating of this feat is equal to one less than the rating of the lineage you choose because you're spending a better feat for it. This typically makes it yellow.
- **Skillful Tail** ★★ Your tail can perform simple actions, but it can't hold items or perform any checks. This feat is mostly useful for opening doors with your hands full.

9th Level Nephilim Feats:

- **Celestial Magic** ★★ Choose everlight and humanoid form. You don't have the hit points to cast share life. The other celestial spells rely on counteract checks even though they never scale. They're useless in short order.
- **Divine Countermeasures** ★★ You gain a bonus on saving throws against divine effects. Both undead and fiends are common foes, and both use divine magic. This is still far too high level for my liking. Orcs get this bonus to a tradition of their choice with a free skill proficiency as a first level feat. Dragonbloods get this bonus with their choice of tradition, an armor class bonus, *and* extra bonuses against paralysis at fifth level.
- **Divine Wings** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression.
- **Fiendish Magic** ★★★ You can use this to pick up invisibility and disguise spells. If either of those don't meet your preference false vitality, see the unseen, and shatter are also okay. The extra hit points of the first don't scale well, see the unseen is both situational and potentially made obsolete by inventor class feats, and shatter is just a mediocre spell. Paranoia is an offensive spell the inventor isn't up to casting.

13th Level Nephilim Feats:

- **Celestial Mercy** ★ Another celestial feat that relies on counteract checks that never scale. Even if you were proficient in spellcasting, this feat would be useless.
- **Slip Sideways** ★★★★ A fifth level translocate spell is the ultimate get-out-of-jail-free card. Teleport out of the entire dungeon if you so choose. Teleport out of a monster's stomach, even. Unfortunately, this feat remains locked to fiendish lineages even though almost all archons are able to cast the same spell.
- **Summon Nephilim Kin** You summon creatures appropriate to your lineage. Don't listen to anyone who tells you summon spells are bad: your summons are useless for combat, but they provide impressive utility. Most heritages have a first level creature able to fly, turn invisible, detect magic, and disguise itself as an animal. Such creatures are useful messengers, mailmen, and scouts. They can create distractions, trigger traps, or lead civilians to safety. Even this low-level, limited form of summoning has solid value.

  Angelkin ★★ can only summon cassisians. They can be worn as a hat. It's a neat trick, but it only has worth in battle. That said, it has some utility. They have typical low-level outsider flight and change shape abilities. Their change shape notably allows

them to assume the form of a humanoid. Despite their default form, they are able to open possibly-trapped doors and chests by growing some thumbs. Unfortunately, they remain tiny size and can't carry you anywhere.

Grimspawn ★★ can only summon cacodaemons. Unfortunately, a summoned cacodaemon can't eat the souls of your dead enemies because it takes three actions and summoned minions have only two. Cacodaemons have typical low-level outsider flight, invisibility, detect magic, and change shape abilities.

Hellspawn ★★★★ have options: lemure, imps, zebub, barbazu, and… attorneys. Barbazu, lemure, and attorneys focus on combat abilities. Imps have typical low-level outsider flight, invisibility, detect magic, and change shape abilities. Zebub trade detect magic and change shape for impressive teleportation abilities and the ability to share their memories. They (and the barbazu) are the only nephilim summons capable of fifth level translocation, meaning they can jump up to a mile and go through walls. Both imps and zebub are excellent summons.

Lawbringer ★★★★ first level summons aren't that useful. Lantern archons lack any useful utility besides a fly speed and a single light cantrip; you might still summon them on occasion as neither higher level archon can fly. Hound archons can translocate, cast message, and change shape into a discreet dog form. Horned archons can translocate and dump 60+ hit points into an ally that needs quick healing. Because the horned archon transfers its hit points to an ally instead of healing them normally, it also passively improves any area healing your party does: if it uses this ability, then gets included in an area heal spell, it can transfer the hit points that it receives to a party member. Both horned and hound archons can also translate all languages for you.

Musetouched ★★★ can summon lyrakien and gancanagh. Lyrakien have typical low-level outsider flight and detect magic. They can also make minor illusions and heal, albeit weakly in both instances. Gancanagh are much more impressive. They can cast heroism, but they can also be used for magically empowering makeouts. Both effects provide lasting buffs. You can summon a gancanagh in advance of combat, provide buffs to two party members, and dismiss the gancanagh while continuing to enjoy the buffs without needing to sustain the summon spell. Gancanagh can also translate all languages for you.

Pitborn ★★★ have the widest options. Quasits, dretch, vermlek, abrikandilu, and brimorak. Quasits have typical low-level outsider flight, invisibility, detect magic, and change shape abilities. Vermlek can help you hide a body by making it get up and walk away. Brimorak can translocate and cast fireball, making them good messengers, fast couriers, and unrivalled distractions.

17th Level Nephilim Feats:

- **Divine Declaration** ★ Offensive spellcasting.
- **Eternal Wings** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression.

Oread ★★★

Oreads have one of the single best shield-based ancestry feats in the game, to the point where those inventors interested in shield use should give them a consideration whenever available. Above any other versatile heritage, they have amazing synergy with the power suit innovator: doubly so if applied to an ancestry with a powerful unarmed attack not tied to a heritage, such as the kholo. At low levels there is little of interest. Elemental Trade gives you two Specialty Crafting feats for shield or construct users. At fifth level, Fortify Shield adds a large amount of hardness to your shield. It is once per day, but you still effectively gain damage resistance for both yourself and your shield. Metal-Veined Strikes can add a special metal of your choosing to your unarmed strikes. Demons, fey, and hags are vulnerable to cold iron. Devils, were-creatures, and vampires warrant silver. If any of those, or a more exotic type of creature, is relevant to your campaign, this feat can give you access to something normally unavailable to unarmed combatants. Oddly, when using Summon Earth Elemental only the low-level living boulder stands out due to its precise tremorsense, which can enable it to automatically notice most creatures within 30 feet of it. Unfortunately, it does not have languages or limbs to point out the target to you; it doesn't even speak Terran. In all other cases, an earth elemental's primary use is for their burrow speeds, most of which can go through solid rock and can be used to scout ahead or hide items with ease. At bare minimum, they can tell you how many enemies are in the next room and easily find hidden entrances by passing through the walls.

Suli ★★★★

The suli are elemental hybrids, and can call up numerous elements as part of their abilities. This makes them able to resist fire or hit weaknesses, which is always nice for an intelligent class likely to know that. If you are willing to sink a feat, they can get scaling fire resistance with additional damage resistance against another elemental effect through Dualborn, but it can be difficult to give up Elemental Assault at first level.

1st Level Suli Feats:

- **Dualborn ★★★★** You choose two elements and gain scaling resistance to effects with either of those elements listed as traits. You should always choose fire to protect yourself from your inventor self-damage. This is not technically fire resistance, but it is effectively the same thing. Your second choice can be any of the three, they are all about as likely to damage you. Your choice will impact other suli feats, so be sure to plan ahead.
- **Elemental Assault ★★★★** Elemental Assault allows you to spend an action to add one of four damage types to all of your strikes until the start of your next turn. This is both versatile and useful, especially if you are able to trigger cold or fire weaknesses using it. If you can get a reaction attack, it will apply to that too.

  At their best, melee weapons with the ability to mitigate multiple attack penalty and make reaction attacks can get the most out of this feat, but only if you have a full round to devote to offense and do not need to move. The armor innovator can work around that hurdle with Clockwork Celerity to give themselves free movement at the start of their turn. However, this feat works with ranged weaponry. While ranged weapons

never mitigate the multiple attack penalty, they are rich in targets and actions with which to make multiple attacks in the first place. A shortbow using inventor with this feat can use it, activate overdrive, and shoot on the same turn. It is rare for a melee inventor to be able to do the same.

- **Elemental Embellish** ★★ A generic intimidation feat with minor flavor distinctions.
- **Scholar's Inheritance** ★★ Gain a skill of your choice and the alchemical crafting feat.
- **Suli-Jann** ★ You gain useless bonuses.

5th Level Suli Feats:

- **Elemental Bulwark** ★★★ This feat gives you flat damage resistance against any element. However, you must spend your reaction to use it. Unfortunately, it cannot defend you against self-damage because the trigger specifies than the effect must come from an enemy. While disappointing, it is still a good feat which protects you against a large amount of incoming damage types.

9th Level Suli Feats:

- **Janni Hospitality** ★ You can create food and water twice per day each. There is no actual reason to do so multiple times per day because one use is enough to keep your party fed.
- **Janni Magic** ★★ You gain a couple of poor spells.
- **Tetraelemental Assault** ★★★★ Extend your Elemental Assault across four turns. A ranged weapon user can easily activate this, overdrive, and shoot all on the same turn. Melee characters will find it much harder to activate both. That said, if they are able to do so with an agile weapon innovation they can output significant damage, especially if they added other multiple attack mitigation feats or got a reaction attack from somewhere.

13th Level Suli Feats:

- **Continuous Assault** ★★★ Use your Elemental Assault feat once per hour instead of once per day.
- **Improved Elemental Bulwark** ★★★ Improve the resistance of your Elemental Bulwark.
- **Suli Amir** ★★★ You can cast a 4th level invisibility, enabling you to attack while invisible. You can also detect magic and cast augury. None of these spells require any sort of saving throw, so they're all usable by an inventor.

Sylph ★★★

The sylph feat list may be a bit on the weaker side overall, but they at least get standard ancestry flight progression.

1st Level Ancestry Feats:

- **Fumesoul** ★★★ Gain resistance to poison damage equal to half your level.
- **Smokesoul** ★★ You can improve your concealment from fog, haze, mist, and smoke. Gadget Specialist is able to create smoke, though you aren't able to see through it. Sadly, all ancestral abilities that see through smoke are currently locked to heritages and thus incompatible with this feat.

- **Stormsoul** ★★★ You gain resistance to electricity damage. You can set your Variable Core damage type to electricity.
- **Swift** ★★★★ Improving your speed is always incredible.
- **Wind Tempered** ★★ You gain a small bonus to saving throws against air and electricity effects. I'd just as soon become resistant to electricity damage, as this won't protect you from any self-inflicted damage.

5th Level Ancestry Feats:

- **Cloud Gazer** ★ You can see through most forms of airborne concealment, but not smoke. You do not possess any means of creating these visual impairments, but if an ally likes fog spells for some reason you might bump the rating up a bit.
- **Slip with the Breeze** ★★ You gain some athletics feats to help you jump and leap, but odds are you will favor one or the other.

9th Level Ancestry Feats:

- **Djinni Magic** ★★ You gain invisibility and gust of wind. The first is useful, and the second is unlikely to matter due to your nonexistent proficiency and modest charisma.
- **Inner Breath** ★★ You can hold your breath for longer.
- **Wings of Air** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression.

13th Level Ancestry Feats:

- **Airy Step** ★★★ You can create an area of concealment as a reaction once per day. Unfortunately, you can't use this feat with Smokesoul because both take your reaction.
- **Summon Air Elemental** ★★★ Air elementals tend to have very fast fly speeds, so they can efficiently deliver messages or carry party members up slopes.

17th Level Ancestry Feats:

- **Eternal Wings** ★★★ Standard ancestry flight progression.
- **Storm Form** ★★ With an air elemental form this fast and big, you are unlikely to have any trouble ferrying your party members around. As far as damage goes, this feat leaves a bit to be desired.

Talos ★★★

The metal elemental ancestry. Talos have a couple of fun tricks that trigger off of the inventor's self-damage. As this disincentivizes you from getting resistances to your self-damage, the talos will be of greatest interest to those interested in high risk, glass cannon, melee builds.

1st Level Talos Feats:

- **Ferrousoul** ★★★ The ferrousoul is special among ancestry-granted unarmed attacks because it improves your default unarmed attack, rather than giving you a new one. This has an interesting side effect: the "fist" unarmed strike actually refers to any generic unarmed strike, such as kicks and headbutts. Feel free to keep your hands full and continue to use this feature. It's a good fit for armor innovators.
- **Gildedsoul** ★ This lineage feat is basically a disguised ancestry lore feat without the Additional Lore feat.

- **Quicksoul ★★** This lineage would be very helpful to rogues and swashbucklers. Its value is sharply diminished for everyone else, but a subterfuge suit innovator with a good unarmed strike from their base ancestry might appreciate it anyways.
- **Reflective Defense ★★★** Impose a flat check on attackers once per ten minutes. This is a very nice damage avoidant reaction and I strongly considered rating it blue. It scales off of class DC, further pushing talos builds to maximize their intelligence despite entering melee combat.

5th Level Talos Feats:

- **Conductor's Redirection ★★★** You can share electricity damage you take with nearby targets. If only there was a class with some way to deal electricity damage to itself to get much more use out of this feat. Variable Core can turn your self-inflicted damage into electricity damage, which you can share with nearby enemies. Unfortunately, there are a few caveats. First, it has a short range. This is only practical for melee builds. Second, any resistance to electricity damage you gain reduces the amount of damage your enemy takes. Third, the trigger specifies "hit by" which a stickler GM could use to deny you the ability to use this on your self-damage, though I doubt that is the intent given that it specifies spells and other effects in addition to attacks.
- **Precious Alloys ★★★** Your unarmed attacks (including those of your base ancestry) gain the properties of special metals. This is a handy boon if your campaign features opponents with such weaknesses.

9th Level Talos Feats:

- **Natural Magnetism ★** You can cast magnetic attraction and magnetic repulsion. Your spell attack will be insufficient to use magnetic attraction to disarm opponents with the former, and you can't abide the action cost of using metal weapons with the latter. If you happen to be using a shortbow as a ranged weapon innovator, this feat is yellow. Gildedsoul talos can alternatively cast enthrall, but that requires a save and as such is even less useful to an inventor. It's a great feat, just not for this class; and I do want to give the writer full credit for the stellar wordplay in this feat's name regarding its gilded enthrall function.

13th Level Talos Feats:

- **Summon Metal Elemental ★★** The ferrous butterfly has a fast fly speed but isn't very useful otherwise. The quickiron plasm has the interesting gimmick of a mile-wide magic sense. Though imprecise, it's good enough to locate any magic item or trap. A mercurial can turn its limbs into any useful basic tool, such as a shovel. That's about it.

17th Level Talos Feats:

- **Metallic Skin ★★** Spend two actions to get massive defensive bonuses at substantial speed penalties once per day. This is most useful to armor innovators with speed boosting modifications to compensate for the downsides. It also adds substantial fire damage to your unarmed attacks if you took fire damage since your last turn. As with conductor's redirection, the inventor is uniquely able to provide; albeit far less often at this high a level. You could choose to deliberately include yourself in an explode emanation, but even with hefty fire resistance I'd hesitate to make that trade. There is no listed duration,

but it clearly isn't supposed to be indefinite. Ask your GM how long it lasts, and boost its rating by one grade if the answer is 10 minutes, or two grades if it is an hour or more.

Undine ★★

The undine gives you a swim speed and the ability to breathe underwater. These benefits are helpful about once a campaign unless your campaign is explicitly naval or nautical. That said, unlike the triton you don't trade any of your base ancestry's above ground functionality away to get it. If your backstory or campaign is only partially aquatic, the undine is an all-around solid choice. Boost the undine's rating to blue in such a campaign.

1st Level Undine Feats:

- **Aquatic Eyes ★★★** If you have low-light vision from your ancestry, you gain darkvision. If you did not, you gain low-light vision. The undine gets both this and Elemental Eyes purely due to formatting quirks from its source book, and this feat accomplishes everything that Elemental Eyes does in a more flexible manner.
- **Brinesoul ★★** Once per day you can cause a living target to become sickened and take persistent acid damage if they fail their fortitude saving throw. There are a lot of qualifiers on that, but none of them are outright dealbreakers.
- **Mistsoul ★★** You can improve your concealment from fog, haze, mist, and smoke. Gadget Specialist is able to create smoke, though you aren't able to see through it. Sadly, all ancestral abilities that see through smoke are currently locked to heritages and thus incompatible with this feat.
- **Rimesoul ★★★** If you use Variable Core to change your damage type to cold, you can gain resistance to it.
- **Tide Hardened ★★** You gain decent benefits against cold and water effects.

5th Level Undine Feats:

- **Fluid Contortionist ★★** This feat at least cancels difficult terrain from tight spaces, instead of just improving your squeezing ability. It still won't come up much.
- **Steam Spell ★** Sadly, this feat only applies to fire spells and cannot be used on the explode action.

9th Level Undine Feats:

- **Marid Magic ★** You gain one offensive spell and obscuring mist. Obscuring mist is okay, but it isn't worth a ninth level feat unless you have some way of seeing through it or otherwise cancelling out concealment.
- **Strong Swimmer ★★** If you are in a campaign in which you considered an undine this is probably relevant to you.

13th Level Undine Feats:

- **Summon Water Elemental ★★** As with most undine feats this is most helpful with ready access to water. The mist stalker at least has the gimmick of standing next to you to provide you with free concealment. It does not appear to impede your vision to things outside of its mist either, unlike many similar fog effects. It could be helpful with a couple other ranged allies able to benefit from it.

- **Translucent Skin ★★** You can hide from other creatures without cover or concealment when underwater.

17th Level Undine Feats:

- **Tidal Shield ★★★** Once per day you can give yourself a massive bonus to your armor class for a whole fight. You do have to spend an action sustaining it, but the benefits are worth it.

Backgrounds:

Every background offers at least two choices of ability score, and the only ability score an inventor can't always benefit from is charisma. As a result, any background can work for an inventor.

Proficiencies and Advancement:

As you cannot change these proficiencies, these ratings are to be considered relative to other classes.

- **Key Ability ★★** Intelligence is ostensibly your key ability. However, in practice most inventors would prioritize an offensive physical stat if they could. Intelligence has low intrinsic value because it only influences skills. The inventor uses it more than most martials, but their attacks -and thus the majority of their rolls- are still physical.
- **Perception ★** The inventor has the worst perception of any class. With stats spread thinner than most other classes, the inventor is unlikely to overcome this issue. Don't expect to detect lies or react quickly to combat even with heavy compensation.
- **Skills ★★★** You automatically progress your crafting skill as soon as it is possible to do so, your high intelligence ensures that you have access to a large number of trained skills, and you get the Inventor skill feat. The armor and weapon innovations also provide modest support for athletics checks in combat.
- **Offense ★★★** Your weapon proficiency increases at a standard martial rate, but your damage is higher than average thanks to overdrive and offensive boost. Unfortunately, your damage is unreliable due to the inventor's modest accuracy and because activating overdrive requires you to both pass a crafting check and spend an action.

  Construct innovators have the best offense by far due to their ability to double their overdrive bonus. A construct innovator with all of their bonuses active can rival a barbarian for damage output, albeit only with the qualifiers described above.
- **Defense ★** The inventor gets medium armor proficiency with a free Shield Block feat. However, their advantages end there. Inventors have modest hit points, modest saving throws, and an alarming tendency to hurt themselves at random without investment in the right magic items. They have the worst holistic defenses of any martial class and even most full spellcasters are more durable than them in practice. Despite this weakness, many inventors are heavily pressured to enter melee by their innovations.

  The armor innovation gets a special suit of armor that makes their defenses equal to those of heavy armor, but they don't fundamentally change the inventor's role and

should still be treated as glass cannons. Even if their proficiencies were up for the task, an inventor possesses no inherent means of defending allies and thus has no mechanisms by which to assume a tank role.

- **Class DC** ★★★ The inventor has good class DC progression when compared to other martials, and unlike many of them it can make use of it. At minimum, an inventor will use this for their explode action.

Ability Scores:

It might be tempting to devote your ability scores to intelligence, but melee builds may not want to start with it maximized. Ranged builds have an overall cleaner stat spread, and are one of the builds where the optional flaw rules can be preferable: choosing to dump both strength and charisma can give you an extra point in a more practical ability score. However, even ranged inventors may choose to invest in strength for the purpose of using better armor or weapon traits like ranged trip.

Color	Score
Blue	4
Green	3
Yellow	1 or 2
Red	-1 or 0

Light Mortar Innovation, Ranged Weapon Innovation, or Subterfuge Suit Armor Innovation

- **Strength** ★★ You can choose to ignore strength entirely with a ranged weapon and should always ignore it with a mortar. Starting with a negative score or zero means using a non-composite shortbow. Starting with a one or two in strength is another matter entirely. In this case, you are able to wear studded leather armor without penalty and can equip yourself, either immediately or at fifth level, with a propulsive, thrown, or kickback weapon. You should not go above two unless using a thrown weapon because the returns are too slight to justify. The decision you make regarding strength largely defines the rest of your build.
- **Dexterity** ★★★ Every build in this category bar mortars will start with a three in this category. If it were possible to get a four in dexterity during character creation, this would be blue. Mortar innovators will flip this rating with constitution or wisdom.
- **Constitution** ★★ You will typically be trying to stay near the backlines away from the worst hits of combat. While having better constitution is always ideal, it is not always practical or necessary. Just be sure to boost this as you level, especially if you play a subterfuge suit innovator and intend to use their melee-exclusive offensive boost.
- **Intelligence** ★★★★ A ranged weapon innovator can get by on a non-maximized intelligence score. Like your other ability scores, your ability to invest in intelligence will be influenced by the extent to which you invest in strength. If you get enough strength to benefit from kickback or composite weaponry, they provide more reliable access to

damage than overdrive. If you have less than two strength, you can afford to maximize your intelligence and compensate for low damage with overdrive.

- **Wisdom** ★★ Backline characters are less likely to be targeted by fortitude saving throw effects such as injected poisons, making wisdom competitive with constitution. It also provides bonuses to recall knowledge skills, which is useful to weapon innovators looking to target weaknesses or bypass resistances. That said, there are always exceptions: for example, if your campaign has undead antagonists, they are highly likely to hit you with void spells that target fortitude saving throws. Use your best judgement.
- **Charisma** ★ You have no bonus skill feats and heavy incentives to invest in other ability scores. I recommend leaving it as low as possible, but if you are comfortable neglecting both strength and your saving throws you could attempt a demoralization build. Taking points away from more vital stats makes you demonstrably weaker -you are trading bonuses to saves, armor class, or damage for the chance of getting them for one round against a single target at a dangerous engagement distance after spending an action- but at least you help your team too. Other classes have actual incentives to invest in charisma, but you could acquire similar incentives through a charismatic archetype.
- **Ability Score Boosts:** Boost your dexterity, constitution, intelligence, and wisdom. If you are one boost away from fourteen and are using a thrown, propulsive, or kickback weapon, you may replace constitution with strength. Only thrown weapon users might continue to boost strength beyond that point.

Melee Weapon Innovation or Power Suit Armor Innovation

- **Strength** ★★★ As your primary offensive stat, this would be blue if it were possible to do so. It also controls your ability to take advantage of your weapon's innovation traits. Even if you want to use a finesse weapon, use strength as the ability with which you wield it. Always start with a three.
- **Dexterity** ★★ Try to start with a one so that you can use a breastplate or your power suit to the fullest extent. You might choose to improve it later for reflex saving throws, skills, and emergency ranged attacks. If you are a weapon innovator and intend to take an archetype or feat to get heavy armor, start with zero instead.
- **Constitution** ★★ Keeping this high is more important than maximizing your chances of overdrive. Your hit points and fortitude saving throws will always be relevant. If you are comfortable being a glass cannon, you could drop this a bit in exchange for maximized intelligence. However, the inventor is already dangerously fragile and by entering the melee you expose yourself to substantial risk. Try to start with a two if possible.
- **Intelligence** ★★★ Intelligence is helpful for rounds when you want to go all-in on damage through overdrive, but strength is a more reliable damage bonus for this playstyle. The bonus damage from overdrive won't help you on turns where you are using athletics checks instead of strikes. Starting with a three is ideal, but a two is workable. If you are comfortable being a glass cannon, you could improve this to blue in exchange for dropping one of your three defensive ability scores.
- **Wisdom** ★★ If you have any points left over, put them here to improve your perception, initiative, recall knowledge checks, and will saving throws.

- **Charisma ★** Due to the melee inventor's overpowering need for their other stats, charisma is even less useful to them than other inventors. Leave this ability score as low as you can.
- **Ability Score Boosts:** Boost your strength, constitution, intelligence, and either your wisdom or dexterity. Due to the ten-level gap between four and five, you might choose to stop improving any ability score when you hit four. Reaching a twenty in intelligence may not have been worth it if the game ends at level sixteen, and you could have had better will saving throws and perception for the last five levels.

Construct Innovation

- **Strength ★** Strength isn't important to you. Your damage should come from overdrive and your construct, not your personal might. A drone build could choose to start with one to wear studded leather armor or work towards a composite shortbow, but you can save yourself some points by leaving this at zero or lower. Nothing stops pilots from wearing armor they don't meet the strength requirement for: the construct handles all of their movement and physical skill checks for them.
- **Dexterity ★★** Dexterity determines your accuracy with ranged attacks, and as a result determines your ability to capitalize on the construct innovation's double overdrive. Most construct innovators will do everything in their power to maximize this, starting with a three. If you are comfortable ceding combat entirely to your construct, you could consider this yellow and choose to leave this at twelve: the bare minimum needed to get the most defense out of chain mail. Use the extra points to improve your charisma.
- **Constitution ★★** You might need to stay a little closer to the action than a ranged weapon innovator to direct your construct. If you intend to ride your construct into battle, you'll definitely want to keep this high to compensate for making yourself a target and occasional catching yourself in the blast of your own explosions.
- **Intelligence ★★★★** The construct innovation is unique in that it receives double the bonus from going into overdrive, as both the inventor and the construct benefit from it. For that reason, a construct innovator should always attempt to maximize their intelligence. Even those neglecting double overdrive by riding their construct will want four intelligence, as they won't need to put points towards their own offensive ability scores.
- **Wisdom ★★** If you have any points left over, put them here to improve your perception and will saving throws.
- **Charisma ★★** If you are comfortable ceding combat entirely to your construct, you could invest some points here to intimidate foes and soften them up for robot punches. In this case, you will most likely ride your construct into battle to tamper and demoralize on its behalf. If that is your aim, drop your dexterity to twelve in compensation: the downsides of wearing chain mail without meeting its strength requirement don't apply to someone using a construct for mobility. You won't take advantage of the construct innovation's double overdrive, but this build is viable for those looking to make a more sociable inventor. Most construct innovators will not care to sacrifice their high potential damage output and would sooner ignore this ability score like most inventors.

- **Ability Score Boosts:** Drone construct innovation builds should boost dexterity, constitution, intelligence, and wisdom. Pilot construct innovation builds should boost dexterity, constitution, intelligence, and charisma.

Unstable:

Many of the inventor's abilities have the unstable trait. The unstable trait causes a feature to work almost exactly the same way as a focus spell does, and it is clearly modelled on the same system. The intent is largely that an inventor can only use a single unstable action per fight; after using an unstable action, they typically have to spend ten minutes of downtime before becoming able to do so once more. Again, this is just like focus spells.

Unlike focus spells, there is a limited amount of random wiggle room regarding that restriction. Each time an inventor uses an unstable action, their ability to use further unstable actions might not go away. The inventor attempts a DC 15 flat check, and is able to use it again on a success. The inventor also deals minor fire damage to themselves if they roll a 5 or lower. You have a 30% chance of being able to use a second unstable action and a 25% chance of hurting yourself. Preparing fire damage resistance is a cornerstone of most inventor builds as a result.

Unstable feats are both flashy and powerful, but it is a mistake to grab several. The big downside of unstable actions is that getting more doesn't give you additional uses, which is also their biggest downside relative to focus spells. Inventors can't count on using more than one a fight, so taking multiple unstable feats just leaves you with multiple feats you can't use. There are a few exceptions -Searing Restoration can be used to heal out of combat, for example- but most are purely dedicated to in-the-moment combat. For every unstable feat you choose beyond your first, drop the rating of other unstable feats by one color. Feel free to retrain early unstable feats away when you need to.

Overdrive:

Overdrive works much like barbarian rage, except that it deals less damage, has no defensive benefits, might hurt you, and requires both an action and a crafting skill check to activate. The DC is the standard DC for your level. At low levels it can be unreliable. You should start with a 65-70% success rate depending on your build. As you level it becomes increasingly easy to make your check, to the point where you'll have about a 90% success rate. Though overdrive is not unstable you hurt yourself in the same way during critical failures. The only way to critically fail this check with a reasonable build is to roll a natural one.

Unlike barbarian rage, overdrive does not penalize agile weapons and is compatible with ranged weaponry. Using an agile weapon can help you get more reliable use of the extra damage from your overdrive, but there are legitimate questions as to the worth of such a strategy due to its action cost and reduction in damage from your weapon: see equipment. Ranged weaponry is useful to certain builds, but weapon innovators get better modifications for melee weapons and armor innovators can't apply their offensive boost to ranged weaponry. Both builds may choose to use ranged weaponry anyways, but the downsides do sting a bit.

When you succeed you get bonus damage on every weapon strike equal to half your intelligence modifier, or your full intelligence modifier if you critically succeed. You also receive a small flat bonus to the extra damage when you hit levels three, seven, and fifteen. Because it applies to every hit, the earlier you activate overdrive the better off you are in the fight itself, but it is not worth losing an attack entirely. Use it on the first turn where you have actions you don't need to devote to attacking at least once. Melee characters are the slowest to activate overdrive as a result; they are both more likely to start with less intelligence and less likely to have the actions needed to activate it, as they might have to spend actions moving towards an enemy.

Explode:

You deal heavy damage to all creatures in an area around you. It scales well, dealing 1d6 damage for every level. At the height of its potential, it deals 20d6 fire damage to all creatures in a 15-foot emanation. It's no substitute for meteor swarm, but it's a solid enough blast comparable to offensive focus spells in power. Surprisingly, there are no feats that further improve it. The ability to avoid allies is also conspicuously absent, so watch out for friendly fire or buy your party backfire mantles.

The explode feature is twofold in its function. First, it gives the inventor area damage. Area damage is uncommon among non-casters, though many classes can choose feats to gain comparable abilities. Second, it allows the inventor to bypass MAP by forcing the enemy to make a saving throw instead of using another attack. It takes two actions to use, so pulling the latter function off only applies when you have a full three action turn to devote to offense. The construct innovator has some slight leeway in that regard thanks to the extra action granted to its construct, which further cements them as the best innovation. Explode sees more use from melee inventors than ranged inventors due to its status as an emanation. Ranged inventors are likely to seek alternatives unless their chosen innovation is the construct: in that case, the explosion comes from the construct rather than the character.

Reconfigure:

The inventor can retrain certain class features in a single day by making a crafting check. At higher levels, they receive additional bonuses that allow them to retrain multiple features at once, and even completely replace their innovation with a new innovation. Needless to say, the last point is far more trouble than it is worth.

Offensive Boost:

At 9th level the inventor adds 1d6 additional damage of a type you choose. Unless you have a weapon with the versatile or modular trait, I recommend choosing whatever damage type your weapon already deals. As you will not be able to switch your damage type to overcome resistance, you might as well attempt to power through the resistance rather than risk getting resisted twice. To put it another way, choosing a pre-existing damage type means always getting your bonus damage unless you have the misfortune of encountering something immune to it entirely. Full immunity to physical damage is extremely rare, so this is not normally a concern.

If you do have the versatile or modular trait, you can swap your base damage type. As such, if you encounter a foe resistant to one of your damage types you can change the type instead of attempting to overpower its resistance. In this case, I recommend choosing cold damage. Cold damage will bypass the resistances of creatures that are resistant to all physical damage, as is often the case for golems and devils. It is resisted by monsters with moderate frequency, but of these options it is second only to fire in its ability to trigger weaknesses.

If you prefer any of the other damage types, most are still good choices. Acid and electricity are both reliable. Physical damage types are a bit trickier. Many creatures are resistant to all physical damage unless the correct metal is used, so you might get resisted twice. I might be slightly more inclined to take a physical damage type with an adamantine or silver weapon, both of which serve as a catalyst through which physical damage strikes ignore resistance. Silver is cheaper and will trigger some extra weaknesses, but adamantine weapons are more valuable in a campaign about fighting constructs. Insofar as the individual types themselves go, slashing damage triggers almost as many weaknesses as cold does. Bludgeoning damage is the most reliable, with the fewest weaknesses and immunities. Furthermore, if a monster is resistant to two physical damage types, bludgeoning is often the exception. Piercing damage is the worst physical damage type. It has the most resistances and immunities alongside the fewest weaknesses.

Fire is the gambler's choice. It triggers more weaknesses than any other available damage type. It also has the most resistances and immunities by a significant margin. Due to the low damage of your offensive boost, resistance might as well be immunity to you. I do not recommend fire unless you plan to take Boost Modulation; at that point, choosing fire and cold as your damage types becomes the optimal play, as you can chance your damage types to avoid resistances and target weaknesses. Weapon innovators in particular should not choose a fire offensive boost even if they take Boost Modulation. If they want to trigger a weakness to fire damage, they can turn their overdrive into fire damage. When fighting something resistant to fire damage, they can instead opt to make their overdrive damage physical.

Innovation:

The innovation is the most impactful decision within the inventor class. Your choice of innovation decides several significant details about the rest of your build.

Armor ★★★

The armor innovation is themed predominantly around durability and mobility. Both of its armor options provide superior armor class compared to standard armors of their weight category, though your low hit points still make you less durable than other martial characters in practice and classes with access to heavy armor will be at least as well defended as you. Such classes also get faster armor proficiency tracks than inventors do.

You can also select modifications for stealth if you so choose. If you like the idea of power armor, choose the power suit. If you'd prefer to use stealth, choose the subterfuge suit instead.

Of all the innovations, the armor innovation is the best at shield use. With their higher-than-average access to damage resistances, they can indirectly reduce the amount of overflow damage their shield has to take. Increasing their speed makes it more likely they have the actions needed to raise their shield and their superior armor class causes them to take less shield-shattering critical hits.

Shockingly, there are no options that integrate a weapon into your armor or improve the power of your gauntlet punches. However, the mechanics of the power suit do synergize well with any ancestral unarmed attacks you might have access to. Unlike other inventors, the armor innovation is able to apply its ninth level offensive boost to unarmed attacks. Relying on your unarmed attacks allows you to use one hand for athletics checks and the other hand for a shield without sacrificing significant damage. Subterfuge suit innovators do have the option of getting in on the act with finesse unarmed attacks, but they also have less incentive to free up their hands in the first place due to their lower athletic skill.

If you must use finesse weaponry, following the subterfuge suit innovator ability score build with mid-level strength is the best way to do it. The subterfuge suit is able to receive speed and durability boosting armor modifications as readily as the power suit is, both of which will be important for a finesse weapon build. The bastion, dual-weapon warrior, and duelist archetypes can also be of assistance. Finesse and thrown weapon builds also have the benefit of synergy with the armor innovator's 9th level offensive boost, unlike a true ranged build. The best common weapon for this purpose is the dancer's spear, as its reach trait can keep you out of reach of enemy reprisal. Starknives, reinforced stocks, and finesse ancestral unarmed strikes also have their place.

Owing to its extra armor class, the armor innovator is the best of the non-construct innovations. However, it's very easy to poach that bonus while playing as other intelligent classes, including intelligent martial characters like investigator and magus, by taking the inventor dedication feat. It might be worth checking to see if one of those characters fits your concept better.

Initial Modifications:

- **Harmonic Oscillator** ★★ You will only need resistance to force and sonic damage rarely. While force is somewhat common when facing non-primal spellcasters, sonic in particular is very rare.
- **Metallic Resonance** ★★ You will only need resistance to lightning and acid occasionally.
- **Muscular Exoskeleton** ★★★★ Improve your athletics checks while in overdrive. This is a fantastic choice, and doubly so if you have an unarmed attack with which to retain a free hand. While I consider this one of the best options available, do note that at some levels it will merely compensate for the inventor's inability to maximize their strength score. Other martial classes can hit the same athletics score can far more easily by virtue of a strength key ability.
- **Otherworldly Protection** ★★★ This is a great option for campaigns featuring either undead or fiends. In a campaign themed around those enemy types, improve its rating to blue. Even campaigns without specific focus on those enemies will still see frequent use

of this, as both creature types and void damage are ubiquitous in typical campaigns. Oddly, unlike other damage resistant modifications this one is not improved while in overdrive. It gets even better if you have become sanctified through an archetype, as it grants resistance to sanctified damage if so.

- **Phologistonic Regulator** ★★★ The designers made an admirable effort to prevent this from being the best damage resistance option. It offers resistance to cold and fire damage, but the resistance is lower than that of the other resistant modifications. Despite those efforts, it is still the best one by a longshot. Fire damage is both common and likely to be persistent damage, which makes resistance to it highly covetable. Likewise, this feature mitigates damage caused by critical failure on unstable actions or overdrive.
- **Speed Boosters** ★★★★ This provides you with an easy bonus to your movement speed, which is further improved while in overdrive. Improving your movement speed above the norm is exceptionally valuable, as ranged characters can kite their foes while melee characters can close the distance. Those with agile weapons will almost never choose to go without this upgrade, due to their overwhelming need to avoid wasting actions on unnecessary movement. They are also unlikely to need the improved athletics checks of a muscular exoskeleton due to their focus on strikes and damage.
- **Subtle Dampeners** ★★ You get a stealth boost while in overdrive. However, activating overdrive and taking advantage of stealth mid-combat is going to be difficult even with a ranged weapon. This improves to green if you have ancestry feats or archetypes that improve combat stealth, such as those of the halfling or goblin ancestries.

Breakthrough Modifications:

- **Antimagic Plating** ★★★ You gain a passive bonus to your saving throws against spells. It won't help you against any form of magic besides spells, but it's still a fine boon.
- **Camouflage Pigmentation** ★★★ You can hide without cover if you are willing to stay still. It gets surpassed by several ancestry feats which allow you to hide without cover and move as you do so.
- **Dense Plating** ★★★ You gain strong resistance to slashing damage. Both swords and monster claw attacks are common sights on enemy stat blocks. This is a particularly good fit for an inventor with a shield, as between it and your armor's piercing resistance your shield will take less damage than it otherwise would.
- **Enhanced Resistance** ★★★ Increase the damage resistance of your default resistance.
- **Heavy Construction** ★★★ Your armor becomes heavy armor -which does nothing on its own- and gains the bulwark and entrench traits. The bulwark trait passively makes your reflex saving throws better against damaging effects so that you don't need to invest as much into dexterity. It's a welcome addition to the power suit build. The entrench trait is grants a hands-free boost to armor class that works fine for any two-handed melee build, though you'll rarely have the actions needed to make use of it. This modification also marginally improves your armor specialization when you get it later. It's usually the

best choice for power suit users that didn't take speed boosters as their initial modification, though shield users may favor physical damage resistances instead.

- **Hyper Boosters ★★★★** You become almost twice as fast as default while in overdrive. Any character can appreciate that level of mobility. It is a great pick for those with high damage or agile melee strikes. They need to ensure they get into melee efficiently in order to make multiple attacks.
- **Layered Mesh ★★** You can resist piercing damage. Not only does this defend you against projectiles, it will also defend you against high-damage monster bite attacks. As bites are typically a monster's strongest attack, this is usually the best damage type to resist. However, both armor innovation options already resist piercing damage when you get your armor specialization due to their composite armor classification. While this resistance scales better, it is still difficult to justify choosing it over Dense Plating.
- **Tensile Absorption ★★** Resistance to bludgeoning damage. Of the three physical damage types, this is the least common. It is usually found on less damaging off-attacks like wing and tail strikes, and is not typically a high threat. Exceptions exist, but you should probably choose one of the other two regardless.

Revolutionary Modifications:

- **Augmented Impediments ★★★** All spaces adjacent to you become difficult terrain, which improves your area denial to a substantial degree. Because it can prevent enemies from using the Step action around you, it is best used with allies who have reactive strike.
- **Energy Barrier ★★★** You gain moderate resistance to all energy damage. This is broadly useful against direct damage, but it also massively nerfs most forms of persistent damage.
- **Incredible Resistance ★★** This modification provides intense damage resistance, but still only has a one in three chance of it mattering at all. It is also only likely to matter once, as any reasonably intelligent enemy will stop using that damage type against you if it is an option.
- **Multisensory Mask ★★** You gain perpetual concealment. While generally helpful, this can backfire if an ally wants to buff or heal you.
- **Perfect Fortification ★★★** Gain a 2/5^{ths} chance of negating a critical hit and resistance to precision damage. This is much better than many critical negation abilities.
- **Physical Protection ★★★** You can resist all physical damage and bleed damage. The effect looks sky blue if considered alone, but due to its prerequisites and your armor you already resisted two out of three damage types (unless you took Layered Mesh, in which case you only resist one). It is still a good feat despite that.
- **Rune Capacity ★★★** Your armor can hold an extra property rune. Getting a fourth property rune is expensive but versatile.

Construct ★★★★

The construct is the strongest innovation by far. Both it and you benefit from overdrive, and you each have separate multiple attack penalties. This distinction allows you to double the benefit of

overdrive every single turn and vastly outperform the weapon innovation for damage output. It also adds an extra target with a heap of damage immunities and easily-repaired hit points to your side of the battlefield, making your team as a whole more survivable than the armor innovation ever would. It can flank with your melee allies, and it will even take the fire damage of unstable actions on your behalf.

There is a curious quirk that sets your construct apart from typical constructs. While it has most true construct immunities it is not mindless, and as such can be influenced by mental bonuses, conditions, and penalties. The party bard's composition cantrips or an enemy's fear spell affects your construct as surely as they would an organic party member.

It can be tempting to enter melee and flank with your construct, and it's true that a strength build with its buffs active and a full round devoted to offense produces the highest damage output of any inventor build. However, I find that ranged combat is easier for an inventor of this type to rely on. Commanding your construct requires an action, which compromises your ability to move, strike, and enter overdrive quickly. By contrast, a ranged character can enter overdrive and make a ranged strike, and then spend their final action allowing their construct to move and strike. Archery should be preferred due to its favorable action economy; while thematically appropriate, firearms and crossbows take too long to reload. Ranged weaponry has other advantages too: it ensures you can continue dealing damage when your construct can't reach an enemy and reduces your dependence on multiple ability scores, enabling you to devote more to intelligence and ensure you can activate the double overdrive. When you need brute strength, you can use the robot to compensate for your own deficiencies in that area.

You might also be tempted to ride it, but while viable it is not optimal. Doing so sacrifices the primary benefit of having the construct, as when riding the construct you share its multiple attack penalty and so can't benefit from the construct innovation's double overdrive. It is possible to manufacture reasons to pilot your construct and play out a mech fantasy -for example, it can carry you into Tamper range- but these are largely excuses rather than practical decisions. If you are medium, your construct must also be large size, which reduces its ability to move in tight spaces. Finally, your construct's explosion hurts you unless you spend a sixth level feat removing a downside you didn't need to deal with in the first place. This issue is exacerbated by the inherent -2 penalty to reflex saves levied against mounted characters, which itself represents yet another downside of a mounted build. A high-level pilot can be pretty strong if they choose inoffensive support feats such as Helpful Tinkering, Shared Overdrive, and Lock-On, but they are an explicit downgrade relative to a remote drone build.

I don't wish to discourage anyone interested in riding the construct or flanking with it, as doing so is entirely viable for typical play. I consider melee and pilot builds every bit the equal of the weapon and armor innovations. However, this is an optimization guide and as such I must bring relative build power to the discussion. Here is a table indicating the differences between a pilot and a drone approach to combat:

Pilot		Drone	
Pros	**Cons**	**Pros**	**Cons**
The construct can quickly carry you into melee, where you can use feats like Tamper or Searing Restoration.	You share your multiple attack penalty, effectively preventing you from attacking except to make occasional ranged attacks.	You and your construct can both attack while in overdrive, effectively doubling the benefit of your primary class feature.	You might be slightly less inclined to use Tamper or Searing Restoration but you can choose other equally powerful feats.
You can take advantage of your construct's late-game movement options without losing a free hand.	You become exposed to significantly more damage in the melee.	You can engage from a safe distance, far away from powerful melee strikes.	You will need to hold onto your drone (or it will need a hand to carry you) to benefit from its movement options.
	You'll need to pay a 6th level feat to keep your explode action from hurting you.	You can pick a better 6th level inventor feat, such as Megavolt.	
	Your construct must be big enough for you to ride, which can cause mobility issues.	You can make your construct small enough to fit into places you cannot fit.	

If you do want to be a pilot despite the hurdles, here is my advice: the best pilots are durable small size ancestries with charisma boosts. Typically, gnomes and goblins. They can ride a mobile medium size construct and use their charisma to demoralize foes without interfering with their construct's multiple attack penalty. Pilots will likely want to carry a shield into battle to compensate for all the extra hits they're taking, and leave their other hand free for Tamper. If you don't want to spend money on a sturdy shield, you might as well bring a tower shield for rounds in which you need to maximize your defense. The movement speed penalty doesn't matter when mounted. Another alternative is bringing a one-handed firearm or shortbow with a potency crystal attached: you aren't likely to need to fire more than a couple shots a round because you will generally want to aim for construct punches when possible, so using potency crystals can save you money on the rare occasions your construct can't reach the target. You might use a pistol alongside either a shield or free-hand Tamper strategy, at your discretion. Shield use is partially redundant with the Construct Shell feat. If you take that feat, you might be inclined to the latter.

Be sure to take Lock On at tenth level. That feat is useful to either build, but is more useful to pilots overall. It goes a long way towards equalizing the two, so you might choose to start with a drone build and use the inventor's reconfigure ability to quickly swap your build once you reach mid-level. Finally, get yourself the Armor Training general feat to get heavy armor regardless of your strength score. Movement speed and physical skill check penalties don't affect you because your construct is going to handle all of that for you.

Moving away from the pilot and back to general advice, your construct will be either medium or small. The decision will largely come down to your size category. If you are small, keeping your construct medium enables you to ride it if you choose. As stated above, doing so is often a bad idea in combat, but your construct might be faster than you or have an exotic movement speed. Riding it can provide out-of-combat utility. If you are medium, making your robot small size doesn't impose any penalties on its combat effectiveness while making it easier

to carry and better able to fit into spaces you can't. Large size constructs do cover more spaces with explode and are better at blocking enemy movement by occupying squares, but the added movement complications aren't worth it.

Be certain to take the Quick Repair skill feat, as it is vital for maintaining your construct's health between each fight. If you are a pilot, you might also need it to repair your shield.

Finally, I must shut down a bad-faith argument relating to construct innovation optimization. Some claim that an inventor can still use actions like Megavolt with their own actions because of the bottom text that reads "If your innovation is a minion, it can take this action rather than you." Such people claim that the word "can" means that it is optional which individual takes the action; this would cause Megavolt to erupt from their construct *without* depriving it of its own two actions granted by your command. This claim operates in defiance of the game's actual rules as demonstrated by the text of the unstable trait itself, which spells out the same information more explicitly: "In these cases, only the minion can take that action, and the minion needs to have been Commanded that turn to take the action."

Initial Modifications:

- **Accelerated Mobility** ★★★★ The construct's movement is significantly improved. This helps your robot get into melee without wasting actions. If you are attempting to ride your robot, all the better.
- **Amphibious Construction** ★★ If you are in a nautical campaign, take this. If you are not, reconfigure for it when you travel by sea or visit a bog.
- **Increased Size** ★★ Increasing your construct's size is sure to cause problems when it cannot fit into the cramped areas you need to enter. However, it also improves the effective radius of the explode action. Unlike player versions of enlarge, this has no effect on your construct's offense or defense, exclusively changing the number of squares it occupies on a battle map. This modification borders on red, so be certain you have cause to use it.
- **Manual Dexterity** ★ Animal companions lack hands yet have abilities and features that assume they are able to grapple. The same should be true of construct companions. Assuming that supposition is accurate, your construct can climb and use actions that require hands by default. Unfortunately, that means the only useful thing that this modification allows your construct to do is open doors.
- **Projectile Launcher** ★★★ This weapon isn't as bad as it looks. The projectile's propulsive trait, coupled with your construct's high natural dexterity and strength, enables it to deal reliable damage at range. I'd personally prefer accelerated mobility to ensure it can reach its most optimal state, but there is a strong case to be made for the projectile launcher. This is doubly true when one considers that the construct is actually quite fragile compared to a player character, so the ability to both retreat and still contribute to the fight with overdrive attacks is significant. It is also important to note that you can later choose Megavolt as a feat, which serves a very similar function. You might reconfigure this modification when Megavolt becomes available, but you could also

choose both to double down on a ranged combat style. After all, if your construct is in a good position to use one, it is also in a good position to use the other.

- **Sensory Array** ★★★ Darkvision and imprecise tremorsense for your robot. It's the most boring option but I'd gladly take this modification.
- **Wonder Gears** ★★ Inventors are very intelligent and have plenty of trained skills. However, giving your construct stealth keeps it from blowing the party's cover, intimidation improves its options in combat, and survival is also there. However, as your construct does not share a language with its foes, it always has to make its demoralization checks at substantial penalty. Outside of stealth, there is little reason to take this modification.

Breakthrough Modifications:

- **Advanced Weaponry** ★★ The majority of initial weapon innovation modifications grant traits pertaining to athletic maneuvers. The usual benefits of gaining such a trait -dropping the weapon on a critical failure to avoid consequences and adding item bonuses to the check- do not apply to the construct. Of the weapon modifications available, modular head has the most apparent value. It enables your construct to swap its damage types and deal nonlethal damage. It's only valuable if you avoid killing people.
- **Antimagic Construction** ★★★ The construct gains a bonus to saving throws against spells. Unfortunately, this benefit applies only against spells, not other forms of magic. It is still an excellent choice, as spells are a constant threat.
- **Climbing Limbs** ★★★ Your construct gains a climb speed. If it is large size, it can bus your entire party straight up vertical surfaces if given enough time. Just keep in mind your construct's athletics skill is sufficient to get it out of minor holes or up typical cliffs even without this feat. If your construct is frequently destroyed, combining this modification with a projectile launcher is a good idea. A shame there is no way to combine it with turret configuration.
- **Durable Construction** ★★★ The toughness feat for constructs. Considering your construct's general fragility, this is a great pick.
- **Marvelous Gears** ★★ Your construct can now surpass you in skill, provided you put your points elsewhere. However, like its prerequisite only stealth is reliable due to the intimidation suffering severe penalties.
- **Turret Configuration** ★★★ You spend an action to improve the die size and double the range of your construct's ranged attack, at the cost of its movement. There are times when you don't want your construct to advance into battle. Turret configuration gives it enough range to effectively shoot at creatures even from ranges outside of their full movement. With a ranged attack nearly as powerful as its melee attack, a turret construct can save actions that would be spent moving.

  On open maps, this can relieve the pressure an inventor feels to spend actions commanding. It can even allow you to reclaim your entire turn: the fourth level inventor feat Advanced Construct Companion grants you construct one action even if you do not command it, which a ranged construct can easily use to strike. In cramped dungeon

environments, you might not choose to use this because enemies will engage in close-quarters and have easy access to full cover.

While it is easy to justify choosing this modification in a general sense, those who don't choose it as part of their loadout should keep it in mind for when your party finds itself needing to defend a location. You can reconfigure to get this modification in preparation for holdout missions. I confess I also like the imagery of combining this feature with a small-size Collapse Construct feat, thus creating a Payday-style suitcase turret.

It also must be stated that this modification does not prevent your construct from using its default attack. The construct is immobilized but can use any strike or action it has access to. If a creature walks up to your turret construct, it can still use its higher damage melee strike.

Revolutionary Modifications:

- **Flight Chassis** ★★★★ Your construct gains a permanent fly speed. It will have no trouble reaching opponents it previously could not. Flight also provides utility out of combat. If it is large size, it can ferry your party across all manner of obstacles. If it's small size it can still pull a rope anywhere you need to get one.
- **Miracle Gears** ★★★ Your construct can speak. It can finally effectively utilize intimidation. What terrible cruelty you must possess to give your construct this level of intellect without ever bothering to give it opposable thumbs (unless you took Manifold Modifications to give it manual dexterity as well).
- **Resistant Coating** ★★★★ Your construct becomes even more durable. This time, rather than gaining hit points it shaves five damage off of every source of damage.
- **Runic Keystone** ★★★ Adding a property rune to your construct can have myriad effects. You are certain to find something you like, but unlike the other options all of the good stuff costs money.
- **Wall Configuration** ★★ Your construct can grant total cover. While impressive, there are spells that have been able to do so much more effectively for several levels now. I'd only ever consider this if I had a large size construct, but a medium construct could at least block up a door. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that your construct itself gains the benefits of cover from its own body, and with the defensive penalties of using this breakthrough your construct will not last long after activating it.

Light Mortar (U) ★★

Quick Summary:

The light mortar is the worst innovation. I adore the concept they were going for, but it's mired with so many fundamental issues, sauceless modifications, and fallible moving parts that I almost assigned it a one-star red rating. It's functional in open fields against mobs but terrible in cramped dungeons against low enemy counts; while understandable as a dynamic, its power at

its peak is inadequate as justification for its severe weaknesses. Some of its issues are universal to the inventor class and merely exacerbated by the mortar, but many are all its own.

Full Review:

This innovation is only available through the Munitions Master class archetype. Your mortar is a 10-foot burst that deals 2d6 damage, plus one extra die every four levels. The scaling is terrible, though it is somewhat buoyed by the inventor's various forms of bonus damage. At level twenty you'll inflict 6d8 damage plus overdrive and offensive boost. It inflicts an average of about 36-39 damage on a failed save, multiplied by however many enemies you can catch in the 10 foot burst. It technically has a minimum range, but the burst is big enough to hit enemies directly adjacent to the mortar so the distinction is moot except in highly specific circumstances. Despite being a saving throw, it has the attack trait; it both advances and applies your multiple attack penalty. Firing the mortar requires you to load, aim, and launch it for a total of three actions

The munitions master takes steps to compensate for its flaws through its feats and modifications. The dedication automatically gives you Engineer's Efficiency: action compression to combine the aim action with either loading or launching your weapon. You can therefore load, aim, and fire your mortar for two actions.

Though it works somewhat like a reload weapon, the mortar is actually modelled after a two-action cantrip. The electric arc cantrip, which is widely regarded as one of the best cantrips in the game, deals on average 72% of the damage dealt by a light mortar to a single target. The exact percent varies by level due to the mortar's unusual scaling, but it always hovers above or below that amount. This percentage includes a successful overdrive and offensive boost; if you fail overdrive, it deals only a couple points more damage on average. However, there are problems with balancing the mortar in this way:

- Electric arc doesn't require the free hand or action needed to deploy the mortar.
- Electric arc doesn't demand one or more actions on overdrive to maintain its damage, nor is it occasionally screwed by a critically failed overdrive check.
- Electric arc doesn't penalize your speed and allows you to benefit from speed boosts.
- Electric arc allows you to climb, jump, and swim like normal.
- Electric arc can't inflict friendly fire.
- Electric arc doesn't have two bulk with one extra bulk for every ten shots in ammo.
- You can't be shoved away from your electric arc cantrip.

The mortar already isn't looking good in the face of its competition. Spending at minimum one extra action is tough, but you might need to spend any amount more if you can't get overdrive running. A mortar being an object with its own movement cap means it's completely impossible to compensate for like a normal move speed penalty. Its status as an external object while deployed means you can't jump, climb, or swim while operating it. Still, all of these points could be dismissed as nitpicks worth dealing with for the added damage. However, there are even more serious issues that make this comparison unflattering for the mortar:

- Electric arc can't be broken or destroyed by enemy attacks. An at-level enemy needs just four successful hits to break your mortar even before considering critical hits (which disproportionately damage the mortar due to how hardness works), but the biggest risk is powerful area effects that will automatically include your mortar in the process of

targeting you. If you have the misfortune to get caught in something like a dragon's breath when fighting a creature a couple levels above you, one above average roll and a failed save is all the creature needs to break your mortar instantly. If you critically fail such a roll, there's a real chance your mortar is destroyed outright. While its defenses look better than those of a construct on paper due to its hardness, a construct remains active until its last hit point. A mortar stops working the moment half its hit points are gone. It's much less durable in practice and takes all of your class features with it when it goes.

- Accessing electric arc as a spellcaster requires you to spend just one of their five cantrips. The mortar requires multiple feats, modifications, and class features just to sustain its viability over its lifetime. It represents a vast investment that a mere cantrip doesn't.
- Electric arc can hit any two enemies within 30 feet of the caster. It easily eclipses the mortar for average damage in practice because it can hit multiple enemies *far* more reliably. Put another way: if two enemies want to avoid getting hit by a mortar simultaneously, they have to stand 20 feet away from each other or just move to flank one of your party members. If they want to avoid getting hit by electric arc, they could have to move up to 60 feet away from each other depending on the caster's position. One's a significantly greater positioning challenge than the other.
- Spellcasters reduce their use of cantrips for offense as they level. As spell slots and spell ranks increase they become increasingly inclined to blast using spell slots for bigger and greater effects, to the point where cantrips are phased out almost entirely by endgame. The mortar innovation is stuck with the equivalent of a cantrip for their entire career; only by taking Master Siege Engineer at sixteenth level do they start dealing damage more like a spell, and even then only on a delay and with less range, area, and action flexibility.

In exchange for all of these downsides, the mortar gets more range than a cantrip and the slim possibility of hitting more targets if your enemies are dumb enough to clump up. There are also thin advantages related to the inventor as a class rather than the mortar as an innovation. Inventors arguably have more hit points and better defenses than most blaster spellcasters; I'm skeptical that they last longer in practice owing to defensive spells like the shield cantrip and mobility buffs like tailwind or fly, but there's at least a case to be made. Even with a generous view of inventor durability, none of it is enough to offset all of the mortar's inherent disadvantages.

Mortars are also far more likely to enter bad matchups than spellcasters are. For example, a spellcasting blaster confronted by an enemy with a high reflex saving throw can cast a spell that targets fortitude or will. If even that doesn't work they can cast support or wall spells. The mortar is only ever able to target reflex saving throws. Despite that, they have no choice but to keep launching ineffectual mortars because that's all they can do. It's a shame there's no gas grenade option to target fortitude; that'd make a much better initial modification than enhanced shrapnel. Ghosts also make the mortar ineffectual. The mortar can't gain the magical trait or ghost touch by any means, making ghosts functionally immune to mortar damage. Many campaigns never encounter ghosts, but I'd caution against this innovation in an undead-focused campaign.

Inventors may not get spell slots along with their mortar-cantrip, but they do get the equivalent of a focus spell through their unstable actions. Unfortunately, the default explode action is localized to the mortar. Though one would expect the mortar to have a feature that makes explode a burst that triggers anywhere in its first range increment, no such ability exists either innately nor as a feat. Explode is often useless to the mortar due to its preferred engagement distance being a longer range than explode can cover and inability to quickly move into explode range. It's a fallback plan at best.

So you need an alternative. The only viable candidate is the sixth level inventor feat Megavolt because it has the best range of any unstable feat. The mortar innovation advances its class DC faster than a regular inventor and is slightly better with Megavolt as a result. Like explode, Megavolt takes two actions to use. This means it is possible, albeit very difficult, to both launch a mortar and use Megavolt on the same turn. On this single turn, your damage narrowly eclipses that of a typical blast spell of the maximum rank for your level, albeit with less effective range, worse action efficiency, and far inferior ability to target multiple foes at once. The mortar's arguable advantage here is their superior sustainability, as they can do this once in every fight, but you'd need to fight several encounters per day before you catch up and many casters have their own equivalent options for damaging focus spells. See "Mortar vs. Common Blast Spells" at the end of this guide for a detailed breakdown of the relative damage output. Unfortunately, your ultra-restrictive action economy may force you to use Siege Celerity instead of Megavolt.

Let's break down a mortar innovator's actions. You can't launch your innovation more than once per round even if you have the actions for it due to the universal restrictions placed on all siege weapons. The same restrictions say you can't move a pre-loaded mortar around because no siege weapon "can be prepared or shot while being moved." You also can't use Engineer's Efficiency to compress actions more than once per turn. An optimal set of turns for most mortar innovators therefore looks like the following:

DEFAULT TURN SET:

1. Overdrive, Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Load), Launch or Focused Fire
    a. If you need to move to a better firing position or defend yourself, get an extra action by using Siege Celerity and/or neglecting to activate overdrive. Then move and/or use Wrapped in Smoke.
2. Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Load), Launch or Focused Fire, Load
3. Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Launch), Megavolt
4. Return to #2

If you are able to manipulate your enemies into moving to your location and can therefore put yourself in a good position and pre-load your mortar, you can instead use the following more front-loaded turn order. You can also use this turn set in all battles if your GM thinks keeping your mortar loaded doesn't count as it being "prepared" which, to be fair, isn't a mechanical term and the mortar could certainly use the help.

