

The background of the cover is a deep blue space filled with stars. In the upper left, a sleek, dark purple spaceship with yellow highlights is shown from a low angle, appearing to fly towards the viewer. In the upper right, another similar spaceship is seen from a side profile, also with yellow highlights. In the lower left, a large, complex, grey and green structure, possibly a space station or a large ship, is partially visible. Several bright orange and yellow streaks, representing energy or light trails, curve across the middle of the image. The title 'STARDRIVE' is prominently displayed in the center, with a large white triangle integrated into the letter 'A'. Below the title, the subtitle '4X ACTION STRATEGY' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

STARDRIVE

4X ACTION STRATEGY

MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to StarDrive! This manual will provide you with an overview of StarDrive's gameplay systems and give you instructions on how to play.

You should be aware that besides this manual, two other great sources of StarDrive information are available. First, you can always access an in-game help menu by pressing the "?" button on the game's main menu bar.



Second, you can always find help and discussion on the StarDrive forums at www.stardrivegame.com.

INSTALLATION AND CONFIGURATION

After you have purchased the game and downloaded it from Steam, launch it through your Steam Library of games in the normal fashion. StarDrive requires three specific software packages that will be automatically installed the first time you run the game: the XNA 3.1 redistributable, the 2010 C++ redistributable, and the .NET 3.5 redistributable. You may already have these packages installed, in which case your game will begin right away.

RECOMMENDED HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

This version runs on Windows computers which must match the following minimal configuration:

- Operating system: Windows XP/Vista/Windows 7
- Processor: Intel® Pentium® IV 2.4 GHz or AMD 3500+
- Memory: 2 GB RAM
- Hard disk space: 2 GB Available HDD Space
- Video: NVIDIA® GeForce 8800 or ATI Radeon® X1900a

Please Note: integrated Intel graphic card/chips not supported

- Direct X-compatible sound card
- DirectX® 9
- 3-button mouse, keyboard and speakers
- Internet connection for multiplayer

OVERVIEW

StarDrive is a 4x Action Strategy game set in outer space. The goal of StarDrive is to build a space empire via exploring the game map, expanding your empire's holdings by building new colonies, exploiting the resources found there and, ultimately, exterminating your enemies.

At the heart of StarDrive is a modular ship design system where you have detailed control over the composition and placement of ship modules on your ship hulls. You will research technologies to unlock new ship modules, build ships in a ship editor, assemble ships into fleets, and do combat with them.

Along the way you will encounter alien races who are competing with you for control of the galaxy. Some will be peaceful and others will be aggressive. You will have a wide range of diplomatic options available to you to shape your relationship with the alien races you encounter.

Play in StarDrive occurs in real time, with a turn-based economic model controlling game progression. A game "turn" occurs every 5 seconds, which increments the game's "StarDate" clock by .1. Each turn, new resources are gathered, construction advances, new decisions are made by the AI, and so on.

You win at StarDrive by achieving one of the several different victory conditions, including conquest, diplomatic, and scientific victories.

TUTORIAL VIDEOS

Before starting your first game, it is recommended that you view the tutorial videos which are accessible through a button marked "Tutorials" on the main menu. These videos will help you get an Empire up and running in no time and are narrated by the game developer.

RACE DESIGN

You are able to customize your race at the beginning of every game, first by choosing from one of the racial archetypes provided (which determines your ship style) and then by customizing your traits using a point system to buy and sell positive and negative traits to your liking.



You can also customize your galaxy by selecting the number of opponents you will face, the size of your galaxy, the number of star systems, and so on. When you are ready to play, click the button marked "Engage" in the bottom right of the Race Design screen.

CONTROLLING STARDRIVE

When your game begins you will start with a view of your starting flagship and your home planet. You can navigate the camera in StarDrive by scrolling to the edges of the screen. Alternatively, you can use the arrow keys on your keyboard. The mouse wheel zooms your view in and out. However, you can also use the "Home" button on the minimap to quickly zoom to your flagship and lock the camera on to it. You can use the "-" button to quickly zoom out to a galaxy level view. Finally, pressing the escape key will zoom your view out by a fixed amount.



