# Mechanized Warfare: A Comprehensive Analysis of the Machina Archetype

## The Machina Blueprint: Core Strategy and Key Personnel

The Machina archetype, since its inception, has been defined by a unique and seemingly paradoxical philosophy: destruction as a resource. This core concept has evolved from a simple battle-focused theme into the engine of a complex and powerful competitive strategy. Understanding this blueprint is the first step to mastering the deck's intricate machinery.

### The Engine of Destruction: A Paradoxical Game Plan

The central game plan of the Machina archetype revolves around the strategic destruction of its own Machine monsters to generate significant advantage. This mechanic is not a cost but a catalyst, turning what would be a loss for most decks into the primary trigger for its most potent effects.1 This creates a self-sustaining loop of destruction and summoning that forms the deck's core engine.

Cards like Machina Overdrive, Machina Air Raider, and Machina Irradiator are the primary enablers of this strategy. Their effects, which allow a player to target and destroy a Machine they control to Special Summon another "Machina" from the hand, Deck, or Graveyard, are fundamental to the deck's operation.2 This action simultaneously develops the board by fielding a new threat while crucially enabling the Graveyard effect of the archetype's centerpiece,

Machina Citadel. The typical gameplay loop is as follows:

1. Establish a Machine monster on the field.
2. Activate a "Machina" card effect to destroy that Machine.
3. Special Summon a new "Machina" monster from the Deck or Graveyard.
4. Trigger the effect of Machina Citadel from the Graveyard, summoning it as a powerful interruption.

This process fundamentally alters the traditional calculation of card advantage. In most strategies, discarding a card or destroying one's own monster is a distinct cost. For Machina, however, the act of discarding a key card like Machina Citadel via Machina Redeployment is not a cost but the primary objective of the play.1 A card like

Redeployment appears to be a neutral transaction in terms of hand advantage (discard 1, search 2, lose Redeployment itself). However, by placing Citadel into the Graveyard, it transforms a card in hand into a live, field-ready threat, effectively generating a significant plus in board presence potential. The deck's resources are thus distributed across the hand, field, and Graveyard, making it exceptionally resilient to hand disruption as its key interactive pieces are already in their optimal activation zone.

### The Command Roster: Categorizing the Machina Arsenal

To effectively pilot the deck, it is crucial to understand the specific role each card plays. The Machina arsenal can be broken down into distinct functional categories.

#### Boss Monsters

These are the primary win conditions and sources of interaction.

* **Machina Citadel**: The heart of the modern archetype, this Level 10 EARTH Machine cannot be Normal Summoned and must be Special Summoned by a card effect. Its power lies in two effects. First, if a face-up EARTH Machine you control is destroyed, you can Special Summon Citadel from your Graveyard. Second, it possesses a Quick Effect to target a Machine you control, destroy it, and then destroy all monsters your opponent controls with ATK less than or equal to the destroyed monster's.6 This creates a devastating and repeatable board wipe that can be used on the opponent's turn.
* **Machina Ruinforce**: A Level 10 DARK Machine that serves as a secondary, high-impact boss. It can only be Special Summoned from the Graveyard by banishing Machine monsters from the GY whose total Levels equal 12 or more. It boasts a colossal 4600 ATK and can, during the Battle Phase, negate an opponent's effect at the cost of halving both players' Life Points. When destroyed, it Special Summons up to three of your banished "Machina" monsters, providing immense resource recovery.1
* **Machina Fortress**: The original boss monster, this Level 7 EARTH Machine has transitioned into a versatile extender. It can be Special Summoned from the hand or Graveyard by discarding Machine monsters (including itself) whose total Levels equal 8 or more. This makes it an excellent tool for setting up the Graveyard with cards like Citadel. It also has disruptive effects: when destroyed by battle, it destroys a card on the field, and when targeted by a monster effect, it can discard a card from the opponent's hand.6

#### Starters and Consistency Tools

These cards initiate combos and ensure the engine runs smoothly.