PRE-LOADED TURN SET:

1. Overdrive, Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Launch), Load.
    a. If you need to defend yourself, get an extra action by using Siege Celerity or neglecting to activate overdrive. Then use Wrapped in Smoke.
2. Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Launch), Megavolt
3. Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Load), Launch or Focused Fire, Load.
4. Return to #2

In either case, you'll need to weigh your options if you fail your overdrive check on your first turn. Trying to use overdrive again means delaying Megavolt another turn, which means delaying a significant part of your damage. Furthermore, each turn after the first you activate overdrive you're getting less value out of the activation because there are less rounds left in the fight. When failure occurs I recommend not activating overdrive in favor of getting to Megavolt as fast as possible, because your mortar is a cantrip and you want to get to your real source of damage.

If you instead feel that you are in danger on your first turn or in a bad firing position, you'll be forced to add an extra action to your first turn (to be spent on movement) through either using Siege Celerity or neglecting to activate overdrive. Of the two, I'd be more inclined to sacrifice overdrive because unstable Megavolt is such a massive proportion of your damage. At sixth level you'd need to hit three discreet creatures with your mortar before you catch up to the damage difference between a stable and unstable Megavolt, and that number both neglects to consider multiple targets and rapidly increases with level due to unstable Megavolt's powerful scaling. Every two levels, the number of targets you need to hit to make up the difference of losing an unstable Megavolt increases by one, capping out at six.

That said, you have about a 30% chance of passing the unstable check and retaining the ability to use an unstable Megavolt. If you're a gambler you may prefer Siege Celerity. The fourteenth level feat Unstable Redundancies can also guarantee you pass your unstable check once per fight. Ideally you'd just use both for Megavolt, but that's not always an option. In the default turn set you'd have to wait until your fifth turn to use both launch and Megavolt on the same turn a second time. Many battles will end before that point, so you might want to consider the merits of just launching Megavolt without firing your mortar on your fourth turn. This is especially tempting if the battle seems to be nearing its conclusion or you don't have overdrive active. If you think the battle will make it to its fifth round, your overall damage is technically higher by waiting but might not be if you sacrificed an extra target that died between turns. You'll have to weigh your own scenario to guess the best course of action. In the pre-loaded turn set you just need to make it to the fourth turn, which is more likely and an overall good gamble.

There's also a glaring issue with both turn sets: any disruption to your action economy whatsoever throws your entire game plan out the window. If you need to move, or get tripped, shoved, stunned, or slowed, your entire rotation needs to be reconsidered. The need to move is going to be the most common disruption to your ideal turn order by far.

This is the core issue with the mortar innovation: It's giving its everything just to keep pace as a blaster, but if it can't give everything due to action disruption, a high reflex enemy, or bad rolls on its overdrive and unstable checks, it falls to pieces. Kineticists and spellcasters have a significantly greater degree of flexibility in both actions and utility with the same or better

blasting potential, even accounting for the resources they spend in doing so. Any spellcaster with electric arc and a good focus spell would be about as effective even if they never used a spell slot for their entire adventuring career.

There's only one way to compensate for the mortar's flaws: Prototype Companion. A companion gives you an action-efficient method of targeting armor class and can even support your regular playstyle through its fourth level upgrade, Advanced Construct Companion. See their individual entries under feats for more details.

The only significant benefit of this archetype is that it spares you expenses typical to martial characters. You never make attack rolls, so you have no need to invest in strength or dexterity beyond that which is required for maximizing the armor class of your armor. Even that can relax a bit if you're good at maintaining a safe distance or somehow find the actions for Wrapped in Smoke. You don't care about not meeting the strength requirement of your armor because you can't move your mortar more than 20 feet at a time anyways, so the speed penalty barely matters. Chain mail is especially well suited to this strategy due to its flexible trait; feel free to start with zero strength and one dexterity. Just be aware this leaves you with little backup plan when your mortar is broken or you're forced to abandon it, as you'll have few effective secondary attacks. A Prototype Companion once again comes recommended as compensation for this scenario.

To my shock, nothing about the mortar except its initial deployment requires a free hand. Feel free to hold shields or other useful items as you operate it. This is obviously absurd from a common-sense perspective, as reloading a mortar should require two hands. Still, even a free-hand mortar has enough issues that it's probably best to allow it from a balance perspective. Due to their restrictive action economy and aversion to investing in physical ability scores, a mortar innovator has few good uses for their hands anyways.

Buy a spacious pouch or other extradimensional storage item to hold your ammo, or see if your GM will let you strap a backpack to your Prototype Companion. Pull ten rounds out of storage between each fight so that you never need to carry more than one bulk of ammo on your person.

The uncommon sixth rank spell Siege Weapon's Blessing gives enemies disadvantage on their saving throw against your mortar for one minute. As it is uncommon, you'll need to ask your GM to give your party spellcaster access. Your party spellcaster will resent you if you beg them to spend their high level spell slots empowering your mortar-cantrip. That's why you're going to buy them a wand of Siege Weapon's Blessing at around thirteenth level for 3,000 of your own gold. The ninth rank version instead lasts for eight hours. Try to save 40,000 gold to buy a ninth rank wand at the end of the campaign. So much for saving gold on gear expenses.

The siege weapon is a medium object, so your GM might let you take cover behind it or even have it give cover by default, like other objects. You won't usually have the action economy needed to use the take cover action, but it's a decent trick to keep in your back pocket all the same. It's a shame there's no modification to officially add cover to your mortar, but it might or might not be necessary.

You must get the Master Siege Engineer feat at sixteenth level. In a free archetype game, this gives you room to squeeze another archetype of your choice in at levels eight to fourteen (assuming your GM is cool with you switching your designated free archetype around). Few

archetypes work well with the mortar due to their brutal action economy. Look for archetypes that allow you to contribute to battle without spending actions mid-fight or provide out-of-combat utility. Good options include the loremaster, spellcasting archetypes, and any archetype that generates free consumables for your party to use (snarecrafter, talisman dabbler, scroll trickster, etc.). You could also use beastmaster to avoid paying class feats for a Prototype Companion, but at time of writing there's not much else a mortar would want to do with their first level feat anyways.

Viable mortar builds are so inflexible they can be easily noted here. Deviation from these builds can greatly decease your efficacy unless you know exactly what you're doing. In addition to the feats listed below, you should always choose the following mortar modifications: spring loaded, narrow blast, enhanced damage.

NO VARIANT RULES:
1st: Prototype Companion
2nd: Munition Master Dedication
4th: Advanced Companion
6th: Megavolt
8th: Focused Fire
10th: Wrapped in Smoke
12th: Gigavolt
14th: Unstable Redundancies
16th: Master Siege Engineer

FREE ARCHETYPE:
1st: Prototype Companion
2nd: Munition Master Dedication, Haphazard Repair
4th: Focused Fire or Wrapped in Smoke, Advanced Companion
6th: Siege Celerity, Megavolt
8th: <Archetype Dedication of Your Choice>, Incredible Construct Companion
10th: <Archetype Feat of Your Choice>, Gadget Specialist*
12th: <Archetype Feat of Your Choice>, Gigavolt
14th: <Archetype Feat of Your Choice>, Unstable Redundancies
16th: Master Siege Engineer, Persistent Boost or Paragon Companion
18th: <Archetype Feat of Your Choice>, Persistent Boost or Paragon Companion
20th: <Archetype Feat of Your Choice>, Ubiquitous Overdrive
*You may retrain this at level twenty to access Ubiquitous Overdrive's prerequisite.

Initial Modifications:

- **Contained Shrapnel ★** Your artillery is now nonlethal. It's worse than the weapon innovation's equivalent modifications because nonlethal weapon modifications all offer additional traits to supplement a low-value boon like nonlethal. This would only be equivalent to those modifications if its effect was included with that of enhanced shrapnel, and even then it'd remain a worse choice than spring loaded. This modification

also becomes useless if you ever take Persistent Boost because the persistent damage will kill anyone you knock out anyways. I can't recommend this modification and am baffled by its existence.

- **Enhanced Shrapnel ★** Get two extra physical damage types and nothing else. Even in the unlikely event you fight a monster that discriminates by physical damage type, your default bludgeoning damage is already the least likely to be resisted of the three. Weapon innovation modifications that offer versatile damage types always give other traits that are actually helpful. I'm shocked they made no effort to do the same here. I wish this was a gas bomb that switched the damage to poison and the save to fortitude, as an alternate save and nonphysical damage type would be far more useful even accounting for the limits of poison as a damage type.
- **Spring Loaded ★★★** Whenever you don't start with your mortar deployed, such as due to ambushes, needing to travel, or walking around town without alarming civilians, you can save an action. You'd be a fool to pick any other initial modification.

Breakthrough Modifications:

- **Blanching Chamber ★★** Your siege weapon now counts as cold iron and silver. Handy against the right foes, but not exactly the universally useful choice you'd want for most campaigns. Triggering weaknesses with your mortar can at least trigger the weaknesses of multiple enemies at once and can trigger them even if the enemy takes half damage from a successful save. It's still too situational to get a good rating, but it's better than similar features on the weapon innovation. Boost its rating as appropriate to your campaign.
- **Earthbreaker ★★** You can opt to deal half damage but create difficult terrain in the area. There is no duration associated with this difficult terrain. Given sufficient time to prepare you can blanket an entire battlefield with difficult terrain, though your allies may not appreciate it. Choose it if your allies have features that let them ignore difficult terrain or if you are desperate for a way to contribute to battle that is less reliant on a dexterity saving throw. Though it uses the same written mechanics as Burrowing Shot (see below), it is compatible with Engineer's Efficiency because it modifies a regular launch.
- **Narrow Blast ★★★** A 20 foot cone effect from a point of your choosing makes for much less friendly fire without sacrificing area damage like Focused Fire does. You might consider retraining Focused Fire for Wrapped in Smoke after taking this modification. It is compatible with Engineer's Efficiency and Master Siege Engineer.

Revolutionary Modifications:

- **Enhanced Damage ★★★** I find it funny that this is described "as the revolutionary weapon modification of the same name" when it's much better. The mortar has more damage die than a normal weapon and can spread its extra damage across multiple targets if you're lucky. Increasing its die size is superior to that of the weapon innovation.
- **Impossible Alloy ★** Just as bad as the revolutionary weapon innovation modification of the same name. These metals are all far too obscure. Take it only if your GM is throwing tons of constructs at you and refuses to allow you to just buy adamantine ammunition for your mortar.

- **Precise Blast ★★** No more friendly fire. Your 10 foot burst isn't that hard to avoid hitting allies with, especially if you have alternate shapes available through narrow blast or Focused Fire. This still makes you able to deliver multitarget damage to two foes flanking an ally without including your buddy in the blast. If you have several melee allies and they still don't know how to position themselves to avoid your blasts or just get flanked all the time, take this instead of enhanced damage.

Munitions Master Archetype Feats:

As a class archetype, the munitions master also has several feats unique to it. I've chosen to review them below because they don't quite fit either the archetype or class feat list. Unfortunately, all of its feats are mediocre but you must take two of them before you can escape the archetype.

- **Munitions Master Dedication** Engineer's Efficiency provides action compression to make your siege weapon viable. You are obligated to take this feat, and you always would even if you had any other choice. The innovation barely functions without it.

  It's too bad you can't compress a load and launch through a supplemental feat. If you could, then you could use movement to adjust your mortar's aim and personal location simultaneously. That'd go a long way towards fixing the mortar's severe mobility issues.
- **Focused Fire ★ / ★★** Hit only a single square and deal an extra die of damage. This greatly curtails your damage output when facing multiple foes but avoids collateral damage. This feat is far more difficult to use than it appears because it is incompatible with Engineer's Efficiency, Siege Celerity, and Master Siege Engineer. When you get Master Siege Engineer, you will never be able to use it without losing significant action efficiency and can consider it red. At such levels you should use narrow blast or precise blast to avoid friendly fire instead. The extra damage of Focused Fire is paltry at those levels, further encouraging you to retrain it.
- **Wrapped In Smoke ★★** Cover yourself and anyone adjacent to your mortar in concealing smoke with an action. Normally concealment works against martial characters, but you don't share those concerns. Mortars don't rely on targeting because they're area effects. Even using Focused Fire is technically still an area effect that bypasses concealment. Unlike many similar features, nothing prevents you from using the concealment to hide. Good luck finding the actions to use it before you get Master Siege Engineer at sixteenth level; perhaps you'll be willing to sacrifice overdrive for it if a fight looks like it's especially likely to threaten you. Boost its rating one step when you get Master Siege Engineer.
- **Field Artillery ★** Spend an action to increase your mortar's speed by ten feet for a round. The problem:
  - Your mortar has a default move speed of twenty, meaning you can move twenty feet for one action.
  - Activating this feat requires also one action, leaving you with two remaining actions to move.

    - Using those two actions after using this feat gives you… twenty feet of extra movement.

  You need to use this feat and two move actions just to break even with moving three times for the same amount of actions. Even if you get an extra action from Siege Celerity, Recoiling Relocation, or Master Siege Engineer at least one of them must be a firing-related action so you still can't gain speed from this feat. It is literally impossible for this feat to provide any benefit to you.
- **Siege Celerity** ★★★ / ★ Quicken yourself to load or launch your mortar. As an unstable feat you won't be able to use it more than once a fight with any reliability, and worse still it competes with your actual damage source: Megavolt. Remember, without Megavolt you're just a guy with a cantrip. Still, sometimes you just need to move and getting an extra action gives you the means to do so. If you're lucky you'll roll well on your unstable checks and retain the ability to use Megavolt on following turns.

  Siege Celerity becomes useless once you take Master Siege Engineer at sixteenth level. Retrain it once you reach sixteenth level.
- **Recoiling Relocation** ★ Move as a free action after firing. It's incompatible with Siege Celerity because they're both unstable. Siege Celerity saves you the same actions in the same scenario, but costs a lower level feat and has objectively superior flexibility regarding the actions you can take that turn. Quickening yourself to load the mortar enables you to use the saved action for anything you want, including movement at any point on your turn. This feat can only be used for movement and only then after firing your mortar, which means you can't even move before shooting to put new spaces within your firing line.

  You could use both in a single turn if you took Unstable Redundancies or got lucky on your unstable roll, but I guarantee the better play is just using Siege Celerity twice across two turns or using Siege Celerity and retaining the ability to fire an unstable Megavolt. The only valid reason to take this feat is post sixteenth level when Master Siege Engineer makes Siege Celerity redundant. At that point, you might improve its rating one step if you're feeling charitable. I wouldn't.
- **Burrowing Shot** ★ Launch a shot that deals double damage to objects but half damage to creatures. While interesting and thematic, objects rarely need to be destroyed. The best use for this feat is the elimination of cover in support of other ranged party members. However, few enemies use cover and when they do I'd rather just place a normal mortar burst behind the cover to bypass it and deal full damage. It's debatable if it can even shred enemy shields better than a normal shot because shields only take damage on behalf of creatures, and this feat halves that damage.

  Unfortunately, it gets worse. Like its predecessor Focused Fire, this feat is far more difficult to use than it appears because it is incompatible with Engineer's Efficiency, Siege Celerity, and Master Siege Engineer. It's a shame this feat isn't a breakthrough modification like earthbreaker, as it uses the same mechanics and would be viable were it compatible with the munition master's other feats.
- **Master Siege Engineer** ★★★★ You become quickened and can use the action for aiming or launching a siege weapon. Your optimal turn order now looks like this:

- Wrapped in Smoke, Overdrive, Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Load), Master Siege Engineer (Launch)
    - Substitute Wrapped in Smoke with movement as needed.
- Master Siege Engineer (Load), Engineer's Efficiency (Aim and Launch), Megavolt
- Repeat Previous Step

This means that you only need to go without dealing big damage once per fight. This feat is mandatory to keep high level mortar innovators relevant. At this point your first turn is still trash, but your second and third are firing off the equivalent of max-rank blast spell damage (albeit with far worse area, action economy, and multitarget potential).

Weapon ★★

The weapon innovation's overdrive is unique in that the weapon innovator can choose to make overdrive deal fire damage even on success. You'll be better off using your weapon damage most of the time, but if you ever find yourself dealing with an ice, plant, or undead themed enemy it is usually worth trying to see if they are weak to it. Unfortunately, outside of rare battles against foes with a weakness to fire a weapon innovator couldn't even dream of competing with a construct innovator for damage output. Frankly, they might lose out even then.

The weapon innovation can also be used for battlefield control through the weapon traits it offers your innovation. The majority of these traits support the use of the athletics skill, and as a result a melee weapon innovator should have a good strength score. If you would rather dump it, there are modification options that do not require athletics. While relying on those options is possible, they're not as good and it limits your options at each modification tier. A weapon innovator committed to athletics checks but unwilling to use a reach weapon might prefer an agile weapon instead. It will confer the benefits of agile to athletic maneuvers that normally do not exist on agile weapons, such as grapple.

The weapon innovation is the only way for an inventor to use all of their abilities on a ranged weapon. Even a weapon innovator with a ranged weapon will often want two strength for using ranged trip with a propulsive or kickback weapon, though they'll find it easier to dodge athletic modifications if they choose to. Unfortunately, ranged weapon modifications aren't as good as those available to melee builds and you tend to be too far away from enemies to use explode. Worse still, nerfs applied post-remaster have made the composite shortbow an invalid choice for weapon innovation due to its status as a first level weapon. This has undermined ranged weapon innovation builds because the composite shortbow was previously the best choice owing to its solid damage, lack of the reload or volley traits, and propulsive trait. If you want to use a ranged weapon build, consider asking your GM for access to uncommon weaponry like the air repeater or daikyu.

It isn't especially important, but if your weapon gains a versatile trait for a damage type it already has, you can choose a new damage type instead of the listed type. If you put dynamic weighting on a hammer, you can choose to make it versatile S instead of versatile B. Considering the weaknesses, resistances, and immunities of monsters, a general tier list of physical damage types is as follows: bludgeoning (fewest resistances, fewest immunities, middling weaknesses) >

slashing (middling resistances, middling immunities, most weaknesses) > piercing (most resistances, most immunities, fewest weaknesses).

Initial Modifications:

- **Advanced Weapon** You can choose a level zero advanced weapon in place of an initial modification. Almost none of them are worth the loss of a modification and most of them are uncommon, requiring GM permission to use. Common uses for this option include:
    - **Broadspear** ★★ This advanced weapon has the maximum damage afforded to a reach weapon plus the sweep trait. It's a solid choice for damage-focused weapon innovators. The biggest issue with this weapon is its lack of any solid breakthrough modification options, since it already has sweep and therefore can't benefit from aerodynamic construction. You'll have to choose inconspicuous appearance instead.
    - **Daikyu (U)** ★★★ This weapon is uncommon, but I feel compelled to mention it anyways. The remaster removed the composite shortbow from the list of viable ranged weapon innovations, leaving inventors the unenviable choice between regular shortbows (which don't benefit from strength) and reload weaponry with propulsive or kickback (which do benefit from strength but have reload). As all the best modifications rely on strength in some capacity, getting a weapon that benefits from strength is useful for making the most of a ranged weapon innovation build. The daikyu is the best fit for the job and qualifies as a weapon innovation because it is a level zero weapon. Unfortunately, it comes at the price of your first modification, which undermines the point a bit. It's nonetheless the best long-term fit for the any of the ranged trip modifications, such as blunt shot through the class feat Manifold Modifications or the rope shot breakthrough modification. As an uncommon weapon you must ask your GM for access.
    - **Falcata** ★★ If you are aiming for a damage build but have a desperate hunger for a free hand (probably for Gadget Specialist), no other one-handed weapon can beat the falcata for average damage output. With the maximum base damage for a one-handed weapon and a hefty fatal trait, it cleanly exceeds the damage of any martial weapon of its weight class. Even the inventor, with their modest critical hit rate, might appreciate it. As usual for critical weapons, it is best in a party containing a bard or other support character that regularly increases your accuracy.
    - **Gada** ★★ A better version of the bastard sword. It gets the maximum damage available for its category whether used in one or two hands, plus the backswing trait. Like the broadspear, it's a useful choice for those who want to emphasize damage over athletics checks. It works in the same scenarios a bastard sword does.
- **Blunt Shot** ★★★ Concussive and ranged trip. If you're not planning to use an air repeater with complex simplicity, this is going to be the best choice available to ranged weapon innovators. Unfortunately, the same remaster update that gave this modification

ranged trip made composite shortbows inaccessible to weapon innovators and removed its best use-case in doing so.

You may want to check with your GM to see if they require you to spend ammunition and reload as part of using ranged trip. While common sense would indicate you do, the trait itself assumes it is attached to a thrown weapon and provides no clarification as to its interaction with ammunition-based weaponry. Uncommon kickback weaponry like the harmona gun could become more appealing with ranged trip and a generous GM. I'd be especially fond of using it on a weapon like a blunderbuss with a large bore modification. If the splash damage would adversely affect an ally in melee with your target, trip the foe instead to give that ally an advantage.

- **Complex Simplicity** Increase the damage of a simple weapon and add either the versatile or razing trait to it. The traits are both irrelevant. The damage is the real draw. Martial weapons are generally better than using this modification, but there are exceptions. Notable uses include:
  - **Air Repeater (U)** ★★★ This uncommon weapon is a one-handed agile ranged weapon that doesn't require reloading until after you've burned through six shots. With this modification to give it the same base damage as a shortbow, it's a great choice for capitalizing on overdrive damage. You can put a shield in your other hand or keep it free for use with Tamper, athletics, and gadget use. Just keep a backup weapon with a potency crystal attached to it in case you run out of shots near the end of a fight. A gauntlet bow provides a good compromise because it gives you a defensive option (parry) and an extra shot for emergencies, all without taking up a hand. You can alternatively invest in a repeater bandolier to make reloading the air repeater's magazine more efficient.

    Later modifications can compensate for the air repeater's poor range or integrate it with a gauntlet owing to its status as a one handed weapon. As neither demands strength investment, air repeaters are especially good choices for those who don't want to invest in strength. For such builds, complex simplicity air repeaters are the best choice.

    Owing to the lack of useful first level ranged weapon modifications compatible with conventional bows, I strongly considered rating this blue. Only the six shot limit and short range give me pause, but there is a compelling case to be made for a higher rating.
  - **Gauntlet** ★★★ Using this modification to improve a gauntlet means getting access to the best damage you could ever expect from an agile weapon with the added benefits of the free-hand trait. The free hand trait means you never need to spend an action drawing or retrieving your weapon. You can't be disarmed and don't drop it while unconscious. You can draw, use, and drop potions or bombs. You can use the Tamper or Gadget Specialist feats and any athletics check of your choosing; though unlike an athletic weapon trait, a free-hand weapon does not enjoy the benefits of agile on athletics checks. You can use kits such as healer's tools mid-battle. Be sure to fill your other hand with something you want to have at the ready consistently. Usually this means carrying a shield, but it could also be

a magic item like a cantrip deck, horn of blasting, or broom of flying. Some builds might even use the dual-weapon warrior archetype to carry a d8 weapon with an attached weapon siphon in their other hand.

- **Heavy Crossbow ★★** Hypothetically, you could use an empowered heavy crossbow with Megaton Strike for very high damage. The two-action reload is borderline untenable, but if you take Running Reload from an archetype you could technically spend two actions firing Megaton Strike, and one action moving and reloading. On your second turn you could spend one action completing the reload and moving further, then using Megaton Strike once more. It breaks down on the third turn because you would no longer have the actions needed to both reload and use Megaton Strike, but by that point you might have moved close enough to use explode or an unstable action. Alternatively, you could use an unstable action and attempt to activate overdrive or reposition on the first turn, deferring Megaton Strike to later turns in exchange for improved damage and the inability to activate the unstable function of Megaton Strike itself. The most likely source of Running Reload is the archer archetype, but there are other archetypes that offer it too.

  There are rare circumstances in which this strategy is preferrable to a shortbow. The most obvious is when fighting a resistant enemy, in which the complex simplicity Megaton Strike heavy crossbow cleanly surpasses its rival for average damage. Due to its high up-front non-critical damage, it is also a better choice against higher-level boss threats. Finally, it will notably improve further if you risk using the unstable function, though you will be out of luck on round three if you do so.

  If you are not receiving any flat damage on your shortbow, the heavy crossbow can take a blanket lead on damage. However, a shortbow without extra flat damage is extremely unlikely, as even with their access to composite shortbows removed an inventor will quickly activate overdrive. The difference is slight, so if you frequently encounter resistant enemies or just like the idea of finding an actual use for the heavy crossbow, you could get by on this strategy. It still doesn't exceed a yellow rating due to its strict build requirements and the inflexibility of your action routine, which is likely to be disrupted if you need to spend an action doing literally anything else (such as moving to see an enemy, escaping a grapple, drawing your weapon, or standing up after being knocked prone).
- **Javelin ★★** Using this modification on a javelin effectively nets you a trident with a better range increment. This can be helpful when used in tandem with the tangle line modification to improve trip range. Like the chakram, the javelin is classified as a ranged weapon and can benefit from ranged weapon modifications. This includes further improvements to its range. However, it also means that using the javelin in melee will trigger reactive strikes. Just using a chakram is usually easier if you want a technically-ranged throwing weapon, but the ten extra feet may be worth it to you.

    - **Long Air Repeater (U) ★★** Errata gave this weapon the kickback trait, so it now does more damage than the regular one-handed air repeater. In the aftermath of the composite shortbow losing its status as the premier weapon innovation, the long air repeater has become a good choice for those looking to make use of blunt shot. Unfortunately, taking both complex simplicity and blunt shot requires you to spend a class feat on Manifold Modifications. As an uncommon weapon it also must compete with its fellow uncommon shortbow replacement: the daikyu, against which it comes up short.
- **Dynamic Weighting ★★** Two-hand, versatile B, and the tethered trait. I like the two-hand trait and wish more weapons had it. You can use a sword-and-board style against mobs of minions, then switch to damage when you are up against a caster or boss that would bypass or break your shield. That said, gaining the two-hand trait in this way isn't much of a damage add. You would be better served by using a bastard sword if that strategy is your intention. Because this modification forbids agile weapons, at best this could add the two-hand trait to a trident, which enables you to gain a unique two-handed d10 tethered throwing weapon. You can even readjust your grip each time it returns to you via its tethered trait. This allows you to use a free action to release your grip and gain an off-hand for maneuvers or the Tamper feat, throw your weapon, and then easily readjust your grip back to a two-handed form to get better damage as it returns to you. As long as your opponent lacks reactive strike, there is no penalty to "throwing" your weapon in melee. You might prefer the speed of a returning rune over the inefficiency of the tethered trait, but at least it gives you the option to choose a damage rune for the rune slot if you choose.
- **Entangling Form ★★★★** Grapple, trip, and disarm. This modification is superior to all other melee modifications. Every melee weapon innovator should take this modification, but it is beyond build-defining for inventors with reach weaponry. Putting this trait on a reach weapon means gaining the ability to grapple an enemy at range. Unless the enemy also has reach, it can't attack you and it can't move until it successfully escapes. If it escapes, it has to step towards you. Only after it has spent at least two actions can it attack you, and it has a multiple attack penalty on its attack. That is a staggering level of control over an enemy for one action. The bec de corbin and halberd are the best choices for this weapon modification. I still can't believe they decided to buff this modification to include disarm. It was already the best one by a landslide.
- **Hampering Spikes ★★** Hampering got a rework that makes this modification viable. Rather than creating a tiny useless space of difficult terrain, you can spend the action to impose a movement penalty on a single creature. Unlike its original incarnation, enemies can't bypass it just by moving diagonally. This modification is best for those who have chosen a dedicated melee dexterity build reliant on finesse weaponry because they won't be able to use most other modifications. It also gives trip and versatile P.
- **Hefty Composition ★★** Shove, razing, and versatile B. Three situational bonuses that are irrelevant in most encounters.
- **Modular Head ★★** Modular and optional nonlethal. Spend an action to get any physical damage type. When you do so, you can also choose to make your weapon

nonlethal or lethal. It's an okay option for somebody reliant on a whip, as you can remove the nonlethal trait when facing off against creatures immune to nonlethal damage, such as constructs.

- **Pacification Tools** ★★ Disarm and optional nonlethal. It's laughably outclassed by entangling form.
- **Razor Prongs** ★★★ Tearing, trip, and versatile S. On the off-chance your weapon already has grapple or you just want to prioritize damage above all else, you can use this modification instead of entangling form. The bleed damage is pretty insignificant and makes it very difficult to take prisoners, but it's passively applied every time you hit. You can juice the damage a bit by buying exsanguinating ammunition for the party archer and begging them to use it., but it's not always worth it depending on the strength of your enemy and turn order.
- **Segmented Frame** ★★ Modular and concealable. If you don't care for taking prisoners via the nonlethal option of modular head, you're likely also inclined to smuggle a weapon past the authorities.

Breakthrough Modifications:

- **Advanced Rangefinder** ★★ Backstabber and improved range for ranged weapons. Ranged weapons can struggle to take advantage of backstabber because they can't benefit from a flank, but if you have a couple of the following: the tamper ability, grappling allies, sword-using allies, decent stealth, or any other consistent source of off-guard enemies, this modification is much better. Its range enhancement is likewise welcome for weapons with limited range increments, such as air repeaters and blunderbusses.
- **Aerodynamic Construction** ★★★ Sweep and versatile S. These are both handy traits that work regardless of whether or not you invested in athletics. It is particularly useful to reach weaponry thanks to their improved access to targets.
- **Inconspicuous Appearance** ★★ Backstabber and versatile P, and if light bulk it is also concealable. This modification works best when applied to an agile weapon in a melee-focused party. Having several melee allies means getting easy access to the off-guard condition through flanking. I'm fond of putting it on a complex simplicity gauntlet. Boost its rating one step if your campaign is focused on stealth, such as a thief or assassin themed game.
- **Integrated Gauntlet** ★★★ Free-hand. This may not look valuable because you can't hold something in your weapon hand and strike with it at the same time. However, there are still numerous benefits to having a free hand weapon even if you aren't using it to hold anything. You can climb or grab an edge without needing to stow your weapon first. You can't be disarmed and don't need to pick your weapon up after falling unconscious. You can draw, drink, and drop potions or elixirs. Perhaps most relevant to the inventor is this modification's interaction with the Tamper and Gadget Specialist feats. Both momentarily require a free hand. If you took either feat despite lacking a free hand, this feat's rating improves one step. If you have an agile melee weapon, odds are good you

would have been better served by using the complex simplicity modification on a gauntlet.

- **Manifold Alloy ★★** Your weapon is both silver and cold iron. If your GM prefers political campaigns with a large number of humanoid opponents, give this a pass. If you find yourself routinely attacked by werewolves, fey, demons, devils, kami, hags, and other monsters from beyond the mortal world, having both metals at once can save you some trouble. Oddly, this modification is not restricted to melee weapons. However, due to the relatively low expense of buying and using special material ammunition, I don't recommend taking advantage of that quirk unless your campaign is entirely about fighting a creature weak to one of these special materials.
- **Rope Shot ★★** Climbing and ranged trip for ranged weapons. It's uses are sharply limited now that the lower level blunt shot offers the same benefits.
- **Tangle Line ★★** Ranged trip, parry, and tethered for thrown weapons. Dynamic weighting can get you the latter benefit for a lower level, but it might be best to combine them despite their redundancy. The parry trait has little use unless a weapon takes up both your hands and dynamic weighting is the best way to get a two-handed throwing weapon.

Revolutionary Modifications:

- **Attack Refiner ★★** Backswing and forceful. It won't stack perfectly with aerodynamic construction as both offer circumstance bonuses. Forceful is modest but fine. It's best applied to an agile weapon.
- **Deadly Strike ★★** Deadly d8. It adds more critical damage to your weapon. The inventor's moderate accuracy doesn't make them especially great at crit-fishing, but their tendency to multiattack still ensures they get a decent amount through pure chance. Deadly strike competes with enhanced damage. On average, enhanced damage is the numerically superior choice because most of your strikes aren't critical hits.

  You might be more inclined to choose this modification over enhanced damage if you have already increased your weapon's die size, you are using a fatal weapon, or your party has a supportive member buffing your accuracy. If you have already increased your weapon's die size -such as through complex simplicity- it is incompatible with enhanced damage. A fatal weapon renders enhanced damage obsolete when it crits because it increases die size in its own way. A supportive party member -such as a bard or an ally using the aid action- will increase your accuracy and make you more likely to crit.

  You can also enhance this modification by purchasing a keen rune to make it more likely you crit. A pick with both this modification and integrated gauntlet makes for a very cool pile bunker, but it's a very feast-or-famine build.
- **Enhanced Damage ★★★** Your weapon's die size increases. This is free extra damage unless you already have a d12 or chose the complex simplicity modification. Shortbow users might as well choose omnirange stabilizers instead, as reconfiguring your innovation into a longbow and removing its volley trait grants the same damage bonus with better range.

- **Extensible Weapon ★★★** Reach. If your weapon is already a reach weapon, it becomes even longer. This enables you to both attack and make athletics checks over a huge area: 36 spaces in total. At this point, if you grapple a creature with 10 ft. reach it still can't attack you in melee until it breaks the grapple. While you will surely fight creatures with attacks that exceed that distance, their best attacks often still require their target be within five or ten feet. While this modification is often the best choice in general, it is most useful if your weapon has the reach, grapple, or sweep traits. Improve its rating one step if your weapon already has at least two.
- **Impossible Alloy ★** Your weapon counts as a bunch of weird metals. Most of these will never come up, but adamantine is at least helpful against golems. If your campaign is about fighting golems or some weird creature type vulnerable to one of the specified metals, improve the rating one step. Even if this covered every special material weakness in the game it would be pretty niche.
- **Momentum Enhancer ★★** Give your weapon agile. It can also be reloaded as a free action once per round if it is a ranged weapon with the reload trait. It's a fine choice even on weapons that lack reload due to its synergy with the inventor's preference for multiple attacks. An agile daikyu or greataxe is quite nice. Unlike other traits that mitigate the multiple attack penalty, such as backswing and sweep, this one is untyped, always applies, and stacks with everything.

  The free action reload is a bit more unwieldy that it appears. You can only use it once per round. Your first turn is easy. It will look like this: Overdrive, Strike, Free Reload, Strike. However, this leaves your weapon unloaded. If you want to continue using the weapon's new agile trait, your second turn will look like this: Free Reload, Strike, Manual Reload, Strike. You still need to continue to consume your entire turn just to keep pace with what a non-reload weapon would do, and the non-reload weapon would leave you with a leftover action. That action is generally more valuable than the scant damage upgrade of a reload weapon, especially considering you could just give a non-reload weapon enhanced damage at this level. The inventor feat Clockwork Celerity could help you better take advantage of your agile trait by allowing you to get an extra action for striking, but then you've just shifted the cost from an action tax to the consumption of your unstable action.

  This is still a useful action-economy enhancer for firearms and other reload weaponry, but don't change your equipment just to use it and don't expect to make use of both the reload mitigation and the agile trait every round. It's nice of them to give reload-using weapon innovators something, but it's disappointing that reload weaponry only becomes viable for inventors at level fifteen. Non-reload weapons remain the optimal choice due to enhanced damage. You have nothing to gain and actions to lose by using a reload weapon.

  There is one exception. On the off-chance you made it this far using the deadly simplicity Megaton Strike heavy crossbow build, your GM will need to resolve a rules ambiguity. Unlike most similar features, it states that it reloads your weapon, not that it gives you an interact action to reload your weapon. A strict reading of this feature indicates that it reloads your weapon instantly, bypassing the two-action reload entirely.

This affords enough action economy to activate magnetic shot ammunition and thereby deal 12d12 damage on an unstable hit. With overdrive, damaging runes, weapon specialization, Megaton Strike, and offensive boost you could deal about 100 damage per hit, albeit at the cost of 2,200 gold per shot. You'll probably still get out-damaged by a starlit span magus but that's not a fair comparison.

It's unlikely the designers considered weapons with unorthodox reloads or the repeating trait when designing this weapon, so there's no real rules-as-intended for this scenario. Your GM would be fair to rule that it only replaces one action of the heavy crossbow's two action reload. In that case it remains an excellent choice because it still provides enough action savings to maintain the Running Reload and Megaton Strike combo indefinitely.

- **Omnirange Stabilizers** ★★★ Remove the volley trait OR double your weapon's range increment. If you are using a shortbow, I recommend upgrading to a longbow and removing its volley trait. Bows already have more than enough range for typical play.
- **Rune Capacity** ★★ Add an extra rune. Expensive but versatile. If you plan to put a damage rune on your weapon, you'd be better off choosing enhanced damage. If your GM is generous with treasure or your allies don't use weapons, you might get more high-level runes than average and improve this rating a step.

Class Feats:

1st Level Feats:

Built-in Tools ★

This feat enables you to integrate a tool set into your weapon. It is pointless. You can already wear two sets of tools on your person. I can't think of any builds that would need to keep more than two sets of tools available in combat at once. Out of combat, you can simply pull other tools in or out of storage as needed. If you don't have the strength needed to carry the bulk of multiple tools, choose the Prototype Companion feat and use it as a pack mule. It can't even be used to enact Battle Medicine checks or similar abilities while using a two-handed weapon because it is specifically worded such that it doesn't bypass the need for a free hand.

Explosive Leap ★★★

At low levels when it doesn't compete with any other unstable feats, this feat is excellent. It allows you to freely reposition yourself within 30 feet of your starting location, largely heedless of circumstance. At higher levels its value diminishes, particularly if you chose Gadget Specialist at 4th level thanks to it granting blast boots, which provide the same effect but do not force unstable checks. Inventors with high strength might also choose to give it a pass once their modifiers improve, as they are sure to have decent jumping and climbing ability. Dexterity inventors with lacking athletics will appreciate this feat far more. Unfortunately, Explosive Leap won't move a deployed mortar with you. This feat is red for the mortar innovation.

Haphazard Repair ★ / ★★ / ★★★
You spend one action fixing your innovation. Weapon and armor innovators don't need this unstable feat in the slightest: abilities that target worn gear are rare enough that most campaigns never see them. By contrast, the construct will take damage in almost every fight and is not very durable. This feat will compete with Explosive Leap for the attention of construct innovators. Mortars will also need to consider this feat, as boss fights with significant area damage make it likely you're going to lose your mortar instantly.

No! No! I Created You! ★
This feat is redundant in practice. If an enemy spellcaster actually chooses to control or confuse your technically-not-mindless construct, you can choose not to give it actions with which to betray you. While retaining control of your robot is nice, there is little reason to waste a feat countering something you already have a near-perfect counter to; especially conditions as rare as these ones, which are unlikely to be directed at the construct in the first place.

Prototype Companion ★★★★
You gain a non-innovation construct companion. Don't expect its offense to impress like a true construct innovation, but getting a companion is never a bad call. Even if you barely use it, it's an extra sack of hit points for your team that has a host of immunities and can provide a flanking bonus as needed. It's also a fine mount or it can supply attacks when your own aren't working well due to situational factors. While not as effective in a mount role as a speedy animal companion, you still get to move twice for one action. Unlike a true construct innovation, riding a Prototype Companion into battle costs you little because you don't mind when it can't make attacks. This strategy will only work for small ancestries at first due to the limits on your construct's default size, but taking Advanced Construct Companion at fourth level can fix that and improve its action flexibility as a bonus.

If you're not using any other archetype and want to invest heavily in a companion, the beastmaster or cavalier archetype will usually pull ahead of a Prototype Companion. If you want a simple companion but want to use another archetype, or just want a little bit more speed or action freedom, this feat more than pulls its weight provided you're willing to continue spending feats on it as you level. However, you must sincerely consider the question: why are you choosing this feat rather than using the construct innovation? If you don't have a good reason, consider switching your innovation to the objectively stronger one.

A mortar innovator can't easily get any other companion because they already have an archetype. A companion gives them a combat option when their mortar would be forced to include an ally in the splash zone or when their enemies have high reflex saving throws. Or it can just stall enemies from reaching your position. It won't fit into your action routine as easily once you unlock a feat like Megavolt, but its fourth level upgrade Advanced Construct Companion makes using it cost you no actions. Unfortunately, competition for the mortar's fourth level feat slot is tight and you may have to go without to get something else you'd prefer.

Let's cover some technicalities regarding the companion's interaction with the mortar. The rules state: "Normally [companion items] are the only items a companion can use. Other items can qualify, at the GM's discretion, but an animal can never Activate an Item." While these

rules refer to animal companions as the default, they apply to all companions including your construct.

This means that –with a permissive GM– a mortar innovator could use a construct they're riding to push their mortar around the battlefield, transporting all three entities much more quickly than they otherwise would. Pushing the mortar around isn't covered by any of the situations explicitly forbidden to the construct; it isn't holding, wielding, or activating the item. However, it runs afoul of the crew rules for moving a mortar, which states that the entire crew must ready an action to move it; so if it is interfacing with the mortar, you could need to spend two actions readying to move. There's no clear distinction on what it means to enter or exit a crew, but it's yet another reason why this strategy would only work with an unusually lenient GM. I doubt I'd allow it myself, if only because it strains belief to imagine an inventor assembling and firing a mortar from the equivalent of horseback.

Your GM may find it more permissible if you offer to buy a light chariot, as the rules do specify you can attach siege weapons to sufficiently large vehicles. Attach the chariot to your companion and attach the mortar to the chariot. Unfortunately, then you have to deal with the unwieldy vehicle rules instead of the companion rules and must contend with the pathetic hit points of a light chariot. Unless your GM promises not to destroy your chariot, kiss this strategy goodbye the first time you get hit with a fireball.

Something the construct definitely *can't* do is help you load or launch a mortar; by default it lacks the limbs for manipulate actions, as otherwise the construct innovation wouldn't have a modification expressly granting that ability. Aim lacks the manipulate trait, but even if your GM allowed it you'd have little reason for the construct to assist you with aiming because you have Engineer's Efficiency, which always includes aiming.

Even with none of these technicalities ruled in your favor, a Prototype Companion remains the best choice for the mortar innovation. It provides an alternative offensive strategy when the mortar's action inefficiencies aren't working in your favor, and supplemented by Advanced Construct Companion adds free offense and flanking bonuses to your team even when they are. Like the mortar itself, it demands no investment in strength or dexterity.

Tamper ★★★

Tamper allows an inventor to use their crafting like other classes use athletics. There are two major differences. First, it lacks the attack trait. Tampering with enemy gear to reduce their armor class or accuracy does not advance your MAP, giving it a massive advantage over conventional maneuvers. Second, it has the manipulate trait. Tampering will trigger a reactive strike if your opponent has it. Don't use it if your opponent has reactive strike.

Due to its melee range, one might expect ranged inventors to avoid this feat. However, the ability to render and enemy off-guard and impose a movement speed penalty on them before moving away to shoot can have substantial value, as the enemy is unlikely to be able to reach you in one action on the following turn; if you don't have the room to move twice, it's a nice fallback plan. It is only of slightly reduced value to inventors who are already intending to invest in athletics to capitalize on weapon innovation traits. Thanks to having no MAP, it is still useful. For example, you could reduce enemy accuracy before grappling them, making them off-guard, unable to move, and less accurate all at once.

Tamper provides an arguable reason to ride your construct into battle. By ordering your robot to move you towards the enemy, possibly using an impressive 40 ft. movement speed, you can get in range for tamper using the same action you used to get your robot into melee. Making an enemy off-guard isn't worth surrendering an attack to the MAP, but if you really do want to rely wholly on your robot you could save a lot of money not buying striking runes this way. Also note that unless your GM allows you to split up your construct's actions, the robot will act before you are able to tamper on turns where you have to move towards the enemy.

If you are carrying a shield, you should always raise it before using Tamper to reduce an enemy's weapon accuracy. A shield is guaranteed and applies to all enemies, while Tamper can fail and targets only one. If you have the actions for both, then you can use both.

The only things holding this back from a blue rating are the need for a free hand, the possibility it inflicts fire damage on you if you critically fail, and its manipulate trait which causes it to provoke reactive strikes. Weapon innovators with reach grapple weaponry, non-archer ranged inventors, and construct innovators who don't ride their robot can consider this yellow instead. Inventors using weaponry with the two-hand or free-hand traits, as well as most pilots, can consider this blue.

Variable Core ★★

This feat replaces the default fire damage of your various abilities. Rather than improving your in-the-moment versatility, you are simply hoping that the enemies you face happen to be vulnerable to your chosen damage type instead of fire. To be fair to Variable Core, fire is a poor damage type. A staggering number of creatures are completely immune to it, and many are resistant as well. Due to the fact that your fire damage is usually only a small piece of extra damage or part of an AoE blast, resistance might as well be immunity to you. Its only saving grace is that it also claims a high number of monster weaknesses, even when considered relative to the number of monsters resistant and immune to it. Still, all three options offered are arguably superior to fire on average.

Many creatures are resistant or immune to cold, but a generous number of creatures also have a weakness to it. Fewer monsters are resistant or immune to acid and lightning damage, but they also trigger far fewer weaknesses. Acid is arguably more reliable and occasionally halts regeneration, but electricity triggers slightly more weaknesses.

However, there is no need to commit to one in a long-term sense. Variable Core has the modification trait, which means it can be easily retrained to suit whatever threats emerge. If you choose electricity only to find that a mad alchemist has begun breeding an army of lightning-resistant gelatinous cubes, you can swap your damage type with a day's downtime. You often won't get that downtime, but it is better than nothing.

It also changes the inventor's self-inflicted damage to the chosen damage type. If you happen to have an ancestral resistance other than fire, you might choose to switch to that damage type. The only other use I can think of for this feat is nautical campaigns, in which explode becomes more difficult to use because it has the fire trait and so can't be activated underwater.

2nd Level Feats:

Collapse Armor ★★

I can think of two plausible scenarios in which this is helpful. The first is during nighttime ambushes, during which you would otherwise not have the time to equip your armor. The second is during social functions, in which showing up in armor would be a faux pas. If you only need the second function, you might just buy a glamoured armor rune for the event. It is of greater value to power suit innovators than subterfuge suit innovators. Power suit innovators are more reliant on their armor for defense and it takes them longer to put their armor on in the first place. Subterfuge suit innovators usually have high natural dexterity, making it less dangerous for them to be caught without their armor. Both scenarios are too rare to justify the feat expense, but at least it's better than Collapse Construct.

Collapse Construct ★

This feat doesn't actually do anything. Though the form is specifically described as "compact and innocuous" this feat provides no numeric benefit for disguising or concealing your construct. Your GM may be inclined to give you a circumstance bonus to pretend a small construct is a briefcase, but there is no mechanical impetus to do so. It does reduce your construct's bulk, though it is unclear if this would allow a large size construct to be carried or pulled through a space smaller than would normally allow a large size figure. A literal reading once again states that it is not possible, but I'd expect most GMs to be more lenient. After all, the construct is literally being collapsed into a smaller form. It would make little sense for that to have no impact on its ability to move through a smaller space. If you GM rules leniently in such cases, improve this rating one step.

Oil Fire ★★

This unstable feat lets you deal persistent fire damage to foes you have grabbed. The flavor text implies this effect emerges from your gauntlets. However, there is no mechanical restriction that would prevent you from using this effect with a grapple weapon, such as an entangling form polearm. The foe gets a reflex save to avoid the effect that works similar to a basic save. It also releases the foe from its grapple if it succeeds on this save.

The damage is bad and there's no getting around that. It takes four ticks of persistent damage for this effect to deal as much damage to a single target as the inventor's default explode action, but explode can target multiple enemies, deals its damage instantly, and has the added benefit of not giving your enemy a free chance to escape your grapple. This feat has minor value if your party emphasizes melee and you really want a low-level unstable action that won't cause friendly fire. It also surpasses explode in an encounter against a single foe with a weakness to fire. Its biggest advantage is its action efficiency, as it only takes one action while explode takes two. However, due to the limited frequency with which you can use unstable actions you generally want more bang for your buck.

It's difficult to justify spending a feat on this because you already have explode. This feat teeters on the brink of a red rating, but its few niches narrowly save it. You have no need for this feat if your party is smart enough to avoid your blast radius. Even if they aren't, you'd be better served waiting a few levels and picking up Megavolt instead of this feat. No reasonable amount

of persistent damage ticks will ever match the damage dealt by Megavolt. Replace it once you reach level six.

Reverse Engineer ★★

Errata finally confirmed that this feat's expert crafting prerequisite was a mistake. It's now possible to acquire this feat at its listed level.

Reverse Engineer grants large bonuses when attempting to determine the formula for an item in your possession and grants a slim chance of not breaking the item when doing so. It also provides you with the ability to disarm traps using crafting instead of thievery. This last bonus is by far the most noteworthy. An inventor automatically maximizes their crafting proficiency as they level, and certain builds might not have strong incentives to improve their dexterity. As such, your crafting proficiency and ability modifier are both usually higher than your thievery modifier. That said, an inventor does get plenty of trained level skills and thievery might well be one of them. Overall, I would only be inclined to take this on a melee build in which I had no intention of improving dexterity. Traps are common, but not to the degree that this feat is vital. If nobody in your party is trained in thievery, bump this feat up a color rating.

Searing Restoration ★★

The inventor's version of lay on hands. Searing Restoration is less reliable due to its variability, but it provides a similar amount of healing on average. It also ends bleeding instead of providing an armor class boost to allies and has the potential to hurt you due to its unstable trait. Like lay on hands, this feature can be used to heal outside of combat in place of the medicine skill. It is a better pick if you did not choose to become trained in medicine.

Technically speaking, it is better to choose the blessed one archetype than this feat. Lay on hands heals the same amount, is available at the same level, is more reliable, provides a much more widely applicable secondary benefit, and won't ever hurt you. It also relies on its own resource that is expended separately from your unstable actions, affording you better flexibility. The only other advantage held by this feat is a slim chance to be able to heal twice in quick succession. If all you want is healing and you don't intend to take a different archetype, you have every incentive to choose blessed one instead. I have rated this feat yellow in accordance with that evaluation. If you can't take the blessed one dedication due to a conflicting archetype, or you intend to take another archetype later, bump its rating up one step.

It's also slightly more valuable for construct innovators because it allows their construct to heal allies, improving its versatility and giving it something to do when its strikes aren't working.

Wukong Extension (U) ★★★

An unstable one action melee strike with a weapon innovation that grants a reach of thirty feat. This feat keeps you safer than using Explosive Leap to reach your target would, but makes it more difficult to use follow-up strikes. Choose whichever you prefer, but don't choose both because they serve the same function.

4th Level Feats:

Advanced Construct Companion ★★★★

If you chose a companion, this feat is not optional. You must advance your construct so that it stays relevant. Such is the price of power. In addition to the basic advancement benefits outlined by the general construct companion rules, this feat grants your construct one action whenever you do not command it.

Should you invest heavily in improving your construct innovation's ranged capabilities you can reclaim your action with relative ease, and potentially even reinstate yourself as a melee combatant. If such a build would be of interest to you, follow the melee ability score spread instead of the construct ability score spread, though continue to do everything in your power to keep your intelligence maximized for overdrive.

If you chose Prototype Companion, this feat still comes highly recommended. The statistical and action economy advantages are just too great. Even if you don't plan to use your construct for combat, letting it move around the battlefield for free makes for easy flanking bonuses or an even more action-efficient mount.

Diving Armor ★★

Your armor enables you to swim fast and breathe underwater. This feat is a prime example of why the inventor's reconfiguration feat is helpful. If your party is about to travel by sea or do some treasure-hunting in a lake, you can spend a day of downtime to receive these benefits and remove them once you are done. Unfortunately, this feat doesn't allow you to use explode while underwater.

Dual-Form Weapon ★ / ★★

You can spend two actions to turn your weapon innovation into a second configuration. This gives it the stats of a new weapon with its own modifications. It shares runes across both forms. This feat is of limited worth and is only barely superior to carrying around a backup weapon with a potency crystal on it or using a combination weapon. Let's talk pros and cons:

	Potency Crysal	Combination	Dual-Form Weapon
Actions	It takes one action to swap weapons	It takes one action to change grip	It takes two actions to swap configuration
Costs	Each potency crystal costs gold	None	It costs a fourth level class feat
Damage	Maximum damage	Lower than typical weapon damage plus offensive boost	Maximum damage plus offensive boost
Modifications	No	No	Yes

The dual-form weapon is worse than the others at responding to sudden emergencies -such as an ambush by flying foes while you are holding a melee weapon- due to its two action shift. In theory, you could keep it halfway transformed between fights and swap to whatever you wanted for one action, but then you're paying an unnecessary action tax at the start of every fight.

This feat is awful at the level it becomes available. Initial weapon modifications aren't worth the extra action and feat cost. Potency runes are cheap. Save your feat for Gadget Specialist or an upgraded companion.

It must also compare to a combination weapon. Your weapon statistics drop in exchange for the faster swap. Most of the best combination weapons for strength builds -like the hammer gun and gun sword- are inaccessible as weapon innovations because they're first level. This wasn't a problem before the remaster, but I guess they had to make this feat worth something somehow. Dexterity builds have it much better here because finesse combination weapons -like the mace multipistol and piercing wind- are usually level zero. These builds are also more likely to want to swap in the first place because they're more accurate at range.

So if you have a mid-level strength build and want to an option to shoot with bad accuracy, feel free to retrain for Dual-Form Weapon around level ten. If you need to contribute at range, choose Megavolt in two levels so that you can shoot lightning when you have to instead of choosing this feat. Other options include carrying a few bolas in an effort to trip flying foes without onerous dexterity investment, taking support feats like Helpful Tinkering or Shared Overdrive in the future so you can buff ranged allies, or adding a potency crystal to a ranged weapon that benefits from high strength through the propulsive or kickback traits.

I don't think I'll ever understand this feat's insistence on being a two-action swap. There are so many better options than it because of that restriction, and it prevents the feat from fulfilling its own trick-weapon fantasy.

Duo Dragon Leap ★★

Both you and your construct leap and make an unarmed strike at the end of your leap. It takes two actions. I don't know what crazy drone construct innovator is out there trying to punch their foes to death. You built a killer robot to do that for you. It has an unstable function that slightly increases the range of the leap. I can't endorse this feat because it relies on a below-average build to work, but it functions as intended and lacks any significant downsides. It gets better with access to better unarmed attacks from ancestries or archetypes, but I'd still rather pick up a bow and let the construct do its job alone. A shame it doesn't work if you're mounted on the construct; it could have been interesting as a means of dismounting.

Gadget Specialist ★★★★

Gadget specialist provides versatility and competes in function with several other inventor feats. Running out of consumables can be annoying, but there are plenty of tricks you only need once or twice a day. You will need a free hand to use some (but not all) of these gadgets. It works especially well for bastard sword users, or those who have modified their weapon to compensate. Complex simplicity gauntlets, dynamic weighting weapons, and integrated gauntlet modifications all provide better access to free hands.

Nothing stops you from handing out gadgets to your allies at the start of the day. Construct and mortar innovators are the most likely to do so because their innovations have limited compatibility with gadgets, but they're also the least likely to choose this feat because they need to take Advanced Construct Companion at this level. A mortar innovator interested in handing their allies gadgets may take it as an alternative to Shared Overdrive as their tenth level feat, which is one of the mortar's only flexible feats.

While this feat gives you three formulas right off the bat, you can get all of them with ease. Buy as many formulas as you want. They're extremely cheap.

- **Blast Boots ★★★★** These can replace the Explosive Leap feat entirely. If you want to save yourself a class feat, prepare one of these in the morning and retrain Explosive Leap.
- **Clockwork Goggles ★★★** These are better than the inventor feat Visual Fidelity because you can get rid of them when you won't need them. By the time you are eighth level, these provide the exact same effect as Visual Fidelity, cost a lower-level feat, and can be handed out to your party in advance to prepare your whole team for a fight against an invisible foe.
- **Cryomister ★★** Unlike a worn gadget, you will have to retrieve and then activate a cryomister. It deals some crummy but unavoidable damage and causes a small area of difficult terrain.
- **Impact Foam Chassis ★★★** You gain heavy resistance to fall damage and you don't need to spend any kind of action on it, but the higher-level versions will overreact to comically small falls and imprison you in (easily escaped) foam over even trivially insignificant damage. I'd be most inclined to take it on an inventor without a free hand for grabbing edges, but it is useful to any character whose GM is fond of heights.
- **Ablative Armor Plating ★★ / ★★★★** The ten-minute application time and short duration of the lower-level versions render them difficult to use, but you can generally get away with applying them during the time your party casters spend refocusing mid-dungeon. The greater versions and up last for an hour, so you can set them up ahead

of entering the dungeon and gain a significant number of temporary hit points: enough to soak an entire hit from an even-leveled creature.

- **Ablative Shield Plating** ★★ / ★★★★ This is the same as ablative armor plating, except that it allows a shield to take an extra hit rather than a person. That is very much appreciated, as the inventor receives no other boosts to shield durability.
- **Explosive Mine** ★★★ The damage is modest but fair. As long as someone in your party has stealth, they're easy to hide. It is nice to have a trap that isn't shackled to the Snare Crafting skill feat.
- **Flare Beacon** ★★ Flare beacons have good potential, but it is difficult to keep enemies in the area and the saving throw does nothing when the enemy succeeds. These might be useful for crude long-distance communication when nobody in your party has a magical means of doing so, but you can usually find a better option.
- **Instant Spy** ★★★ Getting benefit from this object is difficult but rewarding. Your stealthiest party member has to plant it somewhere useful, leave and allow it to record one hour of audio, then return and recover the device. All told, there are scenarios when this is riskier than just having the stealthy party member eavesdrop personally. Still, if you do somehow know that a secret meeting of powerful vampires is going to take place at a specific location and time, your party rogue might not want to risk being in the room personally when it goes down. While situational, if you add these to your formula book you can prepare them when you need them, and ignore them when you don't. This is a perfect use for a feat like this.
- **Smoke Fan** ★★ You can create multicolored smoke. If you have a means of seeing through smoke this is a very useful tool. If not, it is liable to confound you as much as it will your enemies. Goz masks provide an affordable means of seeing through smoke, but it costs an action to activate. Ancestral smoke negation or reduction is much better. At time of writing, ancestries with a means of seeing through or reducing the penalties of smoke include:
    - Halfling: Keen Sight ancestry feature
    - Elf: Whisper Elf heritage
    - Dwarf: Smoke Sight uncommon 9th level feat
    - Hobgoblin: Smokeworker heritage
    - Aasimar: Emberkin lineage 1st level feat
    - Ifrit: Firesight 5th level feat

  There are also some heritages that provide additional defensive benefits in smoke.
    - Dwarf: Smoke Sight uncommon 9th level feat
    - Sylph: Smokesoul lineage 1st level feat
    - Undine: Mistsoul lineage 1st level feat
- **Spring-Loaded Net Launcher** ★★ The escape DC is trivially easy, but using the escape action still wastes an action. If you have multiple ranged allies and would like to keep a powerful monster at bay, you could do much worse than this. A weapon innovator with a ranged trip modification has better options, but otherwise this gadget has its uses.

- **Wind-Up Cart ★★★** It takes some creativity, but you can always find a use for this simple gadget. Use it to trigger traps more ethically than summoned creatures, deliver explosive mines or glyphs of warding, or even deliver written ultimatums to a powerful monster. It even gets a check to force open obstacles; you give it enough time at a typical door, and eventually it will succeed.
- **Cauterizing Torch ★★** The action economy of drawing and using the cauterizing torch is quite difficult when used on a target other than yourself, typically requiring your whole turn to move, draw, and activate. However, if you know you are going to be fighting a monster with a bleed ability, you can prepare more than one and hand them out to your at-risk party members. If you generally keep a free hand for the Tamper feat or athletics checks, filling it with a cauterizing torch before an appropriate fight is a fine idea. Like the clockwork goggles, you can prepare these when you need them. Unlike the clockwork goggles, they have only a single narrow function with no broader benefit.
- **Etheric Essence Disruptor ★★** Use the power of science to counteract a divine or occult spell. A great thing to prepare when you know that you will be fighting an opponent from a faction that uses such abilities, such as an aberration, cleric, or undead. It is held back by a two-action activation and below average counteracting ability.
- **Material Essence Disruptor ★★** Use the power of science to counteract an arcane or primal spell. A great thing to prepare when you know that you will be fighting an opponent from a faction that uses such abilities, such as an elemental, fey, or wizard. It is held back by a two-action activation and below average counteracting ability.
- **Chameleon Suit ★★★** An inventor intending to focus on stealth is probably wearing the subterfuge suit, and at 7th level will take Camouflage Pigmentation to get this effect permanently. This version is still good, but the low duration of the basic version seriously hampers its effectiveness. I might wait until 8th or 12th level before going out of my way to get these, but formulas are cheap.
- **Magnetic Suit ★★★** The magnetic suit finally got errata. It also got buffs; its bonuses now apply only to allies and its emanations are larger. Most important of all, it finally got an actual duration: 10 minutes, which is pretty generous. You'll generally want to wear it yourself and set it to repel mode for better defenses. If your party has a particularly powerful tank, you might consider offering them the attract mode to make them a better bullet sponge for the team.
- **Gadget Skates ★★★★** The gadget skates are a fifth level item. As such, they are the first gadget that is too high level to select as soon as you get this feat. I would be intent on getting the formula as soon as it became available, because the effect of gadget skates is not only powerful but very unique. A speed boost might not seem like much, but gadget skates don't provide a typed bonus to your speed, they double it. Because the bonus is untyped, it not only stacks with any other boosts you might have to your speed, it doubles them too. While it would be complete overkill, an armor innovator focused on speed could become absurdly fast with these. The tradeoff of the skates is limited turning ability; you can only turn once per move and must make a DC 20 acrobatics check to do so. That isn't a problem: even if your destination isn't on a straight line on the grid, as long as there are no obstacles between you and your destination you can still charge to it

so long as it is a straight line in-universe. If the terrain really is so choppy that you can't beeline it to your destination, you can simply choose to save them for an encounter where it isn't. An absolute godsend for melee characters, and a powerful kiting tool for ranged ones. Even if you don't want to use these personally, odds are high there is a character in your party that would kill for the chance to do so.