Camera Control Keys on the Minimap

Across the top of your main gameplay screen are your Empire Management buttons. These are visible in the above screenshot. From left to right, you can access the Research Screen by pressing the blue science icon, the Economic Overview by pressing the money icon, the Shipyard (where you design ships), the Empire Screen (where you can see all of your colonies at a glance), the Diplomacy Overview Screen (where you manage Espionage and Contact other races), the Main Menu Screen (where you can save, load, and adjust options), and finally the Help screen, indicated by the "?". In the top right of the screen is the StarDate, which indicates the game turn.

You can pause the game at any time by pressing the Space Bar. You can also increase or decrease the game speed by pressing the + and - keys on your keyboard. When in doubt, Escape will always close the menu you are looking at. Right clicking will also generally close any menu you are looking at.

SHIP CONTROL

High level strategic control of your empire requires that you issue commands to your ships using your mouse. You can select a ship with a left click, or select a group of ships by either dragging a selection box around them or by shift-left-clicking a number of ships. When you select a ship, a detailed view of that ship will appear in the lower left corner of the screen.



Example: A selected ship

This detail view shows all of the pertinent information for your ship. The name is displayed in the top area along with the ship's current orders. The orange button in the lower left side toggles the "Grid View" display of your ship. You can toggle this more detailed damage report on or off using the Grid View button. The six orange buttons along the lower right change the ship's combat behavior. From left to right, the orders are: Attack Runs, Artillery, Hold Position, Orbit Target Left, Orbit Target Right, and Evade. Mouse over these buttons in game for more detailed explanation of their behavior. Experiment using different ship designs with different combat behaviors for the best results.

The Shield Icon on the left side of the ship selection box indicates this ship's defense against boarding actions, whereas the Troop Icon indicates how many Troops (ground units) the ship is currently carrying and what its maximum Troop capacity is. Most ships cannot carry Troops without specialized Troop modules. The three horizontal progress bars, from top to bottom, indicate the ship's current power stores (used to fire energy weapons), the ship's current shield power, and the ship's current ammunition stores (called Ordnance).

Finally, the large orange arrow on the right hand side of the box can be clicked to expand a list of advanced commands. These commands change depending on the type of ship you have selected. Hovering over any of these command buttons with your mouse will provide you with a detailed tooltip explaining the behavior.

StarDrive allows for two methods of controlling your ships: direct control, and RTS control. You can always take direct, arcade-like control of any ship in your empire by selecting the ship and pressing the Q key to bring up an on-screen command menu. You can also access this menu by right clicking a ship. The "Assume Command" button grants you direct control over the ship. Likewise, the "Relinquish Control" command frees that ship from your direct control.

You may move any directly-controlled ship around using the W, A, S, and D keys. You can also press the F key to initiate a Faster Than Light warp sequence. After a brief spool-up, your ship will jump into warp speed. You can also fire the weapons of any ship you are directly controlling, if it has any, by using the right mouse button.

When you have a ship or ships selected, the right mouse button will issue an order depending on what you have selected and what you are right clicking. For instance, if you right click a planet then your ships will move to orbit that planet. If you right click an enemy then your ships will move to attack that enemy. If you hold the right mouse button down then you can set your ship's facing upon arrival at your mouse location.

Ships will plot the most efficient path through your empire. This may not always be a straight line. Due to various speed bonuses that are gained while traveling within friendly territory, your ships may plot circuitous routes. To order a ship to take the most direct route, hold down the ALT key while issuing a move order.

Moving groups of ships uses the same basic control scheme. However, if you hold the right mouse button down then you can drag it to set the spacing for a group of ships.