* **Machina Redeployment**: The deck's premier Normal Spell and most powerful consistency tool. It has two effects: discard any card to add two different "Machina" monsters from your Deck to your hand, or discard a "Machina" card to add any two different "Machina" cards (including Spells/Traps) from your Deck to your hand.3 This card single-handedly sets up entire combos.
* **Machina Gearframe**: The deck's primary Normal Summon. This Level 4 Union monster searches for any "Machina" monster (except itself) upon being Normal Summoned, making it a one-card starter for many plays. It can also equip to a Machine monster to protect it from destruction once.6
* **Machina Metalcruncher**: A Level 9 EARTH Machine that can be Normal Summoned without tribute if you control no cards. Its effect reveals three EARTH Machine monsters from the deck, and the opponent randomly adds one to your hand. This provides another strong opening play and can search for non-Machina combo pieces in hybrid builds.10

#### Extenders and Combo Pieces

These cards help swarm the field and enable more complex sequences.

* **Machina Air Raider & Machina Irradiator**: A duo of Level 8 EARTH Machines that Special Summon themselves from the hand by discarding another "Machina" monster. Their crucial effects allow you to destroy a Machine you control to Special Summon another "Machina" from the Deck (Air Raider, a Quick Effect) or Graveyard (Irradiator).4 They are the primary in-archetype method for triggering  
  Citadel.
* **Machina Unclaspare**: A Level 4 DARK Machine that can Special Summon itself from the hand for free, but locks you into summoning only Machine monsters for the rest of the turn. Upon summon, it sends any "Machina" monster from the Deck to the Graveyard, providing the most direct way to set up Citadel or Ruinforce.1
* **Machina Possesstorage**: A Level 4 DARK Machine that, when summoned, can revive another "Machina" monster from the Graveyard (with its effects negated for the turn). This facilitates easy Rank 4 Xyz Summons or Link plays.3

#### Support and Utility

These Spells and Traps provide protection, recursion, and additional disruption.

* **Machina Overdrive**: A Normal Trap that functions similarly to Air Raider and Irradiator, destroying a Machine you control to summon another from the hand or Deck. Crucially, its Graveyard effect allows you to banish it to shuffle three of your banished or in-GY Machine monsters back into the Deck to draw one card, which is vital for the deck's grind game.2
* **Machina Defense Perimeter**: A Continuous Spell that protects your Level 6 or lower Machine monsters from attacks and targeting effects while you control a Level 7 or higher Machine. It also allows you to add a Machine from your GY to your hand once per turn when one of your Machines is destroyed.2

### Table 1: Machina Card Role & Function Summary

| Card Name | Card Type | Primary Role | Key Effect Summary | Strategic Value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Machina Citadel | Effect Monster | Boss Monster / Disruption | Summons from GY when an EARTH Machine is destroyed; Quick Effect to destroy own Machine to wipe opponent's board. | Core interactive piece and recurring threat. |
| Machina Ruinforce | Effect Monster | Boss Monster / Finisher | Summons from GY by banishing Machines; 4600 ATK; Battle Phase negation; Recovers banished monsters. | High-impact OTK enabler and resource recovery tool. |
| Machina Fortress | Effect Monster | Extender / GY Setup | Summons from hand/GY by discarding Machines; Destroys a card when destroyed by battle; Hand-rips when targeted. | Enables combos by setting up the GY and providing an easily summoned body. |
| Machina Redeployment | Normal Spell | Starter / Consistency | Discard 1 to search any 2 "Machina" monsters/cards. | The deck's best starter, providing unparalleled consistency and setup. |
| Machina Gearframe | Union/Effect Monster | Starter / Searcher | On Normal Summon, adds a "Machina" monster from Deck to hand. | The primary one-card starter for most combos. |
| Machina Metalcruncher | Effect Monster | Starter / Consistency | Normal Summon without tribute; Reveals 3 EARTH Machines to add 1 to hand. | Alternative starter that can access non-Machina engine pieces. |
| Machina Air Raider | Effect Monster | Extender / Combo Piece | Summons itself by discarding; Quick Effect to destroy a Machine to summon from Deck. | Triggers Citadel on the opponent's turn for disruption. |
| Machina Irradiator | Effect Monster | Extender / Combo Piece | Summons itself by discarding; Destroys a Machine to summon from GY. | Extends combos and triggers Citadel during your turn. |
| Machina Unclaspare | Effect Monster | Extender / GY Setup | Free Special Summon; Sends any "Machina" monster from Deck to GY. | The most efficient way to place Citadel or Ruinforce in the GY. |
| Machina Possesstorage | Effect Monster | Extender / Link-Xyz Enabler | On summon, revives a "Machina" from GY. | Facilitates access to the Extra Deck for Rank 4 or Link-2 plays. |
| Machina Overdrive | Normal Trap | Disruption / Recursion | Destroys a Machine to summon from Deck; GY effect recycles resources and draws a card. | Provides disruption and fuels the long game. |
| Machina Defense Perimeter | Continuous Spell | Protection / Recovery | Protects smaller Machines; Recovers a Machine from GY when another is destroyed. | Offers defensive utility and resource recursion. |