- **Gecko Pads ★★★** You get a climb speed so long as your hands are free. It isn't flight, but it is the next best thing. Pull them out whenever you need to scale a big cliff. Weapons with the climbing trait, which can be added to certain weapons via the weapon innovation, consider their hands free for the purpose of climbing and should be compatible with this gadget. The two together make it easier to get into safe sniping positions.
- **Clockwork Spider Bomb ★★** The clockwork spider bomb doesn't do much damage and is difficult to set up.

Megaton Strike ★★ / ★★★

The bigger your weapon's damage die, the better this feat gets. Consider this feat if you are using a ranged weapon with at least a d8 damage dice or a melee weapon with a d12 damage dice. You still won't deal as much damage with this feat as you would by activating overdrive or making a second attack, unless you risk using its unstable function, so this feat is best used to overwhelm damage resistance. It works well if you aren't planning on using a versatile weapon (which could bypass resistance) and want to make your weapon's damage type match your offensive boost (which could help overwhelm resistance). It should also be used if you are buffed and your enemy is heavily de-buffed such that you are likely to crit, or if you have a full three-action turn to burn and already used overdrive on a prior turn. Firearms perform exceptionally well in the first case thanks to their fatal trait, which can improve the extra damage granted by this feat.

Constructs emphasize flat damage over die size, so construct innovators typically shun this feat. Armor innovators interested in shield use will want to avoid it for the same reasons.

6th Level Feats:

Clockwork Celerity ★★★

Anything that improves your action economy is worth considering. Being able to perform these actions as free actions at the start of your turn will be a constant temptation, which is exactly what I'd want out of an unstable feat. Just be sure you don't sacrifice a good explosion in a battle against a horde.

The armor innovator can get a free stride. This offers a great way for an innovator to get where they need to go quickly. It's most useful for shield builds, dual-weapon builds, or other action intensive builds.

The construct innovator gets to command their construct; this affords them the ability to command a construct with no loss to their own turn. I consider it the best use-case for this feat because a construct innovator wants to command every turn.

A weapon innovator can strike or reload. Striking is great. The addition of reload is pointless for most builds because the only reason you want to reload is to strike. Its inclusion is narrowly justified for builds that use both a reload weapon and a special strike, such as Megaton Strike. It enables you to reload before using Megaton Strike while retaining a third action. It's a nice addition, but it isn't enough to make reload weapons optimal as a weapon innovator.

Construct Shell ★★★

Construct Shell gives you a perpetual bonus to your armor class and reflex saving throws, while also making you immune to damage from the explode action while riding your construct. However, there are a few reasons why this feat is worse than it looks. First of all, at this level you could choose Megavolt. Choosing Megavolt gives you an unstable action that doesn't kill you, while still affording you the choice to use explode if you absolutely must. Second, the bonus to armor class does not stack with the bonus from raising a shield, which most pilot builds have little issue doing because they don't need to spend actions attacking or moving. It also affords them the shield block reaction, unlike Construct Shell. The only benefit remaining is the perpetual bonus to reflex saving throws, which is admittedly very good; though keep in mind it only offsets the -2 reflex penalty for being mounted in the first place. There are still many builds that will prefer this to Megavolt, especially those heavy on action use such as pilots with the marshal archetype and Lock-On.

Megavolt ★★★

Megavolt deals the most direct damage of any unstable action until Celestial Cacophony finally overtakes it at level seventeen. There are some caveats to that. Your basic explode action is more likely to hit multiple foes owing to its shape and can make up the damage difference in doing so. Celestial Cacophony deals persistent damage that can overtake Megavolt at earlier levels in practice.

Still, Megavolt has a clear role: blasting. As a sixth level feat, no other inventor feat compares to its level-to-damage ratio. As a line, it also gives the inventor a useful new shape for their area damage. An inventor with Megavolt is much less likely to weigh the cost of friendly fire than one reliant entirely on explode. Megavolt scales faster than explode does because it uses d8s rather than d6s. Megavolt deals about 30% more damage than explode when you get it. By level twenty it deals almost 40% more. See "Unstable Action Damage Comparison" at the end of this document for details. Generally speaking, use whichever one hits more opponents. In the event of a tie or if explode would hit an ally, use Megavolt.

Every type of inventor benefits from Megavolt in some fashion. Melee builds get a powerful ranged attack that they can activate whenever they want; no need to waste actions or gold on swapping to and supporting backup weaponry. Ranged builds get a powerful unstable action that works much better than explode at their preferred engagement distance. Construct builds give their construct a powerful ranged attack whenever it needs one, much like melee builds. Megavolt is basically mandatory for the mortar because it's the only method by which they can deal more than cantrip-level damage.

Megavolt also has a modest function when not unstable. It's useful for the construct and mortar as a means of getting a ranged attack or dealing damage around the one-launch-limit

respectively, though its short stable range undercuts the latter function. Other innovations might use it if your weapon has low damage and you can hit multiple targets with it.

Silk Bracelet (U) ★★★

A two-action melee strike that imposes a movement speed penalty and deals persistent poison damage. It isn't unstable so you can spam it with reckless aplomb. It's a fine alternative to Megaton Strike for those with low-damage weaponry because it doesn't care about your weapon's die size like Megaton Strike does. It works best for more durable builds such as power suit armor innovators with shields because it makes the enemy more likely to attack you if they can't reach your allies.

Visual Fidelity ★★

Darkvision is always helpful. It must be pointed out that the darkvision-granting magic item, goggles of night, only cost 150 gp. While visual fidelity has other bonuses, they are much more conditional. You can't easily retrain for it when you expect to fight an invisible monster, making it very circumstantial. I recommend anyone interested in this feat take Gadget Specialist instead, as it can give you the consumable item clockwork goggles that do much the same thing. When you don't need it, prepare a different consumable.

Xidao Sea Mine Drop (U) ★

You can create two mines once per day that only detonate underwater. Where are the mines placed? Can you deploy one mine at a time or do you have to deploy both? What causes them to detonate? The answers to all of these questions are unclear. My best guess is they're placed in spaces adjacent to you when you spend two actions and detonate when a creature enters a space adjacent to them. There's an obvious problem with that.

The unstable function lets you place three extra mines and specifies that you can put them up to 30 feet away, unlike normal which… doesn't specify. This has its own ambiguities; I'm guessing the intent is that you are creating five total mines, but an alternate reading suggests you can use the unstable function to create three mines as a second activation independent of the two-mine activation.

This feat needs errata clarifying these issues. If your campaign is aquatic and your GM resolves these ambiguities, use your best judgement in keeping with their decisions. This feat is useless in most land-bound campaigns anyways.

8th Level Feats:

Gigaton Strike ★★

When you use the unstable function of Megaton Strike the enemy must make a fortitude save or be pushed away from you. Gigaton strike is cool in theory but limited in practice. At its peak, it can force the enemy to waste an action moving back to their target or shove them into hazards. However, you can only benefit from this feat once per encounter because of its unstable restriction and you don't get to choose whether or not it applies. Even if you might prefer an

enemy stay within arm's reach of an ally, using the unstable function of Megaton Strike to deal extra damage always bears a chance of moving the enemy. Furthermore, it is unlikely to work against boss encounters. You have to land a hit and the enemy must make a fortitude saving throw before anything happens. That's two checks before you gain the full effect, though it almost earned a green rating simply because it is still able to push enemies five feet even if they succeed on their fortitude saving throw. You might favor this feat if you or your party provide additional incentives to force enemy movement, such as a reactive strike, snares, or a spellcaster able to create hazardous areas. Improve the rating of this feat one step if your party has such team synergies.

If you plan to use this feat, I recommend delaying your turn such that you are right before the enemy you plan to target with it. That way, the enemy is forced to spend an action moving back to your allies to attack them. If you move the enemy away from your party's barbarian right before the barbarian's turn, that meathead is going to spend their action moving to the enemy instead.

Guardian Lion Roar ★★

This feat is similar to Megavolt, but it trades most of the damage for the ability to inflict the off-guard condition. Most innovations will prefer its lower-level rival. An unstable Megavolt deals over twice as much damage at all levels.

If you want to use it, supplement the off-guard condition with other supportive inventor feats such as Overdrive Ally and Helpful Tinkering because it can help your allies land those empowered hits, especially if your allies favor ranged weapon combat and so aren't already getting the off-guard condition from flanking. Certain party compositions could skew things further in this feat's favor. Allies with sneak attack from the rogue class or an appropriate archetype will appreciate this feat most of all, and you can boost this feat's rating one step if your party contains such synergy.

The non-unstable (hereafter referred to as stable) function of this feat is also similar to that of Megavolt. While it starts worse, it scales twice as well and surpasses a stable Megavolt in just two levels. It even retains the ability to inflict off-guard. At max level it deals almost as much damage as explode without the associated risks inherent to unstable actions, though it can only do so within a thin line area. Unlike Megavolt, the stable function of this feat is its more practical method of use.

The reasonable powerful stable function and ability to target fortitude saves would make this feat a great fit for the mortar. It would enable the mortar to target something other than reflex saving throws and allow them to save their unstable feat usage for Siege Celerity, enabling them to actually move on occasion. Unfortunately, for no discernable reason this feat is exclusive to the armor, construct, and weapon innovation even though works almost exactly like Megavolt. There is no reason why this shouldn't be compatible with a mortar just like its lower-level contemporary. I'd still favor using Megavolt over Guardian Lion Roar due to it being the only real way a mortar can deal good damage, but Guardian Lion Roar would offer a decent alternative playstyle that is less vulnerable to disruption. Alas, it's not to be unless your GM makes an exception.

Incredible Construct Companion ★★★★

Continue to improve your construct innovation. If you have a construct innovation, this feat is mandatory. If you instead have a Prototype Companion, this feat is more optional; odds are you're just using it as an extra set of legs to cart you around the battlefield or provide your allies with a flanking bonus. Incredible Construct Companion is still useful, but these improvements aren't necessary for that role. Drop its rating one step for Prototype Companions.

Manifold Modifications ★★★

There is always a modification worth taking unless you're playing the mortar. As a modification feat, you can quickly retrain this if you prefer. An inventor with an entangling form ranseur can use this to take hefty composition, enabling them to use every single athletics action in the game at reach with the benefit of their potency runes. That is a staggering level of flexibility, and it improves even more with later feats and modifications such as aerodynamic construction, extensible weapon, and Explosive Maneuver. Armor innovators will most likely use this to improve their movement speed through the speed boosters modification after picking up their suit-specific modification: doing so is particularly important to melee power suit innovators, who need to get into melee quickly to use their muscular exoskeleton athletics checks.

Overdrive Ally ★★★

The more attacks your ally makes each round, the bigger the return you get from using this ability. You want to use this ability more if:

- Your ally can make reaction strikes or induces others to make reaction strikes. The benefits only last until the end of your ally's next turn, but depending on the initiative order they can still get the benefit on a reaction.
- Your ally uses an agile weapon. Those equipped with agile weaponry can make more attacks more accurately. An ally using two weapons to fight is a prime target for this ability for similar reasons.
- Your ally is a flurry ranger or otherwise able to mitigate the multiple attack penalty.
- You use a ranged weapon. Not only are you more likely to have the high intelligence needed to get the most out of this feat, you will also enter overdrive more quickly and have the actions to spare. Melee characters might be more inclined to wait two levels for Helpful Tinkering, though nothing stops an inventor from taking both except their action economy.

While your party are always better targets, it also must be mentioned that nothing stops you from using this ability on your construct. That it is already benefiting from your overdrive does nothing to stop it from gaining this benefit.

The mortar innovation is likely to take this feat at tenth level. It serves as the prerequisite to the only feat available to them at level twenty. If that's not a concern due to your campaign's level limit, I recommend Gadget Specialist instead.

Ubiquitous Gadgets ★★★

You gain two extra gadgets. Even if you have already applied your favorite gadgets to yourself, you can loan them to allies. Don't underestimate the value of selflessness when building a character: other classes can use gadgets just as well as you can.

10th Level Feats:

Distracting Explosion ★★★

Oddly, this feat does not have anything to do with your explode action. In fact, it doesn't cause any kind of explosion whatsoever. Instead, you use your reaction to strike a creature that uses a concentrate action within your reach, typically meaning spells. If you make it unstable, it also disrupts the triggering action. Disrupting spells is always useful, and the inventor doesn't have any other reactions that might conflict with it.

This feat is blue for weapon innovators with entangling form polearms. An enemy mage grappled by a polearm-using inventor with this feat doesn't have any great options: they can't strike the caster, their odds of escaping are low, and casting a spell means making a flat check and taking a hit. Even teleporting away is difficult if the inventor uses this feat's unstable function.

Other inventors will still find this useful if the enemy mage can be provided with other incentives not to move, such as the trip action or an allied fighter with reactive strike. In the absence of any such incentives, this feat's value drops to yellow as spellcasters walk out of reach before casting.

Electrify Armor ★★★

Electrify Armor deals damage to anyone who touches you. It takes an action to activate and can be made unstable to greatly improve the damage and duration. The damage is completely unavoidable. Any enemy that hits you in melee and isn't using a reach weapon will take damage.

The damage isn't that good, but unavoidable is unavoidable. This feat shines brightest against high-threat boss enemies. Boss monsters are able to hit you more easily, would make their saves against other offensive unstable actions, and don't present multiple targets for area abilities. For example, an enemy that succeeds on their save against explode takes about ten damage at this level. A mere two instances of damage from Electrify Armor surpass that. Unlike most unstable features Electrify Armor doesn't need to compete with explode. The two don't operate in competition because they both favor mutually exclusive scenarios.

Dealing damage to bosses isn't the only function of this feat. Your character is visibly wreathed in painful lightning. This serves as a deterrent for intelligent enemies to attack you at all. Enemies that know they would take damage by hitting you are more likely to target your allies. The inventor's primary role is damage output and they only have eight hit points per level. Assuming any of your allies chose a class with better hit points or heavy armor, let them take the hits. This feat is best for damage-focused armor innovators who chose non-defensive modifications, don't use shields, and have durable allies like barbarians, champions, fighters, and monks.

Geobukseon Retaliation (U) ★★★

An unstable reaction that adds a truly impressive bonus to your armor class, gives you damage resistance to physical damage in case the attack hits you anyways, and deals damage to all creatures in a small emanation. It's an impressive and comprehensive set of bonuses. It's best for armor innovators that haven't invested in redundant features, such as shields and physical damage resistance modifications.

Helpful Tinkering ★★★

You gain the ability to share your offensive boost with an ally for one minute if you can make a high standard DC crafting check. The crafting check will not usually be a problem at this level, but if you do roll a natural one your ally will take a little bit of damage. This ability is very similar to Overdrive Ally: it takes an action, it adds damage to an ally's strikes, and it is best used on the same type of ally (with the exception of two-weapon users). Unlike Overdrive Ally, it requires a check, the ally must be in your reach when you activate it, it can only be used once every ten minutes, only applies to one weapon, doesn't work on unarmed attacks, you do not need to be in overdrive to activate it, and it lasts for an entire minute rather than a single round.

If comparing the base forms of these two feats, I would take Overdrive Ally on a ranged inventor and Helpful Tinkering on a melee character, though a monk or druid in the party would convince me otherwise. Both also have follow-up feats or synergy with later feats (both at 12th level) that will weight individual preferences. While you could take both, they are so similar in function that it would be difficult to justify doing so. I'd only consider it if you had an ally that was exceptionally capable of taking full advantage of both, such as a flurry ranger who uses a single weapon.

Lock On ★★★ / ★★★★

Spending one action to give your construct a massive boost to its accuracy is almost always a great trade. This feat goes a long way towards equalizing the pilot and drone approach to combat. If you chose the drone approach during the early levels but never lost your longing to pilot a mech, you might choose to reconfigure your drone into a pilotable mech at this level.

The pilot has the advantage of always being near its construct, thus making it more likely that they will be able to see the target they want to designate for this feat. However, the pilot isn't able to reposition independently of the construct. If the desired target is around a corner or otherwise out of sight, the pilot won't be able to Lock On to the target that round. To move into a position in which the target is visible, they must command their construct. Commanding your construct results in it taking all of its actions immediately, and they cannot be broken up by a Lock On. The drone build is able to use its own movement to move around a corner or out of visual impairments, use Lock On (or make their own strike if they choose), and then command the construct to move and strike.

Still, that is a niche scenario. Generally speaking, pilots will be able to see their intended targets at the start of their turn. They are also more likely to get the full benefit of this feat by spending two actions to command their construct, at which point Lock On replaces the function that demoralization has served for the last ten levels. Your charisma investment becomes slightly vestigial, but seeing as you've already given up on your own combat actions you might as well enjoy the social benefits of high mental ability scores. You can still use it to support your team

whenever your construct isn't well suited for the task at hand, such as when facing a ghost or other physically resistant creature.

While Lock On retains its good rating for the drone build, failing to take it as a pilot is a devastating mistake. This feat provides yet more incentive for inventors to avoid wasting time on the reload action.

12th Level Feats:

Boost Modulation ★★

Boost Modulation gives you the ability to change the damage type of your offensive boost as an action. Most inventors should choose cold and fire. While both cold and fire are frequently resisted, they collectively comprise the overwhelming majority of weaknesses. Because boost modulation allows you to switch your damage type on the fly, resistances cease to matter and weaknesses matter much more. This feat has synergy with Helpful Tinkering for the same reason. If you chose Helpful Tinkering, you likely have an ally able to make multiple attacks per round. Such allies will be able to trigger that weakness with brutal frequency.

Here is a quick and dirty tier list of the damage types, sorted by the number of weaknesses the damage type triggers at time of writing. Choose the highest rated of the following which you do not already have access to (such as through the weapon innovation's unique overdrive):

1. Fire
2. Cold
3. Slashing
4. Electricity
5. Bludgeoning
6. Piercing
7. Acid

Celestial Cacophony (U) ★★★

Celestial Cacophony offers the inventor a conical unstable action. Enemies in the cone take fire and sonic damage with a fortitude save. The area becomes difficult terrain that inflicts persistent damage if they fail a reflex save as they move through it.

The damage is fantastic. Celestial Cacophony deals more damage than explode *before* considering the possibility of additional persistent damage. The only unstable feature capable of doing more damage than Celestial Cacophony at the level you get it is Megavolt. If enemies move through the area and take at least two total ticks of persistent damage it will surpass even that, albeit on a delay and possibly scattered across enemies. Celestial Cacophony even scales faster than Megavolt. While it never surpasses Megavolt for pure up-front damage output, it gains enough to only need one tick of persistent damage to surpass Megavolt's average damage starting at eighteenth level.

Celestial Cacophony enjoys a superior conical shape that makes it far more likely to include multiple opponents in its area and adds difficult terrain to its area for a round. This collection of features coupled with its great damage earn it a solid rating even at this high level.

The feat's primary competition is the upgrade to Megavolt available at this level: Gigavolt. Gigavolt can make Megavolt hit every enemy in a room with little risk of friendly fire. This feat isn't necessarily better than a Gigavolt, but it only costs one feat and lets you choose something else at sixth level.

Contingency Gadgets ★★★

Contingency gadgets can help significantly when you need to get use out of the more circumstantial but hard-to-predict gadgets in your formula book. The clockwork goggles, cauterizing torch, instant spy, and impact foam could all become unexpectedly useful over the course of an adventuring day.

Deep Freeze ★★

This feat has the odd distinction of dealing flat damage equal to your level, though it still has some variability as a result of offering a basic save. I appreciate its reliability, but this does have the consequence of lower-than-average damage and scaling. It also has the typical cold damage rider effect of reducing the target's speed. If you make it unstable, it instead affects every creature in a 60-foot cone and deals damage equal to double your level, which is still less on average than your default explode or Megavolt. You might still choose to take it if you did not take Megavolt, especially if your GM prefers weak hordes likely to trigger the slow effect of critical failure. It's pretty soundly outclassed by Celestial Cacophony for both damage and area denial, with its only real advantage being the bigger area.

Gigavolt ★★★

This feat lets you bounce Megavolt off solid objects. In an interior dungeon environment, this often means hitting every enemy on the opposing side without worrying about hitting allies. Don't forget that you can aim your Gigavolts upwards; if your ally is fighting an enemy in a thin hallway, bounce it off the ceiling to send the lightning bolt over your ally's head and crashing down on the enemy.

Shared Overdrive ★★★

This feat makes Overdrive Ally work for as long as Helpful Tinkering does the first time you use it during each overdrive. At this point, Overdrive Ally is superior to Helpful Tinkering unless weaknesses get involved. It is easier to apply because you can do so at range, adds about the same amount of damage on average, and isn't restricted to a single weapon like Helpful Tinkering is. The back and forth between these feats is a tug-of-war.

14th Level Feats:

Explosive Maneuver ★★★★

Make athletics checks that almost completely ignore the multiple attack penalty. The benefit speaks for itself.

Paragon Companion ★★★★
The final standard companion progression feat. Construct innovators must take this feat despite all of the other awesome options at level fourteen.

Soaring Armor ★★★★
Soaring Armor gives you permanent flight at level fourteen, before most other classes can unlock the same feature. It is as simple as it is effective. Melee inventors can chase targets into the sky, while ranged inventors can pelt hapless foes with aerial bombardments. If your GM suddenly swerves the campaign towards underwater encounters in which you cannot fly, reconfigure it to diving armor until you are back on dry land.

Unstable Redundancies ★★★★
While Unstable Redundancies is the most generic pick of the fourteenth level feats, it stands equally tall among the others. This feat guarantees you will be able to use at least two unstable actions per fight. It is also the only realistic option for weapon innovators who rely on dexterity and the only option for mortar innovators. I encourage you to choose it at sixteenth level if you want your innovation's feature at this level.

16th Level Feats:

Just the Thing! ★★★
Using the power of technobabble, replace any skill check with a crafting check once per hour. Seeing as your crafting check is guaranteed to be maximized, that's a heck of a good feat. It borders on a blue rating.

Persistent Boost ★★★ / ★★★★
Your offensive boost now deals persistent damage on every hit. The persistent damage is actually higher than your offensive boost damage. It has minor synergy with agile or sweep weaponry as those traits allow you more accurately apply persistent damage to multiple foes.

Improve this feat's rating one step if you took Boost Modulation. You can use Persistent Boost with Boost Modulation to apply multiple instances of persistent damage at once. Just hit a foe, use an action to swap your damage type, then hit the foe again. The second application of persistent damage now deals a different damage type and is therefore tracked separately. It also pairs well with Devastating Weaponry in two levels because it will inflict the persistent damage on multiple foes at once.

This feat is also blue for the mortar innovation because it uses a basic saving throw to deal damage. Persistent Boost applies its persistent damage to any creature that takes damage from your offensive boost, and the mortar is able to do so far more reliably because enemies must critically succeed to avoid all damage. Its status as an area effect, albeit a small one, means that it can also occasionally spread persistent damage to multiple foes at once. It won't be able to use the Boost Modulation trick easily due to its restrictive action economy, but the benefits far

outweigh the drawbacks in this case. Sadly, this is only feasible in a free archetype game because the mortar will otherwise always prioritize getting access to Master Siege Engineer.

You Failed to Account for… This! ★★★

Use your reaction to replace your armor class with your crafting DC. At the level you get this feat, your crafting DC should be about 41. Your armor class will probably be around 38. Your armor class should only catch up at level nineteen when you improve your armor proficiency to master. An early apex item or armor potency rune could alter the exact timing at which the two even out.

The existence of shields also complicates matters. If you are using a shield, you can spend an action improving your armor class by two. Replacing your armor class with your crafting DC both denies you that bonus and prevents you from using shield block. If a shield is an integral part of your strategy drop this feat's rating to yellow.

However, this feat does replace your armor class entirely, so any penalties that apply to your armor class cease to apply to your defense when you use this reaction. You can nullify the effects of the clumsy or off-guard conditions in this manner. When those conditions apply, this feat dramatically improves your defenses.

Ultimately, the fact that you can use this every single round is what secures it a high rating. Once you hit the tail end of the game and your armor class improves you might decide to retrain it, but even then this feat is a much-needed boost to durability on a fragile class. Granted, the rogue has enjoyed a similar effect since second level via their Nimble Dodge feat, so you might be better off multiclassing on a dexterity build.

18th Level Feats:

Devastating Weaponry ★★

Devastating Weaponry looks amazing on paper, and it can be very dramatic and impressive when you are able to pull it off. However, it takes three actions to use. Because it consumes your entire turn, you cannot reposition before activating it. It also fills the same AoE role as explode. The area is bigger, it is not unstable, and it does not have friendly fire, but with your explosion dealing 18d6 damage at this level only an extremely powerful and expensive weapon will compete for damage. Explode also only demands two actions, enabling you to position yourself for maximum effect or make an attack before using it.

The exact value of devastating weaponry is determined by the choices you have made thus far. You will be more inclined to use Devastating Weaponry if the following apply to you:

- You chose a weapon with d12 damage.
- You have traits or chose modifications that deal damage.
- You placed a large number of damage runes onto your weapon.
- You took Persistent Boost at level sixteen.
- You have already activated overdrive.
- You are likely to trigger the weaknesses of multiple foes.

If you are using a weapon with the reload trait, you sadly can't use it for devastating weaponry. Yet more evidence that firearms just don't compare with archery.

Engine of Destruction ★★★
Engine of Destruction has much better ease of use than Devastating Weaponry. While it does still take your whole turn to use and deals less damage, it allows your construct to move first. The construct is better able to position itself to take advantage of the AoE. While it will lack property rune bonuses, the improved ease of use makes this feat much easier to recommend. Like explode, the area of effect is technically expanded by having a large size construct.

Negate Damage ★★★
Reduce incoming damage by 15 using your reaction. If you make it unstable, it is instead reduced by a staggering 50. That is excellent, but there are some caveats. For starters, the unstable trait: if you are able to hit two enemies with a Megavolt, it will deal far more damage on average than this feature prevents. Negate Damage shines the most in combat against high-threat targets; while a boss monster is very likely to make its save against Megavolt, there isn't anything it can do to prevent you from reducing the damage. It is also likely to deal enough damage to warrant the unstable negation in the first place.

20th Level Feats:

Full Automation ★★★
Several classes get a feat that grants a permanent quickened condition as a capstone feat, and the inventor is no exception. Full Automation grants different actions depending on which innovation the inventor chose. As with Clockwork Celerity at sixth level, all of these actions are something you'll want to do almost every turn. Full Automation and Clockwork Celerity are not compatible, so if you take Full Automation be sure you retrain its lower-level counterpart.

Ubiquitous Overdrive ★★★
If your party members are predominantly martial, they are likely to appreciate the added damage. You will appreciate that Overdrive Ally is now free whenever you overdrive. Not only that, it is now party-wide. If you have made it this far up the feat chain, you are most likely in a martial party and attempting to hand out overdrive as much as possible. If so, this feat is roughly comparable to its fellow capstone in terms of the actions you save.

This is the only capstone feat available to the mortar innovation, so I hope you took Shared Overdrive as one of your feats.

General Feats:

General feats are exactly what you would expect. Their ratings do not deviate much from class to class.

- **Adopted Ancestry ★★** If you desperately desire another ancestry's feats, this is how you have to get it. I only recommend this feat for the most precise builds that need two feats from different ancestries to pull off. If your backstory is just "raised by kobolds" but you don't actually need their feats for anything, you'd be better off without it.

- **Ancestral Paragon** ★★★ The exact worth of this feat varies from ancestry to ancestry. Those with bigger feat pools will be more likely to find something great, so it is of greatest use to inventors with common ancestries.
- **Armor Proficiency** ★ / ★★★ / ★★★★ Get heavy armor. It's an easy bonus to your armor class that comes at the expense of your speed. Armor innovators can't use it because they must use their innovation armor sets. It's red for armor innovators. It's green for melee weapon innovators, as the bonus defense comes at the expense of speed. It's still a great choice, as it enables you to neglect dexterity entirely while maintaining a good reflex save thanks to the bulwark trait of plate armor. Just be prepared to invest in feats like Fleet, Explosive Leap, and Gadget Specialist to improve your speed. Construct pilots can consider this blue, as riding their construct makes any penalty to your own speeds irrelevant. It becomes a bad deal for all builds at level 19, because inventor proficiency in medium armor exceeds that of the heavy armor attained through this feat. However, few games ever reach that level.
- **Canny Acumen** ★★★★ Inventors should almost always take this feat, as it can be used to compensate for their terrible perception until level thirteen. The inventor gets more use out of this feat than any other class.
- **Diehard** ★★★ This feat is very circumstantial, applying only when you have been left unconscious for several rounds or angered a foe to the point where they start stabbing your unconscious body. It does apply in the situation with the greatest possible consequences, so I'm inclined to be lenient. I might be more inclined to retrain for it once I had met the requirements for its follow-up feat, Numb to Death.
- **Expeditious Search** ★ You don't really have the perception necessary to capitalize on this feat.
- **Fast Recovery** ★★ A mediocre feat that helps you shake off conditions and regain more health when you rest. If nobody in your party played a healer its value skyrockets.
- **Feather Step** ★★ You can step through difficult terrain if you have the dexterity for it. There are worse uses for your action than stepping into a flank, and this can help you do so more reliably.
- **Fleet** ★★★★ This feat is always a good choice. Positioning is very important to an inventor to ensure they can make the most of their unstable actions, such as explode or megavolt.
- **Improvised Repair** ★ Your own ability to craft and repair will be sufficient to the point where you will not need this feat even if you use a shield.
- **Incredible Initiative** ★★★★ You gain a bonus to all initiative checks. If your team uses the scout exploration activity, this will be slightly redundant as both provide a circumstance bonus. It is a great pick for anyone else, especially in tandem with Canny Acumen.
- **Numb to Death** ★★★ Once per day, you don't get wounded and get extra healing when brought back up from unconsciousness. Between this and its prerequisite diehard, you'll be pretty tough to kill. You must have died once before you can take this feat.
- **Pet** ★ You get a bad familiar without any of its useful abilities. Pick it if you like the flavor, but it is unlikely to accomplish anything.

- **Prescient Consumable** ★★★ This is a good feat to have just in case. You won't always need it, but you can give your allies the items they need: spare lockpicks, spell scrolls, and so on. A comprehensive knowledge of the items is needed to take full advantage of this feat.
- **Ride** ★ You do not need to make a check to ride your construct and can put a trained skill in nature if riding a horse is important to you for some reason.
- **Robust Health** ★★★★ You get more hit points back when somebody else treats your wounds or uses Battle Medicine on you. You can also benefit from Battle Medicine more than once per day.
- **Shield Block** ★ Inventors get this for free.
- **Supertaster** ★ You don't have the perception to use this feat.
- **Toughness** ★★★★ Your eight hit points per level aren't impressing anyone. Take this to become more durable.
- **True Perception** ★ You don't qualify for this feat due to your low perception.
- **Untrained Improvisation** ★ You receive plenty of trained skills. You don't need this.

Skills:

The inventor earns plenty of trained skills through their high intelligence, but does not receive any extra skill boosts or skill feats.

Varying Skill Feats:

A large number of varying skill feats are based around knowledge skills, typically those of the four magic traditions. While it can be worthwhile to raise all four, it is also practical to focus on arcana over the others. Arcana is an intelligence-based skill, which plays nice with your other class mechanics. Arcane is also the most frequently encountered tradition, and so most magic identification and magic item feats get the most value out of high arcana proficiency. I'd choose occultism or religion next; occultism due to its intelligence scaling and religion due to its frequency. However, the details of your individual campaign will vary wildly, and you should make your own calls in accordance with your knowledge and preferences.

- **Armor Assist** ★ A useless feat. You can shave thirty seconds off of putting on your light armor. That's still five rounds of combat. It will only matter if your GM orchestrates a scenario with that exact timing. The timing only gets more implausible with medium and heavy armor. If you have two and a half minutes, you usually have five.
- **Assurance** ★★★★ RPGbot has a great guide on Assurance, which can be found here. I recommend using this feat for athletics, crafting, intimidation, or medicine. Using it on athletics allows you to bypass the multiple attack penalty, though it comes at the cost of your strength modifier. Intimidation can allow you to target a monster's will DC and mitigate the need for charisma. Assurance allows you to guarantee success on crafting and medicine checks because both have fixed DCs. Finally, it can be applied to one of the four magic tradition skills (arcana, nature, occultism, religion) to use the Trick Magic Item feat with great reliability.

- **Assured Identification** ★★★ A great versatile knowledge skill which prevents you from critically failing checks to identify magic. It even partially protects you from misidentifying a cursed item, which is a rare benefit. Be suspicious of anything you can't identify if you take this feat.
- **Automatic Knowledge** ★★★ You can scan the battlefield and make assured recall knowledge checks as a free action once per round. An inventor doesn't get many abilities like this. I would consider this most useful if you are boosting a wisdom-based knowledge skill, in which case losing your ability modifier does not have the same sting. Religion is a prime candidate due to its applicability to common enemy types.
- **Consult the Spirits** ★★★ Using this feat on occultism allows you to make the most of your high intelligence. The exact details regarding what occult spirits tell you are a bit vague, but I consider that a good thing. "Strange auras" could mean anything, which gives the GM great latitude in what the spirits can tell you. If your GM is particularly unimaginative this might not have the same value.
- **Discreet Inquiry** ★ You are not good at any of the skills involved in this process.
- **Quick Identification** ★★ Most of these "speed enhancer" skill feats are about as worthwhile as they sound. At least this one eventually reduces it to an activity you could theoretically perform in combat.
- **Quick Recognition** ★★★ Turn the Recognize Spell reaction into a free action. I've seen players waste hero points on acid splash cantrips. This feat saves you the trouble.
- **Recognize Spell** ★★★ You can use a reaction to attempt to recognize a spell being cast. Typically, you can tell what spell is being cast when something goes boom. However, you don't have many inherent uses for your reaction, and knowing that the dragon that just got summoned onto the battlefield is actually an illusion can be very helpful. You can also use this spell to tell whether your foe turned invisible or teleported. There are many scenarios in which knowing exactly what the enemy cast helps you dramatically. Plus, if you ever critically succeed, you get a small bonus to your save or armor class. Like Quick Identification, it works with all of your knowledge skills.
- **Skill Training** ★ You don't need every skill. The only reason to take this feat is if you want to brag about having every skill. Humans have a better version of this feat available as an ancestry feat, as do most other ancestries via their lore skills.
- **Trick Magic Item** ★★★ You can use this feat to gain access to spellcasting from magical items. This usually means using wands and scrolls on buffs and utility, because your offensive spellcasting is not powerful enough to rely on. There are plenty of great spells to gain in this manner: alarm, translocate, heroism, invisibility, longstrider, and many others. All of those spells are on the arcane or occult list, so be sure to choose one of those two. Both of the associated skills for those traditions (arcana and occultism) also scale with your intelligence, further incentivizing you to choose them. You can also use spellhearts to gain offensive spellcasting because they can set their own save DC. You don't need to draw spellhearts, so you can use them more quickly mid-battle. Flaming star spellhearts are particularly noteworthy because they both grant fire resistance and allow you to cast fireball.

- **Tumbling Theft ★** You can attempt to steal when you critically succeed at a tumble through check. You have little reason to tumble through.

Acrobatics ★★★

This skill is nowhere near as useful as athletics, but it is still handy to be trained in. It also unlocks useful feats and serves as a prerequisite for some talismans, such as stormfeathers.

- **Cat Fall ★★★** Reduce your fall damage. That's always handy.
- **Quick Squeeze ★** Squeezing isn't relevant. Most of the time, tight spaces are just difficult terrain that doesn't require acrobatics. Getting a bonus for the rare times it is an actual squeeze is close to pointless.
- **Steady Balance ★★★** The effects of this feat are pretty good. You can always move your full speed while balancing, aren't off-guard when doing so, and you can use acrobatics instead of a reflex save to grab an edge. Your reflex saving throw is your worst one, and it is not hard to get your acrobatics proficiency to outpace it.
- **Nimble Crawl ★** This feat isn't worthwhile until you are legendary, at which point it makes the prone condition cease to influence your defenses entirely and becomes yellow. When that happens, you might occasionally choose to stay prone if your enemies are dedicated ranged attackers. Unfortunately, it still limits your attack rolls even if you are using a crossbow, and it never allows you to avoid reactive strikes caused by standing or crawling, so you will still generally want to stand and move normally.
- **Rolling Landing ★★** Use your reaction to move whenever you fall without taking damage. Your usual agenda after falling is getting back to wherever you were, not moving around in your new location. This feat doesn't let you climb, so it can't help with that. It's very situational.
- **Slippery Prey ★★★** You can more effectively spam escape attempts. The rating may be a bit generous for its initial effect, but it scales well and can get you out of the nasty follow-up abilities that high-level monsters tend to supplement their grabs with.
- **Tumbling Teamwork ★★★** An ally can use their reaction to step after you tumble through an enemy. They could step into a flank with you, but you will have already tumbled into a flanking position on your own unless there are walls blocking you. It's more likely you'll use this to get them out of a flank or out of range of a second enemy.
- **Kip Up ★★★** You get a free action to stand back up without provoking any reactions. This is extraordinarily helpful for melee inventors and provides a great incentive for them to boost their acrobatics even with minimal dexterity investment.
- **Aerobatics Mastery ★★★** If you can fly, this feat is great. If you can't fly, you can't use this feat.

Arcana ★★★★

A fantastic intelligence-based knowledge skill that all inventors should take. You live in a magical world, and ignorance of the most common type of magic will backfire. Almost all of its feats are shared between it and the other skills associated with spellcasting traditions. Arcana only has two unique feats, but they're both great.

- **Arcane Sense** ★★★ Arcane Sense allows you to cast detect magic. That cantrip is universally chosen by spellcasters, but even in a party with a spellcaster the ability to cast detect magic is useful. This feat is blue if nobody else in your party has it.
- **Unified Theory** ★★★★ This is easily one of the best skill feats in the game. You can use arcana in place of any other tradition skill. Unlike any other skill that does this, arcana can even fill in for the purposes of using skill feats (though not as a prerequisite for feats).

Athletics ★★★★

All adventurers should be at least trained in athletics. You will need to do so much climbing, jumping, and sprinting over the course of your adventuring career that basic physical fitness is a must. Further investment is optional, but the inventor has several compelling reasons to advance their athletics at the first available opportunity. Melee weapon innovators and power suit armor innovators tend to be especially keen on doing so, due to their tendency to rely on athletics checks. It is possible to build a character without any of the athletics-reliant options, but doing so neglects some of those innovation's best features.

- **Combat Climber** ★★★ This useful feat can help you scale walls mid-combat, as the name implies. You only need one hand to climb and aren't off-guard when climbing. This feat can be exceptionally useful to a few different types of inventor. Weapon innovators can put the free-hand trait on a melee weapon, enabling them to climb without even stowing their weapon. They can also put the climbing trait onto a ranged weapon. Power suit armor innovators may be relying on an unarmed attack anyways, and can use their unarmed claw to climb without dropping the shield in their other hand.
- **Hefty Hauler** ★ A bag of holding costs just 75 gp and can carry 25 bulk. Only take this feat if your GM doesn't allow you to purchase magic items.
- **Quick Jump** ★★★ If you have high strength, intend to continue increasing athletics, or have Assurance in athletics, you should choose Quick Jump instead of Powerful Leap. The higher your level, the more preferable Quick Jump becomes.
- **Titan Wrestler** ★★★★ You can use athletics checks on creatures two size categories larger than you. Despite its rating, medium characters shouldn't feel pressured to take this feat immediately because huge creatures are incredibly rare before mid-level. Small characters will need it just to wrestle with horses, ogres, and other common threats. They should take it immediately.
- **Underwater Marauder** ★ This feat is only useful if you are in a nautical campaign, and even in that case the inventor has better options. Their high crafting proficiency and ability to quickly reconfigure their feats and gear make it trivially easy for them to circumvent the penalties of aquatic combat. Armor innovators can reconfigure to get the Diving Armor feat, construct innovators can give their construct the amphibious construction modification, and weapon innovators can rebuild their weapon innovation as a weapon appropriate for underwater combat.
- **Lead Climber** ★ Just have whoever climbs up first drop a rope. The benefits of this feat are negligible.

- **Powerful Leap** ★★★ If you have a movement speed of 30 feet, a low strength score, or no intention of raising your proficiency in athletics, choose Powerful Leap instead of Quick Jump. At higher levels when your athletics modifier eclipses the distance of your leap, you might choose to retrain into Quick Jump.
- **Rapid Mantel** ★★ This feat allows you to swap the Grab an Edge reaction from a reflex saving throw to an athletics check. Regardless of whether or not you use that benefit, you can instantly pull yourself up as part of the same reaction. It is nice, but most inventors will receive slightly better and more versatile benefits from the acrobatics feat Steady Balance.
- **Quick Climber** ★★ This feat is okay until you hit legendary athletics, at which point it becomes an upper green because it gives you a climb speed equal to your speed. At that point, you are a more effective climber than most ancestries with climb speed options.
- **Quick Swim** ★ See Underwater Marauder.
- **Wall Jump:** Wall jump is a very cool and practical ability. The more jumping or leaping feats you have, the better it gets.
- **Water Sprint** ★ Take Wall Jump instead. Even the other swim feats are far superior. The only advantage of Water Sprint is that you can combine your land speed and water speed into the same action, rather than necessarily using two actions (one to stride and the other to swim). Such a scenario is too niche to rank well in an optimization guide.
- **Cloud Jump** ★★★★ A great enhancement to your mobility. You are a hero of the realm, and no cliff, pit, or wall is going to stop you any longer.

Crafting

You automatically progress your crafting proficiency as you level, so the rating it would be a moot point. You want your crafting to be as high as possible, but you have little control over its growth outside of purchasing magic items that improve it: usually a crafter's eyepiece.

- **Alchemical Crafting** ★★ The slow speed and limited savings of crafting make it more practical to buy the alchemical items you want. If you are stuck in a small town where at-level items are not available, this might become much more important.
- **Crafter's Appraisal** ★★★★ This feat takes your automatic crafting proficiency and makes it applicable to every magic item you find.
- **Improvise Tool** ★ Try not to lose your tools in the first place.
- **Quick Repair** ★★★★ If anyone in your party has a shield or you have a construct innovation, this feat is blue and mandatory. If not, you might struggle to find uses for it.
- **Seasoned** ★★ Take Specialty Crafting to get this bonus for all alchemical items instead of just potions. It also helps you make nonmagical food, but there are no mechanical benefits from doing so. From an optimization perspective it is irrelevant.
- **Specialty Crafting** ★★★ If you have a shield, put the bonus into blacksmithing. If you are using the alchemical sciences methodology, put the point into alchemy. Putting the bonus anywhere else makes this feat red.
- **Magical Crafting** ★ You don't have the spells necessary to make most magic items. In theory, you could take the Trick Magic Item feat and buy the spells as scrolls to make

virtually any magic item, but that is a lot of extra expense and time. You could also coordinate with your party to supply the casting of certain spells. Boost its rating by a grade for each of those that apply, up to green if both do. Crafting is really only worthwhile if your campaign doesn't have a magic item shop, as it is almost always easier to just earn income and buy magic items than it is to craft them.

- **Bless Tonic** ★ Weak benefits in a narrow scenario.
- **Bless Toxin** ★ Your poisons are too weak to get any benefit from this feat. Even if they weren't, enemies don't heal often enough to make this feat worthwhile.
- **Impeccable Crafter** ★★ It becomes slightly more cost-effective to craft rather than earn income with this feat.
- **Rapid Affixture** ★★★ You can affix a talisman as a one-minute activity. At high levels, you can do so in one turn. You and the spellcasters will take ten minutes after each fight refocusing or compensating for the unstable trait, but they may be disinclined to wait around for ten additional minutes unless they also need to make medicine checks. This feat makes it so they don't have to choose.
- **Craft Anything** ★★ By taking this feat, the GM can't keep you from getting the magic items you want by saying the store doesn't stock that item. You can just build it yourself. Of course, such an adversarial GM might also be inclined to deny you downtime, rendering it a moot point. Assuming your GM strikes a reasonable balance of item access, you might find value in creating uncommon or even rare items through this feat.

Deception ★★

Inventors interested in using deception are probably interested in using the feint action. Imposing the off-guard condition on an enemy would be useful for a late game weapon innovator with a crit-fishing fatal deadly melee weapon. Short of that scenario, there is little reason to invest in deception. Unlike the feat support available to demoralization, all feat support for feinting is locked to specific classes.

Diplomacy ★★

Some of the rules on diplomacy are a bit gamey and inorganic, so check with your GM to see how rigidly they will adhere to RAW regarding diplomacy before taking any of its feats. Inventors are unlikely to have the charisma necessary to support diplomacy, but at least failing won't get you in as much trouble as deception would. It never hurts to be trained in this skill.

Intimidation ★★★

This charisma skill is the clear standout among its fellows. Unlike the other two, it receives feat support for its in-combat applications.

- **Group Coercion** ★★ GMs are more likely to be literal about intimidation rules than diplomacy. As such, this is a handy way to threaten a group of people into obedience.
- **Intimidating Glare:** This feat is not optional for anyone interested in demoralization in combat. Take it so you can intimidate a grizzly bear with a stern look.

- **Quick Coercion** ★★★ In a tense situation, you're more likely to want intimidation than diplomacy. For those situations, quick coercion has you covered.
- **Intimidating Prowess** ★★★ This is a great way for a strength build to offset their mediocre charisma.
- **Lasting Coercion** ★★★ Your threats are effective much longer. At legendary intimidation, the target has to comply with your demands for a month.
- **Terrifying Resistance** ★★★ A good bonus to your saving throws against targets you successfully demoralize.
- **Battle Cry** ★★★ At the start of battle, you get a free action to demoralize. The enemy may be out of range on more open maps, but in all other scenarios this is very useful.
- **Terrified Retreat** ★ You are very unlikely to critically succeed on demoralization with any frequency, especially if you are relying on Assurance. Give this a pass.
- **Scare to Death** ★★★ This skill feat provides you with an upgraded version of the demoralize action, assuming you are targeting a creature with a level lower than yours. You also have to be morally okay with the slim chance of instantly killing your target.

Lore ★★★

I prefer to consider this a substitute to religion and nature checks. By selecting a lore skill related to a creature type covered by one of those skills (typically fey, undead, or fiends) you can use your intelligence for the check instead of your wisdom. Unfortunately, few backgrounds give you access to such lore skills.

- **Additional Lore** ★★★ Pick a lore skill appropriate to your campaign and become trained in it. It will automatically scale up as you level. This feat is useful for replacing the function of wisdom-based recall knowledge skills such as religion and nature. You could also use this to qualify for Battle Planner with warfare lore, thus affording you vastly improved initiative which automatically scales to legendary.
- **Contract Negotiator** ★★★★ Replace diplomacy with the intelligence-based Legal Lore skill when negotiating. A great choice for any investigator lacking in charisma.
- **Experienced Professional** ★ You'd be better off using your maximized crafting skill to earn income or even build the item you want to save up for.
- **Battle Planner** ★★★★ If you qualify for it, this is a perfect feat for the inventor. Use your intelligence-based warfare lore as initiative means bypassing your atrocious perception. You'll want to be stealthy, or have a stealthy party member, in order to make the most of this feat. Figure out what your average perception or stealth initiative roll is; in the unlikely event your warfare lore initiative check is lower than that average, you can roll your initiative the conventional way instead. While it lacks the fortune trait, because it grants two tries this feat is essentially a fortune effect for initiative.
- **Unmistakable Lore** ★★ The more monster identification skills you manage to replace with lore skills, the better this gets. If you managed to nab all three of the following: Fey, Undead, and Fiend lore, this becomes green.
- **Legendary Professional** ★ As experienced professional.

Medicine ★★★

Medicine is an incredibly valuable skill, but it only becomes great if you take several feats. The inventor is not the best class to capitalize on medicine, and some inventors may instead choose to take the Searing Restoration feat. If you do not want to take that feat, I highly recommend being at least trained in medicine.

- **Acupuncturist ★★** Give allies bonuses to downtime checks once per week. If you're lucky you will also give them a big bonus to a saving throw against an affliction. Since you can apply this to all of your allies, you might as well fish for the save bonus whenever it becomes possible to try. You'll probably succeed on at least one.
- **Battle Medicine ★★★★** Use your medicine mid-combat to heal with one action. A great feat for a squishy class.
- **Forensic Acumen ★★** Generally speaking, if you've got a dead body on your hands you've got the time to analyze it. The bonuses to recall knowledge about whatever you find on the body are more valuable, but even so this is an easy feat to skip.
- **Inoculation ★★** You are unlikely to encounter the same disease twice. Ignore it unless your campaign has a specific disease as the focus of its plotline.
- **Continual Recovery ★★★★** Get your team to full health after every fight without expending resources. You possess the same healing capacity as a champion by taking this feat.
- **Godless Healing ★★★** Five extra healing from Treat Wounds and Battle Medicine for yourself for so long as you don't follow a god. You'll be a reliable source of self-healing.
- **Mortal Healing ★★★** If you have a divine spellcaster or a champion in your party, this feat is yellow. If you don't, this feat is green. While this feat is technically common, you do have to be a follower of a semi-obscure philosophy in order to take it, and Godless Healing is a prerequisite. As pointed out by DisastrousSwordfish1, some GMs will argue that you can't use Assurance with it because it only works when you "roll" a medicine check. I personally do not believe that such a ruling is RAI because language referring to rolling is the assumed default in ability descriptions, and not intended to be a hard ruling.
- **Risky Surgery ★★★** Your treat wounds restores an average of four extra hit points assuming you can reliably achieve success. As pointed out by DisastrousSwordfish1, some GMs may prevent it from working in tandem with Assurance because you must "roll" a medicine check to receive the benefits. I personally do not think this is RAI, but check with your GM. Don't take both it and Mortal Healing, as they serve the same function. Risky Surgery is better if you have a divine healer in the party, Mortal Healing is better if you do not.
- **Robust Recovery ★★★** These are very hefty bonuses to poison and disease recovery. With your help, almost nobody in your party needs to suffer those long-term conditions ever again.
- **Ward Medic ★★★★** Further speed up your medicine use after battle by treating multiple allies at once. At this point, medicine is essentially a powerful AoE healing focus spell.

- **Advanced First Aid ★★** You can spend two actions to reduce a frightened or sickened condition. Sickened I get, but I wonder how you reduce the frightened condition with some bandages, tonics, and stitches. It must be the placebo effect.
- **Legendary Medic ★★★** Remove several permanent conditions with hour-long medicine checks. While your party's spellcasters can probably magic away most of them, you can save them a spell slot and the cost of material components when you have enough time.

Nature ★★

Your primary use for nature is as a monster identification skill. While that is valuable, the monsters nature can identify are not overwhelmingly common outside of the first few levels. Elementals and beasts can both be more easily known through the arcana skill thanks to your high intelligence. Animals, plants, and fungi have limited ability to serve as antagonists due to generally lacking sapience. Only fey are common targets for recall knowledge with the nature skill. While any of those could be useful in the right circumstance, nature is by and large the least important of the four spellcasting tradition skills for inventors. Its unique feats also aren't very good, and it scales off of your wisdom rather than your intelligence.

Occultism ★★★★

A great skill for the identification of monsters that arcana can't handle. You'll find this used most frequently on aberrations and incorporeal undead.

- **Deceptive Worship ★** Being a rational sort, you're unlikely to be a member of a cult in the first place. Even if you are, you're also not a spellcaster that needs to display their holy symbol, and open worshippers of some unholy deities like Asmodeus get allowed into most towns without issue. There isn't any need for this feat unless you're worshipping someone super illegal, like Norgorber or Ravagug.
- **Oddity Identification ★★★** This bonus only applies to occult magic that manipulates the mind, predicts the future, or scries. However, I'm pleased to see the bonus is two. Most feats only offer a bonus of one.
- **Root Magic ★★★** Give one ally a small bonus on their first saving throw against a spell each day. You can't personally benefit from this bonus, but an ally's saving throw is as likely to matter as yours is. At times, you might even be up against a party member's nemesis and know which ally will be targeted first.
- **Schooled In Secrets ★★** This feat is similar to Streetwise, but it is narrower because it only applies to cults. It is more helpful if you are a cultist yourself, as in that case it also gives you the ability to identify fellow cultists automatically.
- **Disturbing Knowledge ★★★** A superior demoralization that scales off of your intelligence. Sign me up. The only catch is that it takes two actions, which can be very difficult for an inventor to pull off.

Performance ★

You're not a bard. This skill has no use to you. Even its feats just unsuccessfully attempt to replace the function of diplomacy.

Religion ★★★

Much like nature, this is a useful recall knowledge skill that scales off of wisdom. Unlike nature, its feats are worthwhile and it applies to several different creature types that are inaccessible via arcana: mostly fiends, celestials, and undead. Many of its feats require you to follow a deity. Your patron's identity is mostly irrelevant, though you will see the best results from a good deity.

- **Pilgrim's Token ★★★** This provides bonuses roughly equivalent to a +1 to initiative. It stacks with every other initiative enhancer due to its nonstandard design.
- **Student of the Canon ★★** You can't critically fail knowledge checks about religious symbols, rites, practices, and organizations. No more accidentally mistaking the local church of Iomedae for a secret cult of Zon-Kuthon.
- **Exhort the Faithful ★★** This is a decent use of your religion skill, but it is limited in its viable targets. The more multicultural your campaign's society, the less useful this feat is to you.
- **Battle Prayer ★★** This feat is very useful for targeting the weaknesses of fiends, but of little use otherwise. Even a third strike will deal more damage on average. A good deity will provide the best results. You don't necessarily have to be good yourself if you worship a good deity that allows neutral worshippers.
- **Sacred Defense ★★★** This benefit is much nicer than the benefits offered by Battle Prayer, because its benefit is useful in all types of combat. The inventor being modest on hit points, it is a valuable addition to your kit. Unfortunately, it will be difficult for an inventor to make the check until high level, so you might retrain for it later rather than take it immediately.
- **Sanctify Water ★** Terrible amounts of good damage against specific creature types with a terrible action economy that consumes the entire turn. Skip it.
- **Divine Guidance ★★★** Your GM will determine how useful the hints you get from this feat are. It is basically impossible for me to determine its value.

Society ★★★★

This is the skill you use to recall knowledge about humanoid foes, and thus is very valuable. If there is one creature type you are guaranteed to fight over the course of a campaign, it is humanoids. While society has some decent feats, it also has a large amount of worthless crap.

- **Courtly Graces ★★★** Use your society to impress nobility as if it was diplomacy. You still need diplomacy to make an actual request, so its value is inherently curtailed. Like diplomacy, your GM may not draw such a sharp distinction between the two uses of diplomacy, and so this can be pretty valuable with a permissive GM.
- **Eye for Numbers ★★** You can tell your GM to give you approximate quantities of objects in your surroundings. I shudder to think what GMs don't already give you

approximate numbers. You can also substitute society for deception checks made in combat, such as feint checks, if you spend an extra action setting it up. It even gives you a bonus. It'll almost never be worth doing so unless you are able to "count" the enemy's items in advance of combat.

- **Glean Contents** ★★ The benefits are extremely niche, but the right GM or campaign could make this feat worth choosing. Avoid it for most campaigns.
- **Multilingual** ★★ If you're that determined to get more languages, this feat has you covered. You're intelligent enough to know plenty of languages already, but a language might turn out to be unexpectedly important over the course of a given campaign.
- **Read Lips** ★★ The stealthier you are, the more helpful this is. Even if you're not, it still comes in handy from time to time.
- **Sign Language** ★ No campaigns demand that you know sign language. This is only of value to you if other members of your party also take it for discreet communication. For each party member that also takes this feat, upgrade its rating by one color.
- **Streetwise** ★★★ Unlike Courtly Graces, the Streetwise feat offers a more comprehensive replacement to a function of diplomacy. You can instantly attempt a high society check to receive the benefits of a diplomacy check to gather information. If you fail, you or your party can invest the time like normal.
- **Connections** ★★ This feat doesn't accomplish anything you can't accomplish on your own with good roleplaying.
- **Criminal Connections** ★★★ This feat is identical to connections, but for crime. It is also more useful, because criminals leave less means of access and it is more risky to inquire about their whereabouts: you might either anger the criminal or cause the guards to wonder why you're asking. Automatically knowing a mafia don's contact information makes interacting with them go much smoother. Adventuring parties usually blunder through criminal underworlds like a wrecking ball. This might tone the destruction down to sledgehammer levels.
- **Quick Contacts** ★★★ Get the benefits of Connections or Criminal Connections after spending a single day in a city.
- **Biographical Eye** ★★★ This feat makes it fairly easy to tell the true profession of any criminals you interact with. Your society is likely high enough to reliably beat most Will DCs you encounter. It can also identify the non-criminal professions of people you are talking to, but you can typically just ask in that case.
- **Legendary Codebreaker** ★ This feat is atrocious. You can reduce the time it takes to decipher writing by half. If you choose to take the full amount of time, you turn a success into a critical success. Those effects might have gotten a yellow rating if the feat was first level.
- **Legendary Linguist** ★★ This is mediocre, but it is better than codebreaker. You can communicate simple concepts to anything that has a language.

Stealth ★★★

The inventor sees great return from stealth investment. While any skill can be used as initiative in the right situation, stealth is the only skill with an explicit mechanic for using it as initiative: the avoid notice exploration activity. Due to an inventor's rock bottom perception, using stealth as initiative is almost always preferable. Those using dexterity as their offensive score will gain more for this strategy than strength builds, so for them the skill is blue. Even a strength build will still see moderate initiative improvement from this strategy, especially with further proficiency investment.

Of course, stealth has other benefits. Mid-combat stealth, smuggling small objects past checkpoints, and avoiding fights are all part of its purview. Construct innovators are the only inventor who might be disinclined to use stealth to outright avoid encounters. Their construct is unlikely to escape notice without costly modification investment, though this hurdle can also be circumvented with a small size construct and the Collapse Construct feat. Few are the GMs that demand your suitcase make a stealth check. Even without that class feat, nothing stops a construct innovator from using stealth for initiative.

- **Experienced Smuggler** ★★★ Exactly what qualifies as a small item for the purposes of this feat is not abundantly clear, but a subterfuge suit innovator with the Collapse Armor feat could make a solid case for it. Weapon innovations and collapsed construct innovations will usually be too large for this feat, but your GM may rule otherwise.
- **Terrain Stalker** ★★ This feat's efficacy is entirely dependent on how permissive your GM is when you ask for difficult terrain to sneak through. Most of the time, they won't agree when you suddenly flip your usual stance and argue that the light undergrowth should count as difficult terrain.
- **Quiet Allies** ★★★ When the whole party makes stealth checks, there are several points of failure. Sneaking as a group is almost impossible without this feat. If your whole party is decently stealthy, this feat is extraordinarily valuable.
- **Shadow Mark** ★★ Get a good bonus the one or two times you need to tail a target. It is technically a debuff on the target's perception, which means it stacks with any other stealth bonuses you might have. It is still too narrow to get out of a yellow rating.
- **Foil Senses** ★★★★ If you want to stealth past most monsters or even regular guard dogs, you'll want to have this feat. Bypassing all of the special senses used to thwart sneaking with a single feat is a great deal.
- **Swift Sneak:** If you want to use stealth, doing so quickly is very useful. It is ideal for moving between points of cover when targets aren't looking, or just getting out of dodge after your failure alerts a guard without completely revealing you.
- **Legendary Sneak** ★★★★ An obvious capstone for stealth builds. You can hide without cover. There are other benefits, but none of them top that.