FLEETS

Fleets are special groups of ships that have designated formations. You can customize these formations in a fleet editor, or you can create a quick fleet by pressing CTRL + a number. An indicator will appear on the left hand side of your screen with that Fleet's assigned icon and icons for each of the ships in that fleet. Pressing the appropriate number will select that fleet for you.



Example Fleet Icons

The hotkey for accessing the fleet screen is "i". You can also access it through the Shipyard button. This will allow you to customize your fleet formations further, to requisition new ships for your fleet, to rename your fleet, and more.

When issuing a move order for a fleet, the fleet will always maintain formation so long as you have the entire fleet selected. However, there are two types of fleet movement: **immediate** move and **move in formation**. If you issue a single right click command, then all of your ships will immediately make their best speed to that position. However, some of your smaller ships will probably be a lot faster than your larger cruisers. This means that the formation will be disrupted while warping long distances. To prevent this, hold the right mouse button down and set your fleet's desired facing before releasing. This will order your ships to match speeds with the slowest ship in your fleet, generally maintaining formation.

THE STARDRIVE ECONOMY

There are 4 main resources in StarDrive: **Food**, **Production**, **Research**, and **Money**. All of these resources are created by your planetary colonies and used to expand your empire. As noted above, StarDrive operates on "turns" where each turn is 5 real-time seconds. Each turn, each of your colonies harvests its resources. The colonists then eat the food that they need to survive and grow, apply any production created to items in their planetary construction queues, add progress to the current research goal, and finally maintenance is paid for all of your ships and planetary improvements.

Food is perhaps the most important resource because your colonists need it to eat (unless your people are a Cybernetic people, in which case they eat Production). Each game turn, each colonist requires 1 food to eat. So on a planet with a population of 14.0, your colonists will consume 14 food per turn. So long as your people are fed, the population of your colonies will naturally grow up to the planet's population cap. If they are not fed, then the population will shrink as colonists starve.

Production is important because it is used to construct all of the game units: ships, troops, and planetary improvements. **Research** is used to discover new technologies. Finally, **Money**, also referred to as Credits, is used to pay for maintenance on all of your game units and limits the size of your fleets.

Each colony allows you to assign a division of labor between production of the three main resources of Food, Production, and Research. By assigning the labor priorities of your colonies, you can have specialized agricultural or industrial colonies if you wished, or you can create balanced economies spread over all three sectors. Money is created as a product of taxing the production and research outputs of your colonies.

Game mechanics will often reference production or consumption of various resources as keyed to the population of a colony. For reference, your starting home planet begins with a population of 14.0 (billion). So, for instance, if a game mechanic stated that a building provides +1 food per colonist, then a maximum of 14.0 food could be produced by that building. This amount is then modified by your labor allocation.

RESEARCH, TAXES, AND MONEY

Unlike Food and Production, which are stored and used locally at each colony, Research and Money are placed into an empire-wide pool each turn. Research is applied to the top item in your research queue whereas Money is placed into your empire's coffers.

Money is unique in that it is produced as a result of your Tax Rate. You can set your Tax Rate in the Budget Screen, accessible through the Money Icon in the in-game top banner.



Your Tax Rate acts as a penalty on Production and Research. Your default rate is set to 25%, which means that your Research and Production on all of your planets is reduced by 25% and then you gain that same amount back as Money.

Money is then used to pay for the maintenance on all of your buildings and on all of your ships. If you run out of money, then bad things will happen from units disbanding to turning to piracy or worse. Don't run out of money! Several technologies exist to help you increase your incomes and you can also earn money through clever diplomacy.

PLANET QUALITY AND THE ECONOMY

The StarDrive universe is randomized at the beginning of the game. Some planets, like Gas Giants and highly active Volcanic worlds, are not habitable by terran species. However, a wide range of planets including barren, ice, desert, steppe, tundra, terran, swamp, and ocean planet types exist.