## Assembly Lines: In-Archetype Search and Combo Chains

The Machina archetype's internal logistics are built upon a network of powerful search effects and combo starters that ensure its engine can be assembled consistently. Understanding these pathways is key to executing the deck's strategy effectively.

### The Search Grid: Mapping the Lines of Consistency

The deck's consistency is built on several powerful search and setup effects that provide access to its key pieces.

* **Primary Searcher (Machina Redeployment)**: This Normal Spell is the most versatile searcher in the deck. By discarding a single card, it can add any two "Machina" monsters or, if the discard was a "Machina" card, any two "Machina" cards, including Spells and Traps. This one card can assemble a full combo hand.3
* **Normal Summon Searcher (Machina Gearframe)**: The most common opening play involves Normal Summoning Machina Gearframe. Its effect adds any "Machina" monster (except another Gearframe) from the Deck to the hand, reliably starting the deck's main combo lines.6
* **Graveyard Setup (Machina Unclaspare)**: While not a traditional search, Unclaspare's effect to send any "Machina" monster from the Deck to the Graveyard is functionally a search that places the card directly into its desired zone. This is the most efficient way to prepare Machina Citadel or Machina Ruinforce for their Graveyard effects.1
* **Conditional Searcher (Machina Metalcruncher)**: When Normal or Special Summoned, Metalcruncher can reveal three EARTH Machine monsters from the Deck, with the opponent randomly adding one to the hand. While less precise, this can access crucial combo pieces, including non-Machina cards in hybrid variants.10

### Foundational Combo: The Gearframe-Unclaspare Line

The most fundamental combo in the archetype demonstrates its core engine and establishes its basic endboard with just one card.

* **Starting Hand**: Machina Gearframe
* **Step 1**: Normal Summon Machina Gearframe. Upon summon, activate its trigger effect to search the deck and add Machina Unclaspare to your hand.9
* **Step 2**: Activate the effect of Machina Unclaspare in your hand. By revealing it, you can Special Summon it to the field. This effect locks you into Special Summoning only Machine monsters for the remainder of the turn.1
* **Step 3**: Upon its successful Special Summon, Machina Unclaspare's second trigger effect activates. You send one "Machina" monster from your Deck to the Graveyard. The primary target for this effect is Machina Citadel.1
* **Step 4**: With two Level 4 Machine monsters on the field (Gearframe and Unclaspare), you can perform a Link Summon. Using both monsters as material, summon a Link-2 Machine monster such as Qliphort Genius or Platinum Gadget.15

### The Primary Endboard: Citadel in the Grave

The result of this one-card combo is a Link-2 EARTH Machine monster on the field and Machina Citadel in the Graveyard. This seemingly modest board is the cornerstone of the Machina control strategy.1 The deck's primary goal on turn one is not to construct an unbreakable field of negations but to establish this recurring threat. The power of this setup lies in its reactive nature. When the opponent attempts to remove your Link monster through battle or card effect,

Citadel's effect will trigger, Special Summoning it from the Graveyard. Once on the field, you can immediately use Citadel's Quick Effect, targeting itself for destruction, to trigger a board wipe that destroys all of the opponent's monsters with 3000 or less ATK.3 This creates a powerful, repeatable loop of disruption that forces the opponent to play around a constant threat.