Survival ★★

Tracking doesn't come up much. Actual subsistence in the wilderness comes up even less. I am very surprised that survival and nature weren't collapsed into a single skill. While the skill itself is okay, survival has the most consistently useless feats in the game. Almost all of them help you

survive in the wilderness, but you will use survival for tracking and little else. On the off-chance your GM is running a wilderness survival game, your party casters will gladly conjure food to spare you the hassle of hunting. Only the Survey Wildlife feat is of any interest whatsoever, as it can allow you to identify and make recall knowledge checks about a monster before combat starts.

Thievery ★★★

Thievery is useful for disabling traps and picking locks. Actual stealing is unnecessary because adventurers make way more money than petty theft ever will. If you can offload this to someone with a key ability in dexterity, you should do so.

- **Concealing Legerdemain ★★** I'm surprised that concealing objects on your person isn't thievery by default. If you don't intent to be so much as trained in stealth, this might have value to you. If you are trained in stealth, the Experienced Smuggler feat is a vastly superior pick. Even if you never advance past trained, the Experienced Smuggler feat makes stealth far better than thievery for concealing objects on your person.
- **Dirty Trick ★★** Use a thievery check to inflict clumsy. It has the attack trait. Inventors tend to have little trouble getting the strength for athletics, which comes pre-loaded with a variety of techniques that impose similar penalties. Likewise, they can use the Tamper class feat to inflict similar penalties without the onerous presence of the attack trait. This is a very good feat, but the inventor already has better options for inflicting such penalties. As clumsy is a status condition it isn't redundant with those options. However, it will compete for actions and using it imposes the multiple attack penalty on the high offense of an inventor. It's best for subterfuge suit innovators because they're the most likely inventor to fully neglect strength; they might use it on turns they fail to get their overdrive up and running. This is a good feat but it isn't a good fit for the inventor.
- **Pickpocket ★★** When the party needs to steal something, the odds of you getting within arm's reach of the guy carrying it without being in active combat is unlikely.
- **Subtle Theft ★★** Observers get a penalty to spot you stealing from your primary target. It is a handy bonus, but the scenario remains unlikely.
- **Wary Disarmament ★★** You get a small bonus to your defenses against traps.
- **Quick Unlock ★★** Speed up your lockpicking. You rarely need to pick locks in encounter mode where such action savings are relevant.
- **Legendary Thief ★★** If you liked stealing the clothes off of NPCs in Skyrim, this is the feat for you. It won't change anything important unless the antagonist waves a plot-critical artifact in your face while standing adjacent to you.

Equipment:

Armor:

The only way an armor set makes it onto the following list is if it is the best armor available to a certain kind of inventor. If an armor is not listed below, it is mechanically inferior to one that is. The ratings below are thus of frequency rather than raw power: armors with lower ratings show up on less builds than those with higher ratings, but they are still optimal for those builds.

- **Explorer's Clothing** ★★★ Explorer's clothing is worn by inventors with a dexterity score of twenty. It is only possible for inventors to achieve such a score at level fifteen. At that point, explorer's clothing becomes optimal attire. It provides the same defensive benefits as armor while gaining the comfort trait.
- **Padded Armor** ★★ Padded Armor is worn by inventors with a dexterity score of sixteen, a strength score of ten or less, *and* who value their stealth or thievery checks more than their armor class. A chain shirt will provide low-strength inventors with superior defense at the cost of tiny penalties to stealth and thievery checks, so I recommend using it instead of padded armor in anything short of a thieves' guild campaign.
- **Leather Armor** ★★★ Leather armor is worn by inventors with a dexterity score of eighteen and a strength score of ten. It is only possible for an inventor to achieve such a dexterity score at level five. At fifteenth level, you will switch to explorer's clothing.
- **Studded Leather** ★★★★ Studded leather armor is worn by inventors with a dexterity score of sixteen or higher and a strength score of twelve or higher. Ranged weapon innovators usually start their campaign with studded leather armor and stick with it for the majority of their careers. At fifteenth level, they switch to explorer's clothing.
- **Chain Shirt** ★★★ Chain shirts are worn by inventors with a dexterity score of sixteen and a strength score of ten or less. The penalties for failing to meet its strength requirement are minimal thanks to its flexible trait and lack of movement penalty. If you have an ancestral penalty to strength and no intention of fixing it this armor will be your primary set until fifteenth level, at which point you can switch to explorer's clothing.
- **Hide Armor** ★★ Hide armor is worn by inventors with a strength score of sixteen and a dexterity score of fourteen. In that case, it will provide the same defense as other medium armors at the cheapest cost. The only inventors likely to possess that ability score layout are those with throwing weaponry and those interested in the fighter multiclass archetype.
- **Chain Mail** ★★★ Chain mail is worn by pilot construct innovators and mortar innovators. Chain mail only requires a dexterity modifier of one to reach its full defensive potential. Riding the construct innovation bypasses the movement speed penalty caused by failing to meet the armor's strength requirement. On the off-chance you are knocked off the construct, the armor's flexible trait prevents it from penalizing your athletics and acrobatics checks, both of which may be necessary to escape whatever caused you to dismount. Light mortar innovators do have to deal with the speed penalty, but are unlikely to care because their mortar's maximum movement speed is just 20 feet anyways.
- **Lattice Armor** ★★★★ Lattice armor is worn by melee weapon innovators. They will easily meet the strength requirement, and it provides solid protection for minimal dexterity investment.

- **Bastion Armor ★★** Bastion armor is worn by pilot construct innovators with the Armor Proficiency feat and dwarven melee weapon innovators with the Unburdened Iron feat. In both cases, even they won't use it if they also have a shield. Nobody else will find the movement penalty worth the slim defensive advantages.
- **Full Plate ★★★** Full plate is worn by melee weapon innovators. You'll get one extra armor class and can afford to completely neglect dexterity thanks to the bulwark trait of full plate. As you cannot get a strength score sufficient for full plate until level five, weapon innovators who go down this route might choose to start with lattice armor before upgrading.

Shields:

Shields on the whole are best used by the armor innovators. An armor innovator can reduce various damage types due to their improved resistances, which in turn reduces the amount of damage that their shield takes. Weapon innovators are often too busy making attacks to try to raise a shield, and a construct innovator's action economy is too tight because of their need to command their construct and enter overdrive. Pilots may also do so on occasion because they can't use actions attacking and are exposed to much more risk than other construct innovators.

To be perfectly frank, inventors lack any real support for a shield playstyle outside of having shield block in the first place. If you can get the shield cantrip from an ancestry or archetype, it'll always be the better choice. It won't eat a huge portion of your treasure budget, blocks about as well, doesn't take up a free hand, and can block far more types of damage because it can block all magical effects. If you really want to use a true shield, consider using the bastion archetype to get extra benefits from using your shield or combine it with a good ancestral unarmed attack on an armor build.

- **Buckler ★★★** The buckler is a good fit for those with the Tamper feat, those with a shortbow or pistol, and those with a two-hand weapon like a bastard sword. If you have a casting archetype, the shield cantrip is a significantly better alternative. Even if you have a full size heavy two-handed weapon, you can still raise a buckler if you are willing to re-grip next round. Doing so usually isn't worth it, but why deprive yourself of the option? A buckler is dirt cheap.
- **Shield ★★★** Standard shields require a hand to use. That is a tough sell for many inventors, who will need those hands to load ammunition, tamper, or hold a two-handed weapon. That said, the inventor does get the shield block reaction for free and the armor inventor can indirectly reduce the amount of damage that is directed at their shield. If you choose to use a shield, you will want to be certain to purchase the sturdy shield magic item.
- **Tower Shield ★** There is almost no chance you have the action economy necessary to receive the full benefits of a tower shield. Due to the speed penalty, this will only work against you. Dwarves with Unburdened Iron might consider it, but even so they usually have better options. Mech pilots can also use it without penalty. For either of those edge cases it is yellow, especially if your GM prefers to target you over the construct.

Weapons:

Inventors with ranged weapons are best served by the shortbow (or composite shortbow) unless they take archetypes that mitigate the reload trait. Inventors with melee weapons have much more diverse options. Typically, a melee inventor wants high damage and traits pertaining to athletics checks. However, if the inventor is a weapon innovator able to add traits to a weapon, those traits are inherently devalued. For example, weapons that have either grapple or trip cannot benefit fully from entangling form. Note that a weapon innovator cannot add traits to advanced weaponry, even if they are proficient and have access. With a few key exceptions useful to armor and construct innovators, advanced weaponry will go largely unreviewed as a result.

An inventor should not be overly concerned with traits relating to critical hits. With modest offensive ability scores and average weapon proficiency, their ability to critically hit foes is not the equal of other classes. The reliability of high base damage is much preferable to occasional bursts of damage.

The agile trait is another matter. Unlike barbarian rage, overdrive does not penalize a character for using an agile weapon. If you are able to enter overdrive and get two attacks off on a turn, a weapon with the agile trait is able to out-damage a rival weapon even if it has higher base damage by one die size. For example, a shortsword can out-perform a longsword if given two actions worth of attacks against a typical armor class. This divide widens the more additional damage the inventor adds to their strikes: offensive boost, damaging weapon runes, and so on. However, actually getting two actions with which to strike can be difficult. Melee inventors must use one action to enter overdrive and another to move towards their targets. If you only make one attack a round, an agile weapon always loses out to its non-agile contemporaries. The Clockwork Celerity feat can tip the scales in favor of agile weaponry.

However, there is no such thing as an agile two-handed weapon. As such, an inventor looking for pure damage is always best served by a non-agile weapon. Agile weapons are typically found in the hands of inventors looking to take advantage of their free shield block feat. Unfortunately for agile weapons, an inventor with a shield needs to spend an action raising it, making it rare that they have the actions necessary for two strikes: unless the weapon in question is also thrown, as the combination of both traits enables them to make strikes at range without moving. There are three weapons that meet this criteria: the hand adze, hatchet, and the light hammer. These two weapons are on-par with their non-agile thrown counterparts, the chakram and the trident.

Finesse:

Most of these weapons are only useful to subterfuge suit innovators of at least ninth level. However, there are exceptions. The following ratings assume you are playing a subterfuge suit innovator. The ratings in this category drop by two if you are another other type of inventor, barring d6 agile weapons which retain their green ratings by being useful to strength-based, damage-focused inventor builds.

Common Agile

- **Bayonet** ★★★ The bayonet provides a character with a melee strike to use after discharging a firearm or crossbow. This conveniently bypasses the need to reload. You might be wondering why you wouldn't just kick an opponent, as the default fist strike (which can be a kick) deals the same damage and also has agile and finesse. The reason is runes: unlike an unarmed fist strike, you can duplicate the runes from your firearm with blazons of shared power. A bayonet is also able to damage creatures immune to nonlethal damage.

  It's most likely to be used by those with kickback weapons, as the strength needed for kickback also adds damage to bayonet strikes. Subterfuge suit innovators are especially likely to use a bayonet as it gives them a means of benefiting from their ninth level offensive boost without sacrificing the powerful two-handed ranged weapon they've been relying on.
- **Flyssa** ★★★ Identical to the shortsword barring its critical specialization.
- **Kris** ★ The kris is made obsolete by the war razor. There is never a reason to use it instead of the latter.
- **Liuyedao** ★★ An interesting weapon with both agile and sweep. It's a handy way to mitigate the multiple attack penalty and get a tiny bit of bonus critical damage if you get lucky.
- **Main-gauche** ★★ Disarm, parry, and versatile. Minimum damage. If the gauntlet bow didn't exist it'd be the best common weapon for use with the Twin Parry feat from the Dual Weapon Warrior archetype.
- **Scourge** ★ I'd sooner use a fist strike for nonlethal damage. Throwing out a kick doesn't require you to spend an action drawing a weapon first.
- **Shortsword** ★★★ The shortsword is a fine weapon for an inventor intending to make the most out of overdrive. Between agile and the versatile trait, it can pump out reliable damage when you have actions to burn. Weapon and armor innovators can try using Clockwork Celerity to ensure they have the actions needed to strike twice.
- **Sword Cane** ★★★ Identical to the shortsword except that it trades versatile for concealable.
- **War Razor** ★★ Backstabber and deadly. Minimum damage. The war razor is all about compensating for that low damage. In the right scenario its damage is comparable to that of the shortsword, but its situational nature and inconsistency is difficult to recommend.

Common Non-Agile

These weapons are only of use to subterfuge suit innovators. If you are playing any other innovation, you can consider these weapons red. Even most subterfuge suit innovators have little reason to use them until ninth level due to their low strength scores and lack of offensive boosts.

- **Dancer's Spear** ★★★★ This weapon has both respectable damage and traits. Reach is the dealmaker, but using sweep to land overdrive damage doesn't hurt either. This weapon enables a subterfuge suit innovator to stab using a melee weapon with offensive boost from a safer distance.

- **Rapier** ★★★ The most popular finesse weapon is of limited worth to the inventor. The inventor's lower physical ability scores make them crit less often than other classes. I prefer the shortsword, but the rapier isn't far enough behind to warrant a worse rating.
- **Reinforced Stock** ★★★★ As of recent errata, there is no finesse weapon with higher damage than the reinforced stock on a two-handed weapon. It's also compatible with the offensive boost of a subterfuge suit. It's a fantastic way for subterfuge suit innovators to use their offensive boost while retaining quick access to ranged strikes. Unlike the bayonet, it can't share runes with its firearm with blazons of shared power because it isn't a one-handed weapon. Attach it to an arbalest or arquebus and put a potency crystal on the combat type you intend to use less; the stock if you want to favor ranged combat and the ranged weapon if you want to favor melee.
- **Whip** ★★★ Disarm, nonlethal, reach, and trip. Nonlethal makes this weapon useless against certain enemy types. However, reach is an excellent trait for those interested in keeping themselves safe. Before the dancer's spear was introduced this was the only reach weapon available to dexterity builds. Now the wind has been taken out of the whip's sails. It's still a solid choice for subterfuge suit innovators who want a free hand for Tamper and Gadget Specialist.

  A weapon innovator could take the nonlethal trait off the whip with some of its modifications, but as with most finesse weapons the whip isn't worth the tradeoffs for a conventional melee weapon innovation build.

Common Agile (Thrown)

- **Starknife** ★★★ The starknife is the only common finesse thrown weapon. It has a niche for subterfuge suit innovators who want a weapon that can be used at range but can still benefit from the armor innovation's offensive boost in finesse melee. You'll need to fill a rune slot with a returning rune, but they're dirt cheap. You can put the money you saved elsewhere. A shame it's such a goofy looking weapon.

Ranged:

Only weapon innovators will want to use this as a long-term strategy owing to their offensive boost being uniquely compatible with ranged weaponry. However, the remaster of Guns & Gears has disincentivized this style of combat by denying weapon innovators access to composite shortbows, which are first level items and thus can't be chosen as weapon innovations. If your GM allows your weapon innovator to use uncommon advanced ranged weapons, you may want to secure a daikyu as a replacement. It is an advanced propulsive ranged weapon with great damage and the forceful trait, and is level zero. A complex simplicity long air repeater can also work.

Common Non-Reload

- **Composite Longbow** ★ This weapon is sadly inaccessible to weapon innovators due to its status as a first level weapon. No other innovation can add their offensive boost to it, the volley trait isn't worth dealing with, and the only build that might still be considering

it -a drone construct innovator- won't have the strength to use the composite longbow's propulsive trait.

- **Composite Shortbow** ★★★ You have lower damage than the composite longbow, but don't have to put up with the volley trait. It's a handy weapon for low level subterfuge suit innovators before they boost their strength a bit and get their offensive boost, making melee thrown weapons preferrable. Sadly, the remaster made this weapon inaccessible as a weapon innovation owing to its status as a first level weapon. This weapon previously represented the best way to make a ranged inventor build. Now ranged weapon innovators must either use a mundane shortbow or rely on the GM giving them access to an uncommon weapon like the daikyu or air repeater.
- **Gakgung** ★★★ Identical to the shortbow except that it trades critical damage for better range.
- **Longbow** ★★★ You get better damage and range than a shortbow but must contend with the volley trait. It's usually not worth it, but an inventor does have some tricks that can help. If any enemy gets into melee with you, you can explode rather than try to make attacks with the volley penalty. The inventor feat Gadget Specialist can help you get into an optimal range quickly via items like gadget skates and blast boots. A high level weapon innovator may also choose to reconfigure their shortbow to a longbow and apply omnirange stabilizers to remove the volley trait. Even with all this preparation you'll find yourself stuck in rooms that are just too small to avoid the penalty with some regularity, but there's a compelling case to be made for the longbow inventor nonetheless.
- **Shield Bow** ★★ A shortbow that trades critical damage and a bit of range for the parry trait. I can't think of any good reason you'd use it rather than a regular shortbow and a buckler, but it's still basically a shortbow with all of the advantages that implies. Perhaps you'd use it if you wanted to draw a melee weapon with your other hand on occasion.
- **Shortbow** ★★★★ The shortbow is the best common ranged weapon for construct innovators and weapon innovators. Unfortunately, it provides no benefit for having a decent strength score like its composite version does. It remains the best ranged weapon because it takes up only a single hand when not in use and lacks the onerous reload and volley traits.

  The inventor has so many great actions to use -overdrive, megavolt, explode, command a minion, tamper, recall knowledge, and many more- that wasting time reloading will never be ideal. Like most other bows, it requires two hands to fire but only one hand to hold. Having one hand available when not shooting enables shortbow builds to use inventor feats like Tamper and Gadget Specialist, both of which do not require prolonged use of the hand.

  While the shortbow has modest damage, the inventor has numerous means of compensation. Delivery of damage from overdrive and offensive boost is far easier when you can choose any target you can see.

  Alternative ranged builds that involve strength include using the advanced daikyu or a complex simplicity long air repeater as your weapon innovation. Certain archetypes and endgame weapon modifications can also mitigate reload, making those weapons more competitive alternatives.

Common Reload

- **Arbalest** ★★★ This martial crossbow hits hard. With d10 damage and the backstabber trait, it is an excellent choice for those looking to use Megaton Strike. Against an off-guard foe it deals three more damage per shot when compared to a shortbow; an impressive lead until one considers that it must be reloaded after each shot. This also assumes that the user lacks the strength for a composite shortbow. Still, if you built a character with lacking strength, take Megaton Strike, and seek a means of getting Running Reload from an archetype, the arbalest can be almost as powerful as a shortbow.
- **Gauntlet Bow** ★★★ Every time I think I've got this weapon figured out it throws another curveball at my thought process. Let's try to break this down: it's a free-hand martial ranged weapon with minimum damage, average range, parry, and capacity four. It can be used as a regular gauntlet to make a melee attack but *isn't* a combination weapon, so you can switch between melee and range instantly; its runes also apply to both usages.

  It can't receive melee weapon modifications because it is classified as a ranged weapon. An armor innovator couldn't apply their offensive boost to it. A drone construct innovator couldn't abide the actions spent on the capacity trait. A pilot construct innovator is the only playstyle likely to use this weapon as their primary weapon, insofar as a pilot can be said to have a "primary" weapon. Its parry trait means it can be used to defend yourself like a shield, its free-hand trait means it doesn't interfere with Tamper or other feats a pilot likes to use, and its ranged attack function can compensate for the construct's lack of range.

  Let's assume we're not using it as a primary weapon. Any build with a two-handed weapon might appreciate the gauntlet bow. A weapon with the two-hand trait like a bastard sword would be even better. If an enemy is out of reach, release your grip for free and quick-fire a single ranged strike. This is a decent way to keep your overdrive damage up on turns you can't reach your foe. It also gives you emergency defensive options through parry *and* emergency agile strikes if you need to land a blow. You could even leave your runes on it and use blazons of shared power to transfer runes to your primary weapon, thus giving you a runed ranged attack and two runed melee attacks, two of which are impossible to disarm and aren't dropped after falling unconscious.

  Needless to say, this weapon is fiendishly complicated. I can't help but admire the off-the-wall strategies it enables. I've given it a green rating because it doesn't redefine your play, but practically speaking there is very little reason *not* to have one. Even if you don't want the expense of blazons of shared power, you could always strap a potency crystal to it for on-demand backup strikes.
- **Rotary Bow** ★★★ A d8 one-handed crossbow with the capacity trait. This is a superior version of the slide pistol as far as an inventor is concerned. It's best used on builds that want a shield in their other hand; builds only looking for brief uses of their off-hand like Tamper or Gadget Specialist will prefer to use shortbows and longbows due to their lack of reload. Weapon innovators looking to use this type of ranged shield strategy may want to consider using an air repeater with complex simplicity instead, provided your GM allows it. See its entry under the weapon innovation for more details.

- **Sukgung** ★★★ A crossbow with the fatal aim trait. It's identical to the jezail, except it trades concussive for a 200 foot range. That's complete overkill, but it is still probably worth it because concussive isn't that useful.

Common Thrown

Note that ranged thrown weapons are always thrown and thus provoke reactions such as Reactive Strike if used in melee range.

- **Bola** ★★★★ The bola is a great weapon for melee weapon innovators and power suit innovators characters to carry as backup ranged weaponry. Its ranged trip property enables them to contribute to combat at range without any use of their dexterity skill. You don't need to upgrade them at all because they aren't used for strikes. Nonlethal isn't an issue for the same reasons. I can't believe they made these common.
- **Chakram** ★★ / ★★★★ The chakram has high damage and good range, but its most interesting feature is subtle: the chakram is a ranged weapon. Normally this is a bad trait for a thrown weapon because ranged weapons trigger reactive strikes. On the inventor, it opens up the unique option of using ranged weapon modifications on a thrown weapon. How exactly putting an advanced rangefinder on a bladed hula hoop works is beyond me, but getting to add your entire strength modifier on a strike with a 30-foot range increment is tempting nonetheless. By the time you get a revolutionary modification, its range increment could be a staggering 80 feet. The chakram takes an age to reach its full potential, but for a sword-and-board build it is tough to beat. As it is also a thrown weapon, it could instead be used in tandem with the tangle line modification to trip foes up to 70 feet away.
- **Harpoon** ★★ The only two-handed thrown weapon and the only common weapon with the tethered trait. A subterfuge suit innovator with a two-handed finesse weapon could switch to this with a potency crystal when they need a ranged attack.

Uncommon Reload

If your GM is allowing the inventor, odds are good they are also allowing firearms. Thus, I have included them in my review below. As usual, I will only be reviewing martial weaponry; the firearm ratings below assume that you do not have a means of mitigating reload. If you gain such a method from an archetype you may boost the rating by a color category.

One quirk of the rules that your table may have to resolve is the nature of the concussive trait. By rules-as-written, it seems that firearms are partially incompatible with weapon modifications that adds the versatile or modular traits: concussive overrules them and sets the damage type to the better option between bludgeoning and piercing. Work with your GM to determine how it will be ruled at your table.

- **Arquebus** ★★★ With high damage, fatal, and the kickback trait, the arquebus deals intense damage per shot. Because it requires strength, it is a good choice for the rope shot weapon modification; though if your GM rules that you have to reload after using ranged trip, you might look elsewhere.
- **Blunderbuss** ★★★ The blunderbuss lacks the fatal and kickback traits, but scatter damage can help make up the gap. It is a great choice for inventors lacking strength. Be

careful: the last thing you want is for an ally to fail a death save due to reckless blunderbuss use. GMs might allow backfire mantles to protect your allies from its scatter trait, but they might not because firearms technically aren't alchemical despite their reliance on alchemical black powder. Trustworthy rounds provide another solution.

- **Clan Pistol ★★** You could make it work if you are a dwarf with easy access to it, but there is no need to seek it out if you don't have it. Maybe take the bastion archetype to get a free-hand shield.
- **Double-Barreled Musket ★★** The double-barreled trait is very interesting. If you fire one barrel at a time, you can fire twice before needing to reload in exchange for shortbow-level damage. If you instead fire both barrels at the same time, its damage is equal to that of other two-handed firearms that lack the kickback trait. However, its single-shot damage is below average and each barrel must be loaded individually, making it an inferior firearm once you have spent the first two shots. I would consider the double-barreled musket useful to a construct innovator who rides their construct, as they are unlikely to need to make more than two shots per fight and only carry a ranged weapon for moments when their construct can't melee things. However, as a two-handed weapon it prevents you from using a shield or Tamper, which can be problematic if your build desires either.
- **Double-Barreled Pistol ★★** With minimum damage, the double-barreled pistol sacrifices what few advantages firearms possess. It is possible to justify using it on a construct pilot build, as wielding it in one-hand for the rare moments in which you need to compensate for your construct's lack of range while retaining the benefits of a free-hand for carrying a shield or using Tamper can be pretty helpful.
- **Dragon Mouth Pistol ★★** The dragon mouth pistol has a pistol's damage, but it also has the scatter trait, which inherently adds a bit of damage on top of its default. It lacks the fatal trait, but that is unlikely to bother an inventor. If you are going to use a pistol, this is likely the best one available to you. For those with a construct pilot build, it is green.
- **Dueling Pistol ★★** A pistol with a non-combat trait. It is only worthwhile over the other pistols when you need to smuggle it past security.
- **Harmona Gun ★★★** This weapon hits extremely hard. It competes with the arquebus for the highest average damage of any firearm, and inventors aren't likely to care that it lacks the fatal and concussive traits. Because it requires strength, it is a great choice for the rope shot weapon modification. Those without the strength to use it can choose an arbalest instead. It is identical but for worse range and the backstabber trait instead of the strength-reliant kickback trait.
- **Jezail ★★★** The jezail has several interesting advantages. First, it is one of the highest-damage firearms to lack the kickback trait. Inventors without the strength for an arquebus, but who prefer a sniper-style weapon over the blunderbuss, will prefer this firearm. Second, it can be wielded and fired one-handed at the cost of its fatal trait: a unique take on a two-hand weapon akin the bastard sword. The jezail loses little versatility compared to a shortbow and maintains higher damage. The only downside is

the reload trait. Still, for inventors lacking strength who feel they have the action economy to spare reloading, the jezail is a clear standout.

~~Amusingly, because the jezail technically is a one-handed weapon and technically lacks the two-hand trait, it could be a beneficiary of the integrated gauntlet weapon modification. If you want an arm cannon the jezail is able to perform admirably in the role, though you will never be able to access its fatal aim trait.~~ This is no longer true as of recent errata, which precludes the fatal aim trait from compatibility with that modification.

- **Mithral Tree ★** This mind-bogglingly stupid looking gun was made by elves. It is almost completely outclassed by pistols; if you just strap a buckler to your off-hand, a pistol receives all the same abilities as this weapon with the additional benefit of having a free hand. Its sole advantage is its higher range, which is excessive on any typical battle map.
- **Pepperbox ★** The pepperbox deals pathetic damage in exchange for the capacity trait. While it has better range than the slide pistol, the slide pistol is superior in every other category.
- **Repeating Heavy Crossbow ★★** Oddly, the repeating heavy crossbow is a martial weapon unlike its smaller compatriots. ~~It can be used as a ranged weapon innovation.~~ It can no longer be used as a ranged weapon innovation post-remaster due to its status as a first level weapon. It has great range, making it the best choice for dedicated sniper builds: the kind of character that deliberately walks a hundred feet behind the rest of the party while travelling. ~~It can receive weapon modifications to further improve its massive range for true snipers.~~ Unfortunately, it does have a reload value of one and you rarely need such extreme range. You also only get five shots before you need to spend your whole turn reloading. It won't be a problem most fights, but it stings when it does.
- **Slide Pistol ★★** With better base damage, better critical damage, and a higher capacity, the slide pistol is better than the pepperbox in almost every way. While its low range may hurt from time to time, it is well worth being able to reload without needing a free hand. Using a slide pistol, you can carry a shield in one hand and still "reload" your gun between each shot. While the action economy of doing so is still not good, you at least might not need to spend actions moving and will occasionally be able to raise your shield. Using a slide pistol with the Combat Climber skill feat and Gadget Specialist inventor feat for gecko pads also means being able to fight from the safety of a wall. It is also a good fit for those with high dexterity interested in using a shield, as might be the case for a low level subterfuge suit innovator.

Strength:

Common Thrown (Agile)

- **Hand Azde ★★★** Rock bottom damage and a low thrown range in exchange for agile, forceful, and sweep. Potentially making your second attack with two more accuracy than average is damn tempting for a class with the inventor's damage bonuses, but the low damage will always be a hurdle. It's basically outclassed by the hatchet.

- **Hatchet** ★★★★ The hatchet has both agile and sweep. It is only barely a thrown weapon, as its range increment is paltry. Still, thanks to that and its two MAP mitigation traits it is uniquely well-suited to landing overdrive attacks multiple times a round. After all, nothing stops the sweep trait from applying to a thrown weapon strike.
- **Light Hammer** ★★★★ The light hammer and the hatchet are very similar weapons. The hammer trades sweep for a better range increment. It is a great choice for those interested in the tangle line modification, because its generous range increment allows a weapon innovator to trip at good range while its agile trait capitalizes on the rune slot you saved by using tangle line rather than a returning rune.

Common Thrown (Non Agile)

- **Rungu** ★★ Shove and a long thrown range with average damage. I'd rather have the agile trait of the light hammer.
- **Trident** ★★★ The trident offers solid damage and range. It is a great choice for a simple, easy, conventional build reliant on the returning rune or a ranged tether modification.

Common One Handed

- **Battle Axe** ★★★ High damage for its category and the sweep trait. It's a good alternative to the longsword for weapon innovators, though few weapon innovators will be using a one-handed style in the first place.
- **Flail** ★★ Mediocre damage, mediocre traits. There are better options available.
- **Gaff** ★ There is little reason to use this weapon compared to a flail.
- **Light Pick** ★ The light pick is one of two common agile weapons that are not finesse. It is for crit-fishing builds. The inventor isn't well-suited to the job.
- **Longsword** ★★ The longsword has the highest one-handed damage but the versatile trait is pretty useless. Look to the battle axe or warhammer for better options with the same damage.
- **Machete** ★★ Another weapon with a die size drop for deadly.
- **Pick** ★★ Leave the crit-fishing to the fighter unless you have a party willing to buff you every round.
- **Probing Cane** ★★ A boring weapon with finesse and sweep.
- **Sap** ★★ A sap has decent damage for a nonlethal weapon. If you care about taking captives alive, put a potency crystal on a sap. It is otherwise outclassed by agile thrown weaponry such as the hatchet and light hammer as a primary weapon. The nonlethal trait makes the weapon useless against constructs and other creatures immune to nonlethal damage. A weapon innovator could use modifications to remove the nonlethal trait at-will, but those same modifications could instead apply the nonlethal trait at-will to a better weapon.
- **Scimitar** ★ The scimitar is made obsolete by the panabas. There is never a reason to use it instead of the latter.
- **Scizore** ★★ Disarm and parry are okay.

- **Shield Boss** ★★ An attached weapon, this time to a shield. You could use these if you were a power suit armor innovator who needed a free hand for athletics checks but still wanted to carry a shield. Improve its rating one step in that context.
- **Shield Spikes** ★★ Identical to the shield boss bar its damage type.
- **Warhammer** ★★★ High one-handed damage and the shove trait. This weapon is a fine weapon innovation for use with entangling form.

Common One or Two Handed

Note this category is for weapons with the two-hand trait, meaning they can be used in one or two hands, not weapons that are two-handed. True two-handed weapons are listed below.

- **Bastard Sword** ★★★★ The bastard sword is the only noteworthy weapon with the two-hand trait. The two-hand trait allows it to be wielded on one or two hands. In either case, the bastard sword deals the maximum damage for its category. This affords you the chance to start battle with high damage, then release your grip for free when you need a free hand.

  The bastard sword is a great choice for those interested in using the Tamper or Gadget Specialist feats. It also affords power suit armor innovators with the muscular exoskeleton modification access to all athletics checks. Inventors interested in shield use can use their shield during fights against easily-blocked minions and put their shield away to get better damage against a boss or spellcaster that would break or bypass it. The bastard sword is also an excellent choice for those with any archetype reliant on a free-hand, such as the alchemist or scroll trickster. Even devoid of any additional incentives, a bastard sword affords you the versatility to open doors, grab edges, steal items, and more without sacrificing major combat potential on following rounds. It is a great choice for any inventor.
- **Earthbreaker** ★★★ The earthbreaker is a good alternative to the bastard sword for weapon innovators interested in using a shield. It has slightly lower damage compared to a bastard sword but gets the razing, shove, and versatile traits. A weapon innovator can add entangling form to get access all athletics checks.
- **Griffon Cane** ★★★ This weapon's backswing trait is useful for landing overdrive damage. This is a useful alternative to the greatclub for those who want a free hand on occasion.
- **Panabas** ★★★ This weapon is a good weapon for damage focused innovators who still want free-hand options. It'll never beat the bastard sword, but it's a close second. The panabas is a good choice for turning into a reach weapon at high level with the extensible weapon modification.
- **Talwar** ★★ Basically a panabas that trades the sweep trait for the less useful versatile.

Common Two Handed

- **Adze** ★★★ The adze is identical to the falchion bar its weapon group.
- **Battle Saddle** ★ You could technically use this while mounted on your construct. I can't think of any good reasons to.

- **Falchion** ★★★ The falchion is inferior to the greataxe in every way. The falchion drops its damage dice in exchange for sweep and forceful, but the greataxe has sweep and a higher damage dice. That means the falchion deals less damage on its first strike, and the same damage with the same accuracy on its second strike. The falchion is a fine weapon, it is just outclassed by a better one.
- **Greataxe** ★★★★ For inventors focused on damage, the greataxe is a prime choice. The greataxe has the highest possible weapon damage and a MAP mitigation trait, enabling it to capitalize on overdrive. Hypothetically, an inventor with this weapon could use a class feat like Clockwork Celerity to hit two targets with overdrive attacks and then explode on the same turn, for some impressive split damage. The greataxe is a top pick for power suit innovators with the speed booster modification and weapon innovators with any modification granting the greataxe a new damage type.
- **Greatclub** ★★★ This weapon is underrated. Its base damage is sub-maximum, but its backswing trait is very nice for inventors fully committed to damage. If you started play with a three in strength and a four in intelligence this weapon is about equal to its higher base damage rivals, as the higher your crank your damage the more important landing it becomes.
- **Greatpick** ★★ Leave crit-fishing to the fighter. You aren't quite good enough at it to justify using a weapon so monomaniacally focused on critical hits. I could justify this only for a high-level game as a weapon innovator with the deadly strike modification and generous support caster allies. Try to find a keen rune so your second attack can crit if you are actually starting such a game, and prepare to be screwed when you don't roll high. Getting access to sure strike through an archetype, ancestry, or both would also be ideal.
- **Greatsword** ★★★ Maximum damage and two damage types makes the greatsword as simple as it is reliable. This weapon is a solid go-to for power suit innovators with the speed booster modification. Reach is less important when you are more likely to be able to move right up to your enemy. If you are a weapon innovator, the greatsword is a fine pick for those who don't want to use a reach weapon but still want to use entangling form.
- **Maul** ★★★★ Maximum damage and the shove trait makes an athletics-focused weapon innovator salivate. Giving the maul entangling form grants the inventor a weapon capable of using the three most important athletics checks on a single extreme-damage weapon.
- **Scythe** ★★ The scythe adds very little substance to the inventor's kit, but if you intend to take one of the modular weapon modifications you could do worse.
- **Tetsubo** ★★★ This interesting weapon can put its sweep trait to good effect with the inventor's overdrive damage and existing predilection to split damage between foes with area effects. The addition of the razing trait isn't worth much, but it's just enough to put it on par with the greatclub.
- **War Flail** ★★★ The war flail splits its focus between athletics checks and multiple attacks. If you choose the war flail, your game plan will probably consist of trying to trip one foe to limit its offensive actions while damaging another. I might choose this on a

power suit innovator with the speed booster modification to position myself in such a manner where implementing that strategy was possible, but even with improved speed you won't always have the right enemy setup for it.

Common Reach

- **Bec de Corbin** ★★★★ Low damage for razing, shove, and versatile. You can easily get all athletic weapon traits on a single weapon by applying entangling form to this weapon.
- **Bo Staff** ★★ The bo staff is the only way to get the parry trait on a reach weapon, but it doesn't play to the inventor's offensive strength.
- **Fauchard** ★★★★ Despite its low damage, the fauchard has just enough traits to keep itself top-tier. Inventors may not be able to capitalize on deadly quite as well as other classes, but it is still helpful to have. Sweep can mitigate your multiple attack penalty and synergizes with reach nicely due to your improved access to targets. While splitting damage is usually a bad idea, an inventor is likely to follow up attacks with an explode somewhere down the line. If you are going to split your damage between targets anyways, you might as well try to take a couple out all at once. It also has trip, making it a good choice for armor inventors with the muscular exoskeleton modification. The distinction between it and the guisarme is ultimately one of preference. It is yellow for weapon innovators because it is redundant with the entangling form modification.
- **Glaive** ★★★ With the deadly and forceful traits, the glaive is all about making up for its low damage. If you do not want to use athletics and are going for overdrive damage alone, the glaive competes with the fauchard as a receptacle for versatile or modular modifications.
- **Guisarme** ★★★★ The guisarme is a good weapon for power suit innovators with the muscular exoskeleton initial modification. It has high damage and the trip trait, both of which are useful. It is yellow for weapon innovators because it is redundant with the entangling form modification.
- **Halberd** ★★★★ The halberd has high damage and the versatile trait. It is an ideal weapon for weapon innovators with the entangling form initial weapon modification.
- **Lance** ★★ The lance is intended to be used while mounted, but it doesn't actually perform well in that context. Due to its low base damage and the inventor's mediocre ability to crit, you'd typically be better served by any other one-handed weapon with higher damage dice, such as a longsword. If you have a small size character on a medium size construct and you want to use your construct as a glorified horse, the lance can at least provide you with good reach. Medium characters on large steeds cannot benefit from the reach trait and have little incentive to use lances as a result.
- **Long Hammer** ★★★ Brace, reach, trip, and low damage. It's fine, but weapon innovators won't take it because it is redundant with entangling form and most power suit innovators will choose the guisarme instead because brace isn't a very important trait.
- **Meteor Hammer** ★★★ The meteor hammer's low damage noticeably impedes it relative to polearms. It also already has the trip trait, making it partially redundant to put entangling form onto the weapon. If for some reason you don't want to use entangling

form, the meteor hammer can be a decent receptacle for either of the modular modifications. The backswing trait is also quite appreciated by inventors because it can help you land your overdrive damage if you miss with your first attack. The polearms are a better choice overall, but this is still a good weapon if you like the flavor.

- **Ranseur** ★★★ The ranseur has d10 damage and disarm. The remaster gave the entangling form modification disarm and made this weapon's niche vanish in doing so. Choose the halberd or fauchard instead unless you plan to use an inferior modification.
- **Shuan Ji** ★★ This weapon sets a new minimum for damage on strength based martial reach weaponry, but its unique combination of traits make it an adequate pick for multiattack-focused inventors. There's still no real way to justify choosing it over something that deals more base damage.

Combination:

Combination weapons no longer provide any speed advantage as of the remaster. You can't switch from a melee to range attack mode any faster than somebody drawing a new weapon.

There are a few alternatives that must be considered before you commit to a combination weapon. First, the gauntlet bow. This weapon works like a combination weapon and shares runes, but it isn't technically a combination weapon and doesn't require an action to switch attack modes. It's superior to most combination weapons with a d4 damage die in both categories, and arguably superior to many with higher damage. It also comes with a free hand and the parry trait. The only downside is the gauntlet's lack of finesse.

Next, the reinforced stock. This likewise doesn't require an action to switch attack modes and deals more damage than any finesse combination weapon. Finesse is a useful trait for a switch hitter because they can use dexterity for both attack modes. The downside of the stock is its inability to share runes. If you generally intend to favor one combat style -especially ranged combat- but want a backup option when either approach is disincentivized by a given encounter, using a stock with a potency crystal attached is usually a better choice than a combination weapon. In particular, it's much better for use avoiding Reactive Strikes because it doesn't need to spend a reaction-triggering interact action to switch.

True switch hitters who want to emphasize both melee and ranged combat equally are served decently by combination weapons. Those who use both combat styles regularly will be more willing deal with the minor damage loss that combination weapons have relative to regular weapons, as it is more important to them that both weapon forms always have runes.

Common Combination

- **Bow Staff** ★★★ It's a decent choice if you have little strength and want a backup melee weapon for close-quarters engagements. It's primary draw is its lack of reload, making it comparable to a non-propulsive shortbow. It has worse deadly damage, but it somehow has better range. If you have decent strength, you'd usually be better off with a composite shortbow.
- **Crescent Cross** ★ A one-handed parry combination weapon with bad damage. Just use a gauntlet bow.

- **Lancer ★** A reach combination weapon. Reach loses its luster when you have a ranged attack and no access to Reactive Strike. You can't even use it for Reactive Strike if you happen to be in ranged mode when the enemy approaches you. Still, boost its rating one step if you got Reactive Strike from somewhere.
- **Mikazuki ★★** A weird bow combination weapon with reload. The low damage and lack of finesse makes it difficult to recommend over a gauntlet bow, but a subterfuge suit innovator might use it anyways.

Uncommon Combination

- **Axe Musket ★★★** Along with the dagger pistol, the axe musket is one of the few combination weapons to have seen real-world use in any significant capacity. While it is a solid weapon for a switch-hitter, it is tragically outperformed by the gun sword.
- **Black Powder Knuckle Dusters ★** Somehow this weapon doesn't have the free-hand trait, which could have made up for its atrocious damage in both categories and enabled it to compete with the gauntlet bow.
- **Cane Pistol ★** Errata finally gave the cane pistol its concealable trait. Hilariously, the cane has the thrown trait in case you want to throw it rather than, you know, fire the gun, and the thrown cane actually deals more damage. While amusing, there's little point to having multiple ranged attack options on a single weapon, as you'll always favor one over the other. The loss of damage isn't worth such a dubious benefit.
- **Dagger Pistol ★** Rock-bottom damage without any good traits to make up for it. It has some dubious value to an inventor with the dual-weapon warrior archetype, but even then I can't recommend it.
- **Gun Sword ★★★★** Easily the best combination weapon by a significant margin. Bafflingly, it even got post-release damage buffs. Its ranged mode now deals great damage even by the standards of non-combination firearms in addition to being the only combination weapon blessed by the kickback trait. It's the premier choice for switch hitters that emphasize strength, as it's the only combination weapon to take advantage of a high strength score in both forms. Inventors don't care about its lack of fatal as they don't crit that often. Even if you dropped the die size of the gun to d6 like the other two-handed combination weapons, it would still be the best one.
- **Hammer Gun ★★★** The hammer gun makes an admirable attempt to compete with the gun sword. Errata gave it a buff to melee damage sufficient to make it the strongest combination weapon when used as a melee attack. Its ranged mode is a complete afterthought, with low damage and minimal traits. However, because it's designed to emphasize melee this weapon has to compete with the mundane strategy of using a bog-standard maul with some javelins, tridents, or bombs for backup.
- **Mace Multipistol ★★★** With decent melee damage and the finesse trait, it's pretty good. Its primary value is to sword-and-board builds who want to stand still the entire fight. Your actions consist of raising your shield, shooting, and reloading ad-nauseam.
- **Piercing Wind ★★** The errata's damage buff is decent. You can't capitalize on its one-handed status because you need the other hand to reload, unlike the mace multipistol. It's slightly better as a finesse melee weapon because its sweep trait doesn't require

strength to work, but the mace multipistol is a better choice if you intend to use your other hand for anything.

- **Rapier Pistol** ★ Rock-bottom damage with crit-fishing features on both weapon forms.
- **Triggerbrand** ★ The errata afforded to the piercing wind has made the triggerbrand obsolete, unless you desperately want piercing damage on your melee attack for some reason. You could just shoot anything vulnerable to piercing, though.

Magic Items:

I can't review every magic item in the game, as there are far too many for such an endeavor to be practical. I've outlined some standout examples, those with unique synergy, and trap options to avoid.

Armor Runes:

Common armor runes are pretty weak overall. The subterfuge suit innovator has the most to gain because the best armor runes are stealth focused.

- **Shadow** ★★★ Most skills have a worn item that grants an item bonus. Stealth uniquely has a rune option. A shadow rune provides the cheapest item bonus to stealth, and is highly coveted by subterfuge suit innovators as a result. The only common worn magic item to grant a comparable bonus is the Cloak of Elvenkind, which costs six times as much in exchange for also allowing you to cast invisibility.
- **Glamoured** ★★ This armor rune allows you to change the appearance of your armor. Like the Collapse Armor inventor feat, it is primarily of use when attempting to get your armor into a social function. You might grab this rune when such an event is coming up, then stuff it on a runestone when you no longer need it.
- **Ready** ★ While equipping your armor is slightly faster this way, it will never be enough to make a difference. If you are interested in quickly donning armor you should take the Collapse Armor inventor feat.
- **Energy Resistant** ★ There is no point to this rune. A charm of resistance is half the price, provides the exact same benefit, and doesn't take up a rune slot.
- **Invisibility** ★★★ This armor rune provides you with the benefits of invisibility as a single action. However, there are a couple alternatives available to you. The cloak of elvenkind provides both longer-lasting invisibility and an item bonus to stealth. It also does not take up a rune slot and has a 30% lower cost. If you are interested in reconnaissance or infiltration, it is the better pick. If you instead want an escape hatch from combat, the invisibility armor rune is better because it takes a single action to activate and won't demand a free hand to pull up the hood. I generally favor the cloak of elvenkind for its lower expense, but the invisibility rune is more convenient in encounter mode. Nothing stops you from buying both if you prefer.
- **Fortification** ★★ Inventors are a fragile class. They are also likely to enter the melee. That combination means they are very likely to get downed by critical hits. This rune is very expensive for its effect, but it might save your life: especially if your GM has a

tendency to throw single big monsters at you, who will crit as often as they hit. Power suit armor innovators have a far better option as a revolutionary modification.

- **Winged ★** The winged rune has the same issue as the energy resistant rune. Winged boots provide faster, longer lasting flight for less than half the price. While winged boots can only be activated once per day, they also come with an automatic featherfall bonus. Unlike the energy resistant runes, the effects are not literally identical, so there are extremely rare cases in which a winged rune is preferrable. The most common reason to consider a winged rune is when you already have good magic boots. It still isn't worth the price: you'd be better off buying consumables like stormfeather talismans or potions of flying.

Other:

- **Inventor's Fulu ★★★** These fulu provide you with an expensive way to bail out of a critical failure on an unstable check. It won't protect you from overdrive, though.

Potions:

It can be difficult to find the free hand necessary for potion usage. The following ratings assume that you have an appropriate build, such as one reliant on Tamper, a free-hand weapon, or an unarmed attack.

- **Potion of Expeditious Retreat ★★★** These potions often get overlooked because they rely on planning for failure. Don't let that stop you: especially at low levels, enemies will have no chance of catching up to you after drinking this potion. Buy them for yourself, convince your party to buy them, and buy them for your favorite NPCs. Whenever you encounter something tougher than your party can handle, need to flee the scene of a crime, or even just get a plot-critical item away from the antagonist, the potion of expeditious retreat more than pulls its weight. At just three gold, this potion is a steal.
- **Potion of Retaliation ★★★** Damage those that attack you for one minute. You probably shouldn't bother much with the minor and lesser versions unless you know that you are going to fight unarmed monsters. The moderate, greater, and major versions apply to all melee strikes. If you buy multiple, you'll want to choose cold and fire damage to trigger weaknesses. If you just buy one at a time, acid or electricity will be more reliable. Either way the function is the same: enemies attack you less and attack your allies more, or they take damage by attacking you. As most inventors are glass cannons with high damage and moderate defense, either is fine with you.
- **Shrinking Potion ★★** This item is generally of low value due to its onset time, which often means you might as well have just used the minute squeezing through whatever obstacle you are trying to bypass. However, becoming tiny size does allow you to ride your construct regardless of what size it is, which in turn can bypass bad athletics while exploring. If you are a construct innovator and your construct has manual dexterity, climbing limbs, or amphibious construction, you could benefit greatly from having one or more of these potions on your person. Construct innovators with medium or small constructs and an appropriate modification can consider this green.

- **Potion of Flying ★★** If you have a free hand, you might prefer this to stormfeather talismans for its much faster fly speed. If not, the action tax of stowing and redrawing your weapon, along with drawing and drinking this potion, will assuredly make you prefer stormfeather talismans. Stormfeathers do have the additional requirement that you are an expert in acrobatics, so you might not have any choice in the matter.
- **Potion of Minute Echoes ★★** Bypass your atrocious perception by making your hearing a precise sense, enabling you to easily pick out invisible and concealed creatures.

Talismans:

Talismans are usually the best consumables.

- **Owlbear Claw ★★★★** These talismans grant anyone access to the critical specialization effect of their weapon. Their rating is bolstered by its affordability. Weapon innovators do not need this talisman because they already get their critical specialization effect. Pilots don't make enough attacks to need this. Drone construct innovators and armor innovators will buy owlbear claws in six packs. Keep in mind that you do not need to burn an owlbear claw if you do not want to. If the critical specialization effect of your weapon would not be helpful in a given moment, save it for the next time it would.
- **Potency Crystal ★★★** Plenty of players sleep on potency crystals just because they assume their weapon runes will cover everything. This is a narrow-minded approach. Potency crystals make for cheap emergency weapons with all sorts of uses:
    - Put a potency crystal on a shortsword. If you get swallowed or engulfed, you will need a light slashing weapon to cut your way out.
    - Put a potency crystal on a gauntlet. If you get disarmed, you have a turn or two of backup magical weapon damage, with no need to spend an action to draw. This strategy can also help on rounds where you fall unconscious.
    - Put a potency crystal on a reinforced stock. Firearm or crossbow users can make finesse melee attacks on rounds they are confronted by melee opponents who have reactive strike.
    - Put a potency crystal on a javelin. When you need a ranged attack despite generally being a melee character, few other weapons compare.

  Pilots might even use these instead of early fundamental runes. A pilot doesn't normally need to make attacks because they are relying on their construct to do so. However, when their construct is unable to make a melee attack, they may shoot a bow or pistol. Rather than investing in expensive striking and potency runes, you can invest in a potency crystal to save money. On the rare occasions you need to take a shot at something, you can fire as if you had the more powerful runes.
- **Wolf Fang ★★★** This talisman adds a bit of bonus damage to a trip. Weapon innovators are the most likely to want this talisman, due to its affordability, their lack of need for owlbear claws, and their above average access to the trip trait. However, it won't be difficult for monsters resistant to physical damage to negate it.
- **Onyx Panther ★★★** You can move your full speed when sneaking. This is a great choice for subterfuge suit innovators.

- **Feather Step Stone** ★★★ Ignore all difficult terrain on your next move action. This is helpful to every inventor build except for pilots. Melee builds especially will appreciate this, as moving to the enemy is extremely important for them.
- **Hunter's Bane** ★★★ As a free action, you instantly learn your attacker's location. This talisman is very useful for bypassing your terrible perception.
- **Retrieval Prism** ★★ This is a good way to get a weapon innovation into your hands. As it is a free action, if you absolutely need to save an action that would otherwise be spent drawing your weapon this can be a good item to have in an ambush.
- **Dragon Turtle Scale** ★★ If you have a weapon innovation and are planning a trip to a bog or traveling by boat, you should pick up one of these. If you are any other type of inventor, you will likely be better served reconfiguring your innovation to acquire the relevant speed. In either case, you have the swim speed when you need it and can remove it when you are finished.
- **Bloodseeker Beak** ★★ Spend 20 gold to get an extra 1d4 damage on your strike. You can save this talisman for critical hits, so the damage is twice as good as it looks in practice.
- **Fear Gem** ★★★ Spend an extra action on a strike to make your target frightened on success. Frightened is a powerful condition, and if you have a full round to devote to offense it will be well worth it. That this does not rely on your charisma score provides further incentives to dump it.
- **Sneaky Key** ★ Spend 22 gp to save yourself the 3 gp needed to buy replacement picks. I can hardly fathom how this item is supposed to operate.
- **Eye of Enlightenment** ★★★★ It allows you to make a recall knowledge check whenever you strike with your weapon. Despite their high intelligence, the inventor has no innate means of reducing the action cost of recall knowledge. That this talisman grants such an ability dramatically improves their ability to use their knowledge skills mid-combat.
- **Emerald Grasshopper** ★★★ If you can hit a DC 30 athletics check you can jump high enough to clear most castle walls. These are very useful to melee and ranged characters alike: ranged characters to get into sniping positions, and melee characters to reach enemies in said sniping positions. These are a much cheaper means of vertical mobility than the higher-level stormfeathers, but they won't enable you to fight flying opponents nearly as easily. That said, with proper positioning you could ready a strike, jump, and strike the opponent using your reaction once you get in range.
- **Iron Cube** ★★★ Make a strike and a trip attempt with deferred MAP and no need for a free hand. Weapon innovators are unlikely to need the latter benefit, but power suit innovators will be able to receive this talisman's full benefit.
- **Murderer's Knot** ★★★ An easy damage boost which I like quite a bit. It costs 66 gp, where a wounding weapon rune costs 340 gp. If you expect to buy six or more of these over your career, the wounding weapon rune might have been a better call. However, wounding weapons take a rune slot and often waste their full potential because the bleed damage they inflict doesn't stack, or is applied to something weak that dies before the bleed damage triggers. You don't need to worry about that with Murderer's Knots, and

you can use the rune slot to put a more consistent elemental damage rune on your weapon. These are best used on your first hit against boss monsters.

- **Gallows Tooth ★★** The gallows tooth is expensive, but it can make an enemy off-guard for an entire turn with no save. If you have already activated overdrive and want to go all-in with agile strikes, you could get good milage out of this talisman. If not, you might give it a pass. This is of even greater value to construct innovators, because its bonuses apply until the end of the current turn. Your construct's actions are constrained within your turn, and thus both you and your construct can make an attack against the off-guard target without the multiple attack penalty. Construct innovators can consider this green unless they are riding their construct. You will need to be an expert in intimidation to pull this combo off, but construct innovators are more likely than most to be intimidating.
- **Stormfeather ★★★** Stormfeather talismans provide a reasonably priced emergency fly speed. Any martial character can benefit from quick access to flight, and the inventor is no exception. If you have the acrobatics necessary to use this talisman, it is usually a better choice than a potion of flying due to its smaller action cost to activate.

Weapon Runes:

Inventors are very likely to favor basic damage runes on their weapon, especially if they are using a ranged weapon, an agile weapon, or a sweep weapon.

- **Returning ★★★** A cheap weapon rune which instantly returns thrown weapons to your hand. This rune enables the thrown weapon playstyle for most classes. Its real cost is not the minor gold investment, but instead that it takes up a rune slot that would otherwise go to a better rune. For most classes this effectively, if unintuitively, keeps a thrown weapon's damage on par with that of ranged weaponry. The weapon innovator has a mild workaround in the form of a tangle line weapon modification. Using that modification trades better damage at range via making multiple attacks for damage in melee via rune use. The returning rune is best suited for those who intend to use ranged attacks more often, while the tangle line modification suits those who generally want to melee foes but still want the option to throw their weapon without losing it.
- **Disrupting ★★★** This pleasingly cheap rune allows you to deal extra damage to undead creatures. It can be a good way to trigger some extra weaknesses. In a campaign about fighting undead or necromancers, improve its rating to blue.
- **Shifting ★★★** If you want a trick weapon, use this instead of the Dual-Form Weapon feat. It will retain all of your modifications. That said, a weapon innovator might not actually need this feat, because they can add most desirable traits to their weapon via modifications with no need to spend an action to acquire them.
- **Wounding ★★★** This weapon rune synergizes very well with archery and the fauchard. Both weapons excel at splitting damage between multiple foes each round, thus applying the bleeding condition to each. It offers comparable damage to the elemental runes for half the price, but it is not difficult to see why. Splitting damage can backfire if you aren't smart about it. If you'd rather save the rune slot, you could buy murderer's knot talismans instead.

- **8th Level Elemental Runes:** The elemental runes are all comparable in effect to both each other and to the inventor's offensive boost. You should typically choose a different damage type than your offensive boost in an effort to cover your bases, as even when combined neither one deals enough damage to overcome most resistances. By contrast, diversifying means becoming more likely to trigger weaknesses.

  The greater versions of the acid, frost, shock, and flaming runes all contain an unusual quirk which inventors are uniquely able to capitalize on. All damage of their associated type that is dealt by the weapon ignores resistance. This alters the balance of the damage types, but also means weapon and armor innovators who acquire a greater rune which matches the damage type of their offensive boost enable that offensive boost to ignore damage resistance. The greater energy runes are too overpriced for most other classes to choose, but the inventor might at least consider them if their chosen offensive boost damage type is frequently resisted and the rune has a good critical effect, as is the case for cold and fire damage. Due to their high expense, I still don't recommend going out of your way to buy one.

  Weapon innovators can take this one step further: explode, megavolt, and deep freeze all cause their weapon innovation to deal energy damage as area effects. It is dubious RAI because those abilities are class features and are not strikes for which the rune's extra damage applies, but the damage does undeniably come from their weapon and thus by RAW becomes able to bypass resistance. I personally would not allow this in my game and would not begrudge any GM that did the same.

  - **Corrosive** ★★ Acid is a good damage type, but the critical effect of a corrosive weapon is the worst of the lot. If your opponent lacks armor it doesn't do anything. You can get an equally reliable damage type with a better critical effect from the shock rune.
  - **Frost** ★★★ Cold damage has one of the best ratios of weaknesses to resistances and immunities. The critical effect is powerful, but allows the target to make an extra saving throw against the effect.
  - **Shock** ★★★ Electricity damage is a reliable damage type. If you are determined to stack your offensive boost and runes, the shock rune is a good choice. Few creatures are immune to electricity damage, and the resistance can be overcome with enough dedication.
  - **Flaming** ★★ The flaming rune offers a poor damage type, but there are a few quirks that make it uniquely more viable for a weapon innovator. A weapon innovator can stack a significant amount of fire damage onto their armament. By converting overdrive to fire damage, choosing a fire offensive boost, and using a flaming rune, the inventor gains enough fire damage to overpower resistances. At higher levels you could even stack a brilliant rune to get even more fire damage. Doing so ensures that you get the bonus damage of your rune. However, while this rune is *better* for a weapon innovator it still isn't *optimal*. None of that effort made the flaming rune better than the alternatives. You could have avoided dealing with resistance altogether by investing your gold and class features in

another damage type, while retaining the option to target fire weaknesses with overdrive.
    - **Thundering** ★★★★ Sonic damage is easily the best damage type offered by the energy runes. It is the only option an inventor cannot replicate with offensive boost and most characters will never fight anything resistant or immune to it. Certain GMs may rule that, like a firearm, this rune is implied to make a large amount of noise and will draw attention from other areas of the dungeon. Stealthy characters may wish to save their money for an impactful rune or use a shocking rune if their GM rules in that manner.
- **Extending** ★★★★ You can use an extra action to give your melee weapon sixty feat of reach. This allows you to activate overdrive much more easily: striking a target sixty feet away is still cheaper in action economy than spending two actions moving forward before striking. The inventor has high damage and needs enough actions to activate overdrive. The extending rune helps in both cases.
- **Impactful** ★★★ Force damage is the most reliable damage type in the game, but sonic damage is so close that you might as well save your money by purchasing a less expensive thundering rune. If you have already purchased a thundering rune and are looking for even more reliable damage, or do not want to deal with the potential issues caused by blasting loud noise, the impactful rune is a very good choice.
- **Holy** ★★★ This rune is expensive and will only apply to a subset of your opponents. Generally speaking, impactful and thundering runes are both cheaper and more reliable. However, because all fiends are weak to it holy damage triggers more weaknesses than any other damage type. If your campaign is features fiends as antagonists this rune becomes blue and will surpass the value of any other rune.
- **Brilliant** ★★ This rune is intended to be a one-stop-shop for monster weaknesses. It causes fire damage, spirit damage to fiends, and vitality damage to undead. Between them, it can hit three of the game's four most common damage type weaknesses (the other being cold). It is too little too late: you can easily afford cheaper runes that deal more damage by now, in addition to your own innate inventor abilities. It might at least be handy paired with a greater flaming rune, if you can somehow afford both of them on a fire-themed weapon innovator.

Worn Items:

Inventors are going to look for items that reinforce their individual combat role.

- **Backfire Mantle** ★★★ This useful magic item grants a bonus to saving throws against effects coming from allies. A construct innovator can use this to gain a bonus against their own explosions. However, melee inventors are more likely to buy their allies this magic item, so that they can use explode without worrying about your allies as much. Detonating explosions next to your allies still is not ideal, but this is better than nothing and cheap.