Each habitable planet has a **Fertility** rating and a **Richness** rating. Fertility represents how much food a single colonist can produce per turn, before modifications applied by racial bonuses and buildings. For example, on a planet with a Fertility score of 1.0 and a population of 2.5, the maximum food that could be produced on that colony, before modifiers, is 2.5 food. But of course, this would only be the case if every single colonist on the planet were dedicated to farming instead of production or research. Adding a Xeno Farm or other food production building to the colony would boost Food production even higher.

Mineral Richness likewise indicates the amount of production that can be created at a planet per turn per colonist. This value is also modifiable by racial bonuses and buildings. However, a planet's Mineral Richness score will gradually deplete over time as resources are extracted from the planet. For every 500 production created at a planet, the planet's mineral richness will deplete by .1 to a minimum of .1.

Finally, each habitable planet has a maximum population rating that determines how many colonists can live there.

THE COLONY MANAGEMENT SCREEN

The colony management screen is accessed by double clicking one of your colonies on the main gameplay screen. Here you are able to manage construction for your colony, including ordering new troops, ships, and buildings to be created. You can also **Assign Labor** on this screen by manipulating the Food, Production, and Research sliders.



The Assign Labor sliders determine what percentage of your colonists are to focus on a specific task. For instance, if your planet has a Fertility of 2.0, as does the planet in the screenshot above, then your maximum Food output with a population of 14.0 is 28 food per turn. This is unnecessary because your colony only requires 14 food per turn.

Therefore, setting your Food labor slider around 50% would produce the appropriate amount of food. The remaining 50% of available labor could be divided between research and production tasks.

Note that you may actually produce an excess of Food and Production each turn. Whatever Food your colonists don't eat and whatever Production they do not use is stored in the colony's stores. You can see your **Storage** of each indicated in the lower left of the screen.

Stored Food can be eaten in the case of a food shortage. Stored Production can be used to rush the construction of items in your construction queue. But most importantly, stored Food and Production can be used to fuel your interstellar economy.

PLANETARY GOVERNORS

You are able to assign planetary governors to take care of your planets for you if you are so inclined. You may select from a number of governor personalities on the colony's management screen. The governor will control the construction of planetary improvements and will manage the labor sliders. The governor will also manage the import and export settings of his planet. However, the governor will not build military units.

COLONY SHIPS, FREIGHTERS, AND YOUR ECONOMY

Freighters are critical to the expansion of your economy because they will be the primary method by which you will transport Food, Production, and Colonists from your homeworld to your newly colonized planets. To create a freighter, or any ship for that matter, click the Ships tab in your colony screen and add the desired ship to the construction queue by pressing the + button.



Each game turn, the Production produced at this planet will now be applied to the top item in the queue. In the above screenshot, the top item in the queue is a Colony Ship. Colony Ships are special freighter class vessels that have a colony module. If you send a colony ship to an unowned planet, then it will claim the colony by setting up an outpost. Doing so consumes the colony ship.

New colonies are fragile things. They have a very low population of .1 and they begin with very little industrial capacity. This is where freighters come in. Using freighters, you can transport Food, Production, and Colonists to your new worlds, helping them jump-start their economies.

To do this, select a freighter class vessel (or any ship you have created that has Cargo Modules installed) and then open up the command menu using the Q key or by right clicking the ship. Navigate the menu by selecting "Orders" and then select "Transport Goods" or "Transport Colonists". Alternatively you can open the advanced orders tab by clicking the large orange arrow on the ship's detail window. Clicking the Food, Production, or Colonist Icons will order the ship to begin transporting that item.



By selecting "Transport Colonists", your freighter will pick up colonists at your high population worlds and then bring them to your newly founded, low-population worlds. This infusion of new colonists is critical to growing your colonies because population grows in relation to the number of colonists on the planet.

By selecting "Transport Goods", your freighter will navigate to any planet with an excess of Food or Production and it will bring that Food and Production to planets in need of it.