However, the deck's core consistency is deceptively fragile. The most direct and efficient combo lines begin with the Normal Summon of a single monster, typically Machina Gearframe or, in hybrid builds, Scrap Recycler.3 A single, well-timed piece of opponent interaction, such as

Ash Blossom & Joyous Spring to negate the search or Infinite Impermanence to negate the monster's effect, can halt the combo entirely.20 While the deck possesses extenders like

Machina Fortress, these often require specific resources in hand or Graveyard to be effective, making them poor tools for recovering from a negated starter. This vulnerability—a low ceiling for playing through disruption—is the primary strategic reason for the archetype's frequent hybridization into the more resilient "EARTH Machine" strategy.

## The EARTH Machine Alliance: Synergies and Hybridization

While the pure Machina engine provides a potent control and recursion strategy centered around Machina Citadel, it is rarely seen in top-level competitive play on its own. The archetype's inherent limitations in field presence and offensive pressure have led to its integration into the formidable "EARTH Machine" deck, a hybrid strategy that combines the strengths of multiple synergistic archetypes.21

### Beyond the Archetype: The Birth of EARTH Machine

The Machina archetype, by itself, lacks the explosive swarming capability and high-damage output required to consistently close out games in the modern era. This creates a strategic vacuum that is perfectly filled by other EARTH Machine archetypes, resulting in a cohesive strategy that is far more powerful than the sum of its individual parts.1

The success of the EARTH Machine hybrid stems not just from a shared Type and Attribute, but from how each integrated engine solves a critical weakness in the others. Machina possesses a powerful, recurring disruption tool (Citadel) but has a fragile early game and low monster output. The Infinitrack engine offers incredible consistency and swarming to build an Extra Deck board but lacks its own powerful boss monsters. The Railway (Train) archetype provides unparalleled OTK potential but can be linear and inconsistent on its own. By combining them, Infinitrack provides the consistency and extension that Machina lacks, allowing it to play through disruption and safely set up its Citadel engine. Machina, in turn, provides the turn-over-turn control that the other engines lack, allowing the deck to survive until it can assemble its win condition. Finally, the Trains provide the decisive, game-ending power that the other two cannot reliably produce.

### The Infinitrack Module: Xyz and Link Swarming

The Infinitrack engine serves as the connective tissue of the EARTH Machine deck, providing consistency, extension, and access to the Extra Deck.

* **Key Cards**: Infinitrack Harvester, Infinitrack Anchor Drill, Infinitrack Brutal Dozer, Infinitrack River Stormer (Xyz), and Double Headed Anger Knuckle (Link) are central to this module.15
* **Synergy and Function**: Infinitrack monsters excel at Special Summoning themselves and other Machines from the hand, manipulating their Levels for Xyz Summons, and searching for key combo pieces. Infinitrack River Stormer, a Rank 5 Xyz, can search for any EARTH Machine monster, giving the deck access to its entire Machina and Train lineup. The Link-2 monster Double Headed Anger Knuckle is particularly crucial, offering Graveyard recursion during the opponent's turn and protection for your monsters.15 The Infinitrack engine allows the deck to extend its plays far beyond what a pure Machina build could achieve.

### The Railway Module: The OTK Express

The Railway archetype, commonly known as "Trains," functions as the deck's primary win condition, providing a direct and powerful path to victory.

* **Key Cards**: Super Express Bullet Train, Heavy Freight Train Derricrane, Superdreadought Rail Cannon Gustav Max (Xyz), and Superdreadnought Rail Cannon Juggernaut Liebe (Xyz) are the core components.1
* **Synergy and Function**: These are primarily Level 10 EARTH Machines that are easy to Special Summon. Derricrane provides targeted destruction when used as Xyz material, while Bullet Train offers resource recursion to the hand from the Graveyard. The main goal of this module is to summon two Level 10 monsters to Xyz Summon Gustav Max, use its effect to inflict 2000 damage, and then rank it up into the colossal Juggernaut Liebe. With 6000 ATK and the ability to attack multiple monsters, Liebe is one of the most potent OTK tools in the game.1

### The Scrap Module: The Ultimate Combo Engine

As an alternative or supplementary engine, the Scrap archetype offers one of the most explosive one-card starters available to any Machine deck.