- **Boots of Bounding** ★★★ Movement speed is important to almost every inventor. Melee inventors in particular will want to get these boots for the sake of entering melee quickly. Pilot builds will skip these due to their reliance on their construct for mobility.
- **Brooch of Inspiration** ★★ If you have lore skills for creature types associated with the religion or nature skills, this can boost them.
- **Crafter's Eyepiece** ★★★★ This should always be the first magic item you buy. Improving your crafting means improving your odds of success on overdrive, which in turn means getting better damage. If you have a shield or construct it also helps you repair it. There is no excuse not to own one.
- **Demon Mask** ★★ Pilot builds can consider this item green. It provides an easy intimidation bonus and a once-per-day cast of the feat spell. Both are very helpful when used in support of your construct's attacks.
- **Handwraps of Mighty Blows** ★★★★ In the vast majority of cases an inventor is better served by weaponry, as you might expect from a class themed around technologically advanced equipment. However, power suit armor innovators might consider these blue if they choose to rely on unarmed attacks from their ancestry or an archetype. As that build is entirely viable, power suit innovators interested in doing so can consider this item as vital as other builds would consider fundamental weapon runes.
- **Hat of the Magi** ★★★ This item will boost your arcana skill and give you access to a flavorful cantrip. It is a cheap and easy skill boost for a recall knowledge skill that covers wide-ranging creature types and common magic spells.
- **Lifting Belt** ★★★ This item is broadly useful for its benefits to athletics checks. Weapon innovators will consider it yellow due to its partial redundancy with the item bonuses granted by the weapon traits they add to their weapon. Armor innovators relying on ancestral unarmed attacks or the muscular exoskeleton modification will consider it blue. Regardless of build, it helps with climbing and jumping. Such bonuses will always come up over the course of a campaign. At higher levels you might upgrade to armbands of athleticism.
- **Pendant of the Occult** ★★★ This is a great item which both boosts occultism and grants you the guidance cantrip.
- **Charm of Resistance** ★★★★ If your ancestry isn't giving you fire resistance, you'll want to pick up a charm of fire resistance as soon as you can. A charm of fire resistance will completely nullify most of an inventor's self-inflicted injuries, and will do so far more effectively than an ancestral resistance (though it does cost money). It will also protect you against a very common damage type. Fire damage is particularly likely to be persistent damage, against which resistance is especially useful.
- **Winged Boots** ★★ These boots are the most affordable way to take flight regularly. If you are an armor or construct innovator, you might be inclined to sell these once your innovation allows you to take flight. I'd personally recommend buying more affordable consumables (such as potions of flying and stormfeathers) until you can acquire the correct upgrade. They are blue for melee weapon innovators, who lack any class-based means of flight and need to be able to respond to flying foes.

Archetypes:

Multiclass:

To save myself some time, I'd like to get some general reviews out of the way.

- **Resiliency** ★★★ If you are committed to an archetype, the resiliency feat of martial classes is great. It is particularly noteworthy in free archetype games, in which I consider it blue.
- **Basic, Expert, and Master Spellcasting** These feats are generally blue if intelligence-based and green or yellow if based on another ability score. The spellcasting tradition acts as a modifier. By the standards of an inventor, the divine spell list is the weakest. While its support spells are appreciated, its most useful spells are shared with other traditions. In the absence of a divine spellcaster's ancillary features to enhance healing or otherwise bolster their support abilities, it has the least to offer.

  Avoid most sustained spells during spell selection, as their tax on your action economy is too heavy for the inventor to reliably handle every turn. I also recommend emphasizing spells that do not rely on saving throws, because even with all three feats your spell attack and save DC is behind that of a true caster. That restriction is far more relaxed if you are using your intelligence to cast, due to the inventor's pre-existing incentive to keep it high. Even then, the inventor already has ready access to area damage and may not need it from an archetype.

  Pilots might be able to use a few spells in unique ways by relying on their construct to take hostile actions on their behalf. Invisibility and sanctuary both end if a hostile action is taken, but a pilot can contribute a large amount without using a hostile action via buffing allies, making recall knowledge checks, or by commanding their construct. Your GM may rule that commanding a murder machine to do murder constitutes a hostile action, which is as fair a ruling as any. Even then, pilots might be able to let their construct take independent actions to circumvent the restriction. Check with your GM if this build is of interest to you. They are also more likely to use offensive spellcasting which requires a saving throw, both due to their higher mental ability scores and to avoid imposing a multiple attack penalty on their construct's attacks.

  The following are some quick-and-dirty recommendations for common spells. They are separated by tradition and are far from exhaustive. There are dozens of excellent spells not accounted for below; this listing is intended only as a build accelerator.

  - **Common Arcane Spells:** The arcane list has everything but healing. As most arcane spellcasters use intelligence, I have included more offensive spellcasting on this list than I have other lists. Your save DCs are still a couple behind the casters in your party, but it is not impossible for you to land offensive spellcasting. If you have a repertoire, dispel magic is likely to be your signature spell.
    - Cantrips: Electric Arc, Protect Companion (construct), Shield, Ray of Frost

        - 1st Level: Fear, Grease, Magic Missile, Sure strike
        - 2nd Level: Blur, Dispel Magic, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Resist Energy
        - 3rd Level: Blazing Dive, Fireball, Haste, Slow, Time Jump, Warding Aggression
        - 4th Level: Translocate, Draw the Lightning, Fly, Invisibility, Resist Energy, Stoneskin
        - 5th Level: Blink Charge, Cone of Cold, Translocate, Prying Eye, Wall of Stone
        - 6th Level: Chain Lightning, Wall of Force
        - 7th Level: Fly, Haste
        - 8th Level: Earthquake, Maze
    - **Common Divine Spells:** The divine spell list is lacking for inventors. Most of its buff spells can be taken through an occult caster while its healing spells can be taken from the primal spell list. You might take or prepare a niche utility spell at certain levels, but prepare healing spells on days you do not expect to need it. In either case, the witch is ideal for its intelligence scaling and flexible tradition. If you have a repertoire, heal is likely to be your signature spell.
        - Cantrips: Guidance, Protect Companion (construct), Shield
        - 1st Level: Bless (pilots), Heal, Sanctuary
        - 2nd Level: Dispel Magic, Resist Energy
        - 3rd Level: Heroism, Warding Aggression
        - 4th Level: Freedom of Movement, Resist Energy, Vital Beacon
        - 5th Level: Blink Charge, Prying Eye
        - 6th Level: Heroism
        - 7th Level: Regenerate
        - 8th Level: Divine Aura
    - **Common Occult Spells:** The occult spell list is particularly useful to pilots. They can stack the bonuses they grant through demoralization or Lock On with the benefits of their occult spells. The construct innovation is not mindless and can

benefit from the mental buff spells offered by the occult list. If you have a repertoire, soothe is likely to be your signature spell.

- Cantrips: Guidance, Protect Companion (construct), Shield
- 1st Level: Bless (pilots), Magic Missile, Soothe, Sure strike, Sanctuary
- 2nd Level: Blur, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Resist Energy
- 3rd Level: Haste, Heroism, Hypercognition, Time Jump
- 4th Level: Translocate, Fly, Invisibility, Resist Energy
- 5th Level: Blink Charge, Death Ward, Translocate, Prying Eye
- 6th Level: Heroism, Wall of Force
- 7th Level: Fly, Haste
- 8th Level: Maze

- **Common Primal Spells:** The primal spell list has a bit of everything, though it lacks some of the best spells. An inventor should take this tradition through the witch archetype for its intelligence scaling. The primal list is light on buffs, so you're likely to need to pad your spell list with healing and offense. Intelligence is all the more important due to the latter. If you have a repertoire, heal is likely to be your signature spell.
  - Cantrips: Electric Arc, Guidance, Protect Companion (construct), Ray of Frost
  - 1st Level: Fear, Grease, Heal
  - 2nd Level: Dispel Magic, Resist Energy
  - 3rd Level: Blazing Dive, Fireball, Haste, Warding Aggression
  - 4th Level: Draw the Lightning, Fly, Resist Energy, Stoneskin
  - 5th Level: Cone of Cold, Wall of Stone
  - 6th Level: Chain Lightning
  - 7th Level: Fly, Haste, Regenerate
  - 8th Level: Earthquake

- **Spellcasting Breadth** Spellcasting breadth is as valuable as the spells themselves are, so the rating of this feat is the same as those of the spellcasting feats above. Much like

resiliency, it gives you more the more you invest in the class. If you are in a free archetype game, bump its rating up one color category.

- **Cantrip Expansion ★★★** A first level feat for most spellcasting classes which provides two additional cantrips. True members of these classes rarely need this feat, but an archetype only grants two. The ability to get a couple extra is pretty handy. It is best on melee builds with intelligence-based archetypes to provide accessible ranged attacks for the rare turns you are unable to reach your intended target. Ray of frost is helpful in that regard due to its generous range. You could also use it to pick up detect magic.

Alchemist ★★★

The inventor is well-qualified to use the alchemist archetype. In exchange, the alchemist archetype dramatically improves your flexibility. If you are only interested in healing elixirs you should choose the herbalist. If you want poisons, you should instead choose the poisoner archetype. Both options advance your alchemy level more quickly than the alchemist archetype within their specific fields. What the alchemist offers is a combination of healing, buffs, and bombs.

Versatile vials can bypass physical damage resistances via the acid damage. Alchemist inventors can even use ghost charges to bypass incorporeal resistances. If you find an uncommon bomb you can disassemble it to secure the formula, as is the case for any other uncommon item you find. Don't forget that the Inventor skill feat -which is given automatically to the inventor class- enables you to build common formulas on your own during downtime, just in case your GM is being stingy.

Bombs are able to benefit from overdrive. However, due to their nature as consumables they will not benefit from your ninth level offensive boost. You should be treating bombs as emergency ranged attacks, a means of targeting weaknesses, or a method of bypassing resistances. They're not a primary mode of offense.

You will also need to accommodate the free hand necessary for using alchemy. Several innovators are able to do so with relative ease. Melee weapon innovators can use the integrated gauntlet modification to give their weapon the free-hand trait. They can also use complex simplicity on a gauntlet. Power suit innovators can rely on ancestral unarmed attacks to keep a hand free. Ranged weapon innovators or subterfuge suit innovators will likely use a bow and thus have a free hand for drawing ammunition, which can be easily repurposed for drawing bombs. Ranged builds are more accurate with bombs but are also less likely to need them due to their pre-existing access to ranged damage. You might consider using a longbow and saving your versatile vials for attacks against enemies that get within volley range. The Quick Bomber feat is a must for all of these builds.

- **Advanced Alchemy ★★★★** Create four extra alchemical items at the start of each day. It's a great way to give your allies healing elixirs, such as soothing tonics. You can also use it to create bombs with which to power a weapon siphon. The inventor's propensity for multiple attacks makes them slightly less likely to use a weapon siphon than other classes, but it's still a good strategy for those who don't want to invest much in the alchemist archetype beyond this level. It'll work best for builds that don't emphasize

making multiple attacks with a single weapon, such as sword-and-shield builds or dual-weapon builds.

- **Basic Concoction:**
  - **Quick Bomber** ★★★★ It is all-important for the purpose of using bombs due to their otherwise poor action economy. Other low level alchemist feats either aren't very helpful or are inaccessible due to your lack of a research field. You might pick up Far Lobber through Advanced Concoction later if you plan to make heavy use of bombs.
  - **Improvise Admixture** ★★★ This is a good choice for those who don't plan to use bombs. It lets you create more versatile vials via a crafting check, which is easy for the inventor due to their automatic scaling.
- **Advanced Concoction:** The following feats have caught my eye. Your alchemy level will be too low to use additive feats effectively until you take Expert Alchemy and reach tenth level.
  - **Calculated Splash** ★★★ You can add your intelligence modifier to splash damage. This will stack with overdrive on the initial target.
  - **Directional Bombs** ★★★ You can avoid hitting allies with your bombs. They usually will take a tiny amount of splash damage without complaint if it means hitting several enemies at once, but if they are unconscious causing them to fail a death saving throw is extremely risky. This helps you avoid that fate.
- **Voluminous Vials** ★★★ Get an extra versatile vial. It's pretty easy to get vials between combat as you repair your unstable innovation. This lets you use more in a single encounter, but you're unlikely to use that many vials that quickly. I might pick up one instance of this feat, but I'd be unlikely to choose it again at higher level.
- **Alchemical Power** ★★ This feat increases your alchemist class DC. It also lets you replace the DC of alchemical items you make with your class DC. It's a handy way to use poisons, but most poisons aren't very good and for the most part your alchemical items don't rely on DCs anyways.

Barbarian ★★★

Using the barbarian archetype on an inventor provides massive risk with equally substantial rewards. The dedication offers you rage. Rage adds even more flat damage to your attacks at the cost of dropping your armor class. An inventor with the barbarian archetype is the ultimate glass cannon. Their attacks hit like a truck multiple times per turn, but their low hit points do not pair nicely with a reduced armor class. While a melee weapon innovator will be mighty tempted, the power suit armor innovator is better able to compensate via damage resistance modifications.

Barbarian rage may prevent you from using concentrate actions, but the inventor has shockingly few. As engineers and mechanics, they do most of their thinking out of battle. So long as you don't care for using recall knowledge checks in battle, this downside of rage is surprisingly tenable.

A larger impediment is the action cost of activating both rage and overdrive. Each takes its own action, and the barbarian's bonuses are locked to melee combat. Activating both, moving,

and striking represents a herculean chore. You're almost certain to choose Clockwork Celerity as an inventor feat and/or Wounded Rage when you can, especially if you are using a power suit, to improve your lackluster action economy. You are unlikely to use explode as a result, though that is unlikely to bother you due to this build's monomaniacal focus on weapon damage.

You'll almost certainly want to use a heavy weapon of some kind. Greataxes, halberds, and fauchards are all appropriate choices. The ability to mitigate the multiple attack penalty with sweep and/or save on action economy with reach is incredibly important to an inventor barbarian.

- **Barbarian Resiliency** ★★★★ A standard class archetype resiliency feat.
- **Basic Fury** ★★★★ The first level feat Sudden Charge is almost certain to be your choice. Because you will always want to strike in melee, it effectively doubles your movement speed on a typical battle map. Its open trait will not prevent you from using rage or overdrive as your first action, and it is still extremely useful for moving between targets once the battle gets going, especially if your table uses larger digital maps.
- **Advanced Fury:** The following barbarian feats have caught my eye.
    - **Fast Movement** ★★★ Your movement speed increases while raging. Sudden Charge will likely accommodate your movement needs, but more speed never hurts. Between the both of them, you will almost always be able to make two strikes on your target per turn.
    - **Wounded Rage** ★★★★ You can enter rage as a reaction to taking damage. This is a great way to circumvent the action tax of activating both overdrive and rage. If you aren't taking damage in a fight, you probably didn't need rage. You might even be able to trigger this yourself with your self-inflicted damage.
    - **Reactive Strike** ★★★★ Even at level twelve this is an incredibly useful addition to your toolkit. Landing your extremely powerful attacks more often is incredibly useful to an inventor-barbarian.
    - **Brutal Bully** ★★★ Adding your strength modifier as damage to all of your athletics checks against foes. That's catnip to a weapon innovator, especially one that started with lower-than-average intelligence and thus is less likely to use overdrive. I could imagine a build that uses athletics checks in support of the party until they take damage, at which point they activate Wounded Rage and overdrive to unleash the damage.
- **Instinct Ability:** This feat's rating is contingent on the instinct you chose.
    - **Animal** ★ These are all worse than weapons. One might expect power suit armor innovators to appreciate these for use with a muscular exoskeleton modification. To a sharply limited degree they are correct, but using athletics checks instead of strikes allows the inventor-barbarian's extreme damage to go to waste.
    - **Decay** ★★ Take a minor amount of self-damage for a large amount of extra damage. Unfortunately, it's poison damage.
    - **Dragon** ★★★ Your weapon deals yet another damage type and improves rage damage. This is a fine and safe choice of instinct.
    - **Fury** ★ Get a bad damage bonus and an extra first level feat.

    - **Giant ★★** You gain even more damage but become the most laughably fragile and self-destructive martial character in the game. You will burn bright but short. If your GM refuses to kill characters boost the rating of this ability accordingly.
    - **Ligneous ★ / ★★** The movement penalty is terrible unless you took Raging Thrower and don't plan on moving very much.
    - **Spirit ★★** You deal a bit less damage than dragon but you gain ghost touch on your weapon and the damage will never be resisted if you have a basic understanding of your enemies' creature types.
    - **Superstition ★★** Some interesting anti-mage benefits and self-healing.
- **Juggernaut's Fortitude ★★★** You get your fortitude to master five levels early. You can always retrain this away once you get there.

Bard ★★

The bard is the strongest of the charisma spellcasting archetypes and borders on a blanket green rating. The support power of the occult spell list synergizes well with the inventor's martial playstyle. It has access to numerous buff spells which provide bonuses to both accuracy and athletics checks, such as bless and heroism. Its composition cantrips also become available at level eight, and can serve the same purpose or improve defense and travel speed. The bard even has multiple feats available for those interested in improving their recall knowledge checks, which inventors have no means of doing despite their high intelligence.

The bard must compete against two rivals. First, the witch and psychic archetypes offer the same spell list with the benefits of intelligence scaling, enabling them to choose from a slightly broader range of spells. Using intelligence also makes your spells harder to counteract and better able to counteract enemy magic. Second, the loremaster archetype provides easy access to the bard's recall knowledge feats without the onerous charisma prerequisite. If you merely want one or the other, you should look to those archetypes first.

The bard archetype is best used by those who seek both benefits simultaneously. Possession of the action economy needed to cast two-action support spells and pre-existing investment in charisma likewise makes the bard more appealing. It should therefore come as no surprise that a pilot build is the best-suited for using the bard archetype. They are more likely than other inventors to use recall knowledge and support spells mid-combat because they do not want to advance their construct's multiple attack penalty by making attacks of their own. The construct is not mindless and can benefit from the bard's easy access to status bonuses. The bonuses granted by the bard archetype even stack with those of the Lock On feat because it provides circumstance bonuses while those of the bard provides status bonuses. A bardic pilot could thus produce a monstrously accurate war machine, though you still might be better off casting buffs on your party members overall. The bless spell is ideal for this purpose. It can improve your construct's attacks and those of your allies simultaneously. If your construct is large size, it even covers a wider area than it would for other characters. I consider the bard archetype a high-tier green rating for the pilot.

Non-pilot inventor-bards will need to drop their ability scores in support of charisma, but the bard is a strong archetype and it is not impossible to see benefits from it. Long-duration buffs

that do not detract from your combat action economy are especially valuable to such inventors. The one-action cost of composition cantrips is likewise tenable, if not ideal. However, it must again be stated that most of these benefits could be more easily acquired through other archetypes with more appropriate spellcasting ability scores.

- **Basic Bard Spellcasting** ★★ Standard occult charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.
- **Basic Muse's Whispers:**
  - **Bardic Lore** ★★★★ You can replace all of your wisdom-based recall knowledge skills with an intelligence-based lore skill. This also includes a reduced DC for using a lore skill, and thus both improves your success rate and affords you the chance to go untrained in nature and religion. Technically speaking you have every incentive to choose Multifarious Muse instead of this feat, as doing so grants you this feat and an expanded feat pool at no additional cost.
  - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Standard cantrip expansion feat.
  - **Loremaster's Etude** ★★★★ This focus spell allows either you or an ally to roll a recall knowledge check twice and choose the higher result. This is most helpful to whomever has the higher bonus, so if you have a cleric or druid in the party be sure to allow them the benefits of this feat when discussing religion or nature. It is a focus spell, but it can be used out of combat with ease. Provided you can convince your party to wait ten minutes between checks, this spell enables your entire party to roll twice on all knowledge checks.
- **Advanced Muse's Whispers:**
  - **Courageous Advance** ★★★ Use one extra action when casting inspire courage to afford an ally a stride action as a reaction. Your construct does not have reactions and cannot benefit from this feat, but you can convince an ally to move into a flanking position to provide your construct or other allies with indirect benefits. Furthermore, moving an ally into melee so they can use their optimal three-action turns is incredibly valuable even on its own.
  - **Inspire Defense** ★★★★ You, your construct, and all of your allies gain several useful defensive bonuses. If you are already making heavy use of bless or heroism, this covers your construct and your party's other combat statistics.
  - **Triple Time** ★★★ Your construct and your allies all gain a bonus to their movement speed.
  - **Dirge of Doom** ★★★ Render all enemies around you frightened with no saving throw. They can't reduce their frightened condition for one round. This almost completely outperforms demoralization. The downside is that you cannot have it active at the same time as other composition cantrips.
  - **Courageous Opportunity** ★★★ Even at sixteenth level, reactive strike is still worth your time. This won't be of much interest to pilots due to their low inclination to use their own attacks, but every other type of inventor will relish it.
- **Counter Perform** ★★ Your performance investment is likely to be token at best.

- **Inspirational Performance** ★★★ You may already be giving your allies these benefits with occult spellcasting, but its one-action casting time and generous range secure it a high rating regardless.
- **Occult Breadth** ★★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Bard Spellcasting** ★★ Standard occult charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.
- **Master Bard Spellcasting** ★★ Standard occult charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.

Champion ★★

Getting the ability score array needed to use the champion archetype is a challenge unto itself. Boosting both strength and charisma is extremely difficult for an inventor. Pilot builds are the only build likely to use charisma, but they have no use for strength. The inverse is true of every other inventor build because they already require so many ability scores. The archetype does negate the need for dexterity investment by offering heavy armor as part of its dedication, which spares it a red rating for the melee weapon innovator. They're likely to favor the reaction of the justice cause due to their shared propensity for reach weaponry and the pleasant synergy between the justice reaction and the inventor's high damage output. Any of the former evil causes that adds damage to your weapon strikes is a good fit for weapon innovators with agile weaponry.

Ancestries with a wisdom penalty that lack a boost to dexterity are the best suited to using this archetype, but no common ancestry has such an ability score array. Most ancestries will be forced to endure uncomfortably low constitution and wisdom scores just to take this archetype.

- **Basic Devotion** ★★★★ The first feat you choose from the champion archetype is likely to be Divine Grace. It provides a helpful bonus to your saving throws as a reaction. Once you gain your champion's reaction at sixth level you can retrain this for the first level feat associated with your cause, such as Ranged Reprisal for paladins or Weight of Guilt for redeemers. You could also use Advanced Devotion to pick up both without much trouble.
- **Champion Resiliency** ★★★★ A standard class archetype resiliency feat.
- **Devout Magic** ★★★ You gain a champion focus spell. The lay on hands spell is available at the same level as the equivalent inventor feat: Searing Restoration. It heals slightly more on average and improves armor class. It doesn't cure bleeding and doesn't have the unstable trait, instead relying on the focus spell system. If you want to heal but don't want to lose your unstable action in service of that cause, lay on hands is one the most reliable and efficient means of doing so available. A pilot is particularly capable of using this feat due to the high movement speed and improved action economy afforded by a construct innovation. Those dedicated to healing before all should check the Blessed One archetype before committing to a champion. You might also consider shields of the spirit if you are using a shield build, but I don't consider it as useful through archetypes as much of its power comes from its synergy with other champion feats.
- **Advanced Devotion:** The following feats are of particular note:

    - **Aura of Courage** ★★★ You and your allies bleed off fear more quickly. This will even assist a technically-not-mindless construct.
    - **Reactive Strike** ★★★ Getting extra attacks is great for the inventor due to their high damage. Be sure to avoid reaction overload between a champion's reaction, divine grace, shield block, and this feat. If you have too many, you'll be more inclined to give this a pass.
- **Champion's Reaction** ★★★★ This reaction is the reason you chose this archetype. Failing to take it is a crime against optimization.
- **Devout Blessing** ★★★ You can improve the durability of your shield, gain a free rune for your weapon, or get a speed boost. The speed boost is the best one if you don't already have a redundant bonus to speed.

Cleric ★★★

The cleric archetype is stingy. It offers nothing outside of that which it is obligated to provide. The only benefits one gains from taking the cleric archetype are access to its class feats and standard spellcasting progression.

This stinginess hurts the archetype's potential on an inventor. A plethora of its feats list a divine font as a prerequisite, which the archetype never offers. Feats that improve the heal spell are likewise of limited value because they are intended to bolster the free heal spells granted to clerics by their font class feature. On an inventor-cleric with only a few spells total, they have a diminished impact.

Due to these issues very little about the cleric stands out. Its biggest advantage is the format of its spellcasting. Most other spellcasting archetypes rely on discovering spells and adding them to your spellbook or choosing specific spells and being unable to cast anything but those spells. The cleric gains access to their entire spell list right away. As such, nothing stops an inventor-cleric from pulling out unorthodox spells when needed. For example, if translating an ancient tome written in Infernal suddenly becomes relevant, you can rest and prepare comprehend languages instead of your default combat loadout.

The cleric also has a surprising number of weapon damage feats. While the damage gained from this archetype is not likely to rival that of barbarian rage, it can eventually get surprisingly close and does not come with any defensive penalties or lock you out of certain actions. Those looking for extra damage with little thought behind its use are well served by the cleric archetype.

- **Basic Cleric Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard divine wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Basic Dogma:**
    - **Domain Initiate** ★★★ Particularly useful domains include destruction, knowledge, and pain. Unfortunately, few holy gods possess those domains. Most also focus on magic rather than science, making them a poor thematic fit as well. Inventor-clerics from the Inner Sea region are perhaps inclined to worship less mainstream powers, such as one of the four empyreal lords with the knowledge domain.

Refocusing can be difficult to do alongside repairing your construct. An appropriately mechanical deity and a permissive GM may allow you to refocus at the same time as you repair the unstable function of your innovation. Deities such as Brigh or Torag are particularly likely candidates for this particular synergy.

  - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Standard cantrip expansion feat.
  - **Emblazon Armament** ★★★ This feat provides access to the easiest free damage boost in the game, albeit the mildest possible damage boost. Your strikes all deal one extra damage. You can instead opt to improve your shield's durability through this feat, which is also quite nice.
  - **Rapid Response** ★★★ When an ally goes down you can move towards them with extra speed using your reaction. Even if you do not intend to heal your ally, getting in the face of the enemy responsible can be very useful for keeping them alive.
- **Advanced Dogma** ★★★ The only feat to stand out at higher levels is Emblazon Energy. You get more free extra damage on every weapon hit, which synergizes perfectly with overdrive. This time it is elemental, though you're likely to leave it set to sonic unless your deity provides you with incentive to choose another type. As with its predecessor, this feat can be applied to a shield. When you do so, you can shield block damage of the appropriate type: this in turn means gaining the ability to shield block your own self-damage, albeit at the cost of your reaction. Your sturdy shield will almost always be just tough enough to take all of the damage without taking damage itself, which is the exact scenario in which you want to deploy shield block.

  Some may look to the similar feat Divine Weapon for further strike power, but it is not the equal of its contemporaries. Its bonuses only apply after you cast a spell, which is a sharply limited resource for you. Furthermore, casting a spell often takes two actions and may not always be feasible alongside a weapon strike. It does at least allow you to trigger holy damage weaknesses with ease, so its value skyrockets in a campaign about fighting fiends. You may wind up taking it anyways for lack of other good feats to choose.
- **Divine Breadth** ★★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Cleric Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard divine wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Master Cleric Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard divine wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.

Druid ★★

Druids are allowed to wear metal armor as of the remaster. Even now that you are able, the thematic clash makes it difficult to justify a backstory that accommodates both a progressive engineering-focused ideology alongside a ritualistic set of edicts which abhors the byproducts of industry. The flames order has the most mechanical and thematic synergy, but is also likely to make you commit anathema if your various forms of fire damage ever spiral out of control.

- **Basic Druid Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard primal wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Basic Wilding** ★★ Druids don't even get Cantrip Expansion. At a glance Poison Resistance looks the most valuable, which aught to tell you something.
- **Order Spell** ★ Wave order is the only druid order to offer a spell of interest to the inventor and is green. The rest are red due to their reliance on offensive spellcasting, shapeshifting, or healing animal companions.
- **Advanced Wilding** ★★ You can get fire resistance at level eight if you are part of the flame order. At level sixteen you could choose Fiery Retort from the same order to deal some retaliatory damage to those who hit you in melee.
- **Primal Breadth** ★★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Druid Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard primal wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Master Druid Spellcasting** ★★★ Standard primal wisdom prepared spellcasting progression.

Fighter ★★★★

The fighter archetype is saddled with a double prerequisite, but inventor shouldn't have too much trouble adjusting their build to accommodate it. You'll typically follow the strength build with an extra point in dexterity. In exchange, you get access to several amazing feats and reactive strike.

- **Basic Maneuver:** The fighter has several amazing feats. Many of them synergize very well with the inventor. Below are some that stand out to me. There are many other useful fighter feats, but many of them can be more easily acquired through an archetype. Examples include dual-weapon warrior, mauler, and wrestler. Feats able to be more easily acquired through those means are not listed here, though you may still be inclined to choose them if you want to mix-and-match a particular combination.
    - **Combat Assessment** ★★★★ This strike is one action and does not have the press trait. When you strike, you can also recall knowledge. You might as well turn every strike you make into Combat Assessment strikes. This feat is best taken alongside good lore skills to cover your lackluster wisdom, especially if a particular creature type is appropriate to your campaign. It is melee-only.
    - **Exacting Strike** ★★★ This feat only matters when you have a full three-action turn to burn. When that is the case, this feat prevents you from ever seeing the maximum multiple attack penalty, thus allowing you to reliably land overdrive and offensive boost damage at least twice a turn. Ranged weapon innovators and subterfuge suit innovators using archery can consider this feat blue due to the ease with which they can devote three actions to offense. This feat can be especially valuable when taken alongside the Clockwork Celerity inventor feat. The quickened condition substantially eases the difficulty of using this feat.
    - **Sudden Charge** ★★★★ Because you will always want to strike in melee, it effectively doubles your movement speed on a typical battle map. Its open trait

won't prevent you from activating overdrive first because overdrive lacks the attack trait.
    - **Brutish Shove** ★★★ This feat is only held back by its press trait. You make a strike and automatically shove the target if you hit. Polearm users will greatly appreciate pushing the enemy back out to an optimal engagement distance, especially if taken in tandem with the Opportunist fighter archetype feat.
    - **Intimidating Strike** ★★★★ Use two actions to strike a foe and inflict the frightened condition on them. Frightened stands among the best conditions in the game. The ability to inflict it on a strike provides wonderful party support.
    - **Rebounding Toss** ★★★ Use two actions to strike two targets without the multiple attack penalty whenever you use a thrown weapon. This is a great way to deal overdrive and offensive boost damage multiple times a turn. It is best used alongside a high damage thrown weapon, such as a chakram or trident.
- **Fighter Resiliency** ★★★★ A standard class archetype resiliency feat.
- **Opportunist** ★★★★ This feat could not possibly come with a higher recommendation. You gain reactive strike at a very reasonable level. Unless your default mode of combat is ranged weaponry you should always take this.
- **Advanced Maneuver:** In addition to the feats listed under Basic Maneuver, the following feats might draw your attention.
    - **Dual Handed Assault** ★★★ Weapon innovators possess the unique ability to add the two-handed trait to a weapon. Unlike fighters, they can use this ability with weapons other than the bastard sword. This can allow you to enjoy the damage of a two-handed weapon while still retaining the flexibility to use athletics checks, Tamper, or climb.
    - **Swipe** ★★★ Those with polearms will greatly appreciate the ability to strike two targets with no multiple attack penalty, thus landing their overdrive and offensive boost twice.
    - **Advantageous Assault** ★★★ After you grapple or trip a target using your entangling form polearm and first action, you can use your second action to make a strike with bonus damage. Melee weapon innovators are unlikely to pass this chance up.
    - **Dazing Blow** ★★★ After you grapple a target using your entangling form polearm and first action, you can use your second action to make a strike with the potential to stun your target. The enemy must fail a saving throw which has the incapacitation effect. If locking down a boss monster is your primary aim, you might have been better off tripping your grappled foe instead of using this feat. That said, this feat does allow you to deal damage as a normal strike.
    - **Shatter Defenses** ★★★ Due to the power of demoralization at least one of your allies is likely to rely heavily on it. If that is the case Shatter Defenses can be a great choice of feat for following up on their investment.
    - **Ricochet Stance** ★★★ In case you want an offensive rune and don't want to spend an action reeling your tethered weapon innovation back every round, the

fighter can spend one action to enter a stance in which thrown weapons return automatically.

- **Diverse Weapon Expert ★** This is unnecessary for a class with your proficiencies.

Gunslinger (U) ★★★

As you would expect, the gunslinger makes using firearms much more practical. It provides a few different means of mitigating reload, which is necessary for firearms to compete with archery. Like the inventor itself, the gunslinger archetype is uncommon and requires GM permission. As it comes from the same book, if your GM is allowing one odds are good they are willing to allow the other.

- **Basic Shooting ★★★** Your first choice should almost always be Risky Reload. You will not be able to get Running Reload or Practiced Reloads until eight and tenth level respectively, leavy Risky Reload the sole initial means by which you can efficiently reload your firearm.

  Using Risky Reload against a powerful monster or while debuffed is a slight risk. If you fail and your gun misfires, you will need to spend an extra action clearing the jam before either reloading the normal way or trying risky reload again. That isn't actually a bad trade: assuming you only want to make a single attack per round, you might as well use Risky Reload as your first shot every turn. If you fail, just clear the jam and use Risky Reload on the next round. You're only spending as many actions doing that as you would have if you were reloading the normal way.

  If you want to make multiple shots a round, try using risky reload as your first shot, then reloading and shooting the normal way with your second. Only against a weak horde of minion creatures can you use Risky Reload multiple times per turn to land overdrive and offensive boost multiple times a round.

  You might or might not choose to retrain this feat for another once you get Running Reload at eighth level or Practiced Reloads at tenth, especially if you take another special strike from the gunslinger archetype (such as Sniper's Aim). Exactly what you retrain it for is up in the air: Hit the Dirt is good at long engagement distances, Fake Out provides reliable party support, and Quick Draw is useful in an ambush or for targeting weaknesses with alchemical bombs. Sword and Pistol is okay for well-planned subterfuge suit drifter builds. You could even take Munitions Crafter purely for the purpose of later taking Alchemical Shot so that you can easily bypass physical resistances and repeatedly trigger elemental weaknesses with your firearm. Munitions Crafter also leads to Munitions Machinist. See Advanced Shooting for details.
- **Advanced Shooting:** The following gunslinger feats are of interest. You can get running reload more easily through the archer archetype.
  - **Black Powder Boost ★★★** You can jump farther by discharging your firearm. This feat is not the equal of Explosive Leap but it only costs you a bullet to use and will not interfere with your unstable actions. It can also be used to ascend short cliffsides quickly due to the 10-foot bonus applying to vertical jumps as well. Be sure to pick up Quick Jump to capitalize on it.

    - **Running Reload** ★★★ This is a great alternative to Risky Reload once you are finally able to access it. I recommend using both in tandem: Risky Reload can handle your first shot, while Running Reload can lead into your second. The inventor is keen on multiple hits per round to trigger overdrive and offensive boost more frequently, and you can always find a use for mobility in battle.
    - **Sniper's Aim** ★★★ It is important that firearms land their first shot with as many bonuses as possible with which to trigger critical hits. Spending an action to give yourself an easy bonus is well worth it, even before considering this feat's ability to ignore the downsides of kickback weaponry and ignore concealment. It is best used in tandem with Running Reload or Practiced Reloads because it is incompatible with Risky Reload.
    - **Munitions Machinist** ★★★ Your advanced alchemy level for bombs advances one level faster than it would have if you took the alchemist archetype. You had to wait until level twelve to get this feat, but coupled with Quick Draw and Alchemical Shot you can enjoy a versatile and entertaining build.
- **Slinger's Readiness:** You gain the initial deed of your way. These feats all allow you to draw a weapon, but the drifter and the pistolero are locked to weaker one-handed firearms which the inventor is unlikely to favor.
    - **Drifter** ★★ When you roll initiative you can draw one melee weapon, one ranged weapon, and stride towards the enemy. This is green for switch-hitter subterfuge suit innovators.
    - **Pistolero** ★★ You improve your initiative and draw a one-handed firearm for free. This would be great if you didn't have access to far better two-handed weapons.
    - **Sniper** ★★★ When you roll stealth for initiative you can draw a firearm of your choosing as a free action and gain heavy bonus damage on your first strike with it.
    - **Vanguard** ★★★ When you roll initiative you can draw a firearm and parry with it, regardless of whether or not it has an appropriate trait.
- **Practiced Reloads:** The inventor needs a way to mitigate reload to justify using firearms. This provides your third and final option after Risky Reload and Running Reload.
    - **Drifter** ★★★ When you strike with a one-handed melee weapon you can reload your one-handed gun. Taken in tandem with the Sword and Pistol gunslinger feat and an agile weapon like a shortsword provides you with a fluid and accurate style well suited to using overdrive. Shoot the enemy, hit them with a melee attack, and reload your gun. You may use your armor-enhanced movement to skirmish and can avoid reactive strikes via melee when you can't. The pistol phenom archetype is outclassed by the gunslinger archetype for this reason alone.
    - **Pistolero** ★★ If you want a ranged build with an emphasis on demoralization the pistolero reload can provide it. You likely do not have the strength for two-handed kickback weapons anyways, so your damage loss from using a pistol is not overwhelmingly bad.

    - **Sniper** ★★★ You can take cover or hide when you reload. This is a fantastic means of making your enemy off-guard against your next shot and has excellent combo potential with the subterfuge suit armor innovator. It also works wonders in tandem with the Sniper's Aim or Megaton Strike feats, from the gunslinger archetype and inventor class respectively. Your heavy reliance on cover may compel you to take Running Reload as well to ensure you are always at least heading towards cover on turns where you cannot reach it.
    - **Vanguard** ★★★ You can shove while you reload to create some distance between you and your target. If you succeed on the shove attempt, you won't provoke reactive strikes from creatures without reach. Weapon innovators interested in using kickback weaponry and the rope shot modification will be keenly interested due to their shared emphasis on strength. This shove can also suspend the multiple attack penalty if used after a strike, though you will provoke reactions if you shoot in melee.
- **Eagle Eye** ★★★★ You can improve your perception to master level.
- **Firearm Expert** ★ This feat is unnecessary for a class with your proficiencies.

Investigator ★★★

The investigator dedication is among the best for those looking to improve their access to skills. It provides you with one additional skill proficiency as well as two cornerstone features of the investigator: pursue a lead and clue in. Both of them provide easy and reliable access to circumstance bonuses on skill checks. The investigation can be about a diverse array of topics, and provided you keep a notebook of some sort you should have no trouble dropping and restarting leads at your leisure.

- **Basic Deduction** ★★★★ You should choose That's Odd. This feat helps mitigate your terrible perception by providing you with a clue regarding what you or your party can investigate further. Other good options include Underworld Investigator and Athletic Strategist (at least for specific builds) but they are largely inferior to That's Odd.
- **Investigator's Stratagem** ★★ It is easy to write this feat off due to its refusal to grant you your intelligence bonus to hit. However, an inventor can find some use out of knowing their roll ahead of time. Weapon innovators using reach weaponry with the intent of gaining all athletics checks on their weapon will eventually add disarm to their list of options, and in doing so gain massive benefits from knowing that their next roll is a critical success. Likewise, knowing that you can shove an enemy ten feet can radically change your behavior if your enemy is ten feet away from a cliffside. However, both will require the Athletic Strategist feat.

    Inventors with firearms have the best use-cases for Investigator's Stratagem. In this capacity it is green. They can appreciate knowing their roll ahead of time; if the roll fails, the inventor does not need to spend two actions shooting and reloading, thus saving them time when facing high-threat boss monsters against who you might miss as often as you hit. Likewise, scoring a critical hit means activating the firearm's fatal trait: knowing that ahead of time can mean using the unstable function of Megaton Strike for massive

damage. Should you prove about to miss, you can choose to cancel out of the strike by instead using a weapon innovation's rope shot modification to trip or an unstable action like Megavolt.

- **Advanced Deduction:** The investigator's feat pool is limited and many are lacking. Two of the stronger options can be found at level twelve.
    - **Predictive Purchase** ★★★ This is great in tandem with Trick Magic Item for its value in making scrolls appear out of thin air. Even if you don't have it, your party members can benefit from it.
    - **Thorough Research** ★★★ You get more out of your recall knowledge checks.
- **Keen Recollection** ★ Odds are high you are already trained in all of these skills. Even if you aren't, you've likely only neglected a couple. The value of this feat is scant.
- **Skill Mastery** ★★★ You gain extra expert level and master level skill, as well as an extra skill feat. This is always a good pick, especially if your game tends towards non-combat encounters. While you can select this skill multiple times you almost never have incentive to do so, as it becomes a worse trade as you level and must spend higher level class feats to get it.
- **Master Spotter** ★★★★ You can improve your perception to master level.

Magus ★★★

The magus archetype can provide an inventor with additional damage, though its single-hit style is not a perfect fit for use with overdrive and offensive boost. The inventor will have no trouble meeting its ability score prerequisites.

While it is possible for an inventor to gain a hybrid study spell, they never truly receive a hybrid study. This means two things. First, the magus archetype is only of use to melee inventors because they cannot spellstrike at range. The ability to cast cantrips when you need damage at range is also more useful to melee inventors. Second, the majority of magus feats are not available through a multiclass archetype due to their hybrid study prerequisites. Those that are not locked to a hybrid study are often based around spellcasting, which the magus archetype does not grant until sixth level. You will take Spellstriker at fourth level and Basic Magus Spellcasting at sixth level.

The dedication gives you some cantrips. You should prepare for the inevitability of spellstrike and choose at least one offensive cantrip. Gouging claw provides high damage with a variable damage type and provides a critical effect. It should almost always be on your list. Your other choices should consist of the shield cantrip and other offensive cantrips.

- **Basic Martial Magic:**
    - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Prepare more cantrips for use with your spellstrike.
    - **Force Fang** ★★★ Spend an action to get unavoidable damage with a single action focus spell. This is great for reliably dealing modest damage to a high-level monster and bypassing the multiple attack penalty. This also gives you an extra focus point for use with Hybrid Study Spell.
- **Hybrid Study Spell:**

    - **Inexorable Iron** ★★★ You deal a small amount of extra sonic damage when you hit with a two-handed weapon strike. You also have a low chance of knocking the enemy prone.
    - **Laughing Shadow** ★★★★ Teleport and strike using the same action. The teleport's distance is equal to half your speed, so be sure to hit at least a speed of thirty with the Fleet general feat. Armor innovators can improve the range of their teleportation with speed-boosting armor modifications.
    - **Sparkling Targe** ★★★★ Raise your shield and strike with the same action. The action economy of shield use is one of the largest impediments to its effective function. This focus spell provides a desperately needed improvement to that action economy.
    - **Starlit Span** ★★★ Shoot a target while ignoring cover and negating concealment.
    - **Twisting Tree** ★ You can make two attacks against two different foes using one action. You also have to be using a staff, which deals minimal damage.
- **Spellstriker** ★★★★ You can only spellstrike once per fight but you still add a pile of damage to one of your strikes. Due to the archetype's slow spell scaling you will predominantly place cantrips into your spellstrike.
- **Advanced Martial Magic** ★★ Unfortunately, many of the feats available to a magus are not available to inventors. They require either spellcasting or a hybrid study, which you explicitly lack. You'd be better off picking up your hybrid study spell, though you can get Reactive strike at level twelve. The inventor's bonus damage applies to Reactive strike, unlike the magus' abilities.
- **Basic Magus Spellcasting** ★★★ Bounded spellcasting through an archetype is pretty much just worse than standard spellcasting through an archetype. You receive less spells of lower levels. That said, it's still intelligence-based arcane spellcasting.
- **Expert Magus Spellcasting** ★★★ As Basic Magus Spellcasting.
- **Master Magus Spellcasting** ★★★ As Basic Magus Spellcasting.

Monk ★ / ★★★

Bump the rating of this archetype up to green if you are playing as a power suit armor innovator or yellow if you are a subterfuge suit armor innovator. The armor innovator is able to add their offensive boost to unarmed attacks and is thus the only type of inventor qualified to use the monk archetype.

Unfortunately, the monk is counted among the archetypes that demand both strength and dexterity. You'll need to drain one of your saving throws to support the dexterity or strength needed to meet the prerequisite. The inventor doesn't have too tough a time doing so: power suit armor innovators are just a point off by default, and subterfuge suit innovators might or might not already meet the prerequisites. Power suit innovators may nonetheless prefer the martial artist archetype due to sharing several feats but lacking the prerequisites.

- **Basic Kata:** The following feats may be of interest to you.

    - **Ki Rush** ★★★ Spend a focus point, then move twice in a single action and conceal yourself for a round.
    - **Ki Strike** ★★★ Spend a focus point, then make an unarmed strike with bonus damage.
    - **Gorilla Stance** ★★★ Spend an action to enter the stance, then gain an extremely powerful unarmed strike; superior to those of most ancestry features. Unlike other stances, this one is compatible with armor.
    - **Crushing Grab** ★★★ You add damage to every successful grapple check. The power suit armor innovator will love this.
- **Monk Resiliency** ★★★★ A standard class archetype resiliency feat.
- **Advanced Kata:** The following feats may be of interest to you.
    - **Flying Kick** ★★★ This feat allows you to append a strike to the long jump action. As the long jump action normally takes two actions, this feat is a handy piece of action compression. It is not as broadly useful as the Sudden Charge feat available to other classes such as fighter and barbarian, but there are circumstances in which it is preferable. Hazardous terrain, difficult terrain, and simple pits in the ground can all be efficiently bypassed with this feat. It starts slow due to the limits of your athletics checks, but it gets better as you level up and start becoming able to jump farther, eventually rivalling the value of Sudden Charge itself.
    - **Guarded Movement** ★★ Reactive strikes are really nasty when they come up. This massively improves your chances against them at no action cost, but it still won't apply in most fights.
    - **Stand Still** ★★★ You gain a more focused version of reactive strike. It only triggers on move actions and must be an unarmed attack. It does disrupt the triggering move action on crit, but the inventor has higher than average difficulty scoring critical hits. Still, extra attacks are always appreciated by a class that gets extra damage. Don't forget that standing up from prone will trigger Stand Still. Tripping foes becomes incredibly appealing once you take this feat.
    - **Wholeness of Body** ★★ This focus spell provides above average healing for its one-action cost, but it only applies to you. If your party is garbage at healing, it'll keep you in tip top shape.
- **Monk Moves** ★ Gain a bonus to your movement speed when you aren't wearing armor.
- **Monk's Flurry** ★★★ Make two unarmed attacks with one action and a normal multiple attack penalty. This is a great way to land multiple strikes on one target while in overdrive. This feat is only held back by its high level and frequency limit.
- **Perfection's Path** ★★★★ Bump your reflex or fortitude saving throws to master.

Oracle ★★

There are plenty of classes for which the oracle is a great pick. The inventor is not one of them. The charisma prerequisite is a significant drag on your build. The divine spell list is below average without class features to compensate. Spontaneous spellcasting leaves you with low

versatility. Charisma spellcasting leaves you with low odds of success. Using cursebound feats causes you to suffer from your curse. Unlike a true oracle, you receive no benefits from advancing it.

- **Basic Mysteries:**
    - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Standard cantrip expansion feat.
    - **Divine Aegis** ★★★ You can use your reaction to gain a small bonus against all magic except for divine magic until the end of your turn. You suffer a small penalty against divine magic if you mistakenly use this feat against it. Under normal circumstances it is not difficult to guess the magical tradition of the entity you are fighting, but there are some edge cases. Do not forget that fiends are classified as divine creatures under Pathfinder's game system due to their association with unholy deities. Incorporeal undead might be divine or occult, making this feat a guessing game against them.
- **Basic Oracle Spellcasting** ★★ Standard divine charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression.
- **First Revelation** ★★★ You gain the initial revelation spell of your mystery.
- **Advanced Mysteries:**
    - **Bespell Strikes** ★★★ When you cast a spell, your next weapon attack deals bonus damage. This ability comes in at a reasonable level and synergizes well with a martial playstyle.
- **Mysterious Breadth** ★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Oracle Spellcasting** ★★ Standard divine charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression.
- **Master Oracle Spellcasting** ★★ Standard divine charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression.

Psychic ★★★★

The psychic is an occult intelligence spontaneous spellcaster. It offers powerful support spellcasting. While true psychics are admirable blasters, the features which enable them to do so do not make it to the archetype.

That said, the archetype is still amazing. The dedication feat grants one cantrip and a focus point which you can use to amplify that cantrip. You could use the infinite eye or tangible dream conscious minds to get guidance or shield respectively. If you are normally a melee character, the other conscious minds offer good cantrips for making emergency ranged attacks. I like the oscillating wave for its extra-long-range ray of frost. It is also possible to use thermal stasis to protect yourself from the self-damage of your inventor abilities, albeit at the cost of an extra action before activating it. The cantrip is enough to nullify all damage at all levels, has a one-action casting time, and applies to both fire and cold damage for those interested in using Variable Core to change their self-damage type in response to threats. The unbound step grants warp step, which starts modest but eventually becomes akin to a one-action translocate as a focus spell. That is amazing and secures it my personal preference. It is especially useful to speed-focused armor innovators because its teleport distance is dependent on your movement

speed, but I'd still gladly take it on any build. Any conscious mind can provide you incredible value if you pick the right cantrips.

You might even be able to refocus while fixing your innovation's unstable function, as the psychic mentions the ability to recover focus points via practicing a craft. All-in-all, it is the standout occult caster for inventors. The only flaw is its inability to take a breadth feat, thus leaving you with fewer spells than other spellcasting archetypes.

- **Basic Thoughtform:**
  - **Ancestral Mind** ★★★ You can convert all of your ancestral innate spells to intelligence-based occult spells. This drastically alters the balance of power for your innate ancestral cantrips.
  - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Cantrip Expansion is abnormally useful to the psychic because you might not have picked up guidance or shield as your dedication cantrip, due to the psychic's other excellent choices. These will not be considered psi cantrips and you cannot amp them.
- **Basic Psychic Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard occult intelligence spontaneous spellcasting progression.
- **Advanced Thoughtform:**
  - **Psi Strikes** ★★★ When you cast a spell, your next weapon attack deals bonus damage. This ability comes in at a reasonable level and synergizes well with a martial playstyle. Unlike similar abilities from other classes, this deals your choice of force or mental damage. That is deeply preferable to other caster's versions. Unfortunately, psi amped cantrips can't trigger it unlike true focus spells.
- **Psi Development** ★★★★ Most conscious minds only have one psi cantrip you're really interested in. However, this feat both improves your versatility and gives you an extra focus point for use with the cantrip you actually want to use.
- **Expert Psychic Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard occult intelligence spontaneous spellcasting progression.
- **Master Psychic Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard occult intelligence spontaneous spellcasting progression.

Ranger ★★★

The ranger archetype is understandably restrictive regarding access to edges. While this prevents broken nonsense, it does diminish the value of the ranger archetype somewhat. On a more positive note, the ranger archetype does not demand a wisdom prerequisite. Any ranged inventor is likely to appreciate it as a result.

The ranger archetype does grant the hunt prey action, but without an edge the benefits of using it are much more modest. It improves skill checks made to find your prey and allows you to target your prey in your second range increment without penalty. Only the latter bonus is likely to apply mid-combat, but the former is handy on occasion when enemies start using stealth. This archetype is nonetheless most likely to be appreciated by ranged weapon innovators and subterfuge suit armor innovators.

- **Basic Hunter's Trick:** The best feats available to a ranger can be acquired more easily through the archer archetype without the restriction of the hunt prey action. Check it out before you commit to the ranger archetype. If you have a melee build you should certainly look to the combat style archetypes instead of the ranger.
    - **Hunted Shot** ★★★ It is a handy piece of action compression that further encourages ranged inventors to stick with bows. If it were not shackled to the hunt prey action, it would be sky blue. It is great for fighting against high-threat enemies because they are durable enough to last for multiple rounds, and thus the need to constantly change your prey is reduced.
    - **Monster Hunter** ★★★ When you hunt your prey you can recall knowledge about them. This feat could have been acquired earlier through Basic Hunter Trick, but in the absence of any real incentive to use Hunt Prey mid-combat without a feat like Hunted Shot or Hunter's Aim there is equally little incentive to use this feat.
    - **Hunted Aim** ★★★ An alternative to Hunted Shot for snipers or those with reload weaponry. While Hunted Shot has better synergy with the inventor, Hunted Aim is still a good feat.
    - **Quick Draw** ★★★ This feat is great for ambushes, but it can also be used to draw and throw alchemical bombs when you need to trigger a weakness. Stock up on a couple of frost vials and alchemist's fire to trigger common weaknesses.
- **Ranger Resiliency** ★★★★ A standard class archetype resiliency feat.
- **Advanced Hunter's Trick:**
    - **Disrupt Prey** ★★★ You gain reactive strike with the ability to disrupt the action on critical hit, but it only works against your prey.
    - **Far Shot** ★★ You double all of your weapon's range increments. This is most useful to those using weaponry with short range increments, such as throwing weaponry or blunderbusses. They are the most likely to need the range.

        Hypothetically, a 15th level ranged weapon innovator with this feat and both the advanced rangefinder and omnirange stabilizers modifications could use a sukgung to get a range increment of 820 feet. As hunt prey denies the penalty of firing into your second range increment, the effective range of such an inventor is 1,640 feet. At maximum, with some lucky rolls or a sniper's bead item a Far Shot weapon innovator could land a hit from 4,920 feet. You could further push it to 5,040 feet with a 17th level magnifying scope. Though an entertaining idea, it's massively unnecessary as most encounters take place at much closer ranges. Endgame-level true rangers are also better at extreme range in practice despite a lower total, as they don't need to burn consumable items to ignore extended range penalties.

        Still, you may at times be able to manipulate a scenario in which the enemy is lured out into the open, at which point they become effectively helpless. Few creatures are able to fight at those distances without access to teleportation to close the gap: it would take an ancient red dragon with a 180-foot fly speed at least nine rounds just to enter combat distance.

    - **Favored Enemy** ★★ This makes it much easier to use Hunt Prey in themed campaigns, but outside of that context it is of only modest worth. If you overwhelmingly fight a specific type of creature, bump its rating up in accordance with the creature's frequency.
    - **Running Reload** ★★★ This is a useful feat for those with firearms or crossbows.
    - **Additional Recollection** ★★★ When you succeed on a knowledge check against one creature you can immediately recall knowledge about another.
    - **Skirmish Strike** ★★★ This improves your ability to weasel out of reactive strikes before making a ranged attack. If your opponent has reach, simply step and then use Skirmish Strike to escape even that. This feat is also useful for repositioning before shooting, which ultimately secures it a green rating despite its high level.
- **Master Spotter** ★★★★ You can improve your perception to master level.

Rogue ★★★

The rogue competes with the investigator insofar as archetypes relating to skill proficiency. It grants two trained skills up front, but unlike the investigator it does not include an easy means of getting a circumstance bonus to your skill checks. Due to the high number of trained skills an inventor already possesses, I would argue the dedication feat of the investigator is superior overall. However, the rogue's feats are more than sufficient to even the gap, especially if you are interested in striking a balance between skill bonuses and combat power.

The rogue's dexterity prerequisite makes it well-suited to ranged inventor builds, though melee builds may appreciate it as well with a bit of extra investment. It's especially well-suited to the subterfuge suit build, which benefits greatly from additional incentives to use both stealth and melee combat.

- **Basic Trickery:** The rogue has several great feats.
    - **Nimble Dodge** ★★★★ You can use your reaction to improve your armor class. It is equivalent to the bonus of a shield but you don't need to spend your action raising it first and can keep your hands free.
    - **Minor Magic** ★★★ You can pick up shield and guidance through this feat. Needless to say, you do not need both this feat and nimble dodge. If your campaign is heavily focused on social interaction and skills, choose this instead of Nimble Dodge.
    - **Mobility** ★★★ You don't trigger reactive strikes when you move less than half your speed. If you have exceptional speed, such as that which can be acquired through the subterfuge suit innovator, this can be of extraordinary use. It is only held back from a blue rating because many monsters do not have appropriate reactions.
    - **Quick Draw** ★★★ You can draw and strike with a weapon using the same action. This is always handy to have in your back pocket for the inevitable ambush.

    - **Strong Arm** ★★★ Strong Arm borders on a blue rating for those interested in the tangle line weapon modification. A light hammer or javelin user with a strong arm can either strike and trip at impressive range.
    - **Underhanded Assault** ★★★ This is a fantastic boon for subterfuge suit innovators looking to use their stealth mid-battle without losing access to their 9th level melee-locked offensive boost. Be sure to invest in speed boosts in addition to your stealth boosts with Manifold Modifications.
- **Sneak Attacker** ★★★★ This is free extra damage that synergizes well with almost any inventor build. The only complication is that you must be targeting an off-guard creature using an agile, finesse, or ranged weapon.

  Melee inventors will find it easy to gain extra damage from Sneak Attacker through flanking, grappling, and tripping. It is of greater appeal to those who were already intending to use agile weaponry. Most melee inventors with the rogue archetype wield a light hammer and a shield. The respectable damage and accuracy of the light hammer enable them to inflict sneak attack multiple times per round. On the off-chance they have three actions to burn or simply need defense more than offense, they can raise their shield. A finesse or agile unarmed attack is arguably even better for armor innovators, as is the case for a goblin bite or tengu beak.

  Ranged builds will need to devote actions to hiding before they can benefit from Sneak Attacker, which can interfere with your ability to make multiple attacks per turn. Your allies may be able to help mitigate this issue. An ally focused on grappling can easily provide you with off-guard targets while keeping you safe from reprisal. Likewise, if you take the Dread Striker feat allies with demoralization can provide you with viable targets. Regardless of whether or not your allies are playing ball, Sneak Attacker is still well worth the investment.
- **Advanced Trickery:** In addition to the feats outlined in basic trickery, the following might be of interest to you.
    - **Dread Striker** ★★★ All frightened creatures are off-guard against your attacks. If your allies make frequent use of the demoralize action this can be an easy way to land sneak attacks. It is especially valuable to ranged inventors due to their inability to flank and the ease with which they can target specific foes. A high-level construct innovator could even have an intimidating construct, though such a build only comes online late.
    - **Reactive Pursuit** ★★★ This is a great way for melee inventors to stay in melee. When an enemy flees, you can move with them. If your GM plays enemies with even basic intelligence this should come up with reasonable frequency.
    - **The Harder They Fall** ★★★ When you trip an off-guard foe you can deal damage to them. This is another fine choice for melee weapon innovators and power suit armor innovators, though the enemy will have no trouble resisting it if they are resistant to bludgeoning damage.
- **Skill Mastery** ★★★ You gain extra expert level and master level skill, as well as an extra skill feat. This is always a good pick, especially if your game tends towards non-combat encounters. While you can select this skill multiple times you almost never

have incentive to do so, as it becomes a worse trade as you level and must spend higher level class feats to get it.

- **Uncanny Dodge** ★★★ You cannot be flanked by and don't suffer defensive penalties from hidden creatures equal to or lower than your level. The inventor is both frail and lacks perception. Uncanny dodge is a useful countermeasure for both scenarios.
- **Evasiveness** ★★★★ Improve your reflex saving throws to master.

Sorcerer ★★

Sorcerers are able to access any type of spellcasting tradition. However, their charisma prerequisite and casting-focused feat list leaves an inventor with little of value. Inventors with charisma are likely pilots, and thus have the most to gain from the occult list. However, arcane or primal are just an inch behind if you have a preference for either.

While the sorcerer doesn't come with any downsides, there is still little reason to choose it over its rival multiclass archetypes. It has an exceptionally poor selection of feats, the intelligence-based witch has similar flavor and shares access to all traditions, and the psychic cleanly outperforms it as a support spellcaster. On the off-chance a power suit armor innovator has mustered the charisma for it, maybe they could see benefits from getting unarmed attacks through bloodline spells. It is a dubiously worthwhile investment.

- **Basic Blood Potency** ★★ The only decent option is the Cantrip Expansion feat.
- **Basic Bloodline Spell:**
  - **Demonic** ★★★ This focus spell gives you a powerful unarmed attack with a good rider effect. Power suit armor innovators could use it, but the action it takes to set up is a nuisance.
  - **Diabolic** ★★★ This spell gives your allies an easy buff. It can technically backfire, but your request can be very open-ended. Just tell your ally to "fight these guys" and you'll be fine.
  - **Draconic** ★★★ This focus spell gives you a powerful unarmed attack with a bit of extra elemental damage as a rider. Power suit armor innovators could use it, but the action it takes to set up is a nuisance. It also provides damage resistance of better than average strength, to the point where it usually cancels the majority of any self-damage you might inflict on yourself through your inventor abilities. It borders on a blue rating for that reason; were it easy for an armor innovator to secure the necessary charisma, I would rate it blue without reservation.
  - **Genie** ★★★ You give an ally concealment for a round using your reaction. The concealment applies to the triggering attack, which is always appreciated. You can also choose to give the benefits to yourself or your construct.
  - **Imperial** ★★★ You already have plenty of trained level skills. That said, focus spells intended for out-of-combat are always useful because of the ease with which you can get them back. At higher levels it can even give you expert proficiency in any skill you choose.

