

POWER PROFILE: TECH POWERS



Super-science and high-tech gadgets have been a part of comic book superheroics since the beginning, but there are also those with power over technology itself. This profile looks at powers involving control over technology, or stemming from *being* a machine, rather than powers *provided* by technological devices, such as **Armor Powers**.

TECH DESCRIPTORS

The following descriptors are commonly associated with tech powers.

- **Computer:** Computers—calculating machines capable of running programs—are increasingly ubiquitous in the modern world. Few pieces of technology do not feature an on-board computer of some sort (even just “firmware” chips). Electronic computers are sensitive to electromagnetic forces, which may scramble their circuitry. In comics book settings, sophisticated computers are essentially “electronic brains” often with intelligence of their own.
- **Machine:** Machines are mechanisms with moving parts capable of accomplishing work when supplied with a source of energy. This might be as simple as sheer muscle power (like turning a crank) or, more commonly, electricity. “Steampunk” technology uses captured steam pressure to drive machines. Some tech powers may supply machines with the energy they need while others only work on machines that have a power-source; the ability to interface with

computers is ineffective if the computer in question is turned off or has no power.

- **Technology:** Technology is the broad descriptor for tools as simple as levers and the wheel or as sophisticated as nuclear reactors and super-computers, or even beyond. It includes all of the other descriptors in this section: computers, machines, even super-science devices, are all examples of technology.
- **Super-Science:** Comic books often feature technology far in advance of that in the real world, from the inventions of human geniuses to artifacts from alien civilizations or future time-periods, to name a few. Technology in advance of what is known in the real world falls under the super-science descriptor. It’s essentially science-fiction. Sometimes it’s useful to distinguish between super-science and ordinary technology, as the M&M rules for equipment and devices do (*Hero’s Handbook*, **Chapter 7**).
- **Countering:** Tech powers can often counter each other and, depending on the technology they affect, can potentially counter other powers or effects. For example, control over the sprinkler system of a building can provide a water effect to counter a fire or chemical effect, while control over powerful fans or atmospheric controls can potentially counter air or gas effects. Powers capable of damaging or overloading technology can similarly counter tech-based powers, this is particularly true of electrical or water powers, which might overload or short-out electrical machines. See the **Electrical Powers** and **Water Powers** profiles for details.