* **Key Cards**: The engine consists of Scrap Recycler, Scrap Golem, and the Link Monster Scrap Wyvern.3
* **Synergy and Function**: A single Normal Summon of Scrap Recycler can initiate a powerful, self-contained combo. Its effect sends any Machine from the Deck to the Graveyard, providing unparalleled setup for Citadel, Fortress, or Machine Tuners. This leads into a Link Summon of Scrap Wyvern, which revives Recycler and then destroys it, triggering Wyvern's second effect to summon Scrap Golem from the Deck. Golem then revives Recycler for another Graveyard send. This sequence generates immense card advantage, sets up the Graveyard, and can build a formidable board before even committing any other cards from hand.18

## Advanced Schematics: Competitive EARTH Machine Combos and Endboards

By combining the various EARTH Machine modules, the deck can execute powerful and resilient combos that lead to formidable endboards. The following are examples of common competitive lines of play.

### Two-Card Combo: Machina Redeployment + Discard Fodder

This combo demonstrates how the deck's premier starter can translate into a strong board presence and Graveyard setup.

* **Starting Hand**: Machina Redeployment + any other card.
* **Step 1**: Activate Machina Redeployment, discarding the other card from your hand. Add Machina Gearframe and Machina Fortress from your Deck to your hand.5
* **Step 2**: Normal Summon Machina Gearframe and activate its effect to add Machina Unclaspare from your Deck to your hand.9
* **Step 3**: Activate the effect of Machina Unclaspare in your hand to Special Summon it. Upon its summon, activate its second effect to send Machina Citadel from your Deck to the Graveyard.1
* **Step 4**: Activate the effect of Machina Fortress in your hand. Discard both Fortress and another Machine monster (such as Gearframe if you plan to use it as Link material later) to Special Summon Fortress from the Graveyard.1
* **Step 5**: At this point, you have multiple Machine monsters on the field (Gearframe, Unclaspare, Fortress). This allows for various plays, such as making a Rank 4 Xyz monster like Gear Gigant X to search an Infinitrack monster, or using the monsters as Link material to climb into the Infinitrack and Train lines.14

### One-Card Combo: Scrap Recycler

This combo showcases the explosive potential of the Scrap engine, generating a significant board from a single Normal Summon.

* **Starting Hand**: Scrap Recycler.
* **Step 1**: Normal Summon Scrap Recycler. Activate its on-summon effect to send a Machine Tuner monster with a Graveyard effect, such as Crystron Rosenix or Mecha Phantom Beast O-Lion, from your Deck to the Graveyard.3
* **Step 2**: The effect of the sent Tuner activates in the Graveyard, Special Summoning a Token to the field.
* **Step 3**: Using Scrap Recycler and the Token as material, Link Summon Scrap Wyvern.19
* **Step 4**: Activate Scrap Wyvern's first effect, targeting Scrap Recycler in your Graveyard. Special Summon Recycler and then destroy it.
* **Step 5**: Because a "Scrap" monster you control was destroyed by a card effect, Scrap Wyvern's second effect triggers. Special Summon Scrap Golem from your Deck, and then you may destroy one card on the field.
* **Step 6**: Activate the effect of Scrap Golem to Special Summon Scrap Recycler from your Graveyard. Recycler's effect activates again, allowing you to send another key resource, such as Machina Citadel or Infinitrack Tunneller, to the Graveyard.
* **Result**: This one-card combo has resulted in a field of Scrap Wyvern and Scrap Golem, a fully set-up Graveyard, and potentially the removal of an opponent's card, all while leaving the rest of your hand available for further extension.

### The Optimal Endboard: A Fortress of Interruption

The goal of these combos is to establish a multi-layered endboard that can interact with the opponent on several axes. The ideal Turn 1 board for a competitive EARTH Machine deck typically consists of the following pieces:

* **On the Field**:
  + **A Rank 10 Xyz Monster**: Often Number 81: Superdreadnought Rail Cannon Super Dora, which can use its effect to make one face-up monster on the field unaffected by other card effects for the turn, protecting a key piece from removal.13
  + **Double Headed Anger Knuckle**: This Link-2 monster provides a crucial piece of interaction by allowing you to Special Summon a Level 10 EARTH Machine from your Graveyard as a Quick Effect during the opponent's turn.15
  + **An Omni-Negate**: Therion "King" Regulus is a common inclusion. It can Special Summon itself from the hand by equipping a Machine monster from the Graveyard and provides a once-per-turn negation of any monster effect, Spell, or Trap card.15
* **In the Graveyard**:
  + **Machina Citadel**: The deck's primary disruption engine, ready to be Special Summoned whenever an EARTH Machine on the field is destroyed.17
  + **Super Express Bullet Train**: Its effect allows you to add one Machine monster from your Graveyard back to your hand during the End Phase, ensuring you have resources for your follow-up turn.1

