



# Kickin' Bot: An Illustrated Guide to Building Combat Robots (ExtremeTech)

By Grant Imahara

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Enter the arena of the metal gladiators

Do you have what it takes to build a battle-ready robot? You do now. Here are the plans, step-by-step directions, and expert advice that will put you in competition-while you have a heck of a lot of fun getting there.

Grant Imahara, the creator of the popular BattleBot Deadblow, shares everything he's learned about robot design, tools and techniques for metal working, the parts you need and where to get them, and plenty of tips to keep you off the ropes. When you're finished, you'll be ready to rumble.

Just a few of the topics you'll learn:

- Robot design 101
- Chemicals and power tools
- Popular materials compared
- Cutting your armor
- Things to know about screws
- Top ten drive motors
- Bearings, casters, couplers, and U-joints
- Roller chains and sprockets
- Better traction through chemistry
- Choosing speeding controls
- Batteries and wiring
- The driving test
- Rammers, hammers and crushers

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## Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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### About the Author

**Grant Imahara** is an animatronics engineer and modelmaker for George Lucas's Industrial Light & Magic in Marin County, California. He specializes in electronics and radio control at the ILM Model Shop, and has credits on numerous movies, including *Jurassic Park: The Lost World*, *Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace*, *Galaxy Quest*, *AI: Artificial Intelligence*, *Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones*, *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*, and most recently, *Matrix: Reloaded* and *Revolutions*.

He has installed electronics in R2-D2 units for *Star Wars Episodes I* and *II*, replacing the halogen light source and rotating color wheel (for the sparkly lights) with a custom microcontroller-based LED circuit that was originally created to make the pulsating lights for the main engines of the Protector, from *Galaxy Quest*. He also upgraded all of the radio equipment and speed controls to modern standards. Along with R2-D2 Crew Chief Don Bies and Nelson Hall, he is one of only three official R2-D2 operators in the United States. Grant developed a custom circuit to cycle the Energizer Bunny's arm beats and ears at a constant rate. He performed all electronics installation and radio programming on the current generation of Bunnies. He later became the Bunny's driver and the crew supervisor on numerous commercials.

Grant has a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Southern California. He picked up his mechanical skills from the machinists at the ILM Model Shop, many of whom date back to *Howard the Duck* (1986).

For fun, Grant competes in BattleBots with his robot Deadblow, which set a record for most number of hits in the first season of the show. Grant lives in a loft in Oakland, California, where he works on his robot and pursues other projects in his spare time.

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