    - **Shadow** ★★★ While you won't be able to take advantage of this too often due to your limited spell slots, if you are a subterfuge suit innovator with darkvision this makes it much easier to hide in battle.
- **Basic Sorcerer Spellcasting** ★★ Standard charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.
- **Advanced Blood Potency** ★★★ You could try Bespell Weapon on the off-chance you are not running a pilot build. The evolution feats are all fine choices as well.
- **Bloodline Breadth** ★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Sorcerer Spellcasting** ★★ Standard charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.
- **Master Sorcerer Spellcasting** ★★ Standard charisma spontaneous spellcasting progression. Green for pilots.

Swashbuckler ★★

The swashbuckler is a poor fit for the inventor, and its prerequisite ability scores are to blame. Demanding both high dexterity and high charisma on a melee inventor build is borderline impossible. To be effective, you will need to spread your points between strength, dexterity, intelligence, and charisma. At best, you might use an ancestry like the goblin to dump wisdom in an effort to eke out whatever points you can. In that case, you could start with a build as follows: 3, 2, 0, 3, -1, 2. Ancestries with a flaw in wisdom and a boost to charisma (and strength or dexterity) might consider it.

This build guts your defenses but provides respectable offense and allows you to select the gymnast style, which synergizes very well with the inventor's athletic melee preferences. It will be specifically favored by melee weapon innovators because the power suit armor innovator has a much easier means of getting circumstance bonuses on their athletics checks. Melee weapon innovators enjoy no such bonuses innately but also rely heavily on athletics checks in combat. Virtually every other type of inventor has every incentive to avoid this archetype. Look to the rogue archetype as an alternative.

The swashbuckler also provides a movement speed bonus while in panache. This will again be favored by melee weapon innovators because armor innovators have easier means of accessing speed. So, there you have it: the swashbuckler is a fine choice specifically for melee inventors who are also goblins.

- **Basic Flair:**
    - **Disarming Flair** ★★★ This feat provides you with panache when you attempt to disarm an opponent. If they do not compensate, you become more likely to be able to use Swashbuckler's Riposte. The inventor can receive similar bonuses more easily through Tamper, but it will provoke reactive strikes and demands a free hand.
    - **Nimble Dodge** ★★★★ You can use your reaction to improve your armor class. It is equivalent to the bonus of a shield but you don't need to spend your action raising it and can keep your hands free. You could have gotten it through the rogue archetype.

    - **After You** ★★★ Swashbucklers have a lot to give up by automatically going last. However, you dumped wisdom to take this archetype and have the worst perception advancement in the game. You have almost nothing to lose by deliberately going last, because let's be honest: odds were decent you were going to anyways.
    - **Charmed Life** ★★★★ As Nimble Dodge, but for saving throws.
- **Finishing Precision** ★★ You deal a bit of extra damage on every hit while you have panache. You can spend your panache to improve it to a d6. This does synergize with the inventor playstyle because it provides extra damage on every hit, but the rogue will deal better damage on average assuming you have even one flanking partner. The inventor is likely to prefer holding onto their panache rather than spending it anyways.
- **Advanced Flair:**
    - **Flamboyant Athlete** ★★★ This provides significant improvements to your vertical and horizontal mobility while you have panache.
    - **Reactive Strike** ★★★ This is always a good choice for a class with the inventor's high damage. Be wary of reaction bloat. If you have too many reactions you will often find yourself lacking a reaction to use on them.
- **Swashbuckler's Riposte** ★★★ Make an attack on an enemy that critically fails their attack roll against you. Because overdrive and offensive boost apply to every hit the inventor is arguably better qualified to use this than a swashbuckler is.
- **Swashbuckler's Speed** ★★ More speed is always useful for melee characters. However, you can get more effective speed boosts at significantly lower levels from action compression feats like Sudden Charge through the fighter and barbarian archetypes.
- **Evasiveness** ★★★★ Improve your reflex saving throws to master. You could have gotten it through the rogue archetype.

Summoner ★

The eidolon is deliberately weak, most likely to keep games from getting bloated by doubled party sizes. It is an exceptionally poor choice for the inventor due to the charisma prerequisite.

Thaumaturge ★★

Oddly, despite being a martial character the thaumaturge lacks a physical prerequisite entirely and only asks for charisma. This is a massive pain in the ass. Unlike some charisma archetypes, it is a poor fit for the pilot due to its focus on personal strike damage.

The thaumaturge dedication provides its own version of exploit vulnerability which it calls glimpse vulnerability. It adds two extra damage to every attack you make against the target. Unlike the real deal, you don't need to make any check. Spend one action to get two extra damage against that creature until it is dead or you target something else. However, like other damage-based class features you only receive a fraction of the damage bonus. You also only receive the benefit against that specific creature, even if it is accompanied by other identical creatures.

Another major issue with the thaumaturge is its implement. You don't get any bonuses from the implement at first, but it demands a hand and is required to use glimpse vulnerability. This limits you to one-handed weaponry, which most inventors disdain. If you are interested in a sword-and-board playstyle you can choose the weapon implement to minimize the downsides of one-handed weaponry. With your implement and weapon as the same object, you can use a shield in your other hand. You can also choose a shortbow, though in that case your free hand is used to reload.

- **Basic Thaumaturgy** ★★★ You don't qualify for a large number of thaumaturge feats due to your lack of a thaumaturge class features. Talisman Esoterica is the only initial feat worth taking. You probably should have just chosen the talisman dabbler archetype.
- **Advanced Thaumaturgy** ★★ The only feat to stand out is Instructive Strike; after that, all of the other feats are inaccessible, impractical, better taken through other archetypes, or yellow. As an inventor who invested in charisma, your wisdom is probably low, but you can at least accurately make checks about creatures based on intelligence skills. You could have gotten this exact effect from the fighter archetype at lower level: the only difference is that this one can be used multiple times on the same creature. While that is useful, it isn't useful enough to save this feat from a worse rating than its lower-level rival.
- **Implement Initiate:**
    - **Amulet** ★★★ The thaumaturge steals food right off the champion's plate. This gives you a champion's reaction. Use it to reduce the damage an ally would take. You have few competing reactions, so you might as well use it every time you can. Unlike a champion's reaction, it only works on the target of your glimpse vulnerability.
    - **Bell** ★★ You can stupefy spellcasters, and enfeeble or make physical threats clumsy. You use your reaction to do so. The amulet will keep your party safer overall. Like the amulet, it only works on the target of your glimpse vulnerability.
    - **Chalice** ★★★ You gain a little bit of one-action temporary hit points. It can also heal with a ten-minute cooldown, and can even heal you if you are undead. It is decent enough if you'd like to keep yourself and your team healthy.
    - **Lantern** ★ The lantern relies heavily on perception. It provides slight recall knowledge bonuses, but the tome is far more reliable in that regard.
    - **Mirror** ★★★ The mirror can be very useful for precision placement of explosions. Its range is just enough that you don't need to worry about hitting yourself. The ability to generate flanking with an action is also useful, especially if you use a weapon innovation with backstabber.
    - **Regalia** ★★★ The thaumaturge has now swallowed the champion's entire plate. The regalia implement poaches the effect of their Aura of Courage feat, which helps allies bleed off fear effects more quickly. In addition to the benefits of that feat, it also allows allies to follow the expert even if you are only trained in a skill, which is good because you have a lot of those due to your high intelligence and lack of extra skill boosts.

    - **Tome** ★★★ You gain a perpetual bonus to recall knowledge. That's enough to get a good rating in my book. It also gives you two roaming trained skill proficiencies, which you can eventually boost to expert level.
    - **Wand** ★ Offensive spellcasting based on your thaumaturge DC, pass
    - **Weapon** ★★★ I am not going to give this a blue rating because you could get this effect much more easily and more powerfully from the fighter archetype. However, it is the best implement. As a weapon you still have your other hand and can devote that hand to a shield for extra defense. You also get reactive strike against the creature you are targeting with glimpse weakness, with the standard critical disruption bonuses. This implement sacrifices the least power.
- **Magical Knowledge** ★★★ You become a master in one recall knowledge skill and an expert in another. You also gain a skill feat for either. This is a fine feat, if less versatile than some of its rivals on other archetypes.
- **Resolute** ★ You don't need this feat due to your high will saving throws.

Witch ★★★

The witch archetype is distinct among spellcasting archetypes in that its dedication feat offers lower than average cantrips. You know two and can prepare only one. In exchange, it provides you with a familiar. The familiar only has one ability and it contains all of your witch spells. Unlike a true witch familiar, it does not reincarnate each morning after being slain. If your familiar dies, you aren't able to prepare spells again until you spend an entire week of downtime getting it back. Using your familiar thus represents significant risk, especially if you have several archetype feats tied to it.

Despite the downsides, there are still advantages to using the witch. This archetype can give you access to any spell tradition with intelligence as its spellcasting ability score. That alone secures the witch a solid rating. The weak feat list may not trouble you if you focus on spellcasting. Still, those interested in the arcane tradition should favor the wizard. If accessible, those who dabble in occult magic might prefer the bard or psychic. Despite the bard's charisma prerequisite, its feat list is so incredible that it can even the gap for certain builds, especially construct pilots or those with ancestral charisma boosts.

- **Basic Witch Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Basic Witchcraft:**
    - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★ Cantrip Expansion is less useful than it is on other archetypes due to the witch archetype only affording you two cantrips: the feat allows you to prepare two more, but you only have one more to prepare. Spending a fourth level class feat to get one extra cantrip is a rough deal.
    - **Basic Lesson:** The Basic Lesson feat offers many choices, but only Life and Elements stand out as exceptionally useful.
        - **Lesson of Life** ★★★ Give a creature fast healing for four rounds. You do not have to sustain it. This can keep you or another creature up for

multiple rounds they would otherwise spend unconscious, though you need to watch out for the wounded condition.

        - **Lesson of the Elements** ★★★ If you are a weapon innovator or once you get offensive boost, choosing fire or water gives you extra damage on every hit in exchange for one action every turn. If you have allies using the same damage type as your offensive boost, share your damage types through inventor feats such as Helpful Tinkering, or gain persistent damage through Persistent Boost it becomes even better.
    - **Enhanced Familiar** ★★★ Give your familiar two extra abilities. While useful, if a familiar is your primary objective you should consider the familiar master archetype.
- **Advanced Witchcraft** ★★ There is not much that stands out at these levels.
- **Patron's Breadth** ★★★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Witch Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Master Witch Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.

Wizard ★★★★

The wizard and the inventor fit together like puzzle pieces. With their high intelligence, an inventor is well-suited to using the myriad spells of the arcane tradition.

- **Arcane School Spell:** If you do not intend to take Hand of the Apprentice due to being a ranged character you can instead choose one of the following.
    - **Divination** ★★★ You have a 50% chance of giving yourself or an ally an above average roll using this spell. Against boss monsters that might not be a guaranteed first hit, but against typical enemies it is. On the off-chance you roll a natural twenty, save it for a second attack so that you deal damage twice. Another good use is for a disarm check, if your opponent is weapon reliant.
    - **Evocation** ★★★ Sometimes you just need a little bit of extra damage to knock a foe down. A one-action magic missile focus spell is perfect for doing exactly that.
    - **Transmutation** ★★★ You can spend an action to give yourself a bonus to the next physical check you make. Weapon innovators can use this spell to improve their athletics checks when they want to make absolutely certain they push a foe off of a cliff or land their grapple. With a polearm's reach they may even be able to avoid reactive strikes that would normally be caused by spellcasting.
- **Basic Arcana:**
    - **Hand of the Apprentice** ★★★★ Your weapon flies 500 feet across the battlefield, attacks somebody, and flies back to you. Every melee inventor is going to want this focus spell. With an inventor's high damage and intelligence, there are no martial characters better equipped to use it.

    - **Cantrip Expansion** ★★★ Those with ranged weaponry will have to relegate themselves to this feat instead.
- **Basic Wizard Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard arcane intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Advanced Arcana:**
    - **Bespell Weapon** ★★★ When you cast a spell, your next weapon attack deals bonus damage. This ability comes in at a reasonable level and synergizes well with a martial playstyle.
    - **Split Slot** ★★★ This is a handy little bonus that improves your versatility with spells.
- **Arcane Breadth** ★★★★ Standard breadth feat.
- **Expert Wizard Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard arcane intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.
- **Master Wizard Spellcasting** ★★★★ Standard arcane intelligence prepared spellcasting progression.

Other:

Unlike multiclass archetypes, generic archetypes tend to have decent benefits right out the gate, but less versatility. I can't review every archetype. I don't have that much free time. However, I am quite happy to review all common archetypes. In addition, I will also be reviewing some uncommon archetypes with thematic overlap with the inventor: predominantly those from their book of origin, Guns & Gears.

Acrobat ★★

The dedication feat will cause your acrobatics score to scale like your crafting skill does. Few other archetypes provide that much up-front value. However, its follow up feats have little of interest to the inventor. If you simply want to be the most acrobatic of your party members, you might choose to take this dedication feat and ignore the follow-up options. Unfortunately, many of its feats only function in the melee, which is not usually where a dexterous inventor thrives.

- **Contortionist** ★★ You can squeeze incredibly quickly and when you escape grapples the grappler is off-guard to your next attack. The first bonus is circumstantial, but the second mitigates the multiple attack penalty imposed by using escape. As failing to escape can result in nasty monster combos, the ability to do so without completely sacrificing offense that round has some merit.
- **Dodge Away** ★★★ You use a reaction to gain a bonus to your armor class, and if the strike misses you can step away from the target. This affords you the chance to completely escape follow-up attacks, and is particularly helpful if you have a reach or ranged weapon so that you can attack the target on the following turn.
- **Graceful Leaper** ★★★★ This is an extremely useful benefit for those interested in jumping despite their low strength scores. It is a skill feat, so it is very affordable for most builds. With the acrobat's maximized acrobatics, this is a must-pick.

- **Tumbling Strike ★★** Tumble through and then strike using one action. If you critically succeed the enemy is off-guard. It is pretty tough to take advantage of this as a dexterity inventor. You may wish to purchase a reinforced stock or carry a melee weapon (if using a slide pistol) for use when reactive strikes become a threat, using blazons of shared power to spread the runes between both. Sadly, such a strategy is only possible for pistol users due to the blazon's one-handed restriction.
- **Tumbling Opportunist ★★★** When you use Tumbling Strike or the general tumble through action, you can attempt to trip your target with acrobatics instead of athletics.

Archaeologist ★★

The dedication feat gives you expert proficiency in two useful skills and a bonus to recall knowledge about ancient societies. The latter is handy to have in most campaigns, as fallen civilizations are a dime-a-dozen in fantasy. Their ruins typically serve as adventuring locations, so you might be able to guess what hazards and monsters are on the horizon. Unfortunately, while the dedication itself is excellent the feats leave a bit to be desired. If your GM loves traps, bump the rating of this dedication up by a grade.

- **Magical Scholastics ★★★** You gain three very useful cantrips, though spending a fourth level class feat to get them is a bit dicey.
- **Settlement Scholastics ★★** You get a lore skill about a specific settlement and a language. The language is likely useless, but the lore skill could be relevant. However, there are better ways to get lore skills than fourth level class feats.
- **Trap Finder ★★** You gain useful bonuses to help you find and protect yourself against traps, though the inventor's poor perception makes it difficult to find them and this feat does not actually help you disarm them. This would be best chosen supplemented by the Canny Acumen general feat.
- **Scholastic Identification ★** You almost never need to decipher writing, and if you want to use a single intelligence skill to identify magic items Crafter's Appraisal both costs a lower-level feat, relies on a skill you automatically maximize, and is far broader in scope.
- **Archaeologist's Luck ★★** Once per hour you can reroll a check against a trap, including the check made to disarm it. This is a useful bonus if you are the team's scout.
- **Delay Trap ★★** You can use a reaction to prevent a trap from triggering for one round if you succeed on a very difficult check to disable the trap. This typically gives your team enough time to flee the room before the doors seal or otherwise escape the affected area.
- **Greater Magical Scholastics ★★★** You gain access to two uncommon spells as once-per-day innate spells. Locate is particularly useful. That nondetection scales can help keep it relevant as well. Augury is at its most useful when checking an area for traps, which is handy for a class with your poor perception.

Archer ★★★ / ★★★★

You get the critical specialization of bows and can treat advanced bows as martial weapons, but you don't gain any special access to uncommon advanced bows or crossbows. The only common advanced bow is the hobgoblin's phalanx piercer, which isn't very good compared to a mundane

arbalest; it offers a bit more reliable damage in exchange for worse accuracy at close range, and only then if you have a good strength score. Your GM might give you access to other advanced weapons, but as uncommon equipment with no clear access clause they're outside the scope of this guide.

Weapon innovators can use the archer to dramatically improve their offense with shortbows. Though they already get the critical specialization effect of their innovation and don't benefit from gaining advanced weapons in this way, they're the best fit for this archetype. Subterfuge suit armor innovators have the stats for it, but the incompatibility of ranged weapons with the offensive boost of the armor innovation throws a mid-level wrinkle into that plan. Drone construct innovators might appreciate getting a little more oomph out of their own offense and could never get their own offensive boost anyways. Other builds are unlikely to use this archetype for any reason.

- **Assisting Shot ★★★** Whenever you strike a foe, give an ally a bonus to hit the same target. Unfortunately, it has the press trait and thus can only be used as a second attack. Inventors are very likely to go for that second attack. Point-Blank Shot will be preferable at low levels, but at higher levels improving your allies' accuracy every time you make a second strike will add more damage to a round on average.
- **Point Blank Shot ★★★★** Enter a stance in which longbows effectively lose the volley trait and shortbows deal two extra damage. Unless you are getting a circumstance bonus to damage from a different ability, the shortbow is the mechanically superior choice. This stance is initially flat-out better than overdrive due to its reliability, and should be entered before attempting to activate overdrive unless you have gained additional incentives to do so from modifications. Overdrive will eventually overtake it as its damage and reliability increases, but you still might enter this stance first.
- **Quick Shot ★★** You can draw and strike with a bow using the same action. It also has the open trait, so you cannot use it and Point-Blank Shot on the same turn. This ability only matters when you get ambushed, but every piece of action economy is important to the inventor so they can activate overdrive. Unfortunately, because of the open trait your first shot will not include any inventor damage bonuses.
- **Advanced Bow Training ★** You can improve your damage slightly with advanced bows, but this feat doesn't actually grant access to any of them. It just lets you use any you find.
- **Crossbow Terror ★★** You can demoralize a target as you reload a crossbow. You get a big bonus if you show them with a crossbow on this turn. It's fun, but an inventor with this archetype is unlikely to have the charisma needed to use it effectively.
- **Double Shot ★★★** You make two strikes at a minor penalty. The penalty is much less severe than a multiple attack penalty, so on average you wind up dealing more damage through using this feat. However, both strikes must target different creatures. This is still an excellent feat for the inventor because the inventor has more to gain from making multiple attacks, thanks to all of their extra damage bonuses. Weapon innovators in particular will enjoy this feat thanks to their improved ability to target weaknesses multiple times per round.

- **Parting Shot ★★★** Spend two actions to make your target off-guard and shoot them. This feat is the opposite of Double Shot: it focuses on landing one powerful hit against a single target, with the intent to capitalize on the deadly trait. It also allows you to step first, which can let you escape from reactive strikes if your opponent lacks reach. It will likely be the preferred choice of armor and construct innovators, but the choice is ultimately one of preference.
- **Running Reload ★★** This feat is an integral part of the crossbow build, but unfortunately it only becomes available at the same level as Crossbow Terror.
- **Archer's Aim ★★★** In effect, this feat grants the same accuracy bonus as Parting Shot for the same actions but does not allow you to step. As compensation, it instead allows you to ignore concealment. If your target is often off-guard for other reasons, such as a grappling ally or use of stealth, Archer's Aim becomes preferable. If not, Parting Shot should be your choice. If you are using free archetype, it is possible you will wind up with both if you do not meet the prerequisite for triple shot.
- **Triple Shot ★★★★** You can use both Double Shot strikes against the same target. You can also choose to make three shots at a doubled penalty, though the penalty is still less than that of a single multiple attack penalty. This is an amazing feat for the inventor, and has incredible synergy with class damage features such as overdrive and offensive boost.
- **Mobile Shot Stance ★★** Your ranged strikes do not trigger reactive strike, and if you have reactive strike (you do not) you can use it with a ranged weapon against an adjacent target. As a ranged inventor, your goal will be to stay as far away as possible and thus this feat will only apply in cramped environs against specific foes.
- **Unobstructed Shot ★★★** Attempt to get rid of an adjacent creature by shoving or tripping them before making a ranged attack. The shove function is a great way to avoid reactive strikes, especially thanks to the tendency of ranged inventors to keep a decent strength score on standby for use with propulsive weaponry.
- **Multishot Stance ★★★★** The penalty for using Double Shot or Triple Shot is massively reduced. An inventor with damage bonuses from Point Blank Shot, overdrive, and their offensive boost can deal a glorious amount of ranged damage with this feat.
- **Impossible Volley ★★★★** Make a strike against everyone in a burst. It only works with weapons that lack reload, so no phalanx piercer or crossbows allowed. The composite shortbow continues to reign supreme. This provides inventors a great way to duplicate their high damage over an area.

Artillerist ★

The only innovation likely to want this archetype's feats is the mortar, and it already copies two of them for its own class archetype feat list. Field Artillery is literally useless, but Master Siege Engineer is vital. The only feat you might want from this archetype is Named Artillery, which is almost worth two feats.

Independent of that class archetype, siege weaponry is too rare and slow moving to make this archetype viable. If you are taking this archetype without the munitions master class archetype, consider it red. Artillery may have been a cornerstone of historic conflict, but it rarely

appears in tabletop roleplaying games due to the difficulty of fitting its extreme range on a battle map. You might go a whole campaign without seeing so much as a catapult. If your campaign is specifically set in a war and your GM pinky promises it will be useful, improve this archetype's rating to yellow. Technically a construct innovation with manual dexterity could help you load or aim a piece of artillery if your GM exercises their right to allow it to interact with the item. There is also a rare ritual called statuette that can make siege weaponry portable. If your GM is extraordinarily generous, you may be able to access all of those and single-handedly transport and man your portable siege weapon. You'll need to be on the defensive side of battle for all of that effort to matter. In a typical campaign, every single one of these feats is red. If your campaign actually uses siege weaponry with frequency, Shorthanded, Cannon Corner Shot, and Live Ammunition are the most likely to matter.

- **Named Artillery** ★★★ Your siege weapon becomes significantly more durable. Taking it as a tenth level feat due to the archetype rules is a pain in the ass, but still well worth it. Take it if your GM likes smashing your mortar. You could access it a bit earlier in a free archetype game by getting both munitions master feats at level four, but it's not worth losing your Advanced Construct Companion.
- **Shorthanded** ★ Your mortar innovation has a crew size of one so you have no need for this feat.
- **Cannon Corner Shot** ★★ Turn your burst into a twenty foot line. It's a handy way to thread the needle, but like Named Artillery you're paying a level premium for the privilege.
- **Field Artillery** ★ Garbage. See the mortar innovation for details why.
- **Live Ammunition** ★ You can fire creatures out of a siege weapon. Your mortar is too small to use this unless you're traveling with a tiny size party member or you want to load a familiar into it for some reason. Even in those cases, the feat is far too restrictive; it requires two additional actions just to load, ensuring it's completely impractical.
- **Master Siege Engineer** ★ Take this feat through the munitions master class archetype for the mortar innovation.

Assassin ★★ / ★★★

Poison is a terrible damage type, your charisma is too modest to feint, and finesse weapons deal too little damage. It's most useful for the subterfuge suit innovator due to its useful support for finesse weaponry and quick access to sneak attack. Weapon innovators with agile or ranged weaponry can also see some value in it.

- **Expert Backstabber** ★★★ You get some extra damage out of backstabber if your weapon has it. Weapon innovators can add backstabber to their weapon easily. Nothing stops them from putting backstabber on a greataxe, firearm, or gauntlet. High-level athletic weapon innovators with Explosive Maneuver will find it trivially easy to inflict off-guard, proving them further incentives.

  Those using any other innovation have it much worse: the only common martial weapon with backstabber is the mediocre war razor. Regardless of where you are getting backstabber from, I hope you have plenty of friends in melee with you to ensure you get

your bonus damage. This is especially true if you've gotten your hands on a dogslicer from the goblin ancestry's weapon list, as its useful backstabber trait synergizes nicely with this archetype.

- **Poison Resistance ★★★** Poison resistance is a handy benefit. It is somewhat wasted on its origin classes due to their reluctance to enter melee, where they are more likely to be injected with poisons. The inventor has less scruples regarding melee and can greatly benefit from this resistance.
- **Surprise Attack ★★★** When you use stealth for initiative, all creatures that have not yet acted are off-guard against you. A handy way to open battle before your allies rush in and a good way to trigger sneak attack. The inventor's perception-based initiative is terrible, so be sure to fish for stealth initiative whenever possible.
- **Poison Weapon ★★★** This feat talks a big game about improving the terrible action economy of drawing and applying poisons to your weapon, but its true value is in the free injury poisons it grants. While the text indicates that these poisons are only available to rogues, the intent of the feat is plainly that any character is able to receive them: the archetype would not contain a follow up feat that specifically enhances them if they were meant to be unavailable.

  Assuming your GM takes intent into account, this feat provides you with several poisons that provide a simple damage bonus to strikes. There is no saving throw: you injure the target, it takes damage. Archers can lather all of their arrows in this poison at the start of the day, turning this feat into a damage bonus they can spend whenever they choose to. Melee inventors would have to rely on the action economy of drawing and applying poisons mid-combat. Even with this feat condensing that process to a single action, they still have better things to do with their time.
- **Angel of Death ★** Your attacks gain the death trait, but only against your target. If this were all-encompassing you could use this to bypass tricks like regeneration, but the odds of pulling this off against a resurrecting monster are incredibly low, especially if the target is a boss monster of a higher level than you are. The bad guys don't tend to have ready access to life-restoring magic anyways. Most campaigns would never see any use from this feat.
- **Improved Poison Weapon ★★★** Your basic poisons now deal double damage. As with its prior feat, this is handy for a ranged build because you can poison all of your arrows in advance.
- **Assassinate ★★** You deal a heap of extra damage if you are completely unnoticed by your target. You technically also have a tiny chance of instantly killing your target, but it will never work against anything worthwhile.

Bastion ★★★★

The bastion archetype is devoted to shield use. The inventor automatically qualifies for the dedication thanks to their free shield block feat. Power suit armor innovators are the most likely to use this archetype due to its emphasis on athletics. The armor innovation can also indirectly

reduce damage that the shield takes, either through doing so via damage resistance or making critical hits less likely by gaining heavy armor.

- **Disarming Block** ★★★ A neat way to impose lasting accuracy penalties or drain actions from your foe as a reaction. This feat still relies on your opponent using a weapon at all, which many monsters do not do, but it secures itself a solid rating nonetheless. In a political campaign in which most of your opponents are humanoid, its value skyrockets.
- **Nimble Shield Hand** ★★★ You can open doors, use gadgets, and drink potions with your shield hand. Unfortunately, you still can't use manipulate actions with your shield hand. Even though Battle Medicine is functionally an interact action because it requires a free hand to use its toolkit, it has the manipulate trait rather than interact and therefore still isn't allowed. It's a great choice for inventors with the Gadget Specialist feat.
- **Shielded Stride** ★★★ You do not trigger reactive strikes or similar abilities while your shield is raised and you do not move more than half your speed. Such abilities are common enough and your mobility is important enough that this might well be worth it. Naturally, this is once again better for armor innovators: however, this time it favors mobility modifications rather than durability modifications.
- **Reflexive Shield** ★★★★ Your reflex saving throws are in desperate need of compensation and this feat can provide that compensation. Furthermore, when you fail those saving throws you can use your shield to block that damage.
- **Shield Warden** ★★★ You can shield block for an ally. You are more likely to need the help than other martial classes owing to your lower hit points, but you might still need to keep them up from time to time.
- **Destructive Block** ★★★ You are far less expensive to heal than replacing your sturdy shield is. You should never use this feat if it will destroy your shield, even if you would fall unconscious. That said, careful deployment of this ability towards the end of a fight can be very useful. If you can use Quick Repair to fix your shield after a fight, you'll save the party the time or resources they would otherwise spend using medicine or spells to heal you.
- **Quick Shield Block** ★★★★ You gain an extra reaction with which to shield block. You may not always want to destroy your shield so quickly, but if you are fighting minions unable to effectively bust through your shield's hardness you can massively improve your durability.
- **Mirror Shield** ★★ Creatures tend to be resistant to their own damage types and critical failures on attack rolls are not exceedingly frequent unless you are fighting trash minions. There are times when this is helpful, but they are few and this feat requires multiple rolls to work in your favor before it can succeed.
- **Shield Salvation** ★★★ This feature enables you to reduce even high-damage critical attacks without worrying about your shield getting destroyed. It is an excellent follow-up choice for Destructive Block. With the Quick Repair general feat, a crafter's eyepiece, and the inventor's high crafting aptitude, the shield can be brough back to full hit points relatively quickly.

- **Improved Reflexive Shield ★★★** Share shield block with adjacent allies when you both make a reflex save against the same blast. Your shield doesn't take any extra damage in doing so.

Beastmaster ★★★★

The beastmaster is an extraordinary archetype. There are no classes for which the beastmaster is a bad pick. While those interested in a mount should instead choose cavalier, the beastmaster provides a powerful combat ally. Melee inventors are sure to appreciate the support benefit of the wolf, but almost any creature is a good pick for certain builds. Sample your options to find one that works for you. Construct innovators cannot benefit from this archetype because you cannot have both a construct companion and an animal companion. The sidebar associated with this archetype regarding multiple animal companions does not allow you to bypass this restriction.

- **Additional Companion ★★** You gain an extra companion, but you can only have one active at a time and the other one wanders off. This might be necessary in an amphibious campaign in which you need to swap between a swimming companion and a land companion, but otherwise your go-to combat strategy is likely set by your initial choice of companion. Another use is when your animal companion is badly hurt but you don't have enough time to heal it. You can cruelly cast it out into the wilderness to fend for itself and bring a fresh animal companion in.
- **Heal Animal ★★★** You gain the heal spell as a focus spell, but you can only target your animal companion and can't use the three-action version. You could have chosen the inventor feat Searing Restoration to get a healing feature that works on everyone, but this one at least won't conflict with your other unstable abilities.
- **Magic Hide ★★★** This is a more proactive version of Heal Animal, in that it grants your companion a boost to armor class.
- **Mature Beastmaster Companion ★★★★** This feat is necessary for your animal companion to stay relevant. You should always choose it.
- **Wild Empathy ★** A mediocre bonus on a class that can't take good advantage of it.
- **Beastmaster's Trance ★★** You can send your senses into your animal. At higher levels, you can telepathically communicate with it. If your animal companion does not make humanoids suspicious on sight, such as a dog or horse, you may consider this green. If your animal companion is a bird or a bat, you gain aerial reconnaissance and can consider this feat blue. Birds have the advantage of being more inconspicuous to humanoids, though a bat has better senses and will raise less suspicion in a cave or dungeon environment.
- **Companion's Cry ★★★★** The construct innovator gets this for free, but spending an extra action to give your companion an extra action provides much-needed flexibility.
- **Incredible Beastmaster Companion ★★★★** This feat is necessary for your animal companion to stay relevant. You should always choose it.
- **Beastmaster Bond ★★** You can communicate with your animal companion telepathically. This is not a focus spell; it is a permanent effect. This is useful for all sorts of hijinks, but your voice is often sufficient for practical purposes.

- **Enlarge Companion ★★** You can make your animal companion into a kaiju, though its armor class will drop and it will be hard to move around the battlefield. It'll get more damage and reach to compensate. Occupying more physical space also enhances the area of some companion abilities, such as those of the beetle.
- **Beastmaster's Call ★★★** You can quickly gain the support benefit of a non-active companion. You can do this every turn if you want to, so you effectively have it present constantly so long as you only care about its support benefit and don't mind the possibility of it vanishing after taking some minor damage.
- **Side by Side ★★** You are always flanking any creature that both you and your companion are adjacent to regardless of your actual positions. This could be handy for a melee weapon innovator that added backstabber to their weapon, but other inventors will probably prefer ranged combat with their beast.
- **Specialized Beastmaster Companion ★★★★** This feat is necessary for your animal companion to stay relevant. You should always choose it.
- **Lead the Pack ★★** You can have two animal companions out at once but controlling them is very unwieldy.

Blessed One ★★★

If you are intending to play as a pilot, the blessed one becomes noticeably more appealing. By taking advantage of a construct's extra action and the accelerated mobility modification, you can get yourself to an ally quickly and without wasting offense. The charisma you were using to power demoralization can also be used to power counteract checks. You even have the action economy necessary to use mercy. For pilots, the blessed one is green. Be sure to paint your construct like your local ambulances and make siren noises as you rush to the aid of downed allies. The following ratings all assume that you are playing a pilot build. The only major downside is the need to spend twenty minutes after each fight refocusing and restoring your construct's unstable functions, but your allies may spend that downtime healing anyways.

- **Blessed Sacrifice ★★★★** This excellent feat grants you an additional focus point for use with lay on hands. It also grants you a second focus spell which can be used to draw damage away from allies, including your construct. While the inventor does not have a large amount of hit points, redistributing damage from a heavily wounded party member or preventing your construct's destruction can be well worth it.
- **Accelerating Touch ★★** This is a nice bonus, but allies that fall unconscious are generally already in the melee and thus do not need to move anywhere. It is a shame this does not lift them back to their feet. You can't benefit from this because you are riding in a death robot.
- **Mercy ★★★** Use an extra action to counteract fear and paralysis while healing your ally. It is largely due to the action tax of mercy that this archetype is only viable for pilot builds. A significant portion of the Blessed One's follow up feats require mercy, but in the absence of a construct to ride using Mercy on an ally often means giving up your whole turn.
- **Blessed Spell ★** You cannot cast spells from spell slots.

- **Invigorating Mercy ★★** You can counteract the clumsy and enfeebled conditions. These conditions don't have much bite, but Invigorating Mercy is the only eighth level Blessed One feat for which an inventor meets the prerequisites so you might get stuck with it.
- **Greater Mercy ★★★** You can counteract blinded, deafened, sickened, and slowed. These conditions all have serious consequences and many can become permanent. The ability to counteract these conditions can save your party significant trouble.
- **Blessed Denial ★★★** Use your reaction to reduce the severity of a condition suffered by an ally within thirty feet.
- **Elucidating Mercy ★★★** You can counteract stupefied and confused.
- **Resilient Touch ★★★** Improve the saving throws of allies you heal. It is a simple, effective, and action-efficient bonus.
- **Affliction Mercy ★★★** You can counteract very long-lasting and severely penalizing conditions.
- **Amplifying Touch ★★★** Your ally hits harder and triggers the weaknesses of fiends on the round after you heal them.
- **Rejuvenating Touch ★★** When you heal an ally they get a weak overshield once per turn, but the effect ends if the ally is knocked unconscious. If you are able to use it near the start of the fight, it could shave off a decent amount of damage.

Bounty Hunter ★★

The bounty hunter is a flavorful but modest archetype. It has no particular synergy with the inventor, predominantly offering boosts for a few thematic weapons and bonuses to survival. There are some useful features to be found, but they are locked to your prey. It's difficult to get your hunted prey up reliably. If you just want some little bonuses associated with bounty hunting you could do worse.

- **Tools of the Trade ★★** You deal a bit of extra precision damage to your prey when making nonlethal strikes against them with a bola, sap, or whip. None of these weapons are exactly go-to choices for the inventor, but you could do much worse.
- **Posse ★★** You can give your party bonuses to track down your quarry, either via conventional tracking or by gathering information in urban settings.
- **Keep Pace ★★** You can use your reaction to follow your prey when they move away from you. This can help melee inventors avoid wasting actions on movement, but the fact that it only applies to your hunted prey severely curtails your ability to use it.
- **Opportunistic Grapple ★★** When your prey critically fails an attack against you, you can immediately attempt to grab them using your reaction. If you have a free hand and a shield, as might be the case for weapon innovators with gauntlets or an armor innovator relying on unarmed attacks, you can get some use out of this feat.
- **Double Prey ★★** You can designate two targets as your prey, but you still have to get their posters or otherwise get a description of them.

Captivator ★

The captivator is an exceptionally poor pick for the majority of inventors. The spells both scale off of charisma and demand heavy action investment. Like a multiclass, it has a charisma prerequisite. Pilots might actually have the charisma to qualify and actions needed to use spells. They can pick buff spells from the occult list which will apply to their technically-not-mindless construct. By eighth level this even includes powerful buffs such as Heroism. It is decent for pilots as a result, but an actual spellcasting archetype would still provide better versatility.

- **Basic Captivator Spellcasting ★** Standard occult charisma spellcasting with the additional caveat that it must come from the enchantment or illusion schools.
- **Captivating Intensity ★★** This is a spellcasting breadth feat with a quirk, in that it gives you one more cast of a spell if you take Heightened Captivation later.
- **Countercharm ★★** You can use your reaction to attempt to counteract enchantment or illusion spells.
- **Heightened Captivation ★★** This feat provides an odd middle ground between metamagic and a signature spell.
- **Expert Captivator Spellcasting ★** Standard occult charisma spellcasting with the additional caveat that it must come from the enchantment or illusion schools.
- **Reactive Charm ★★** This might redirect attacks to your relatively fragile construct if you choose a spell without care, but you should be able to find something that can keep both of you safe. Even something as simple as color spray might be a good call on occasion. It only works once per day.
- **Effortless Captivation ★★★** You can sustain an enchantment or an illusion spell for free at the start of your turn. This is a great way to improve your action economy assuming you have and use an appropriate spell.
- **Master Captivator Spellcasting ★** Standard occult charisma spellcasting with the additional caveat that it must come from the enchantment or illusion schools.
- **Look Again ★★** You can spend an action to modify a spell. If that spell then fails, you can try to cast it again on your following turn. This is only good for saving you the expense of a spell slot, but by these levels you might be relatively good at casting and could potentially benefit from a boost to your offensive spellcasting.

Cavalier ★★★

Much like the beastmaster, the cavalier offers a powerful animal companion. It is limited to creatures with the mount ability. Options of common rarity include the beetle, camel, horse, legchair (essentially a bio-organic wheelchair), and terror bird (an exceptionally angry ostrich). Oddly, the beetle has the highest top speed once you unlock their advanced maneuver, though the horse is the most reliably fast and the camel can learn to ignore difficult terrain. The legchair has the most to offer ranged builds due to its incredible ability to disengage and provide cover. Melee builds might choose any of the other options.

The big hurdle for mounts is the same as it has always been. Mounts lack hands and can struggle to traverse adventuring environments. Be sure to keep an eye out for magic items which can compensate, such as the hosteling statuette. Inventors also must contend with their mount's

lack of immunity to explode; using the cavalier archetype means giving up on the explode action. Be sure to choose an alternative unstable action like Megavolt.

- **Cavalier's Banner** ★★ This is technically uncommon, but access is trivially easy: all you need to do is follow a faction. You give all of your allies a small bonus against fear effects. As a circumstance bonus, it even stacks with a bard's inspire courage. It technically has a downside in that your banner can be destroyed and cause your allies to become afraid, but as the banner is an attended object that will only happen if your mount has been downed and the enemy goes out of their way to spend actions snapping your flag. Doing so is unlikely to be high on the priority list.
- **Cavalier's Charge** ★★★★ This excellent bonus allows you to move your mount twice and strike at any point during this movement with a bonus to accuracy. You only need to spend two actions to do so. This allows you to kite foes with ease, and is of particular value to a class as squishy as the inventor. Stab a foe, then run out of their range on a speedy mount and leave the tanking to the classes better able to do so.
- **Impressive Mount** ★★★★ You need this feat to improve your mount. As usual for companions, you should always take this feat. Your animal companion also gains one action even if you do not command it.
- **Quick Mount** ★★★ Combine the actions needed to mount and command an animal. While helpful, odds are you are already riding your animal companion before a fight starts.
- **Defend Mount** ★★★ Your hit points are not the greatest but they are still better than your animal companion's. If you carry a shield, use Mounted Shield instead.
- **Mounted Shield** ★★★ Your shield also protects your mount. You can even shield block on its behalf.
- **Incredible Mount** ★★★★ You continue to advance your mount. This is always mandatory for those with animal companions.
- **Trampling Charge** ★★ Turn your mount's hoof attack from a strike to basic reflex saving throws and apply it to everything smaller than your mount that it can reach with one movement action. Plenty of large creatures are immune to this, but it is a decent AoE when it works.
- **Unseat** ★★ This is way too niche. Mounted enemy combatants are very rare outside of themed campaigns. It also only works if you are using a jousting weapon, of which both are poor choices unless you are small size.
- **Specialized Mount** ★★★★ Continue paying the feat tax to keep your animal companion relevant.
- **Legendary Rider** ★★★ A classic quickening capstone feat which allows you to command an animal using your extra action.

Celebrity ★

The celebrity dedication is quite weak and it only has three common feats. Its dedication allows you to use skills to upstage enemies who fail at skills, but the only skills enemies are likely to use in combat are athletics and intimidation.

- **Never Tire ★** You use your reaction to delay fatigue so long as three non-hostile creatures can see you. The latter qualification is no trouble because you are near your party. However, fatigue is both rare and generally occurs out of combat, in which case this does little good.
- **Mesmerizing Gaze ★★** This feat allows you to fascinate a single target in exchange for two actions. There are definitely better uses of your time, but you may be able to distract spellcasters on occasion or provide your allies sneak around with an inconspicuous debuff to a guard's perception.
- **Command Attention ★★★** You can use an action to give your allies a couple of buffs. They improve all of their saving throws against visual effects and can hide without cover. Technically, even your construct could benefit from this ability to hide without cover so long as you gave it stealth proficiency with the correct modifications.

Clawdancer ★ / ★★★★

As an unarmed fighting archetype, the clawdancer is only of use to the armor innovator. It is a great archetype for both the power suit and subterfuge suit. Its attacks are all finesse, but they still deal great damage. They're innately a great choice for meting out damage with overdrive and offensive boost. The archetype further sells itself with a variety of action compression feats and reaction attacks, enabling you to strike far more often.

Making the best of the clawdancer means emphasizing damage above all else. Get damaging runes and other incentives to hit, because you'll be making plenty of attacks.

- **Claw Snag ★★★** Use a reaction to strike a foe that tries to escape your grapple. It's a good level for the effect, and synergizes well with the power suit's muscular exoskeleton modification. With it, overdrive will help improve both parts of this feat.
- **Dashing Pounce ★★★** Leap and strike twice, but if you botch both attacks you fall prone. The inventor's accuracy isn't as reliable as other classes, but this is still a great action-compression feat that collapses two strikes and a move into two actions. It's a boon to those looking to deal some overdrive damage, though it does require you have two free hands and is thus incompatible with shield use. It gets better if you've used athletic skill feats to improve your leap distance. Alternatively, at ninth level you can start to use greater Blast Boots from Gadget Specialist to leap massive distances as you use this feat.
- **Talon Sweep ★★★★** Strike a creature that flanks you using your reaction. It's a powerful reaction attack available at a low level.
- **Abscission Shards ★★** Spend an action after a hit to inflict some bleed damage. The inventor's damage is high enough that you'd probably be better off swinging again, but if you have three actions to burn on offense or you've failed to get overdrive going against a boss you might be better off using this feat.
- **Wheeling Grab ★★★** Tumble through and attempt to grapple a foe if you succeed for one action. It's a tricky feat that demands investment in both strength and dexterity, which can be tricky for both types or armor innovators. If you can pull it off, it's still a fine feat and it has great synergy with Claw Snag because it initiates a grapple.

- **Hindquarter Kick ★★★★** Strike a grabbed foe twice for one action, then release them. It's a fantastic feat to use on the round after you've grabbed a foe, as they'll escape at the end of your turn anyways. It's too bad it's the same level as Wheeling Grab, but you can always pick one or the other next time.
- **Spinning Stand ★★** Strike and stand without provoking reactions for one action. You can spend two actions to make a second talon strike against a second target, but I can't see any reason why you would want to do so instead of just making a second strike normally against whoever you want. It'd cost the same action and wouldn't restrict your target selection.
- **Tear Tendons ★★★** Two claw attacks for two actions; there's no action compression to this feat. If both hit, the foe must make a save or become enfeebled. Three rolls need to work in your favor before this does anything, one of which has MAP, but you can spam it whenever you would want to make two attacks so there's little loss in trying constantly.
- **Feline Dance (U) ★★★★** Catfolk only. A feat that grants an extra use of Cat's Luck once per hour that also forces you to switch stances.
- **Hunting Snag ★★** Get a version of Reactive Strike that only triggers on move actions at a bloated level in exchange for the ability to step after a target on hit. It's a bit too high level for an effect that is a side-grade at best to the default Reactive Strike.
- **Springboard ★★★** Another leap-and-multiattack feat similar to Dashing Pounce. It lacks the chance of knocking you prone but demands you split your damage between two targets. Still, like its predecessor it has amazing synergy with the Gadget Specialist feat and greater blast boots. You might boost its rating up one step if you have Gadget Specialist.
- **Claw and Talon Flow ★★** Easily switch between stances as you make strikes. Most of the other feats give you the ability to switch as you use the action, but if you want to switch without using one of those feats this can help you out.
- **Precise Hooks ★** Apply the effect of a critical specialization at the cost of a 14th level feat. Even layered over an existing critical specialization effect, this is one of the worst deals I've seen a feat offer in a while.
- **Storm of Claws ★★★** Make three attacks. Step between each one. It's a simple feat that lets you adjust your position while striking rapidly.

Dandy ★★

The dandy archetype allows you to sow rumors and gives you expert proficiency in two skills. A pilot build, and certain ranged builds using charismatic ancestries, might have the charisma necessary to pull this off. Almost all of its feats are skill feats, which alleviates the pressure that many similar archetypes endure: you don't need to choose between inventor feats and dandy feats. Its boons are still mostly flavor and largely grant abilities many GMs would allow you to attempt anyways.

- **Distracting Flattery ★★** A neat little skill feat that allows you to cancel out an ally's social blunder. Notably, this doesn't need to be a failed check on your ally's part. If the party ranger brings their pet camel into the fancy ball, you can still use Distracting

Flattery to keep someone from disliking your teammate. Pilots might even have the charisma necessary to use it.

- **Gossip Lore ★★★** This feat is both a not a skill feat and very useful. It allows you to use recall knowledge on any subject via an intelligence-based lore skill, which is handy if you do not plan to become trained in nature or religion.
- **Fabricated Connections ★** You gain a smattering of little downtime bonuses allowing you to use deception instead of the original skill.
- **Party Crasher ★** You can invite yourself to any social event. This will come up at most once per campaign, and odds are your GM will provide your party with a means of access.

Dual-Weapon Warrior ★★★

At first, a dual-weapon fighting style seems to work well with the inventor's abilities. Overdrive applies to all strikes, making an agile off-hand weapon a good choice for reliable delivery. The feat offered by the dedication, Double Slice, allows you to deliver overdrive damage twice per turn with unrivaled ease.

However, a two-weapon build encounters minor hurdles should the game progress to mid-level. First and foremost, a ninth level inventor can only put offensive boost on a single weapon. The need to activate overdrive can also interfere with the actions needed to make multiple attacks, especially if your first attempt doesn't succeed. This archetype still borders on a four star blue rating.

Each modification a weapon innovator places on their innovation increases the pressure to favor that weapon over an off-hand weapon. However, this does have some synergy with those using the deadly simplicity modification. Boosting an agile off-hand weapon like an air repeater or gauntlet can create interesting results. Not many dual-weapon builds get to enjoy the benefits of a free hand, but a gauntlet innovator can. If you choose the air repeater instead, you must choose Dual Thrower at fourth level; plan an alternative strategy for combat on the levels before you can choose it.

A construct innovator could tailor their build specifically to receive the benefits of this archetype. Construct innovators never receive the benefits of offensive boost on their own strikes; that honor goes to their construct. An ordinary construct innovator lacks the action economy to use two weapons at once due to their need to move and strike twice leaving no room to command their construct. However, investing in the construct's ranged modifications can alleviate that issue significantly. At fourth level the construct can take a single autonomous action, which can be devoted to a ranged strike with relative ease. This affords the dual-weapon inventor their whole turn. Thanks to Double Slice, they will have no trouble triggering overdrive's damage three times per turn. The sole exception is the first round, in which they need to command their construct to assume turret form and shoot. Even that can be mitigated with feats like Clockwork Celerity. Such offense comes at a price: your need for intelligence and strength guts your defensive abilities, rendering you vulnerable.

Armor innovators are arguably better qualified to use this archetype. The only feature they lose out on by using a two-weapon fighting style is their offensive boost. They also have access to modifications which improve their movement speed dramatically, which is very helpful

for not wasting too many actions moving so that you can swing both your weapons. The power suit innovator might even choose to take advantage of their bonus armor class to use the riposte feat line.

If you must be a finesse weapon user, the Dual-Weapon Warrior archetype on a subterfuge suit innovator is likely the best way to do so. The damage loss from one-handed strength to finesse weapons is minimal, and your second weapon is predominantly useful for triggering overdrive multiple times rather than dealing its own damage.

Regardless of build, be sure to buy doubling rings or blazons of shared power to copy your weapon runes. I also encourage all melee dual-weapon warriors to buy a weapon siphon. This item allows you to spend insignificant amounts of gold on cheap alchemical bombs to improve your non-agile weapon's damage at the cost of an irrelevant downside. You never make multiple attacks with your non-agile weapon and so have nothing to lose by adding elemental damage to your attacks in exchange for a worse multiple attack penalty.

- **Dual Thrower** ★★★ This feat enables a weapon innovator to dual-wield air repeaters to surprisingly great effect. If you have access through a feat like the human's Unconventional Weaponry you might replace your non-innovation weapon with a non-agile but more damaging repeating hand crossbow. Use blazons of shared power to transfer their runes because doubling rings don't work for ranged weapons. It can also be used for thrown weaponry, but using it in that capacity is difficult because of the number of ability scores needed to make good use of them and the requirement that you buy returning runes so as to not throw away your innovation.
- **Dual Weapon Reload** ★ You may not need a free hand to reload, but you'll still need to burn two actions to reload two ranged weapons, which prevents you from using any dual-weapon feat or making two strikes that turn anyways. Perhaps it would be useful to those using an air repeater alongside a combination weapon like a dagger pistol? I can't imagine why you wouldn't just get a free hand by using a gauntlet bow or simply use another air repeater instead. Capacity weapons like the slide pistol also offer easy alternatives to this feat.
- **Quick Draw** ★★★ An excellent feat for any build. It'll make ambushes much less punishing because you don't need to waste two actions drawing two weapons.
- **Twin Parry** ★★ You can spend an action, and a sixth level feat, to give yourself a bonus to your armor class. While this becomes slightly more tempting if you are actually using a parry weapon, there are few parry weapons of interest due to their low damage. A dwarven inventor could declare their clan dagger their weapon innovation and use complex simplicity to boost its damage up to that of a shortsword while retaining the parry trait.
- **Flensing Slice** ★★★ The target of your double slice takes heavy bleed damage if you are able to spend another action. They also become off-guard and lose their physical resistances for a round, both of which are nice additions.
- **Dual Weapon Blitz** ★★★★ You stride and strike with both of your weapons. Unlike Double Slice you have to deal with the multiple attack penalty. However, this feat has two significant advantages. First, it condenses three actions into two. This allows you activate overdrive, stride, strike twice, and shoot with your construct (if applicable) all on

the same turn. Second, you can make the strikes at any point during your stride, enabling you to use hit and run tactics. The inventor is a glass cannon with significant offense and poor defense; the ability to both attack and retreat at the same time is exceptionally important, especially if your allies can keep enemies still with reactive strikes or grapples. Armor innovators are especially likely to appreciate this feat due to its synergy with their speed modifications.

- **Twin Riposte ★★** Your armor class isn't the best, but dwarves using Twin Parry with their clan daggers could get some use out of this. An armor innovator with speed boosters makes the most of this and can improve the rating one step.
- **Dual Onslaught ★★★★** You guarantee yourself a hit when you use Double Slice. This is excellent for killing high-threat boss monsters, and you can guarantee you land the hit with your offensive boost weapon.
- **Improved Twin Riposte ★★** You are not likely to need this feat, as the odds of multiple enemies critically failing their attack rolls against you are low and you have no competing reactions.
- **Two Weapon Flurry ★** You compress two attacks into a single action, but they both have the normal multiple attack penalty and the feat has the press trait. That means you'll always make the attacks with massive penalties, even with an agile weapon. It doesn't work as a good follow up for any other Dual-Weapon Warrior feat because none of them leave you with less than a full multiple attack penalty. There is really no good reason to use this feat; any of your earlier choices are superior.
- **Twinned Defense ★★** You gain a stance which gives you twin parry permanently. As with its predecessors, there are no downsides to having this feat, it just isn't particularly helpful unless you are already rocking a parry weapon in your off-hand.

Duelist ★★★

The duelist is a combat style archetype dedicated to using a single weapon while maintaining a free hand. Its dedication feat offers quick draw immediately, which is handy to have in your back pocket. More generally speaking, the mechanics of a single-weapon style have reasonable, though imperfect, synergy with an inventor. It has a large amount of mechanical overlap with the bastion archetype, which is the stronger (though more expensive) path overall. Any one-handed d8 weapon is an appropriate armament, but the flail is also a modest option for those interested in using the duelist's disarm feats. If you are a weapon innovator, you could also choose a whip and remove its nonlethal trait with modifications. The duelist is a great pick for those looking to make the most out of Tamper, Gadget Specialist, and similar feats that require a free hand.

- **Dueling Parry ★★★** You use your weapon to simulate the effect of a shield, except that you cannot use the inventor's free shield block feat. This is only a good choice in the context of its own archetype, as otherwise you are allowing your shield block feat to go to waste.
- **Duelist's Challenge ★★★** You gain a damage bonus against one target for the duration and a penalty against all other creatures. This works well with the inventor playstyle, and especially with those using a shortsword or another agile weapon.

- **Disarming Stance ★★** Even though you do not have any access to competing stances you might choose to give this one a pass. Disarm just isn't something you need with any frequency. If you take Dueling Riposte later, improve this to green.
- **Selfless Parry ★★★** When you use dueling parry adjacent allies receive a smaller bonus to their AC.
- **Dueling Riposte ★★** Another thing the duelist has in common with the bastion archetype is the ability to disarm as a reaction. Disarming as a reaction means your enemy takes actual penalties to further attacks with their weapon on their current turn. If you get lucky enough to disarm your foe completely, all the better. It still won't work on anything that doesn't have a weapon and you can only use it when the foe critically fails its strike against you.
- **Disarming Twist ★★** Your every second hit has a slim chance of disarming the opponent. As you do not have any competing strikes, you might as well use this literally every time you qualify for it.
- **Student of the Dueling Arts ★★★** You can swap your duelist feats for other duelist feats at the start of the day. Usually, this means if you are going monster hunting you can get rid of all of your disarming feats in favor of armor class boosting feats, and vice versa.
- **Dueling Dance ★★★** You turn Dueling Parry into a stance. This means you only need to spend an action on it once rather than every round.
- **Improved Dueling Riposte ★★** You gain an extra reaction for using Dueling Riposte. Inventors don't have many other reactions they might want to use and enemies are unlikely to critically fail attacks against you multiple times per round.
- **Guiding Riposte ★★** When an enemy critically fails its strike against you, you can move them up to ten feet within your reach. It is of greater use to whip users because they can pull enemies away from them, but even then this requires an enemy to critically fail an attack and you to succeed on an attack before it even does anything.

Eldritch Archer ★★★

On one hand, this archetype gives you charisma-based spellcasting. On the other, it doesn't matter what your spellcasting ability score is because you deliver it via archery, which relies on your dexterity. Thanks to your weapon runes, you will usually be on-par or beyond the accuracy of an actual spellcaster. Unfortunately, using it demands all three of your actions. You can't trigger overdrive on the same turn you use it and will only benefit from all of your inventor damage features once per round. A construct innovator intent on building their construct for range is the most likely user of this archetype. On round one, they enter overdrive, shoot normally, and command their construct to transform and shoot. On following rounds, they use Eldritch Shot and rely on their construct's free action to double dip on overdrive damage. If you ever need to move this process is disrupted, but you can probably get by on your other feats until then.

- **Basic Eldritch Archer Spellcasting ★★** While your first thought might be to grab offensive spells for use with eldritch shot, you should actually use these spells to pick up

buffs. Low level spells won't be able to compete with the damage of your scaled cantrips at this level.

- **Enchanting Arrow ★★★** Your target takes mental damage and becomes stunned on crit. It only takes two actions, but by this level the damage is lower than your eldritch shot cantrips. I consider that a fair trade.
- **Magic Arrow ★★** The most useful arrows to replicate are vine arrows and climbing bolts. Neither are great, and you can't fire arrows from crossbows or bolts from shortbows or longbows.
- **Precious Arrow ★** You spend an action to turn your next arrow cold or silver. You can eventually include adamantine as well. Ammunition of the appropriate metals are cheap and easy to use. Unless your campaign is specifically themed around an appropriate opponent, this feat will save you a paltry amount of money and could easily be replicated with a trivial amount of forethought. Just buy ten of each type of ammunition and you'll be set the next time you need it. Weapon innovators also have a superior, action-free, lower-level means of achieving the same result in the form of their alloy modifications.
- **Eldritch Reload ★★** You can reload as a free action after activating a magical piece of ammunition or casting a spell. It's alright, if a bit high level. I can't imagine anyone trudging all the way through the last few levels of this archetype with a reload weapon. Maybe you'll use it if your game starts at tenth level. I wish the archer had a version of this that worked with magical or alchemical ammunition. You can technically exploit this with trustworthy rounds to get free-action reloads for 6 gold per shot because their activation is a free action, but you still had to wait until 10th level on an archetype that otherwise hates reload weaponry. Unless your game starts at tenth or you've dipper into the archetype exclusively to exploit this and don't intend to take anything else, I can't sincerely recommend it.
- **Expert Eldritch Archer Spellcasting ★★** Get more buff and utility spells.
- **Seeker Arrow ★★★** You get a one-action strike that ignores all concealment and cover.
- **Phase Arrow ★★★** This feat grants all of the benefits the seeker arrow feat and gives a massive bonus against armored targets. However, you can only use it once per day. If you routinely fight armored humanoids, you might take this instead of Seeker Arrow. Most adventurers should favor Seeker Arrow instead.
- **Arrow of Death ★★★** You deal a crapton of extra damage once per day. There is also a tiny chance of instant death, but it is far too small to be worth talking about in an optimization guide. If it ever does work, it will be against an insignificant scrub who probably would have died from the damage.
- **Master Eldritch Archer Spellcasting ★★** Continue taking buff and utility spells.
- **Impossible Volley ★★★** Attack every creature in an area. I can't help but chuckle when I notice the eldritch archer's capstone feat isn't even magical. While the effect is extremely good in the right scenario, you have to be using a weapon with the volley trait. Inventors should be using a shortbow rather than a longbow. If they are using a longbow, they most likely removed the volley trait using omnirange stabilizers. You could attempt to switch now, at the end of the game, just to use this feat if you really wanted to.

Exorcist ★★

An inventor with the exorcist archetype bears an uncanny resemblance to a ghostbuster. When your "spirit dwelling" is also a ranged weapon innovation it starts looking an awful lot like a proton pack. To my great amusement, this seems entirely unintentional. The sidebar mentions nothing about a more scientific approach to exorcism, devoting its focus exclusively to moonlit rituals and similar esoterica. Regardless, the dedication itself grants you resistance to vitality and void damage, as well as all damage from spirits. While much more powerful than average resistance, it takes your reaction to use an expends a resource that functions like a focus point. You'll almost certainly want to choose occultism rather than religion as your tradition due to its intelligence scaling. This archetype is incredibly powerful against ghosts, but it won't help you against any other undead. That level of specificity makes it impossible to attain a green rating, much as I would like to award such.