This combination of on-field negates and protection, coupled with Graveyard-based recursion and board wipes, creates an incredibly resilient and interactive board that is difficult for most decks to overcome.

## Strategic Analysis and Recommendations

The Machina archetype, as the core of the broader EARTH Machine strategy, occupies a strong position as a competitive "rogue" deck—a deck capable of challenging the top meta contenders through its unique strengths and explosive plays. However, piloting it effectively requires an understanding of its pressure points and a sound deck-building philosophy.

### Strengths and Vulnerabilities

A successful pilot must leverage the deck's strengths while being mindful of its critical vulnerabilities.

* **Strengths**:
  + **Resilience and Grind Game**: The deck's ability to constantly recycle resources from the Graveyard via cards like Machina Citadel, Super Express Bullet Train, and Double Headed Anger Knuckle gives it a powerful long game that can outlast many opponents.3
  + **Explosive OTK Potential**: The Railway module provides a consistent and powerful method to end the game in a single turn with Superdreadnought Rail Cannon Juggernaut Liebe.1
  + **Layered Interruption**: The optimal endboard is not reliant on a single form of negation. It combines monster effect negation, protection, board wipes, and recursion, making it robust against a wide variety of strategies.1
* **Vulnerabilities**:
  + **Graveyard Hate**: As a deck that heavily relies on the Graveyard, cards that can banish key pieces like Citadel or Ruinforce (such as D.D. Crow or Bystial monsters) can be crippling.9
  + **Normal Summon Negation**: Despite its resilience, the deck's most powerful combos often start with a single Normal Summon (Gearframe or Recycler). A well-timed interruption on this play can stop the turn if the hand does not contain sufficient extenders.20
  + **Floodgates**: Continuous Spells or Traps that restrict monster effects (Skill Drain) or limit summons to a single Type (Rivalry of Warlords) can prevent the deck from executing its core combos.24

### Deck Building Philosophy and Tech Choices

Constructing an effective EARTH Machine deck involves balancing the core engines and selecting appropriate tech choices for the expected metagame.

* **Core Ratios**: It is essential to run the maximum number of copies of key starters and consistency cards, such as Machina Redeployment, Machina Gearframe, Scrap Recycler, and Infinitrack Harvester, to ensure the deck can consistently access its combo lines.
* **Going First vs. Going Second**: The deck is highly adaptable. A build focused on going second will prioritize powerful board-breaking cards like Urgent Schedule, Lightning Storm, and Forbidden Droplet to dismantle an opponent's board before executing an OTK.18 A going-first build will focus more on consistency cards and hand traps to ensure it can establish its optimal interruptive board.
* **Non-Engine Staples**: A standard suite of "hand traps" like Ash Blossom & Joyous Spring and Infinite Impermanence is crucial for interacting with the opponent. Called by the Grave is also a near-mandatory inclusion to protect the deck's vulnerable Normal Summon starters.15
* **Extra Deck Flexibility**: While the core Extra Deck monsters (Liebe, Gustav Max, River Stormer, Anger Knuckle, Scrap Wyvern) are essential, the remaining slots offer flexibility. Divine Arsenal AA-ZEUS - Sky Thunder is a powerful inclusion, as any of the deck's Xyz monsters can attack and then be used to summon a ZEUS with multiple materials for a board wipe.15

In conclusion, the Machina archetype has evolved far beyond its initial conception. While a pure build remains a fun, casual strategy, its true competitive potential is unlocked when it serves as the disruptive and recursive heart of the versatile and powerful EARTH Machine deck. By combining its control elements with the consistency of Infinitracks and the overwhelming power of Trains, Machina stands as a testament to the power of synergy in the Yu-Gi-Oh! TCG.

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