- **Cast Out ★★** Use your occultism to free a creature from possession. Possession is extremely rare but also extremely bad.
- **Spirit's Absolution ★★** You can use an action to regain a very small amount of hit points. The inventor feat Searing Restoration is entirely superior unless you manage to catch a ghost that day. Said feat is much lower level than this one.
- **Spirit's Anguish ★★★** You dole out sonic damage in a cone. The damage is modest, but the damage type is extremely reliable and it targets will saving throws. The inventor does not normally gain any features able to target will, so this feat opens up a useful new avenue of attack whenever their usual tricks get resisted. Not only that, but despite targeting will saving throws the effect is not mental, and thus can target the often dismal will saving throws of mindless creatures. This feat can deal deceptively high damage in the right circumstances.
- **Spiritual Sense ★** You do not have the perception necessary to use this feat. It might jump a rating if you have canny acumen, but only just and only then if your campaign is themed around spirits.
- **Blind Fight ★** Your perception is literally too poor to take this feat.
- **Enticing Dwelling ★★★** You can use your exorcist abilities twice per day instead of once, even if you don't catch any ghosts that day. This usually means getting two cones of sonic damage.
- **Sense Evil ★** This is an atrocious feat even on its home class.
- **Sense the Unseen ★★★★** This feat is normally only available to classes with extreme perception, but it is only triggered when you fail a perception check. Its intent is to make those classes more reliable even on the off-chance they fail, but for a class with the inventor's perception it allows your dismal perception to still accomplish something.

Familiar Master ★★

You gain a familiar. While familiars can be very useful, inventors can struggle to take full advantage of them due to their lacking charisma scores. Charisma powers your familiar's skill

checks, regardless of the skill's original ability score. Furthermore, the inventor has a large number of trained skills already and is unlikely to need to compensate for them with a familiar.

Still, a little creativity can go a long way. If you make your familiar skilled and independent, it can spam intimidation checks each round at no cost to you. It won't succeed often and will scale poorly, but it is still a free attempt every single round. Your familiar could even ride your construct into range at no action cost.

If you would rather your familiar played support, you can give it manual dexterity to allow it to administer healing consumables to you or your allies. This strategy also benefits from an independent familiar, as they will still be able to administer a potion when you fall unconscious.

Finally, giving it speech and traversal abilities enables you to use it as a scout. Speech affords it the chance to report back to you with information on enemy composition and numbers. It is not the stealthiest critter, but it is much more expendable than a party member is usually innocuous enough that it will not draw suspicion if it is caught. By sending a common bird to fly over an enemy camp and report back, you can usually gain a solid amount of intel. You can keep it much safer if you give it a burrow speed and tremorsense: your familiar will be able to count enemy numbers without risk to itself, though specific details might be lacking.

As an intelligence-based character, you might consider the witch archetype as an alternative. It offers a similar number of familiar abilities while also granting spellcasting.

- **Enhanced Familiar** ★★★★ This feat is vital to pulling off the best familiar strategies outlined at the start of this archetype.
- **Familiar Conduit** ★ You have no spells with which to use this feat.
- **Familiar Mascot** ★★ There are a few possible uses for this feat. Healing an ally, sparing your familiar from death, or recalling it from danger to a specific ally all have their uses. However, you still must qualify for the ability. Many master abilities require spellcasting, so even if you wanted to give it to a spellcasting ally you could not do so.
- **Improved Familiar** ★★ This gives you access to calligraphy wyrms, crawling hands, faerie dragons, nosoi, and pipefoxes. Everything else you either already had access to or still can't access.
- **Mutable Familiar** ★★ Swap around your familiar's movement or sensory abilities in ten minutes. Useful if you want your familiar to scout a pool in the ground or dig something up, but generally this is not necessary.
- **Incredible Familiar** ★★★ You gain even more familiar abilities.

Fireworks Technician (U) ★★

This archetype provides alchemical infused reagents, but they can only be used for its unique firework features rather than anything available to any other alchemist. You'll typically want to prepare flower fireworks, which can dazzle an area of enemies around you without touching your allies. You might prepare one of the others just in case you need them, or more if you are preparing for a specific threat. The default fireworks only take one action to use, and while you need to have a free hand to use them you do not appear to need to draw them before using. The weapon innovator and armor innovator should have little trouble securing the free hands needed

to use this feature between unarmed attacks and weapon modifications, and pilots will appreciate the firework's lack of reliance on attack rolls.

- **Coughing Dragon Display ★** You can counteract a visual or auditory effect using your fireworks lore skill and two actions. If you bump it up to three actions you can counteract both simultaneously. Unfortunately, the level of your counteract check is your half your alchemy level. You'd need to get the Expert Fireworks Crafter feat to keep this feat relevant, and even after doing so its counteract level is below average. The effect isn't worth two feats, so your only incentive to choose this feat is in a free archetype game.
- **Expert Fireworks Crafter ★** This feat has almost no purpose. Advanced alchemy normally allows you to access higher level alchemical items for use with your infused reagents, but there are no fireworks available except those granted to you through this archetype's feats. The only mechanical impact this feat has is improving the counteract level of the Coughing Dragon Display.
- **Jumping Jenny Display ★★★** This firework grounds flying enemies. If you are a melee character you will greatly appreciate this ability, as will all of your other melee allies. If everyone in your party has flight or ranged attacks, you will be less inclined to take this.
- **Goblin Jubilee Display ★★★** You gain a ranged burst with generous range and breadth. It deals minor damage, but it also dazzles and deafens targets in the area. Between the two, both martial and spellcasting threats are sorely inconvenienced, especially if they fail or critically fail their saving throws. It is a great way to reduce the threat of a mob. Unfortunately, it will consume your whole turn.
- **Banshee Cry Display ★★** You can use a reaction to interfere with spellcasting, even if it comes from an item rather than Cast a Spell. The enemy makes a will save to resist the effect. The enemy does receive an odd out in that they can also spend an extra action to prevent the spell from being disrupted, even if they failed the saving throw. That it is a will save also means it is unlikely to succeed against dedicated spellcasters, who overwhelmingly favor will.

Gladiator ★

This archetype is about two things: using performance in combat and engaging in combat with noncombatants watching the fight. Neither is likely to apply to a typical adventure, especially not on the chassis of an inventor.

- **Fancy Moves ★** Use performance to demoralize.
- **Play to the Crowd ★** You need non-combatant spectators to use this feat, which will not be the case the vast majority of the time.
- **Stage Fighting ★★** You can make your lethal attacks nonlethal at will.
- **Performative Weapons Training ★** You are already proficient in all of these weapons. The dueling cape doesn't even need proficiency to use, making its presence here baffling. You also get the critical specialization effect. A sixth level class feat for the crit spec is a terrible trade.

- **Call Your Shot ★** You need non-combatant spectators to use this feat, which will not be the case the vast majority of the time.

Herbalist ★★

The herbalist is for those who are sick of buying healing potions and would rather make their own. As an intelligent inventor, you might want to just use the alchemist archetype directly to get the same healing items with a much expanded item list and less reliance on the environment. You'll have no trouble meeting the intelligence prerequisite.

- **Fresh Ingredients ★★★** You can gain significant boosts to the treat wounds action.
- **Poultice Preparation ★★★** You might as well turn all of your elixirs into poultices. There are no downsides to doing so. Applying them means getting an extra flat check against the three most common forms of persistent damage.
- **Advanced Herbalist ★★★** Make more items.
- **Endemic Herbs ★★** Get some minor bonuses themed around your environment.
- **Expert Herbalism ★★★★** You get more powerful elixirs of life automatically as you level up and improve your alchemy level so that you can use them.

Horizon Walker ★★

If you miss the days when rangers were only effective in specific favored terrains, the horizon walker is for you. However, the odds of long-term travel and exploration feats being relevant to your adventure are extremely low. Worse still, most of these feats are not skill feats. You are trading away class feats to get them. One positive thing I can say about this archetype is that it solves one of the main issues regarding many travel-time feats, in that it confers the benefits to your allies as well as yourself.

You'll need to choose a favored terrain. Your choice will be largely down to the circumstances of your individual campaign. Plains has the most overtly useful bonus thanks to its hefty movement speed bonus, but forest is more likely to come up for general purpose adventuring. Underground is my preferred option because it is the only one that is likely to apply in dungeons, though conversely it will almost never use the overland travel side of the dedication feat.

- **Acclimatization ★★** In your favored terrain you can treat temperature as one step less severe. When other creatures follow you, they also receive these benefits.
- **Sure Foot ★★★** You gain a bonus to all skill checks made to move in your favored terrain. This feat provides further incentives to choose cave as your favored terrain. It also somehow got away with being labelled a skill feat. The prerequisites are a bit annoying due to your lackluster skill boosts.
- **Perpetual Scout ★★★** You give yourself and your party a bonus to initiative, assuming your GM even uses exploration activities.
- **Blind-Fight ★** Your perception is too bad to qualify for this feat.
- **Magical Adaptation ★★** You gain two useful spells and one other spell. It is more than a bit high level for what you get out of it.

- **Terrain Master** ★★★ You can easily swap your favored terrain over the course of an hour.
- **Warden's Step** ★★ This can allow you and everyone else to use stealth for initiative more reliably, so bump its rating up to green if you are in a sufficiently sneaky party.
- **Wild Strider** ★★★ You can ignore all nonmagical difficult terrain and treat greater difficult terrain as regular terrain. By level twelve I should hope you have better options, even if it just amounts to buying feather step talismans for when you really need them.

Linguist ★

The odds of a language barrier becoming a major hurdle are incredibly low. While any of the linguist's feats could come up in a scenario designed exactly for them, it is unlikely any of them will matter more than once a campaign. The sole saving grace is that they are largely skill feats rather than class feats, so you are not outright trading power away by choosing the linguist.

- **Multilingual Cipher** ★★ You can make and break secret codes more easily. Good luck getting that to come up.
- **Phonetic Training** ★ You can easily transcribe languages even if you do not know them, presumably for the purposes of bringing the text to someone who does know the language for later translation.
- **Spot Translate** ★ This feat is not a skill feat. You can convert the linguistic effects of allies into a language you know. For this feat to matter, several things must coincide: your ally must use a linguistic effect, your enemy must be able to understand a language, it must not speak common or any other language known to your ally, and you must know one of the languages it does speak. Out of all the monsters that can speak, I would guess maybe a hundred can't speak common. If you intend to use this feat be sure you know infernal, abyssal, and necril, as they are the most likely culprits.
- **Analyze Idiolect** ★ This could be pretty helpful to somebody intending to be a master of disguise, but the inventor has nothing else that could assist them in that capacity.
- **Read Shibboleths** ★★ You can gain a minor bonus to diplomacy and deception checks after interacting with a target for ten minutes. If they are in disguise, you can use society to determine the truth. This is a handy enough way to replace a perception check with a society check, though it won't come up that often.
- **Crude Communication** ★ You can convey basic information in all languages. Once you are legendary you can effectively speak (but not read) any language you encounter within ten minutes of observation. While nice, this is not a skill feat. You have to trade an eighth level class feat for the privilege of doing something that might never come up.

Loremaster ★★★★

Right out the gate, the loremaster gives you access to an archetype equivalent of Bardic Lore. This allows you to use your intelligence for any recall knowledge check with a reduced DC, thus supplanting the need for religion and nature while also improving your success rate. You even gain expert level proficiency in your special lore skill at high tiers of play. The dedication alone

is thus very helpful for ensuring your recall knowledge checks about various monsters and magic items are successes.

- **Loremaster's Etude** ★★★★ This focus spell allows either you or an ally to roll a recall knowledge check twice and choose the higher result. This is most helpful to whomever has the higher bonus, so if you have a divine or primal caster in the party be sure to allow them the benefits of this feat when discussing religion or nature. It is a focus spell, but it can be used out of combat with ease. Provided you can convince your party to wait ten minutes between checks, this spell enables your entire party to roll twice on all knowledge checks.
- **Magical Edification** ★★★ You gain three very helpful cantrips.
- **Orthographic Mastery** ★★ This is very unlikely to be necessary.
- **Quick Study** ★★★ This feat can be used to achieve a hyper-specific lore (such as Adult Red Dragon Lore) and thus should drop the DC of recall knowledge checks on the subject by three, relative to the archetype's universal lore skill. As you can freely alter this lore each morning, if you have even a passing idea of what is heading your way you can improve your knowledge checks against it. At high levels when you become a master or legend in arcana and occultism, this becomes slightly less valuable due to the disparity between your proficiencies.
- **Assured Knowledge** ★★★ You gain Assurance with all recall knowledge skills, including your lore skills. Lore skills are unique in that they drop the DC of the subject in question rather than applying bonuses or penalties to the check itself, thus making it very likely that you can successfully use Assurance on them. This is very useful when combined with Quick Study for that reason. You still should not expect to succeed with Assurance against primary antagonists and other boss monsters.
- **Greater Magical Edification** ★★ You gain three modest spells, though they are fun and suitable for the archetype's flavor.
- **Enigma's Knowledge** ★★★★ You can make all of your recall knowledge checks as free assured actions. This is a great follow up feat for Assured Knowledge. It is particularly useful to the inventor, as they receive no ability to reduce the action tax of recall knowledge despite their high intelligence.
- **True Hypercognition** ★★★★ You make five recall knowledge checks using one action. You can't use any special abilities triggered by recall knowledge checks, but besides the ones this archetype gave you the inventor doesn't have any of those. You lose nothing and gain four actions, though you might find your last checks dubious.

Marshal ★★★★

The updates made the marshal in Player Core 2 made charisma far less relevant to the marshal. If you take Assurance in the skill of your inspiring stance you can meet the DC 100% of the time. You'll probably still want a point of charisma to make use of the social skill you'll be boosting out of combat, but there's no longer any pressure to have a serious amount of charisma to meet the check.

Both of its stances can apply to the construct. They even stack with Lock-On inventor feat, because they are status bonuses whereas Lock-On provides circumstance bonuses. It's a great fit for pilots because riding a large mount because it gives the aura additional coverage.

- **Dread Marshal Stance** ★★★★ This is the easier option to choose due to the power of intimidation and demoralization. It synergizes more naturally with the pilot's go-to demoralization playstyle, which arguably makes it the superior choice.
- **Inspiring Marshal Stance** ★★★★ The inspiring marshal stance may require diplomacy rather than intimidation, but it is the equal of its rival on average. Both stances are very well balanced against one another, but the inventor's limited skill increases usually cause them to favor Dread Marshal Stance for intimidation's value in demoralization.
- **Snap Out of It!** ★★★ You can grant an ally an immediate will save against a mental effect, assuming the mental effect has a limited duration. This is a nice and versatile bonus.
- **Steel Yourself!** ★★★ As one action you give your ally a paltry amount of temporary hit points and a significant boost to their fortitude saving throws. I would typically only use this if you expect the fortitude saving throw bonus to matter, treating the temporary hit points as a small bonus atop that. As with all of the other marshal abilities, your technically-not-mindless construct can benefit from it too.
- **Strategist Stance** ★★★ An intelligence-based alternative to the charismatic stances. While inventors are highly intelligent, this stance was built pre-remaster and uses standard DC rather than the remastered easy DC. This means that even with an inventor's superior intelligence, using one of the other stances is going to be a better choice because you can guarantee the result with Assurance. Even if your GM adjusts the DC to the remaster standard, this stance is still worse than those two. You give a bonus to reflex saving throws, which isn't even targeted in some encounters. You also make enemies off-guard against a single hit if you Recall Knowledge about them. Compared to the Inspiring Marshal Stance's universal accuracy bonus, which applies to every hit your allies make and isn't rendered redundant by mundane flanking, it's no contest. You might consider it if your party has a dedicated bard rendering the other stances redundant, but otherwise it's outclassed.
- **Cadence Call** ★★★ Errata has clarified that this feat will work on minions like your construct. On following turns, you can simply not give it any actions. This feat is predominantly effective as a fight ender: if your allies use the quickened action this feat grants them, they become slowed on the following round. Should that occur, you have gained very little. As such, it should be used to decisively end a fight by gathering allies around the final opponent for a beatdown.
- **Rallying Charge** ★ This feat is incompatible with the pilot playstyle because you need to move to use it. Your construct cannot use that move action on your behalf.
- **Back to Back** ★★★ You and your construct will always be flanked at the same time and this feat therefore does not make the two of you universally immune to flanking. That said, odds are decent you will have an ally next to you, and making both of you immune

to flanking can be a big help. This also makes your construct immune to flanking when adjacent to an ally.

- **Know Your Enemy** ★ This feat has too many prerequisites. You need two archetypes and strategist stance just to quality, and one of those archetypes requires you to take the monk archetype and multiple monk feats to qualify for it. It's functionally inaccessible for any reasonable build, which is a shame because its mechanics are fun and useful.
- **Reactive Strike** ★★ On one hand, getting extra attacks on your reaction is great. On the other hand, using it effectively means ignoring one of the main benefits of the pilot build: not needing to spend money on fundamental runes. If you are carrying a melee weapon around for some reason, this feat gives you an actual reason to use it.
- **To Battle!** ★★★ Spend one action to make your ally stride or two actions to make them strike. You can't use this on your construct because it does not have a reaction, but it is still a great feat to use on an ally.
- **Form Up!** ★★★ A neat bonus that lets you reposition all your allies at once. The less they use their reactions the better this feat. Unfortunately, it tends to bring them into your explode radius. It's still handy, especially if you have alternative unstable actions.
- **Topple Foe** ★★ Whenever an ally succeeds on a strike, you can use your reaction to attempt to trip them. This would be great for a non-pilot build, but is of more limited worth to a build that generally does not attempt to make its own strikes or athletics checks due to the multiple attack penalty. If you have invested heavily in athletics despite your pilot build, bump this up a color rating, or two if you have kept it maximized and have decent strength or Assurance. You can even use it after your construct succeeds at a strike.
- **Coordinated Charge** ★ You cannot stride and have little interest in using your own strikes as a pilot, so this is of sharply limited worth.
- **General's Gambit** ★ The same onerous prerequisites as Know Your Enemy with none of the power. You can spend your entire turn to stride and create a diversion. There are some extra benefits, but it would be a sub-par feat even without the prerequisites holding it back.
- **Tactical Cadence** ★★★ This feat turns Cadence Call from a situational use to a massively powerful and reliable boon.
- **Target of Opportunity** ★★★★ When your ally succeeds at a strike, you can use your reaction to make a ranged strike with a minor penalty against the same target. This strike completely bypasses the multiple attack penalty. This feat single-handedly allows the pilot to re-acquire the double overdrive feature of a drone style construct innovator. The only downside is that it might provoke reactive strikes from time to time, due to being locked to a ranged strike. You are likely to hit twenty dexterity in one level anyways, so your accuracy should be pretty good. The sudden need to purchase runes might sting your wallet though.

Martial Artist ★ / ★★★

Bump the rating of this archetype to a high-tier green if you are using an armor innovation. Its dedication alone will make your unarmed attacks viable. The following ratings assume you are using a power suit armor innovation. A character with a d6 or d8 ancestral unarmed attack could also take this to make their kicks deal d6 agile damage, giving them an agile follow-up attack that scales off of their handwraps. The martial artist has a large number of dud feats that you'll need to work around, but what's left is still very strong.

- **Powder Punch Stance (U)** ★★★ I am including this uncommon feat for its thematic overlap with the inventor. By entering this stance, your unarmed attacks all deal one extra fire damage. This is a handy way to generally improve your damage while also triggering fire weaknesses. It also comes with an improvement to your shove actions, though it only triggers that bonus on critical success.
- **Brawling Focus** ★ A typical critical specialization feat which the inventor is ill-suited to capitalize on. That the brawling critical effect allows a saving throw just adds further incentives not to waste a class feat on it.
- **Crane Stance** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Dragon Stance** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Gorilla Stance** ★★★ Your unarmed attacks gain high damage and both backswing and forceful. Those traits all synergize nicely with overdrive. This is the most optimal common stance available to the power suit innovator, and likely the most optimal when compared to Powder Punch Stance as well, if only slightly.
- **Mountain Stance** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Stumbling Stance** ★★ The strikes of this stance enjoy high base damage, but their traits are lackluster for an inventor. The stance's reliance on deception and feinting likewise leaves something to be desired, as the armor innovator is very unlikely to have the charisma necessary to use it effectively. It's still the best choice of stance for the subterfuge suit, if you even want to use a stance at all.
- **Tiger Stance** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Wolf Stance** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Follow Up Strike** ★★★★ This excellent feat allows you to make multiple attacks more easily. If you are in Gorilla Stance, your second strike will still receive the benefits of backswing and forceful. Making this strike helps you ensure you will land your overdrive attacks.
- **Thunder Clap** ★★★ The damage is on the low side and the range is slight, but this feat has an excellent damage type and can target fortitude saving throws. Monsters may have a slight bias towards fortitude saving throws, but the inventor does not normally have a means of targeting fortitude saving throws at all. This feat can do more damage than expected against the right opponents. There are also no limits on its usage and it can bypass the multiple attack penalty whenever you have a full round to devote to offense.
- **Crane Flutter** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Dragon Roar** ★ You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.

- **Gorilla Pound ★★** You almost certainly lack the charisma necessary to capitalize on the demoralization check which is part of this feat. You may be able to eke some value out of it regardless, either normally or through the Assurance feat against weaker foes.
- **Grievous Blow ★★★** This feat essentially offers Megaton Strike's unstable function on any turn you wish to have it, with the added benefit of bypassing resistances. It is balanced out by being a higher-level feat and locked to unarmed strikes, but the effect is still monstrously powerful. It is best used to bypass resistances or on turns where you suspect you might critically hit your foe. It is also an alternative to making three strikes on a turn, though it sadly cannot be used on the same turn as Follow Up Strike due to their shared flourish trait.
- **Mountain Stronghold ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Stumbling Feint ★** This feat should not have appeared on the martial artist archetype because it is only possible to use it alongside Flurry of Blows, which the archetype does not provide.
- **Tiger Slash ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Wolf Drag ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Black Powder Flash (U) ★★★** The Powder Punch Stance martial artist learns another trick that targets fortitude saving throws, this time to blind the target with a flash of powder.
- **Path of Iron ★★★★** This is an amazing feat for the inventor. You stride and strike three times at different targets along the way. None of those strikes have the multiple attack penalty, making it easy to land all of your inventor damage bonuses three times per round. This feat is best used in tandem with the armor innovation's speed-improvement modifications, as they improve your access to multiple targets.
- **Mountain Quake ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.

Mauler ★★

You get the critical specialization of two-handed weapons and can treat advanced two-handed weapons as martial weapons. You don't gain any special access to uncommon two-handed weapons. The only common advanced qualifying weapons are the broadspear, gada, and nodachi. The broadspear is a great weapon for inventors owing to its reach and multiattack features. The nodachi's critical fishing playstyle and low base damage make it the worst choice, but it's still decent if you like the flavor. The gada is a flexible weapon which is a good upgrade on the bastard sword. Your GM might give you access to other advanced weapons, but as uncommon equipment with no clear access clause they're outside the scope of this guide.

The weapon innovation already gets the critical specialization effect of its innovation and still needs to spend their modification to use an advanced weapon as their innovation. The dedication feat is useless to them. Power suit armor innovators get the most out of this archetype's dedication and can use the Clockwork Celerity inventor feat to capitalize on the mauler's action-intensive endgame feats. Power suit armor innovators are the best fit for this archetype, and you can improve its rating one step for them. Just be wary of using it for a free

archetype game, as its lackluster selection of early feats leaves you with only poor choices for several levels after choosing Slam Down.

- **Slam Down** ★★★ Use two actions to strike and trip the target. Both weapon and armor innovators will relish the chance to bypass the multiple attack penalty, but armor innovators once again get slightly more out of this feat because it affords them the chance to make trip attempts without free hands. Weapon innovators likely already put trip onto their weapon with entangling form.
- **Vicious Swing** ★ Just take Megaton Strike. It is available at the same level and is explicitly better than Vicious Swing.
- **Clear the Way** ★★ You shove most adjacent creatures and then stride without provoking reactive strikes. Unfortunately, those shoves appear to suffer the normal multiple attack penalty. Not only are they likely to fail if used on more than two targets, but they are also likely to knock you prone due to critical failure. Still, getting two shoves and a stride in exchange for two actions can be a good deal, and your movement won't provoke reactive strikes if you succeed on your shove attempt as a bonus.
- **Shoving Sweep** ★★ Your foe is likely to use diagonal movement to undo whatever you gain by shoving them one space away from you. At best, this might push them somewhere hazardous or near an ally with reactive strike. Your lack of control over the direction you shove the target and the feat's high level don't paint a flattering picture.
- **Crashing Slam** ★★★ You no longer need to make an athletics check to trip your foe. If your attack hits the opponent eats dirt, no exceptions. You even get bonus damage from doing so. This is a great way to make boss monsters waste actions.
- **Brutal Finish** ★★★ This strike can only be used as a second strike due to the press trait. It applies one die worth of damage even if you miss. You will not receive overdrive or other modifiers to damage on this failure strike, but this feat still synergizes nicely with the inventor playstyle due to its encouragement to aim for multiple attacks per turn.
- **Hammer Quake** ★★★ Use Clockwork Celerity to move yourself into position, then use a full-round action to strike a foe and trip both it and every enemy adjacent to it. The multiple attack penalty is delayed until after all attacks, unlike Clear the Way.
- **Unbalancing Sweep** ★★ Unless you really like shoving, this feat is just a worse version of Hammer Quake.
- **Avalanche Strike** ★★★ Use Avalanche Strike with a polearm to make an attack against every creature within your reach with no multiple attack penalty. All targets suffer all of the effects of your weapon, from overdrive to offensive boost. This feat is very similar to the weapon innovation inventor feat, Devastating Weaponry, except that it is lower level and has less range. Unlike Devastating Weaponry, Avalanche Strike is compatible with the armor innovator and thus its version of Clockwork Celerity. Armor innovators have a much easier time positioning themselves for optimal use of this feat even despite its reduced range. However, it will still deal less damage for more actions than using the explode action, and it fills a similar role, so you may wish to save your unstable action.

Medic ★★★★

Your target gains a bunch of extra hit points from your medicine-based healing and you can occasionally ignore temporary immunity to Battle Medicine. This archetype only has four common feats, but the dedication is extremely powerful and all of the feats it has are good ones. The only hurdle is getting a decent wisdom score (because as we all know surgery is about how you feel rather than what you know) but with minor adjustments you should be able to start with a fourteen.

- **Doctor's Visitation ★★★★** Stride then use Battle Medicine once every turn. The action economy savings speak for themselves. Only pilots wouldn't choose this feat.
- **Treat Condition ★★★** You can use medicine to counteract clumsy, enfeebled, or sickened. You might not often want to use this mid-combat, but those conditions can last for a long time if the right effect applied them.
- **Holistic Care ★★★** You can spare your allies from three mental conditions in addition to three physical ones, though you have to be at least trained in diplomacy to do so.
- **Resuscitate ★★★★** Gods demand a diamond tithe, but you can raise the dead at no cost.

Mind Smith ★★★

You can generate a "mind weapon" to use in battle. The vast majority of melee inventors will choose the two-handed reach weapon version of the mind weapon. The Mind Projectiles feat does open up the option of switch-hitting.

Let's get the elephant in the room out of the way: your mind weapon is technically a martial weapon. I can't find any rule preventing you from choosing it as your weapon innovation. I would personally block this regardless on the grounds of common sense, as you can't apply your engineering and metallurgic talents to a weapon that isn't physical. Your GM may rule that you are simply manifesting a completed version of the blueprint in your head, but I doubt this interaction is intended.

There are other grey areas in the mind weapon's interaction with inventor features. For example, the armor innovator must prepare a weapon at the start of the day to work with their version of offensive boost. If the weapon ceases to exist, it is unclear whether or not it is still prepared or has been reset upon remanifesting. I don't have the answers to these questions.

Assuming you and your GM resolve these issues, the mindsmith is a great choice for melee weapon or power suit armor innovators. The strength-based mind weapons offer great damage for their weapon categories. Like the weapon innovator, it is able to add traits to its weapon. At higher levels, it arguably does the weapon innovator's job better than it does. It can easily target any weakness and add the two best traits, grapple and trip, to its weapon with even better versatility in both cases. It is also trivially easy to smuggle your mind weapon anywhere, seeing as you can manifest it from nothingness.

- **Malleable Movement ★★** This feat is a second level skill feat. The feat improves your leap distance. As a melee build, you should have the strength and athletics needed to jump.

- **Ghost Blade ★** Spend one action to give your weapon ghost touch. I'd sooner invest in ghost oil for the rare occasions you need it.
- **Just the Tool ★★★** The exact limits of this ability are ill-defined. For starters, there is no size or bulk restriction. Twenty-foot ladders and fifty-foot ropes are arguably simple tools. Going off of the examples given, I am inclined to guess that the intent is for this ability to apply to handheld tools no larger than five feet to a side. That is still pretty helpful.
- **Mental Forge ★★★★** This feat is bonkers. The grapple-trip-reach combo used to be available only to weapon innovators. Now anyone can do it for the cost of a fourth level feat. Even if you are a weapon innovator, you can put shove and modular on your entangling form mind weapon to get all of the important weapon traits on your weapon far sooner than normal.
- **Mind Shards ★★** The damage and range of this cone are both modest. On the flipside, it can be used very frequently and bypasses the multiple attack penalty. If you happen to find yourself in a position where you can hit three or more targets, you could do worse than this ability. You could also do better if you were willing to explode, but maybe you'd rather use other unstable features or want to avoid hitting your allies.
- **Malleable Mental Forge ★★** You can swap your weapon's damage type as an action, shove, or make it nonlethal. It comes at the expense of grapple and trip, so you'll probably only do so when you know you are going to fight something immune to those conditions. Unlike a weapon innovator's nonlethal options, this is not at-will and can backfire massively if you fight something immune to nonlethal damage.
- **Mind Projectiles ★★★★** Your weapon can be used to make ranged attacks. The damage isn't great, but the fact that you don't need to switch weapons at all to start shooting is amazing. Hundreds of monsters provide reasons to avoid melee -acidic blood, grapple combos, death explosions- and you can't always make it to a melee target. Even with just thirty feet of range and modest damage, this ability is fantastic. The existence of this feat makes Dual-Form Weapon look even worse. Using the same weapon for both melee and ranged attacks with no action interruption is unprecedented.
- **Runic Mind Smithing ★★★★** You get a free energy damage rune for your weapon. Choose thundering for best results. An inventor will always want this feat.
- **Metallic Envisionment ★★** Your mind weapon counts as silver or cold iron. This feat is high level for its effect, but you might need or want it if your campaign is themed around specific foes.
- **Advanced Runic Mind-Smithing ★★** None of the aligned runes work as of the remaster removing alignment, but you can at least swap your rune to target weaknesses should they come up. It's still borderline red because of how high level it is and how long it takes to switch.

Overwatch (U) ★★★★

You'll need to get expert perception from the Canny Acumen general feat just to qualify, but it is well worth doing so. The dedication feat gives your entire party the effect of the Incredible Initiative feat, which is one of the most amazing dedication feats in the game.

- **Spyglass Modification ★★** You can see around corners, though you still can't target creatures around corners.
- **Swift Intervention ★★** You make a ranged attack roll to help an ally arrest a fall, balance, grab a ledge, or maneuver in flight. If you are using a firearm or crossbow your weapon might not be loaded, making you less likely to be able to assist your ally in a critical moment. Archery wins again.
- **Topple Giants ★★★★** Whenever multiple allies attempt athletics checks against the same target, they gain a circumstance bonus on the check. There are no extra actions or reactions required to confer this benefit, making it excellent for tripping or grappling boss monsters. Weapon innovators are especially keen to take this archetype due to their propensity for using diverse athletics checks at reach, as are power suit innovators. It works particularly well for those using one of the weapon innovations that provides ranged trip. Construct innovators with the manual dexterity modification can also share the benefits with their construct; potentially even using athletic attempts with the multiple attack penalty to easily provide the bonus to allies.
- **Wide Overwatch ★★★** Your overwatch field doubles in size. Your allies should all be within 30 feet at the start of the battle. Melee inventors are likely to be within thirty feet of the allies that need the benefits of Topple Giants, but ranged inventors can use this to confer the benefits to the front lines. It also gets better at higher levels when you choose feats like Control Tower.
- **Forewarn ★★★** You will most likely prefer Master Spotter at this level, but if you are in a party of squishy casters this can substantially bolster their armor class. It can also cancel out most debuffs. If you are comfortable ceding your class feat in a free archetype game taking both is a great option.
- **Master Spotter ★★★★** Increase your perception proficiency to master. You'll need to take this feat to qualify for the remaining feats in this archetype.
- **Control Tower ★★★** Your allies receive bonuses to find hidden foes and remove or reduce the penalty of trying to hit them.
- **Converge ★★★★** When you hit an enemy with a ranged strike, one ally can make a melee strike against the target. It consumes both of your reactions and your damage is combined. If you have a high damage melee ally with a limited ability to use their reaction to attack, like a barbarian, all the better.

Pirate ★★

The pirate gives you a bunch of redundant weapon proficiencies and abilities which apply almost exclusively to naval combat. Its dedication feat is the best part about it, as it offers the incredible Boarding Assault activity. You can stride twice and strike for two actions, doubling your

effective speed in most contexts. If you have no plans to take any other archetype and just choose the dedication, give it a four star blue rating.

- **Antagonize** ★ Turn demoralization into a taunt effect. Inventors lack both the charisma and the durability to make good use of this feat.
- **Pirate Combat Training** ★ Get a skill feat without needing to meet the athletic prerequisites, get redundant weapon proficiencies, and get the critical specialization effect of those weapons. Most builds will consider this red, but maybe a subterfuge suit innovator could use it to get the crit spec of a rapier and the skill feat. You could do so much better.
- **You're Next** ★ The only type of inventor with enough charisma to demoralize a foe uses their construct to kill enemies and can't trigger this feat as they do so.
- **Rope Runner** ★★ Climb better for a sixth level feat.
- **Walk the Plank** ★★ Spend an extra action to make your demoralize checks move a target up to its speed. It has the incapacitation effect, so it should only work on even or lower leveled opponents. This could be helpful to pilots, either forcing enemies to walk into punching range or forcing them away to keep them from destroying or flanking your construct. It is green for them, not that I expect anyone to take the pirate archetype just to get it.

Pistol Phenom (U) ★★

This archetype is heavily based on using feint. Feinting is both charisma based and of greatest use to those interested in crit-fishing. Even pilots are unlikely to want this archetype due to the benefits of feint being exclusive to the user. The feats which aren't based on deception are based on performance or intimidation. The inventor scarcely has the skill increases necessary to support one charisma skill, much less three.

The pistol phenom might have some slight value to ranged innovators interested in a sword-and-pistol style. You'll still need to deal with an unmitigated reload and further endure the low damage of pistols, making it dubiously worthwhile. You'll likely favor a double-barreled pistol or a slide pistol for their individual means of mitigating the need to reload.

- **Gunpowder Gauntlet** ★ Make a performance check to draw enemy ire towards yourself. You are unlikely to succeed in the first place, but if you do you aren't tough enough to tank their attention.
- **Sword and Pistol** ★★ This is a nice feat for an inventor because it encourages you to aim for multiple attack rolls. However, it demands you use two weapons, only one of which can benefit from offensive boost and modifications. It might be somewhat useful for subterfuge armor innovators, should they want to have a finesse weapon like a shortsword to avoid reactive strikes or make agile strikes. Their movement speed modifications can also make it easier to switch between melee and ranged in the heat of the moment. They'll still need to deal with an unmitigated reload.
- **Dazzling Bullet** ★★ Make a performance check and a strike, both of which must succeed to cause the target to become dazzled. The difficulty of landing both is borderline

untenable, but you might as well try to make your first shot every round dazzle a foe because it is one action and the inventor has few competing strikes.

- **Hot Foot ★★★** This unique feat requires you to discharge your firearm and make an attack roll, but it does not have the attack trait and thus does not advance your multiple attack penalty. Generally speaking, you'll be able to reliably cancel enemy reactions. This can allow you to escape melee or get any ally out of melee. Be sure to check the turn order, because if the enemy's turn is right after yours the effect won't last long. If you have an ally with a high risk of triggering reactive strikes, such as a magus, they will greatly appreciate your use of this feat.
- **Phenom's Verve ★★** You can attempt to crit-fish even harder, but this is still reliant on deception and performance.
- **Reach for the Sky ★★** You turn demoralization into an emanation, albeit at the cost of discharging your firearm and thus being unable to attack this round. For an offensive class like the inventor, that price is a high one. You could use this if you are carrying a melee weapon in your off-hand, at least.
- **Trick Shot ★★★** This feat's value largely depends on your GM's willingness to state that certain objects are explosive. The wording of the feat itself suggests a generous approach, with even mundane alcohol being considered explosive for the purposes of this feat.
- **Whirling Knockdown ★★** Make a melee strike, then discharge your firearm and make a performance check to trip the foe. You disarm yourself of your melee weapon if you critically fail, so be sure your weapon runes are on your pistol and merely getting transferred to your melee weapon via blazons of shared power.
- **Showstopper ★★** You spend one action to make one feint check against all creatures in range. You shoot one of the off-guard creatures. Then you reload. You are never able to target multiple creatures with this feat using your pistol, making it indistinguishable from a regular pistol twirl except in the event you are fighting multiple foes with substantially different perception DCs. This can allow you to attempt to render a boss off-guard, but then shoot flat footed minions if it doesn't work. That's extremely rare, but it isn't totally worthless.

Poisoner ★★

Poison is the worst damage type in the game, and in the absence of the toxicologist's ability to replace the poison's DC with their class DC, you will find your enemies frequently make their saving throws against your toxins. There is a tiny bit of value to be had here, due to the passivity of the extra damage. Use a bow and poison your arrows in the morning: wasting poison on a miss can string, but it doesn't sting as badly as poisoning your melee weapon and then encountering a golem or undead creature against which it is guaranteed to go to waste. An archer can choose not to draw the poisoned ammunition against inappropriate targets, and can deign to spend poisoned ammunition only when they are more certain it will land. They can also poison all of their arrows at the start of the day, with no need to re-apply poisons mid combat. Even

though many of the poisoner's feats only apply to melee weaponry, archery is still the better way to poison foes by a landslide due to its superior action economy.

- **Poison Resistance** ★★★ Poison resistance is always helpful to melee characters, due to their increased odds of getting injected with it.
- **Poisoner's Twist** ★★ This is extremely difficult to integrate into your turn order due to its action economy and melee restriction, but it is nice if you can pull it off.
- **Subtle Delivery** ★ You can use a blowgun to deliver poison through resistance. This even works if the enemy uses a shield to block your dart. This feat's predominant use is saving you the expense of upgrading a weapon to deliver poisons through resistance, but it doesn't exactly play to the inventor's strengths. The inventor already deals very high damage and has numerous means of bypassing resistance.
- **Expert Poisoner** ★★ You can start preparing higher level poisons. However, you are always three levels behind an alchemist, and thus the poisons you bring to battle are only appropriate for foes much weaker than you are. Such foes would likely die more quickly from the application of violence. While this feat is not actually good, that's more of an inditement of the archetype and poisons as a whole than this feat itself. If you are determined to use poisons anyways it might as well have a blue rating in practice.
- **Poison Coat** ★★ When a creature hits you with an unarmed strike you can expose them to one of your poisons.
- **Poison Weapon** ★★★ This feat talks a big game about improving the terrible action economy of drawing and applying poisons to your weapon, but its true value is in the free injury poisons it grants. While the text indicates that these poisons are only available to rogues, the intent of the feat is plainly that any poisoner is able to receive them: the archetype would not contain a follow up feat that specifically enhances them if they were meant to be unavailable. Assuming your GM takes that into account, this feat provides you with several poisons that provide a simple damage bonus to strikes. There is no saving throw: you injure the target, it takes damage. Archers can lather all of their arrows in this poison at the start of the day, turning this feat into a damage bonus they can spend whenever they choose to. Melee inventors would have to rely on the action economy of drawing and applying poisons mid-combat. Even with this feat condensing that process to a single action, they still have better things to do with their time.
- **Tenacious Toxins** ★ Your poisons are too weak to last this long against anything. The monsters will make their saving throw before even the normal duration expires.
- **Acquired Tolerance** ★★ This is a defensive feat. It gives you a fortune effect against a single specific poison's saving throws. If you get exposed to a poison once, odds are decent that you will get exposed to it again over the course of your adventuring day.
- **Sticky Poison** ★ You get a tiny chance of not wasting poison on your melee strikes. You still shouldn't be trying to use poison in melee.
- **Improved Poison Weapon** ★★★ Your basic poisons now deal double damage. As with its prior feat, this is handy for a ranged build because you can poison all of your arrows in advance.
- **Pinpoint Poisoner** ★★★ Off-guard opponents suffer a circumstance penalty to saving throws against your poisons.

- **Chemical Contagion ★** For this feat to work, three rolls must go in your favor. You must hit with your strike, the target must critically fail their saving throw against your poison, and their ally must fail their saving throw against your poison. Furthermore, the second enemy must be directly adjacent to the first. The odds of all of those happening are incredibly low.

Scrounger (U) ★★★

I've chosen to review the scrounger for its high thematic synergy with the inventor. Its dedication feat allows you to craft without many of the conveniences needed to craft, and you can improvise non-magical adventuring gear up to half your own level. It's a great way to whip up special material ammunition or other random pieces of gear when needed. Be sure to carry some raw materials on your person to avoid the penalties. A good knowledge of the adventuring gear list is a must to use this archetype to its full effect. Some good uses for this feat include:

- Caltrops
- Desert clothing
- Earplugs
- Ladders/Folding Ladders
- Locks
- Magnifying glasses
- Manacles
- Mechanical torches
- Periscopes
- Plague masks
- Portable rams
- Rubber masks
- Shovels
- Spyglasses
- Tool kits (including those that give item bonuses to checks)
- Winter clothing

A GM that allows uncommon items, such as a clockwork megaphone, will make this archetype even more useful. As is often the case for these niche archetypes, it's no use as a free archetype but can be cherry picked for useful feats; in this case, two of its feats are skill feats and thus relatively cheap to pick up anyways. If you want the effects of Reverse Engineer but want to spend your second level class feat on something else, this archetype provides a means of doing so.

- **Reverse Engineering ★★** Half the effect of the Reverse Engineer inventor class feat, but as a skill feat.
- **Magical Scrounger ★★★★** Own any magical item on a delay. This feat enables you to do pretty much anything provided you've memorized the entire magic item list.
- **Expert Disassembly ★★** The other half of the Reverse Engineer inventor class feat, but as a skill feat.

Scout ★★★

The scout is a fine pick for sneaky inventors, but it won't redefine your build.

- **Scout's Charge ★★** This feat allows you to (in a roundabout way) use stealth to render enemies off-guard in melee. Inventors interested in using stealth typically don't want to enter the melee.
- **Terrain Scout ★★★** You can give your loudest ally automatic successes on their stealth checks. Handy when one person on your team is clunking around in plate.
- **Fleeting Shadow ★★★** A stealthy inventor can cover a large amount of ground with this feat, especially in tandem with ancestry feats that allow them to move faster with each sneak action.
- **Scout's Speed ★★★** Gain a ten-foot movement speed boost. The bonus is fantastic, but it is a bit pricey due to being attached to a sixth level class feat. It also will not stack with armor innovation speed boosts, unlike ancestral speed improvements.
- **Scout's Pounce ★★★** You can move and make two attacks for two actions with a bonus, but your multiple attack penalty applies normally. This is nice for action economy and helps ranged weapon innovators trigger backstabber.
- **Camouflage ★★ / ★★★** You can hide without cover in natural settings. Depending on the nature of your campaign this could be anywhere from worthless to almost always available, but at bare minimum dungeons usually do not afford you this bonus.

Scroll Trickster ★★★

The scroll trickster is as good a means as any to get the Trick Magic Item feat. The bonus to trick scrolls can help ensure you don't screw it up in a critical moment. The scroll trickster archetype walks a fine line between overpowered and inferior. On one hand, it allows you to cast spells of any tradition so long as you are trained in the appropriate skill, and it further allots you free scrolls each day with appropriate feat investment. The scroll trickster can prepare and cast *any* common spell in the game. On the other hand, an arcane or occult spellcasting archetype will have offensive spell scaling, more casts per day, and higher-level spells. A spellcasting archetype grants more power at the expense of flexibility. It also should be mentioned that unlike some feats of this sort, there is nothing stopping you from handing the temporary scrolls you create to party members. You'll want to take the Prescient Consumable general feat to get the most out of this archetype. If you need a spell, you can get that spell.

- **Basic Scroll Cache ★★★** You gain a first and second level spell scroll each day. As you can choose what spell is on each one, you essentially learn every common first and second level spell. If your party suddenly needs to translate a dwarven book they found, you can have a solution to that problem ready by next morning with no particular investment. Heal and longstrider are good standbys, but I recommend not getting stuck in a rut. If your party needs to fight a fire elemental, pull out the scrolls of resist energy. If you need to fight a ghost, prepare ghostly weapon.
- **Skim Scroll ★★★** When you draw a scroll you can trick it with the same action. This potentially allows you to both draw and cast in the same round. While useful for

mid-combat healing and support spells, you still will not have the proficiency to pull off offensive spellcasting with any reliability.

- **Expert Scroll Cache ★★★** You gain a third, fourth, and fifth level spell scroll each day. As you can choose what spell is on each one, you essentially learn every common spell of those levels. Spells at these levels can include major game-changers, such as heroism, fly, and translocate.
- **Master Scroll Cache ★★★** You gain a sixth and seventh level spell scroll each day. As you can choose what spell is on each one, you essentially learn every common spell of those levels.

Sentinel ★★★

The sentinel archetype is infamous, and for good reason. It is catnip to optimizers for its easy access to plate armor, which in turn allows builds that otherwise would be unable to do so to dump dexterity. The inventor does have one major hurdle in that regard, as their strength is insufficient for plate until fifth level. The sentinel is nonetheless of value for its dedication feat alone. However, the value of sentinel has been undercut by the remaster, due to the improvement of the Armor Training general feat.

- **Steel Skin ★** This feat is a skill feat. You must be at least trained in survival to take it. It allows you to sleep in medium armor, which makes it worthless initially. It only becomes a tempting choice at level nineteen when it finally allows an inventor to sleep in plate.
- **Armor Specialist ★★** You gain your armor's specialization effect. This typically means getting a small amount of resistance to slashing damage from plate armor.
- **Armored Rebuff ★★★** Shove an opponent away as a reaction to their critical failure to attack you. This can knock them out of range for follow up attacks. This is best chosen alongside a shield, as improving your armor class increases the likelihood that an enemy critically fails their attack. You can't shield block if the enemy critically fails, so it does not conflict with shield block over your reaction.
- **Mighty Bulwark ★★★★** Improve your reflex saving throws by one and allow the bulwark trait of your plate armor to apply to all reflex saving throws. This is excellent.
- **Sacrifice Armor ★★** Smash up your armor to defend yourself in a manner reminiscent of shield block. All heavy armor comes with an undercoat of padded armor which contains all of your runes, so you can technically use this up to three times. However, doing so puts you at severe risk of taking further damage, so this feat should only be used near the end of a fight.
- **Greater Interpose ★★★** As with its predecessor, this feat is best used sparingly. However, the new exception is critical hits and critical failures on saving throws. Negating one of those and resisting the standardized damage that follows means even if you take a hit as a result of junking your armor, you come out on top.

Shadowdancer ★

You need to have wasted at least one of your skill boosts on performance just to take this archetype. In exchange, you get a bunch of rogue abilities. The rogue ability of greatest interest

-Sneak Attack- is better acquired at a lower level through the rogue archetype. You also get a variety of focus spells, but you aren't going to be much good at using the offensive ones. At best you could choose it in a stealth-themed campaign, such as a thieves' guild campaign.

- **Shadow Magic** ★★ Use performance to create darkness or teleport to an area of dim light or darkness. Odds are somebody in your party has a light cantrip up, but in the right campaign you could get some use out of Shadow Jump.
- **Shadow Sneak Attack** ★ If this is what you are after you should have taken the rogue archetype. Getting it at tenth level is wasteful.
- **Uncanny Dodge** ★★★ You can't be made off-guard through conventional means by creatures weaker than you are. This is a very useful defensive benefit, and it will apply in the majority of encounters against multiple foes. It is of greatest use to those entering melee due to the higher likelihood they become flanked. Once again, you could have gotten this through the rogue archetype, though this time at the same level.
- **Additional Shadow Magic** ★ Dance of darkness is not worth it.
- **Shadow Illusion** ★ You get an illusion that can only exist in dim light or darkness. Good luck using this in the majority of encounters.
- **Shadow Power** ★ Once per day you can cast shadow blast. It is not worth a fourteenth level class feat. You notably could have chosen a spellcasting archetype to get this spell and another spell, both with scaling from your intelligence, at the same level.
- **Spring From the Shadows** ★★ Unlock the ability to gain the benefits of being hidden on your melee attacks with a level fourteen feat. A melee inventor is unlikely to be relying heavily on stealth, due to their incentives to use strength instead.
- **Sense the Unseen** ★★★★ This feat is normally only available to classes with extreme perception, but it is only triggered when you fail a perception check. Its intent is to make those classes more reliable even on the off-chance they fail, but for a class with the inventor's perception it allows your dismal perception to still accomplish something.
- **Cognitive Loophole** ★★ At the end of your turn, you can suppress a mental effect for one round. Will saving throws are your best save, so you are less likely to need this than some classes. It can still be darn handy when you do though.
- **Shadow Master** ★★★ When in darkness you gain resistance to all damage and can roll twice on reflex saving throws.

Sleepwalker ★★

The sleepwalker is a novel archetype. I am surprised it is common. The dedication gives you a one-action stance-like effect called daydream trance which massively improves your will saving throws at the cost of your perception and initiative. Seeing as you only enter it in combat, there is little point to the second downside until very late in the game. Your perception is garbage anyways. That said, you already have a stance-adjacent feature in overdrive. Finding the time to activate both is going to be a struggle. Still, if you want to cosplay Guilty Gear's Bedman this archetype on a construct innovator would be how you do it.

Oddly, the sleepwalker is allowed to use its wisdom instead of its charisma for any spells it gains through this archetype. Unfortunately, as it is not a true spellcasting archetype you will

never advance past trained proficiency. As a result, you will never land offensive spells gained through this archetype despite its use of a slightly more valuable ability score.

- **Infiltrate Dream ★★** You can enter the dream of a sleeping person if you have access to them for ten minutes. Trying to pitch this to an NPC might raise some eyebrows. Maybe if you were extremely stealthy, you could break into their room and spend ten minutes to make an occultism check against their will to learn something about a topic they know. Or you could just capture them and wait for them to sleep. It'd probably be much easier. I suspect that mundane methods of interrogation will probably get you the information you want much sooner and more accurately.
- **Vision of Foresight ★★★** You can spend an action to give yourself a fortune effect on your next saving throw or skill check. The action cost is rough -you could always just attempt the check twice- but for features with the attack trait success on your first attempt and a dramatically reduced risk of critical failure can be extremely helpful.
- **Dream Magic ★★** You can learn either sleep or dream message. With sleep being an offensive innate spell, you are very unlikely to land it. Dream message is the more useful of the two: even discount sending can be helpful for long-range party coordination or keeping your allies informed.
- **Waking Dream ★** Confusion is a great condition to inflict on an enemy. It is also almost never going to work because you aren't a spellcaster.
- **Oneiric Influence ★★** When you use Infiltrate Dream you can cast subconscious suggestion on the target. For whatever reason, unlike the other spells from this archetype it allows you to use your class DC instead of your non-existent spellcasting DC. It'll still be difficult to use because you have to get uninterrupted access to a sleeping target.
- **Ward Slumber ★★** Bonuses of this magnitude are incredibly rare. Effects that tamper with dreams are equally rare.
- **Dream Logic ★★★** I hope your GM prepared some countermeasures to prevent you from waltzing out of ye olde magic shoppe with an armful of scrolls. Jokes aside, this is a fine ability if you want to do crime.
- **Shared Dream ★★★** You gain the dream council spell. This spell allows for full conversations with your whole party and relevant NPCs at any distance, which is plenty helpful on its own.
- **Ever Dreaming ★★** You can ignore some of the penalties of being asleep. You can even act while asleep, but you can only take one action per turn. An eighteenth level feat could offer more than incomplete situational bonuses.

Snarecrafter ★★★

Thanks to the inventor's automatic crafting progression there are few classes better qualified to use snarecrafter. However, snares themselves have a couple functional limitations. First and foremost, adventurers need to defend locations less often than they need to attack them. While this dedication does give you the ability to spend a whole turn setting a snare, doing so in the midst of battle is almost always a bad deal. They also require free hands, though that likewise

only matters mid-battle. By the time you get to higher levels, you will also encounter flying enemies with increasing frequency, who will never trigger your snares.

In summary, most snares need at least four things to work in your favor before anything happens. You must have time to set up the trap. The enemy must fail to spot the trap. The enemy must move over the trap's space. Finally, the enemy must fail its saving throw against the trap. All told, it is more than a bit unlikely to work as intended. If none of those hurdles prove too daunting to you, in the right scenario snares can be worth it. As the actions are (at least ideally) spent before combat even starts, snares are free bonus effects that tilt a battle in your favor.

There are also ways to mitigate or bypass some of those steps. Using a free-hand or shove weapon can help push enemies onto snares. Gigaton Strike is able to move enemies onto traps with above average reliability. Your allies may be able to help as well, either through their own athletics checks, class feats like Whirling Throw, or spells such as acid grip and hydraulic push.

This archetype also leads directly to the uncommon Trapsmith archetype, bypassing the normal rules about choosing multiple archetypes. Trapsmith further compensates for the issues inherent in using traps.

The mortar innovation is especially likely to appreciate this archetype. Their restrictive action economy means that they benefit from anything that adds value to combat without taxing their actions within it. They also have a slightly better class DC progression track, meaning their traps hit a little harder. Finally, they already have incentives to lure enemies into ambush locations due to their desire to pre-deploy and pre-load their mortars; though therein lies the mortar-snarecrafter's downside, as this makes you even more boom-or-bust whenever you're unable to do so. If you have enough time to set up, take the earthbreaker modification and use it to create difficult terrain that funnels your enemies into your snares. Unfortunately, archetype dedication restrictions mean you can't take the snarecrafter archetype as a mortar innovator until at least eighth level, or possibly sixth in a free archetype game.

- **Surprise Snare ★★** Your snare becomes a full-round melee attack. That is almost never worth it, though the mortar innovator might appreciate it on occasion due to their lackluster offense with traditional weaponry.
- **Remote Trigger ★★★** You can automatically hit and trigger your snares remotely. You'll need a ranged weapon to effectively use this. If you are generally melee, consider a gauntlet bow for this purpose: the damage, runes, and range on the weapon don't matter. Ancestral ranged unarmed attacks, such as the automaton's Energy Beam, are also useful for this purpose.
- **Giant Snare ★★★** This is an extremely useful bonus, as it allows your snares to cover a much larger area. Enemies are far more likely to stumble into the area by accident.
- **Lightning Snares ★★★** You can toss out snares as a single action. This dramatically alters how you approach combat.
- **Plentiful Snares ★★★** If you needed more reasons why Quick Snares isn't necessary on its own, this feat will double the number of free snares you get each day.

Sniping Duo ★★★★

Despite coming from Guns & Gears this wonderful archetype is not uncommon, and is thus always available. Subterfuge suit armor innovators, ranged weapon innovators, and drone

construct innovators can all find incredible value with the Sniping Duo Archetype. Your chosen partner will love you for taking this archetype, as it somewhat uniquely shares power. Just for choosing this archetype, it adds a circumstance bonus to their damage rolls. The nature of your spotter varies depending on what feats you take, but remarkably few are bad choices. Viable options exist for melee, ranged, accurate, and inaccurate allies.

- **Assisting Shot ★★★** Whenever you strike a foe, give an ally a bonus to hit the same target. Unfortunately, it has the press trait and thus can only be used as a second attack. Inventors are very likely to go for that second attack.
- **Cover Fire ★★** As a gunslinger feat this is only available to those with firearms and crossbows. This feat is a bit tricky because it affords the target a choice: either duck and improve their armor class against this attack in exchange for reducing their accuracy with ranged strikes, or don't and afford you a bonus to your accuracy on the attack. Ranged foes that outnumber your party will almost always choose the former, due to their low individual contributions to battle. Powerful ranged foes less numerous than your party will almost always choose the latter, trusting their innate defenses to keep them safe and knowing that their own offense is more important to the battle's end. Of course, this all assumes your target is inclined to bother with ranged attacks at all: if not, this is just a worse strike. The overwhelming majority of monsters favor melee anyways, so this feat has little value in practice. Add to that the inability to use this feat with bows, and there was no chance it would escape a yellow rating.
- **Triangulate ★★** You don't suffer penalties for firing into your second range increment and reduce the first. Most ranged weapons have more than enough range for conventional maps, but if you are using something with a stubby range increment, such as a blunderbuss, you might choose this feat.
- **Exploit Opening ★★★** If your ally has a high propensity for critical hits this is a must-pick. Your spotter might be a class with high proficiencies, such as a fighter or gunslinger. It could also be a character with ready access to sure strike, such as a magus, or simply a party member likely to receive support buffs from your party casters, such as a ranger. Regardless of the reason, getting extra attacks on reaction is almost always great for the inventor due to the nature of overdrive. The rating of this feat could jump to blue if you have an ally adept at crit-fishing.
- **Targeted Redirection ★★★** Treat your ranged attack as if it came from the space of your spotter. This allows you to bypass cover with ease, provided your spotter is willing to burn their reaction doing so. Classes with powerful innate reactions, such as the fighter and champion, are thus ill-suited as spotters for this feat. Ranged spotters are likewise much less valuable because they will likely be standing near you the whole fight. Oddly, nothing stops an ally from redirecting the entire blast of a blunderbuss, thus extending the range of what would otherwise be short-range scatter weaponry.
- **Duo's Aim ★★★** You spend an extra action while aiming to gain a circumstance bonus to accuracy and ignore concealment, provided the target is within your spotter's reach or first range increment. In deliberate contrast to targeted redirection, this feat is best used by those with ranged spotters because the number of targets available is dramatically superior. Due to the nature of accuracy bolstering and critical hits, this can help trigger

the deadly and fatal trait of ranged weapons you wield, making it best suited to weapons with those traits.

- **Vantage Shot ★★★** Assuming that you are both ranged, this feat enables you to use stealth to make enemies off-guard against both of your attacks. This is not a true hide or sneak action, so enemies will still know where you are and can target you without issue. Nonetheless, weapon innovators with advanced rangefinders will greatly appreciate this feat for its ability to both improve their accuracy and trigger the backstabber trait of their weapon. While it may not provide the full benefits of a stealth check, even partial benefits are valuable when conferred for nothing more than a reaction.
- **Tag Team ★★★★** This feat allows you or your ally to make ranged strikes using your reactions against anyone who the other misses. Between this and Exploit Opening, you can make a ranged strike on any outcome except for success. The trigger of Tag Team is both more common than Exploit Opening and applies to both party members, making it well worth the higher feat cost. It is best used alongside a fellow ranged attacker for their improved access to targets. That said, it is still a fantastic feat for those with melee spotters even if they will not be able to make as many attacks as a ranged spotter would.
- **Deflecting Shot ★★★** As with Cover Fire, this is a gunslinger feat and can only be used with firearms or crossbows. It grants any ally on your team (not just your spotter) a bonus to armor class against an attack, and unlike many similar features you get to know whether or not the bonus would make a difference before using your reaction. However, it does discharge your weapon and thus means spending an action on the following turn reloading.
- **Eagle Eyes ★★★** You cannot be flanked by lower-level creatures as long as you and your spotter can see or hear each other. Higher level creatures are unlikely to be able to flank you due to lacking the numbers to do so, unless your GM is throwing exceptionally powerful encounters at you. This feat is much more valuable if your spotter is a melee character, due to the significantly higher likelihood that they wind up flanked. Eagle Eyes is by far the most selfless feat of the Sniping Duo, as your ally is more likely to benefit from it than you are.
- **Redirecting Shot ★★** This is a gunslinger feat and can only be used with firearms or crossbows. Conversely, this also means its benefits apply to any ally, not just your spotter. When an ally misses a ranged attack, discharge your weapon and spend a reaction to give them a second try. While handy, your attack is in all likelihood stronger than theirs is owing to the inventor's multitude of damage boosts. If needing to reload on your next turn would interfere with your attacks, you might abstain from using this feat. This is best used alongside allies with a "one big hit" style of combat, such as precision rangers. If your party contains such a combatant, improve this feat's rating by a color grade.
- **Concentrated Assault ★★★★** This feat's advantages are many and require a detailed breakdown. To use it, both you and an ally must use the Ready action. That means you each have to spend two actions and a reaction to get any benefit from this feat. Both triggers need to be the same, so you should choose something infallible. I recommend "I strike when the readied spotter says 'Now!'" because talking is free and affords the second person great control over exactly when the readied actions fire.

With that accomplished, you can both use the higher of your two attack rolls. This essentially grants you both the benefits of a sure strike spell. As with the spell, it is an excellent choice for use with weaponry containing the deadly or fatal traits, or weapons with good critical effects such as hammers.

Furthermore, if both strikes hit their damage is combined for the purposes of resistances and weaknesses. If your opponent had a weakness you might have been better off not using this feat to trigger it twice, but resistances are far more common. Not only that, but because of this feat's fortune effect, one or both of you might critically hit the target. Critical hits tend to render resistances obviated simply by virtue of overwhelming damage, so putting two onto one creature is near certain to obliterate it.

This feat requires intense cooperation between you and your spotter, but if your fellow player is willing to work with you both of you can see exceptional returns from using this feat as at-will sure strike. The ideal spotter for this feat is an ally with unexceptional strike options (a fighter can't use Knockdown with this strategy) or an ally interested in crit fishing (as might be the case for an ally with a deadly weapon, fatal weapon, or a hammer with the critical effect).

Soul Warden ★★★

The soul warden's only quirk is that all of its spellcasting scales off of wisdom rather than charisma, as would be the case for most other archetypes. As with the other common archetypes from book of the dead, it is at its most useful when fighting undead. However, the soul warden gets a bunch of extra perks that make it much more broadly useful than its rivals. The dedication feat gives you several bonuses. You can sense undead and cast an anti-undead cantrip. This cantrip notably is not innate, and thus you gain the full benefits of having the Cast a Spell activity, including the ability to activate many types of magic items (such as spellhearts) without a check.

- **Cycle Spell ★★★** Any of the three spells are fine choices, though the inventor will struggle with the action economy of using most of them.
- **Domain Initiate ★★★★** Pharasma grants the knowledge domain, which has by far the most use to you of her available options.
- **Familiar ★★** If you are after a familiar, there are better ways to get one. The follow-up feats available to this archetype don't change that.
- **Psychopomp Familiar ★★** You'd be better off with a more skilled familiar from the familiar master archetype.
- **Liberate Soul ★★** You can counteract possession and any effect that is imprisoning a soul. Niche, but it can be nice to have when it comes up.
- **Spiral Sworn ★★★** You can spend an action to give yourself or an ally temporary bonus damage against undead. It is not much, but it lasts for enough rounds to make it through an average fight. This complements the inventor's playstyle nicely, as they were already keen on aiming for multiple hits. You also get the bonus damage once you've confirmed that your target is a necromancer or otherwise tampering with souls, so it is a bit broader than the usual anti-undead ability.

- **Enhanced Psychopomp Familiar ★★** You'd be better off with a more skilled familiar from the familiar master archetype.
- **Expanded Domain Initiate ★★** Time is neat, but none of Pharasma's alternate domains are particularly well suited to the inventor.
- **Safeguard Soul ★★** You and allies within twenty feet of you gain big bonuses against possession and soul manipulation. Those effects are still niche, but at least this one is passive rather than Liberate Soul. It also prevents you from turning into undead.
- **Expand Spiral ★★★** This turns your Spiral Sworn into a party-wide buff if you use it early. Undead in your presence are in for a beatdown.
- **Advanced Domain ★★★★** Keep advancing the knowledge domain.

Stalwart Defender (U) ★★★★

Stalwart Defender is accessible to dwarves. Its rating assumes you are playing as a dwarf with the Unburdened Iron feat. Non-dwarves can technically take this archetype with a classic power-gamer backstory, but using this archetype to the fullest without Unburdened Iron reduces the movement speed of most ancestries to a paltry 15 feet. Elves are just as good with this archetype as dwarves are thanks to their innate speed and access to Elven Swiftness. For the same feat cost and a tacky backstory, you can get the same functional benefits with them. Other ancestries determined to power through can take Fleet, but every build should be taking Fleet regardless of whether or not they have this archetype. Pilot construct innovation builds can ignore the movement penalty via their mount and don't need any particular ancestry mechanics.

The stalwart defender is an alternative to the sentinel archetype. It provides a new means of gaining heavy armor proficiency, albeit delayed and at a feat cost when compared to its competition. The dedication instead provides the aforementioned tenacious stance, which grants temporary hit points and defenses against being moved or tripped. It is a bit redundant with rage in terms of both action cost and benefits, but it can still be useful if activated once rage's temporary hit points are spent.

Compared to the sentinel, the stalwart defender has a slower start. You'll have sub-par armor class until you get heavy armor at fourth level unless you waste some ability boosts on dexterity. However, it also has many of the sentinel's best feats and a grab bag of unique features. Its greater number of feats also make it a better candidate for a Free Archetype.

Unlike the sentinel, the stalwart defender has some feats that don't pertain to basic heavy armor features. They are often lesser than those that do, but they exist. A defensive armor innovator might choose this feat and avoid the heavy armor feats, cherry picking the various shield feats. It is yellow for armor innovators due to their reduced choices, but still viable. It's especially useful at higher levels once the basic armor function feats are behind you.

- **Mountain Skin ★★★★** Get your heavy armor. Be sure to take Unburdened Iron as your dwarf feat to remove the speed penalty.
- **Tunnel Wall ★★** You get a powerful bonus against a very niche scenario when your shield is raised.

- **Crushing Step** ★★★ Ignore all difficult terrain. Its exact value is dependent on your GM's map design, but it is refreshing to see an unqualified means of ignoring difficult terrain.
- **Gravel Guts** ★★ Sickened isn't a particularly common condition. Spending a sixth level feat to resist it is a lukewarm proposition. This feat's saving grace is that it is wholly passive.
- **Steel Skin** ★ This feat is a skill feat. You must be at least trained in survival to take it. It allows you to sleep in medium armor, which makes it worthless if you chose Mountain Skin. It only becomes a tempting choice at level nineteen when it finally allows an inventor to sleep in plate. If you didn't take Mountain Skin because you are using a power suit innovation shield build, it is a decent choice for ambush defense.
- **Upset Balance** ★★★ Clumsy is a pretty good condition. Inflicting it as a reaction based on an athletics check is even better. It triggers when you are hit in melee.
- **Rupture Stomp** ★★ Spend two actions to make difficult terrain in a decent area around you. It costs two actions and you can only use it once per day unless you spend a 16th level feat to take this feat again. I don't recommend doing so, as this feat's functionality isn't worth that cost.
- **Unshaken Iron** ★★★ You get armor specialization and can improve it substantially when in tenacious stance. Power suit innovators won't choose this due to its redundancy with their own features, but it's otherwise solid.
- **Armored Rebuff** ★★★ You can use a reaction to shove a foe that critically fails its attack roll against you.
- **Gathering Moss** ★★★★ You gain powerful fast healing while in tenacious stance. It is triggered as a free action, but can only be used once per day. As it is linked to a stance, it will only work in battle and can be cancelled prematurely if battle ends. Technically, nothing would stop you from entering combat with a conspiring sparring partner and then standing around doing nothing as it fully heals you, but I wouldn't allow that myself.
- **Cracked Mountain** ★★★ You get orc ferocity and a free melee attack when you use it, at the cost of a high level feat and your tenacious stance. The sacrifice of tenacious stance is not a big deal because you were about to die, so the temporary hit points it grants are no longer relevant.
- **Mighty Bulwark** ★★★★ This feat provides a simple numeric boost to your reflex saving throws and extends the benefits of bulwark to non-damaging effects like disarm.
- **Stone Body** ★★★★ This is an excellent durability improvement for a frail class like the inventor. It will even help you resist your self-inflicted damage regardless of damage type.

Sterling Dynamo (U) ★★

The sterling dynamo archetype gives you an unarmed attack of respectable strength. The first choice you make is between power driver and percussive striker forms. By their own merits the superior damage of power driver clearly takes the cake, but follow-up features muddy the water. Modular Dynamo is a good example of this. The second choice you will make is whether or not

your dynamo is manually controlled. This choice matters much less, as in practice you will always want to make your dynamo manually controlled due to the improved damage. Your dynamo can technically be disabled. The odds of your dynamo getting disabled are so small as to be nonexistent. If an enemy actually wastes their actions doing so, that's just free turns for you.

Naturally, as an unarmed attack this falls squarely in the domain of power suit innovators, who can consider it green. If you already have an ancestral unarmed attack, you'll usually want to choose the dynamo most unlike your own. If your unarmed attack is agile and a d6, choose the power driver and use your agile attack as a follow-up. If your unarmed attack is a d8, choose the percussive striker and use it as a follow-up. If your unarmed attack is weaker than either of those, you probably shouldn't have bothered getting it.

- **Modular Dynamo ★★★** This feat shares functionality with a weapon innovation. It can add a menagerie of traits, though unlike a weapon innovation it cannot bring them all to bear at once. Instead, you must use its modular trait (it does not specify the damage types but is presumably supposed to use physical damage types like every other modular weapon) to swap between forms. Entangling barbs and extendable baton are the most apparently useful.

  Those who took percussive striker as their base dynamo form can use entangling barbs as their default. If you have a full turn to burn and already entered overdrive, you could even choose to strike with entangling barbs, activate modular to switch to percussive striker form, and then strike with an agile percussive striker. Unfortunately, this will strand you in a lower damage form at the start of the next round. A more practical use may be relying on the high base damage of entangling barbs against high-threat monsters, against whom follow up attacks are less useful due to their inaccuracy.

  Those who took power driver as their base might be more interested in a rotating sickle, due to its ability to target reflex saving throws with trips. However, the dynamo is already able to use all of your athletics checks because it has a hand, so simply purchasing a belt of lifting or similar item can easily get you the item bonus this feat would grant. I would just as soon recommend the extendable baton due to the benefits of reach, even at the sharply lowered damage.

  While you can choose this feat multiple times to gain more forms it is very unlikely you will need or want to.
- **Piston Punch ★★★★** Use two actions to make your strike apply to two targets. This is a great way to spread the benefits of overdrive and offensive boost to two targets without advancing your multiple attack penalty. The positioning requirements can be a little strict, but it is well worth the cost when it succeeds. It reduces your operational time, but maintaining it after each fight is trivially easy. If you actually manage to run out the clock, you clearly got great use out of this feat before you did.
- **Stasian Smash ★★** There are some minor differences between this feat and Megaton Strike, but Megaton Strike is half the level of this feat. Just choose it instead.
- **Beast Dynamo Howl ★★** You are a power suit innovator and thus sorely lacking in the charisma necessary to capitalize on this feat.
- **Golem Dynamo ★★★** You gain a bonus to all of your saving throws against magic.

- **Soaring Dynamo ★★** You can fly. It might as well be at-will due to the ease of maintaining your dynamo's operational time. However, most inventors have no trouble achieving easier means of flight. This is doubly true for the most likely user of the sterling dynamo archetype, the armor innovator, thanks to the Soaring Armor feat.

Talisman Dabbler ★★★

The dedication feat alone is extraordinary. You learn all common talisman formulas of your level or lower, and every day you get two of them for free. The sheer versatility on offer just for the dedication feat boggles the mind. At higher levels, this will save you a lot of money. If you ever find yourself with a level of inventor in which none of the class feats on offer appeal to you, simply taking this dedication feat with no further investment in the archetype is a great choice. You'll need a comprehensive knowledge of the talisman list to make the most out of it, but once you do you can swim, fly, jump, deal extra damage, and even replicate fighter feats with ease. See the talisman section for a quick breakdown of some talismans that might interest an inventor. As with the Scroll Trickster, you can freely hand out these talismans to other players. The Scroll Trickster has a higher peak with full investment, but the talisman dabbler offers much more up front.

- **Quick Fix ★★** The crafting proficiency of the skill feat this replicates won't be a problem for you. Affixing four at once can be handy, but burning a fourth level class feat to do so isn't going to be worth it. Just take the skill feat the normal way.
- **Deeper Dabbler ★★★** You get two more awesome talismans every day.
- **Talismanic Sage ★★★** You can put two talismans on a single item.

Thlipit Contestant ★★

Do I really have to review this every time I write a guide now? How many people are going to play frog-folk inventors with a strong desire to smack people with power-armor enhanced tongue strikes? Well, it's a common archetype and per the rules I arbitrarily set, I have to review it. As implied, it's best for those with the power suit armor innovation. The power suit's modifications can somehow improve your tongue strike's ability to grapple targets. The gods only know what nightmarish dentistry you rigged up to make that happen.

Reach grapple weapons are amazing, but the same traits on an unarmed attack are less useful because enemies can attack your extended body part. The archetype also grants some fighter feats, but oddly all of them require using an actual weapon and aren't compatible with unarmed attacks. Assuming your GM takes rules-as-intended into account, they might be more useful to you. It's got a few decent mid-level feats, but it also has too many dead levels for me to consider it a practical archetype.

- **Fly Swat ★** An extremely specific anti-swarm ability. It won't even fully nullify the resistances of many at-level swarms. Just carry a few alchemical bombs on your person if swarms are a concern. Bombs will innately bypass swarm resistances and trigger their weaknesses to boot.
- **Lassoing Lash ★★** This feat gives you a unique "pull" athletic attack action. The power suit innovator can improve it like any other athletics check.

- **Powerful Lash ★★★** Your unarmed attack gets better damage and the sweep trait. Both are fine boons and appreciated by a class that guns for multiple hits, as the inventor does.
- **Snap Falling Fruit ★★★** A simple bonus against ranged attacks for you and all allies within reach of your tongue. It's a great way to use a reaction on a class that doesn't have many innate ways to use it.
- **Levered Swing ★★★** This is an interesting feat with a fantastic and reliable effect, but the inventor has good strength for jumping and could have taken Explosive Leap or Gadget Specialist and gotten blast boots to much the same effect. Still, you can use this as much as you want so there's some decent reasons to choose it instead of the more versatile class-based alternatives.
- **Slurp Up ★★** You can retrieve and drink a consumable with a single action. It's a very nice boost to your action economy… if there are any consumables unattended rather than on a person. Perhaps a familiar in the party could be given the task of dropping soothing tonics on the floor for you to use. You can also steal them from enemies, but they're never going to just hold potions without drinking them.
- **Tail Guard ★★** Get a version of Reactive Strike at a bloated level that only works against those moving to flank you. The inventor's damage output is good enough that they might consider this feat despite its level and narrow trigger.
- **Slingshot Maneuver ★★★** This awesome feat gives your ally a 15-foot airborne reposition every time they move near you. It provides another great use for your reaction.
- **Reflexive Grapple ★★★★** Strike and grapple with a single action and no multiple attack penalty. The armor innovator can't use the more flexible (though less action-efficient) Explosive Maneuver weapon innovation feat, so this is a great feat for them.
- **Spinning Release ★★★** Use all three of your actions to move a grappled opponent 10 feet in any direction with no save. They have to make a save or become confused. Send an enemy careening to wherever they'll do the most damage to their own team. Or off a cliff. Your call.
- **Whirling Clobber ★★★** This feat is very similar to the weapon innovation inventor feat, Devastating Weaponry, except that it is lower level, has less range, and requires a grappled opponent. Unlike Devastating Weaponry, Whirling Clobber is compatible with the armor innovator and thus its version of Clockwork Celerity. Armor innovators have a much easier time positioning themselves for optimal use of this feat even despite its reduced range. However, it will still deal less damage for more actions than using the explode action, and it fills a similar role, so you may wish to save your unstable action.

Trapsmith (U) ★★★

It is a shame this archetype is uncommon because it solves several issues associated with snares. It notably uses Snarecrafter Dedication as a prerequisite and is able to bypass the usual rules regarding multiple archetypes to accommodate that restriction. In a sense, this archetype is really

just an expanded feat list for the snarecrafter. The dedication feat momentarily interferes with the vision of those who fail their saving throws against you traps.

- **Gear Gnash ★** Your snares are never subjected to a disable check. Unlike the traps set by a GM, a snare only occupies a single space: it is not tied to a doorway and can't fill a whole hallway. An enemy that notices your snares will avoid them by moving around or jumping over them.
- **Propeller Attachment ★★★** This feat solves a massive issue shared by most snares, especially towards the tail end of campaigns as flight becomes more common. The snare is painfully obvious unless you can manage to hide it in an exceptional way; smoke and fog magic will be the most common, but maybe you can convince your GM to let you tie a smoke fan gadget to it. However, this does make it much easier to shove flying enemies into your snares, especially if you have the forced movement abilities described in snarecrafter and a fly speed of your own.
- **Recycled Cogwheel ★★★★** You can pick up your daily snares, store them, and place them elsewhere. This completely changes how you interact with your snares, because you can afford to be incredibly flippant with their use. Whenever you enter a dungeon, set traps at the front door. Whenever you enter a building with hostiles in it, set traps at every exit first. Whichever snares don't come up can be freely retrieved and used later in the day, so nothing stops you from mining an entire battlefield with sufficient stealth or time.
- **Repurposed Parts ★★★** You can use two of your daily snares to create a new daily snare of a different type. That can be handy if you need it, but it won't compare to the value of Powerful Snares.
- **Finessed Features ★★★** Your snares become able to discriminate between targets based on visual stimuli. The exact limits of this are unclear. For example, you might need to ask your GM whether or not your snare is able to count, and thus trigger when it sees two people within range. At bare minimum, you should be able to exclude yourself and your party members from the list of viable targets, thus enabling both you and them to walk over snares without issue.

Trick Driver (U) ★★

Much like the vehicle mechanic archetype you will want to confirm that your campaign will actually use vehicles. This one deals with the particulars of vehicular combat, so even if your campaign is using a vehicle, you'll want to confirm your GM is playing them exactly as written. Ultimately, the inventor feels like they have better things to do than drive a vehicle in every encounter, as doing so will distract from all of your powerful offensive options. You also receive little benefit from the archetype itself, which allows you to replace your intelligence skill with dexterity for Driving Lore. It is unlikely your dexterity is higher than your intelligence.

- **Express Driver ★★** A skill feat which improves your travel time substantially. Unlike some similar skill feats, this one applies only when you are in a vehicle. The upside is that your party can ride in the vehicle, and thus benefit from your improved travel speed as well.

- **Power Slide ★★** You can drive and make a 90 degree turn. This is important for using vehicles mid-combat.
- **Take the Wheel ★★** Enter a vehicle and drive it using the same action.
- **Push It ★★** You can give your vehicle a tiny speed bonus. A bonus like this would be amazing on a player, but for a vehicle five feet is a drop in the bucket.
- **Roadkill ★★** You can replace your vehicle's ram DC with your class DC.
- **Drive-By Attack ★★★** You have finally found a feat which allows you to regain use of your primary class features while driving. You drive and strike at any point along your route.

Undead Slayer ★★

This archetype is intended for non-magical undead hunters. Its value skyrockets in an appropriate campaign. I'm glad to see an archetype devoted to the destruction of undead in the absence of divinity, so that those uninterested in divine backing do not need to feel pressure to multiclass to cleric in an undead-focused campaign.

- **Blessed Medicine ★★★** You get two attempts at using medicine checks to treat those diseased by undead. Diseases can be pretty nasty, but your party rarely allows them to get to a life-threatening point. That said, this is a skill feat rather than a class feat so it doesn't draw from your combat power.
- **Hunter's Sanctum ★★** You gain a safehouse that protects those within it from scrying. It is a surprise to see this feat on an archetype themed around undead, who are not particularly associated with scrying. It also makes the entrance harder for undead to find, at least.
- **Necromantic Resistance ★★★** Void damage resistance is always welcome, even in campaigns not themed specifically around undead.
- **Slayer's Strike ★★** This feat is comparable to the fighter's Power Attack or the inventor's Megaton Strike, except that the extra damage is vitality. I'd just as soon take Megaton Strike, but maybe you'll be able to trigger the weaknesses of low-level undead with this. It does coat your weapon in lesser vitality damage for the rest of the round.
- **Frighten Undead ★★★** You can use religion to demoralize undead, including mindless undead. Even with modest wisdom investment, this is very useful because mindless undead tend to have abysmal will saving throws.
- **Gear Up ★★★** This feat actually gives you prescient consumable a level early. You can't normally select it until seventh level. The feat lists a few weak and niche items, but you can use this to choose much better consumables such as ghost charges, which can reduce the need for an inconvenient ghost touch rune.
- **Slayer's Blessing ★★** If you took Slayer's Strike, you can now make it count as a ghost touch weapon or any of three special metals.
- **Slayer's Presence ★★★** You can use Frighten Undead as a free action after rolling initiative, and whenever you critically succeed while using it you force the target undead to flee.

Unexpected Sharpshooter (U) ★★★

This uncommon archetype is powerful despite its silly nature- which is exactly the point. The dedication feat alone offers an extremely powerful feat which, once per day, enables you to completely ignore virtually any reasonable impediment between you and your target while also ensuring higher damage. The charisma this archetype hopes for can be difficult to muster, but it can be well worth it.

- **Hit the Dirt ★★★** You can use your reaction to defend yourself against a ranged strike, but you must also leap (potentially triggering reactive strikes) and land prone (which further defends you against ranged attacks but makes you easier to hit in melee). This is of greater use to those with extremely long ranged weaponry, due to their lower risk of getting caught in melee.
- **Lucky Escape ★★★** Once per day you can force a creature to roll twice and take the lower result on an attack roll.
- **Risky Reload ★★★** The inventor lacks a gunslinger's incredible weapon proficiencies and can't make dexterity their key ability score, rendering them more likely to face complications caused by using this feat than other martial classes. That said, this feat is still extremely useful against mobs of weak enemies. If you are facing four or more foes, go nuts. You should hesitate to use it on a follow-up strike against two or three, and should only use it rarely against a solo boss monster. To get the most out of this feat, try to avoid reloading your gun manually after shooting it. On your next round, use it as your first strike. You should be able to avoid most jams as long as you reserve this feat for strikes which lack the multiple attack penalty or other significant debuffs.
- **No Hard Feelings ★★** You can make your guns nonlethal. If that is a concern to you, you might be able to get it more easily through a weapon innovation. As a sixth level feat it is a tough sell, though far from an impossible one.
- **That Was a Close One, Huh? ★★** You are unlikely to have the charisma necessary to pull this off. It will further require you to be well trained in deception to pull it off, consuming your limited skill increases.
- **Unbelievable Luck ★★★★** Use your incredibly powerful accidental shot ability once per hour rather than once per day.
- **I Meant to Do That ★★** Use deception to shove, trip, or disarm an opponent at range whenever you miss a foe.
- **Trick Shot ★★★** This feat's value largely depends on your GM's willingness to state that certain objects are explosive. The wording of the feat itself suggests a generous approach, with even mundane alcohol being considered explosive for the purposes of this feat.
- **Unbelievable Escape ★★★** You can use lucky escape once per hour rather than once per day. Due to the way medicine and focus points work, if you face three encounters in a day odds are good you'll be able to use it in the first and last encounter.
- **Chain Reaction ★★★** You can burn your whole turn to keep making strikes until you miss. The gunslinger has an easier time of this because of their high proficiency. This is

best deployed against a very large mob of weak enemies due to the high likelihood you miss with the third (and further) strike.

Vehicle Mechanic (U) ★★

It should go without saying that you'll want to check with your GM to make sure vehicles will be relevant to your campaign, be they those of conventional fantasy such as carriages and sailboats or the clockwork and alchemical cars of Guns & Gears. The dedication feat makes your party vehicle inherently easier to pilot. It is particularly useful in naval campaigns, in which ship-to-ship combat is likely to feature prominently.

- **Engine Bay ★** This feat is literally useless. You can repair multiple objects at once, but only if you don't use Quick Repair. Unfortunately, Quick Repair is far superior to this feat, as it could allow you to fix ten objects in the time this feat allows you to fix two, four, or eight depending on your proficiency. This feat is always worse, and is never worth a fourth level skill feat.
- **Patch Job ★★** You can use three actions to make a broken object functional until it takes damage. There is occasionally a need for this on vehicles, but you are more likely to use this on sturdy shields. If an ally has the sentinel archetype, they may also break their armor on occasion.
- **Superior Propulsion ★★** The exact value of this feat varies wildly depending on your vehicle and campaign.
- **Efficient Controls ★★★** That this is a skill feat is greatly appreciated. You reduce the number of crew necessary for a vehicle to function. If you took this archetype you should rely on vehicles with some frequency, this feat can free up a party member from vehicle duties.
- **Impervious Vehicle ★★★** Your vehicle gets defensive benefits. Odds are pretty good that your GM will have enemies target you rather than your vehicle, but it might get caught in blasts.
- **Miraculous Flight ★★★** Your vehicle can fly. You can convert ships into airships, make flying cars, and even somehow enable horse-drawn carriages to fly. Because it is a vehicle able to carry your party, this is effectively party-wide flight.

Viking ★★★

The Viking archetype becomes significantly more powerful at mid-level owing to two excellent shield feats. It works best for builds with a light hammer and shield. It still must compete with the bastion archetype, which shares many of its feats but has a far larger feat list and much more useful low-level feats. The dedication feat gives you Additional Lore for warfare lore, which can be used with the Battle Planner skill feat to greatly improve your terrible inventor initiative. You should never use this archetype for your free archetype, but it is a great one for cherry-picking useful feats out of.

- **Hurling Charge ★★** Throw your weapon before striding and picking up a different weapon. The addition of the thrower's bandolier magic item made this feat more practical because enemies are no longer able to smash or steal your expensive magic weapons, but

it's still usually inferior to a simple returning rune or any Quick Draw feat from any other archetype.

- **Reactive Shield ★★★** You can use a reaction to raise your shield.
- **Viking Weapon Familiarity ★** A class with your proficiencies has no need for this feat.
- **Second Shield ★** The Viking is great at treating expensive objects like they are replaceable, which is somewhat contrary to the design philosophy the game displays elsewhere. If you are routinely breaking your sturdy shields you have bigger issues. If you are instead using a pancake stack of shields strapped to your back, your damage resistance from shield blocking and destroying them will be paltry due to their not being sturdy shields.
- **Shielded Stride ★★★** You do not trigger reactive strikes or similar abilities while your shield is raised and you do not move more than half your speed. Such abilities are common enough and your mobility is important enough that this might well be worth it. Naturally, this is once again better for armor innovators: however, this time it favors mobility modifications rather than durability modifications.
- **Viking Weapon Specialist ★** A class with your proficiencies has no need for this feat.
- **Into the Fray ★★★★** Move and make two strikes for two actions. The strikes can be at any point in your movement and they defer the multiple attack penalty. The move can be a stride, leap, or swim action. This feat is a sleeper hit.

  It offers the inventor a fantastic way to get two overdrive strikes and move while still having an action left over with which to raise a shield. The only downside is that both strikes must be on separate targets. An inventor with gadget specialist can even use it with rocket boots to massively improve their leap actions, getting even more value out of this feat than usual.
- **Quick Shield Block ★★★★** You gain an extra reaction with which to shield block. You may not always want to destroy your shield so quickly, but if you are fighting minions unable to effectively bust through your shield's hardness you can massively improve your durability.

Weapon Improviser ★

This archetype is an atrocious fit for every inventor due to their reliance on upgrading gear. Even those not using a weapon innovation can't benefit from class features such as offensive boost when using an improvised weapon. At best, it may interest a power suit armor innovator in a game not expected to get past level eight.

Wild Mimic ★★

Somebody on the design team likes Street Fighter. This archetype exists for all of your Blanca needs. You get a special lore skill for taking it that can be used to recall knowledge about creature abilities. It is intelligence-based, making the investigator one of the best options for using it thanks to synergy with feats like Know Weaknesses.

Its feats all have the rather odd caveat that you must have met a creature that has the ability you want to get. Hopefully, your GM is willing to play ball and let you track down such

creatures using survival. If not, drop the rating of this archetype by one step because your options will be severely curtailed by what you happen to encounter.

- **Animal Empathy ★** You can use diplomacy on animals and receive answers from them.
- **Crane Stance ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Ferocity Mimicry ★★★** Get the equivalent of Orc Ferocity. Orc Ferocity is so good that it's still worth it at this level, even as a class feat.
- **Gorilla Stance ★★★** Your unarmed attacks gain high damage and both backswing and forceful. Those traits all synergize nicely with overdrive. This is the most optimal common stance available to the power suit innovator.
- **Rend Mimicry ★** It's impossible for an investigator to use this feat except against their lead. This feat would be much better on a class with better multiattack potential.
- **Tiger Stance ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Wolf Stance ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Electrogenesis ★★★** Just in case you weren't absolutely sure this archetype is a reference to Blanca, this feat gives you the ability to replicate electrical discharges. It uses an unarmed attack to do so, and is very comparable to the inventor feat Megaton Strike.
- **Primal Proportions ★★★** A great feat for those looking to make use of the power suit. Being large almost at-will spares you the need for Titan Wrestler as a skill feat without limiting your mobility like a large size ancestry would.
- **Wild Speech ★** This feat doesn't give you much that its predecessor didn't already give you. You can talk to animals, but you could already "receive answers" from animals with Animal Empathy. I suspect it was designed with the inferior pre-remaster version of Animal Empathy in mind.
- **Crane Flutter ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Environmental Adaptability ★** This feat commits the fundamental sin of environmental protection: it doesn't protect your party. The Horizon Walker archetype offers a far superior environmental protection feat at 4th level.
- **Gorilla Pound ★★** You almost certainly lack the charisma necessary to capitalize on the demoralization check which is part of this feat. You may be able to eke some value out of it regardless, either normally or through the Assurance feat against weaker foes.
- **Tiger Slash ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Wolf Drag ★** You must be unarmored to benefit from this stance.
- **Petrifying Gaze Mimicry ★★★** You can't actually petrify creatures with this feat, but it's still pretty useful. It's a great choice for keeping a frail ranged build safer, though it has the incapacitation trait and little else about this archetype supports ranged combat.
- **Trample Mimicry ★★** A three-action activity that only works on creatures smaller than you. You can set it up with Primal Proportions, but that's a whole lot of setup for not much gain. Boost its rating a step if you are a large size ancestry.
- **Roar Mimicry ★★★** An impressive area effect stun that doesn't even have the incapacitation trait.

- **Pounce Mimicry** ★★★ Move and strike with the same action. It's a fantastic feat for obvious reasons. It probably would have a blue rating if it were just a couple levels lower.
- **Emergency Regeneration** ★★★ Cast regeneration on yourself as a reaction to hitting 0 hit points.

Winged Warrior ★★★

The winged warrior archetype is available to those with wings. The wings don't need to be flight-capable just yet, but you at least need to have them. Most player characters won't be able to take this dedication when it is first available at level two owing to their lack of permanent wings. The most plausible way to get this archetype is to play the uncommon strix ancestry, but a generous GM might let you get away with other ancestries, either on the grounds that they're sufficiently avian (tengu) or could plausibly have non-functional wings as part of their biology (nephilim).

The dedication gives you a hefty boost to your leap distance. It is a welcome bonus for any low-strength build. If you ever unlock flight in the future, such as through the inventor feat Soaring Armor, you also get a little bonus to your fly speed. Most of the later feats assume you've acquired a fly speed from somewhere. If you have no intention of getting a fly speed, drop the rating of this archetype of one step.

- **Battering Wings** ★ A standard ancestry unarmed attack, except for the hurdle that it's a fourth level class feat. Just use your default fist strike and save the feat, getting a lethal attack here isn't worth it.
- **Gusting Spell** ★ You don't have any spells with which to use this feat.
- **Wing Bounce** ★★★ Leap, attempt to trip an enemy, and then leap again if successful. It takes two actions to use, so it only provides any bonus if you succeed on your trip attempt. If the enemy wants to hit you after you use this ability on them, they'll need to burn at least two actions: one to stand, and one to stride towards you. The improved leap distance granted by the base archetype dedication makes this feat much better than it otherwise would be. You can further improve it with the inventor feat Gadget Specialist by creating greater blast boots with which to further improve your leap distance.
- **Sunbird Glare** ★★★ As long as you are in bright light, you can spend a single action to attempt to dazzle a foe. Seeing as you are in an adventuring party, you'll always have someone without darkvision who needs a bright light to operate. It works at a decent range and has no cap on the frequency of its use.
- **Feathered Flechettes** ★★ You get a short range blast of slashing damage that scales with your unarmed striking runes. The scaling method is a bit odd, but it's a fairly typical blast for its level. It's a fine example of a feat that you should take if you like it, even though it won't be a power pick.
- **Pluck From the Sky (U)** ★★★ Accessible only to bird-themed ancestries. It's a solid anti-air move that'll put flying opponents within reach of melee allies much more effectively than many similar feats. It even works with ranged strikes.
- **Wing Shove** ★★ Shove two flanking enemies for a single action. It's a decent way to escape a flank from enemies with reactive strikes, but only a single check can benefit

from Athletic Strategist. More positively, the second shove doesn't have to deal with the multiple attack penalty unless the first one did.

- **Falcon Swoop ★★★★** Fly twice and make a melee or ranged strike at any point during your movement. It takes two actions, so this doubles your fly speed for most practical purposes.
- **Redirecting Draft ★★** This feat is a word-for-word copy of the thlipit contestant's Snap Falling Fruit feat, but for some reason it's four levels higher. I don't see any reason for this discrepancy. The only difference is that this feat has a locked 10 foot radius while Snap Falling Fruit uses the dedication's unarmed reach, which is also 10 feet but can be expanded if you get extra reach from an effect like the enlarge spell. By any reasonable measure, this feat is worse than its lower-level rival. Perhaps the designers thought there was value in the fact that this feat doesn't require a body party to touch the ammunition, but there's nothing to indicate that any ammunition would have a contact effect.
- **Smooth Hover ★★★** Once per hour you can remain airborne even if you don't move.
- **Thunderous Landing ★★★** A cool area shove that doesn't rely on your athletics score, doesn't advance or apply the multiple attack penalty, works without requiring you to enter melee range, and throws in a free stride. It even has a generous one-action cost. If shoving foes were just a bit more useful, it'd secure an easy blue rating. You might regard it as blue if your GM designs cool maps with plentiful hazards.
- **Bombing Run ★★** Move and throw a bomb with an expanded splash radius. It's very cool, but it's incompatible with feats like Quick Bomber. You'll need to draw a bomb and use this, consuming your entire turn and denying you your offensive boost. The inventor has better ways of triggering energy damage weaknesses than bombs.
- **Cratering Drop ★★** Significantly boost the downward movement of Pluck From the Sky by spending an extra action and dropping an equal distance yourself. It technically still works at range even though the flavor implies you are manually dragging your foe down with you. It's extremely cool, but between its situational nature and uncommon prerequisite feat, it will see little play at tables in practice.
- **Sonic Strafe ★★★** Spend two actions to fly twice, dealing moderate sonic damage to those you pass. The damage isn't that great and you'll have to eat any reactive strikes the enemy might have, but it can still be pretty useful in tandem with armor innovation feats that improve your movement. It's much easier to avoid dealing damage to allies than typical area blasts.

Wandering Chef ★★

There isn't much an inventor would want from this archetype that they couldn't get by multiclassing to food-themed alchemist instead. The alchemist offers similar benefits with a vastly less restrictive item list and the inventor has no trouble meeting its intelligence prerequisite. I'm surprised the chef starts with acid-filled versatile vials rather than advanced alchemy, like the poisoner archetype does. I don't imagine there's much overlap between professional chefs and those who throw acid at people.

- **Morning Side Dishes** ★★★ Create five extra alchemical foods at the start of each day. You get one more than the equivalent alchemist archetype feat in exchange for not having access to most of the alchemist's best items. Not a great trade.
- **Additional Servings** ★★★ Get an extra versatile vial. It's pretty easy to get vials between combat as you repair your unstable innovation. This lets you use more in a single encounter, but you're unlikely to use that many vials that quickly. I might pick up one instance of this feat, but I'd be unlikely to choose it again at higher level.
- **Food Preservation** ★★ You can store a food item for more than a day. I can't think of any good reason to use this over Additional Servings. They serve the same benefit -more alchemical items- but Additional Servings doesn't require a day of prep work and can be replenished in the field.
- **Packed With Flavor** ★★ Very few foods require a saving throw.
- **Cosmic Cocktail** ★★★ Use your crafting skill to see through illusions and detect polymorphed creatures. It's a nice way to circumvent an inventor's poor perception and is the best feat the chef offers.
- **Regional Specialty** ★★★ These are some pretty powerful bonuses if you manage to guess the right element for the day's challenges.

Wrestler ★★★★

The wrestler is a prime choice for those with the muscular exoskeleton armor modification. In that case, you should expect to focus on battlefield control and support above damage. Your wrestler unarmed attacks may lose the nonlethal trait at your discretion, but they still have rock bottom damage. It could also be helpful to weapon innovators using any of the following: gauntlets with the complex simplicity modification, bastard swords or weapons with the dynamic weighting modification, and weapons with the integrated gauntlet modification. However, the armor innovator has the most to gain by far. The following ratings largely assume you are using that build unless specifically called out otherwise.

- **Combat Grab** ★★★★ If chosen alongside Snagging Strike, this feat produces an excellent turn order. First, strike and make your enemy off-guard. Then, use this press strike to target the off-guard foe. If you succeed, you automatically grapple the target. This simple one-two dramatically improves your average damage output and synergizes nicely with the inventor playstyle, which aims for both battlefield control and multiple hits.
- **Crushing Grab** ★★★ Deal minor damage when you grapple a creature. Any resistance to bludgeoning damage will nullify this damage entirely, but it is still quite worthwhile. You notably do not need to use your hands to get this benefit, and thus polearm inventors with the entangling form modification could greatly enjoy this feat (albeit at the cost of taking an archetype with otherwise poor synergy). Unfortunately, this feat only applies when you take the grapple action, and thus will not provide its benefit on uses of the Combat Grab feat.

- **Disengaging Twist** ★★★ So many monsters have the ability to grapple you automatically. Unlike many feats that defend against the grapple condition, this feat can defend you against those automatic grapples.
- **Elbow Breaker** ★★ When you have a creature grappled, your unarmed strikes against it also gain the success and critical success effects of a disarm action. This is nice for two reasons: first, it is passive and thus you have no incentive not to use it. Second, it can be any unarmed attack, even ancestral unarmed attacks as powerful as goblin bites. If you are already a power suit armor innovator relying on such an attack, you might as well make every strike an Elbow Breaker. This would be green for power suit innovators if not for the fact that so many monsters don't carry weapons at all. In an urban campaign improve its rating to match.
- **Snagging Strike** ★★★★ If chosen alongside Combat Grab, this feat produces an excellent turn order. First, strike and make your enemy off-guard. Then, use the press strike to target the off-guard foe. If you succeed, you automatically grapple the target. This simple one-two dramatically improves your average damage output and synergizes nicely with the inventor playstyle, which aims for both battlefield control and multiple hits.
- **Suplex** ★★★ On any turn you do not intend to maintain your grapple, you can choose to suplex your target. You make an unarmed attack which gains the success and critical success effects of a trip action. This feat resembles Elbow Breaker, but with a more applicable maneuver. Conversely, it does come at the cost of releasing your grappled target: though nothing stops you from immediately using Combat Grab against your prone opponent.
- **Clinch Strike** ★★ Use your reaction to make a melee strike against any creature that successfully escapes. Enemies would usually rather attack than escape unless you have managed to restrain them. It is best taken on builds in which you make regular athletics checks instead of Combat Grab, Unlike Crushing Grab it can't be used alongside entangling form polearms because the melee strike has to be unarmed. If you have a green or blue rated ancestral unarmed attack, bump this up to green.
- **Running Tackle** ★★★ Another great feat for a power suit armor innovator. This one doesn't rely on unarmed attacks and is therefore also practical for weapon innovators who added grapple or shove to their weapon. You can stride twice, then grapple or shove. You can opt for a long or high jump instead of striding. It's a useful bit of action compression for those interested in athletics checks above all else. The power suit especially can benefit from entering overdrive, moving very quickly, and grappling a foe with a check enhanced by the muscular exoskeleton modification. This strategy works especially well if you have a ranged ally able to capitalize on the off-guard condition inflicted on the grappled foe.
- **Strangle** ★★★★ Your unarmed attack against grappled foes gains bonus damage and it can prevent spellcasters from casting. This feat is useful against both humanoid spellcasters and monsters. A spellcaster subjected to this feat doesn't have any good options, especially when combined with Clinch Strike. Even teleporting away is

incredibly unreliable. If you are fortunate enough to have chosen an ancestry with a high-rated unarmed attack, all the better.

- **Submission Hold ★★** You can grapple a creature you have already grappled to make them enfeebled. The worth of doing so is a bit dodgy, especially considering that this usage does not maintain your grapple. Still, it does inhibit their ability to escape if you already have maintained your grapple, so when you absolutely must keep an enemy still this feat can help out.
- **Whirling Throw ★★★** The Player Core 2 update added the attack trait to Whirling Throw, taking this feat from "awe-inspiring must-pick" to "strong." You'll see plenty of insistence that this change crippled the feat and made it unusable, but that's unreasonable. It's still one of the best repositioning tools in the game, you'll just need to grapple an enemy for a round before you use it.

  If you have an enemy grappled, throw them up to thirty feet and potentially knock them prone. It's an omnidirectional shove with triple the range, and well worth the setup. Teammates with snares or spells that create terrain hazards make it even better. Whirling Throw notably doesn't rely on unarmed attacks or your personal reach. As a result, it can be used by a weapon innovator with an entangling form polearm. This strategy makes you much safer during the turn delay between the grapple and this feat's use, though it does make the enemy much more likely to attempt to escape rather than attack; thus reducing the odds you get to use this feat on a following turn. The power suit innovator can instead opt for the muscular exoskeleton modification to improve their odds of success. Those with either of those modifications or a large size category might bump this feat's rating up one step.
- **Aerial Piledriver ★★** This is similar to suplex, except that it is two actions and you might not lose your grip on your target. The critical failure effect also backfires in a nasty way. I'd much sooner use its predecessor even if they were the same level feat.
- **Spinebreaker ★★★** You can grapple an opponent you have already grappled to make them clumsy. Between your grapple and this feat, their armor class is shattered. Your team will be able to deliver a powerful beatdown, but you can also cash-in immediately with explode if your team isn't nearby.
- **Inescapable Grasp ★★** The opponent needs to make an extremely difficult flat check to teleport out of your grapple. I'd just as soon rely on the lower-level and less niche feat Strangle, but this feat does enjoy the benefits of passivity. You might take it if you are in a free archetype game, or if your foes make heavy use of teleportation (such as fiends).
- **Form Lock ★★** You can use athletics checks to counteract polymorph effects. There are plenty of reasons to use this feat. You can do the obvious, grappling and disabling enemy battle forms. You can free allies from effects like Baleful Polymorph. As the feat does not deal damage, you could even use it to pick out shapeshifting infiltrators from a lineup without harming the innocent. Doppelgangers beware when the wrestler is handing out free hugs. Even with all of those potential applications, the effect is still pretty narrow. It is too bad they didn't think to include morph effects as well to broaden the bonus a bit.
- **Godbreaker ★★** You don't often get this feat's full effect, but even hitting the enemy a couple of times adds 20 extra damage.

Final Notes:

Self-Damage and Fire Resistance:

Any class benefits from fire resistance: enemies use fire damage more frequently than any other energy damage type, it is a common environmental hazard, and it is one of the most common forms of persistent damage. Persistent damage is disproportionately affected by resistance because resistance applies to it every time it triggers, rather than just once.

The inventor takes fire damage more often than any other class due to overdrive and the unstable trait, both of which have the potential to inflict fire damage equal to your level every time they are used. Despite the risk, the inventor should be using both every time combat occurs. This propensity for self-inflicted injury predisposes them towards fire resistance beyond that which is typical for an adventurer. There are only two exceptions to this rule: construct innovators and those with the Variable Core feat.

The only extra fire damage a construct innovator takes (unless they ride or stand near an exploding construct) is caused by critically failing an overdrive check, which is far less frequent than the fire damage caused by the unstable trait. Instead, their construct suffers the unstable fire damage that other innovations must personally endure. Unfortunately, there are currently no means short of spellcasting to render your construct fire resistant.

Those with the Variable Core feat alter the damage types of both the explode action and their self-inflicted damage. This renders fire resistance only as important for an inventor as it is for any other adventurer, but it doesn't singlehandedly solve their self-damage problem. They still take just as much damage as they did before changing the damage type. Variable Core is most useful if you gain some other energy damage resistance.

Those with weapon or armor innovations, but who lack the Variable Core feat, will always seek out fire resistance. Doing so will keep them safe from both their own and external fire damage. There are several means one might go about getting fire damage resistance, which I have collected below.

- **Ancestral:** Ancestral fire resistance almost always comes in one of two forms. If you have access to an ancestral energy damage resistance other than fire through your ancestry, you might choose to use Variable Core to swap your self-inflicted damage to that type. If your ancestry lacks fire resistance, do not despair. A charm of resistance is more expensive but more effective.
    - **Scaling** ★★★★ Scaling resistance is always equal to half your level. An inventor's self-inflicted fire damage always equals half their level. Therefore, scaling resistance always nullifies an inventor's self-inflicted damage.

      Scaling damage resistance is usually acquired through a heritage feature which also protects you from hot environments. If that is the case for you, check with your GM to see if they will allow you to choose the uncommon ifrit versatile heritage. It offers the exact same bonus as fire-resistant ancestral heritages with

the added benefit of an expanded feat list, making it objectively superior to all other fire-resistant heritages.
    - **Flat** ★★★ Flat damage resistance is almost always equal to five and acquired through a fifth level feat. At the level you are able to choose it, it will completely nullify your self-inflicted damage. It falls behind scaling resistance at level twelve, but will still nullify most of the damage from that point on.
- **Archetype:** Some archetypes are able to grant fire resistance. Most of them follow the scaling resistance model and will shave off half of your self-inflicted damage.
    - **Dragon Disciple** ★★★ Though uncommon (and thus not reviewed elsewhere) this archetype does have an easy access clause: being a spellscale kobold. It grants scaling resistance equal to that of an ancestry as part of its dedication feat and can further improve their resistance at fourth level for another feat. Class feats are more valuable than ancestry feats, but these are at least reasonably leveled and could be used in a free archetype game.
    - **Druid** ★★ Inventors with the druid archetype who choose the flame order can take the Fire Resistance feat. It only becomes available at eighth level and grants scaling fire resistance equal to that of an ancestry. It is a dubious choice due to its high level.
    - **Monk** ★ Inventors with the monk archetype can gain both cold and fire resistance at twelfth level through the Inner Fire feat. Ordinarily, this would be great because you could use it in tandem with Variable Core to resist two damage types and swap between them as needed. However, they must be unarmored to do it. You'd just trade one death sentence for another.
- **Spells:** Inventors with spellcasting archetypes or generous spellcasting allies might look into the following solutions.
    - **Flame Barrier** ★★ This spell is only available to fire domain clerics. It is able to completely nullify self-inflicted injury at any level. Unfortunately, the soonest an inventor can get it through an archetype is sixteenth level. Inventors who travel with fire domain clerics are truly blessed.
    - **Resist Energy** ★★★ The resist energy spell provides sufficient resistance to nullify most of your self-damage. It has a ten-minute duration, which is enough to cast it ahead of combat. At higher levels it can target more creatures, thus enabling it to protect you from self-damage while simultaneously protecting an ally from your explosions. It is also the only low-level means of protecting your construct from unstable self-damage.

      Resist energy possesses greater flexibility than other means of gaining fire resistance. If you expect to fight a white dragon, you can choose to defend yourself against cold damage instead of fire damage. In that circumstance, the dragon's freezing breath is a far greater threat to your survival than your self-damage. This flexibility also affords inventors with Variable Core a means of adjusting their damage resistance to match that of the damage type they choose. If you intend to make use of the Variable Core's status as a modification feat and

change your damage types with any frequency, the resist energy spell becomes far more powerful due to its versatility.

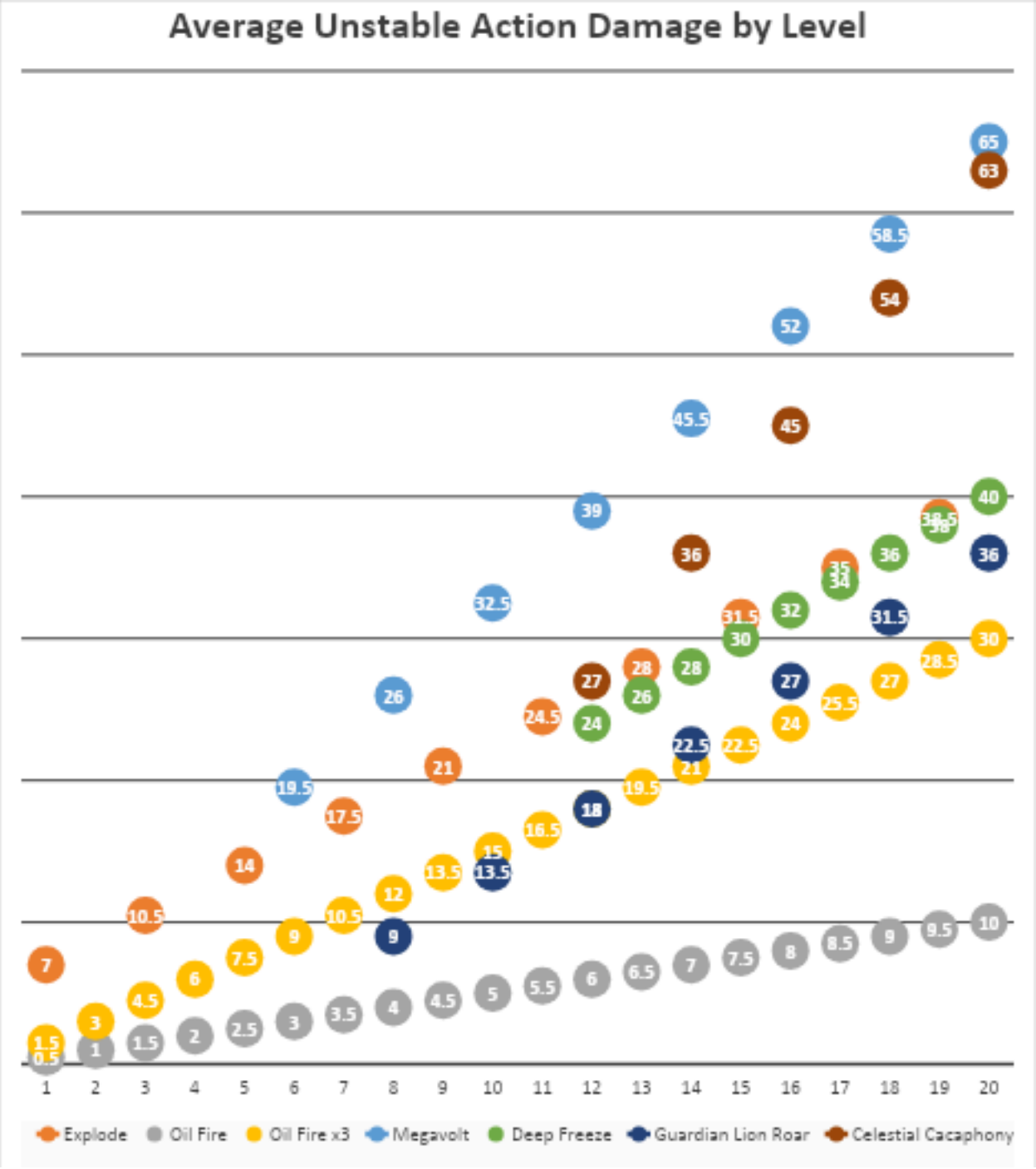
However, if you cast this from your archetype spell slots you will be giving up a scant resource to protect yourself against something that might not come up at all if you get lucky. Its two-action casting time is also untenable during ambushes. Whether for yourself or a spellcasting ally, you might consider purchasing it as a wand. It is cheaper than a charm of resistance at most levels; if you only have a couple of predictable encounters per day it pulls ahead of its rivals.

- **Thermal Stasis** ★★★ This cantrip is only available to oscillating wave psychics. Thermal stasis can protect you from both fire and cold damage, provided you have an action to burn before using overdrive or an unstable ability. I wouldn't typically bother using it before attempting overdrive due to the low odds of critical failure, but I might use it before an unstable action. That it protects you from two energy damage types makes it uniquely compatible with Variable Core. For example, if you expect to fight fire elementals you can keep yourself defended against both them and your cold self-damage.

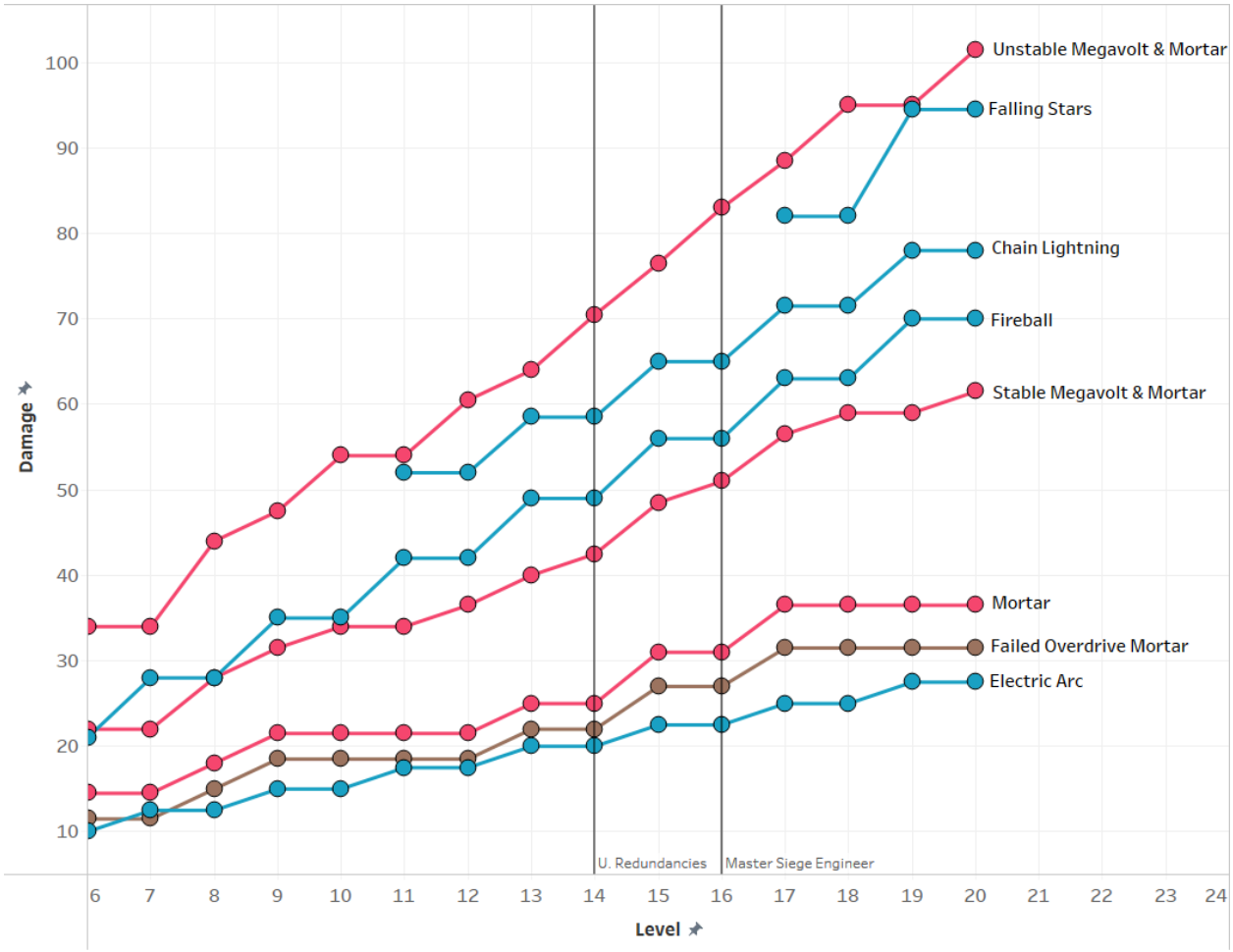
- **Item:** There are several items that can offer fire resistance.
  - **Charm of Resistance** ★★★★ The charm of resistance is the most powerful form of fire damage resistance. Unless you are relying on the ancestral strategy, you are certain to purchase a charm of resistance as soon as you can afford to do so. It will nullify all of your self-damage at the level you acquire it. Once the damage scales to the point where it starts to become an issue, you can easily afford an upgraded version.
  - **Energy-Resistant Armor Rune** ★ This rune is a waste of money. It offers the same defense as a charm of resistance for just shy of twice the cost. The only advantage it offers is that you do not need to invest it; seeing as you have ten investment slots and fire resistance is important enough to devote one of them to, this should never be an issue.
  - **Flaming Star Spellheart** ★★★ A flaming star spellheart costs the same as an energy resistant rune, but if you have Trick Magic Item or access to Cast a Spell from a spellcasting archetype, you can also cast fireball.

Unstable Action Damage Comparison:

- Guardian Lion Roar deals the same damage even if it isn't unstable.
- Oil Fire's damage only occurs on a delay, is unlikely to achieve three ticks of damage, and has a bad successful save result which isn't accounted for. It's worse than it looks.
- This chart doesn't account for the off-guard condition inflicted by Guardian Lion Roar or the persistent damage of Celestial Cacophony. Add nine damage per tick of persistent damage to Celestial Cacophony.



Mortar vs. Common Blast Spells:



Mortar innovator damage with overdrive is pink. Spells are blue. Here's the assumptions and limits of this graph to ensure it is properly understood:

- Mortar damage before accessing Megavolt is uninteresting. I didn't include the boring data from first to fifth level. If you care, the trendline continues exactly as you'd expect.
- This graphic makes no effort to account for action cost. Maintaining a mortar's optimal rotation requires three actions. All of the listed spells are just two actions. Casters can continue to contribute to battle through this additional action.
- Range, propensity for friendly fire, and area aren't considered. Fireball's area is well over twice as big as that of a mortar, and both electrical spells can easily avoid friendly fire to hit more targets more reliably. While chain lightning and falling star's effective range is much higher than that of a mortar, the other spells have stricter ranges; that said, a mortar needs to operate at a similar range in practice due to the range limits on their unstable actions. These damage numbers all assume a single target, which makes the mortar look much better than it is because spells can reliably hit far more than a single target.
- Certain feats and class features aren't accounted for on either end. This graph won't tell us how a Prototype Companion or Persistent Boost helps the mortar, nor will it help us figure out how sorcerous potency helps a sorcerer or an animal companion helps a druid.

It's strictly a comparison of blast to blast. It *does* account for both overdrive and offensive boost except where specified otherwise.

- Finally, while a mortar inventor generally advances their proficiency like a spellcaster, they do fall behind at the last two levels because they never attain legendary proficiency in their class DC.

If you're wondering where Guardian Lion Roar would land were it compatible with the mortar, you may assume it follows the fireball path. There are a few dips and jumps, but it's mostly consistent with that line.

Mortar vs. Construct Durability:

Here's a simple comparison of the mortar innovation's effective durability compared to the construct innovation, using the average of at-level monster damage between high and moderate strikes. The mortar is inoperable when reduced below its BT, so we're using that threshold instead of its HP. Note that the last two columns are considering strike damage, which actually favors the mortar because its hardness shaves more damage off of multiple strike hits. When compared to high-damage multi-action activities it fares significantly worse because its hardness can only be applied once. This chart also doesn't account for construct innovation modifications.

Construct AC	Construct HP	Mortar AC	Mortar BT	Mortar Hardness	Construct Hits Before Death	Mortar Hits Until Broken
6	18	7	8	5	3.3	16.0
7	26	8	11	5	3.1	3.1
8	34	9	14	5	3.1	2.3
10	46	10	17	5	3.5	2.1
11	55	11	20	10	3.8	4.4
12	64	12	23	10	3.9	3.5
13	73	15	26	10	3.9	3.1
16	98	16	29	10	4.9	2.9
17	109	17	32	10	5.0	2.7
18	120	19	40	15	5.0	4.4
19	131	20	43.5	15	5.1	4.1
20	142	21	47	15	5.2	3.8
21	153	22	50.5	15	5.2	3.5
22	178	23	54	15	5.7	3.4
26	190	26	57.5	20	5.8	4.4
27	202	27	61	20	5.9	4.4
28	214	29	73	20	6.1	4.9
29	226	30	77	20	6.2	4.7
30	238	31	81	20	6.2	4.4
31	250	33	95	20	6.2	4.6