However, it is extremely important that you designate which colonies are importing and exporting these goods. If you take another look at the Colony Management Screen, you will see that a button marked **"Import"** is next to the Food and Production Storage meters. This means that the planet is marked to receive shipments from your freighters. To create a trade route from your homeworld to your new colony, make sure to designate your homeworld to **Export** Food and Production, and your new colony to **Import** these goods. Now your freighters will know what to do. Keep in mind that you can also set your planet to simply **Store** goods rather than Import or Export them.

Some technologies provide bonuses to your freighters, including lowering their maintenance costs, increasing their cargo capacity, and even providing income for each unit of food or production transported throughout your empire. Refer to the technology screen to read up on the various technologies that will assist you in these regards.

ADVANCED ORDERS

When you have a ship selected, a ship information panel will display in the lower left of your screen. An arrow on the right hand side of this panel can be clicked to open the advanced orders panel. In the advanced orders panel you will find various options depending on what type of ship you have selected. For instance, if you have a carrier selected, then you can choose to launch or recover your fighters, or raise and lower your shields.

With a freighter ship selected, you can choose which resources a freighter carries by toggling the food and production icons on or off. You can also designate an "Area of Operations" for your

freighter by clicking the appropriate button in the advanced orders menu. To define an area of operations, toggle the option on and then drag a box around 1 or more areas on the main gameplay menu where you want your freighter to operate. Using this tool, you can designate a single star system or a limited number of star systems wherein your freighter will solely operate. With these advanced tools you can set up very specialized trade routes to maximize your efficiency. However, this is merely optional and not required for efficient play.

COLONIZATION

While one way to colonize a planet is to select a colony ship and then right-click the desired planet, it is also possible to colonize a planet in a second way. First, select the desired planet. Then, in the planet's selection window, press the Colonize button. This will automatically dispatch any available colony ship to colonize that planet. If you do not own any colony ships then one will be queued at the nearest shipyard and dispatched when completed.



UPGRADING YOUR COLONIES

Improving your colonies requires that you construct buildings on them. These buildings can provide more food, production, or research, they can increase your tax base, provide defensive bonuses, or even allow you to build things that you couldn't before, like troops (which need a Military Outpost) or ships (which need a Space Port).

Every colony has a colony tile grid. If you look at the above screenshot of our colony management screen, you will see a 7 x 5 grid with two buildings placed on it. Some grid tiles are blackened out. These tiles are uninhabitable due to the geography of the planet.

To create a building, simply select one from the list of available buildings at your colony and then drag it into the desired square on the colony screen's grid. A "ghost" of the building will appear in the tile and the building itself will appear in the construction queue. You can only build on habitable squares.

Because planets come in all shapes and sizes in StarDrive, and because your people require an atmosphere to breathe, you may come across some planets that are not habitable without further development.



This colony was created on a barren world. Note that every colony square is blackened, meaning no construction can occur there. However, by unlocking the "Biospheres" technology, you can begin to enclose these uninhabitable areas inside artificial environments. Once you have built a biosphere, you can place any other building underneath its protective dome. You need to build a biosphere on each square to unlock it.

TERRAFORMING

Note that with the appropriate research, planets may be terraformed. Terraforming a planet will slowly increase its fertility and make planetary tiles that were once uninhabitable capable of supporting life. Terraformers are special buildings that you may build even on otherwise uninhabitable tiles. The terraformer will work its technological magic over the course of many turns. Terraformers can turn a barren planet into a fertile planet with a maximum fertility of 1.0. Terraformers can also be used to combat the effects of various buildings which might harm your planet's ecology, such as deep core mines.

SCRAPPING BUILDINGS

Because buildings cost maintenance, you may wish from time to time to scrap buildings that are no longer useful. To do so, simply right click the building in the colony view.

RUSHING CONSTRUCTION

You can rush the construction of any item in your build queue by clicking the Rush Production icon in the Colony Screen's construction queue. This will apply 10 production from your production stores to the top item in the construction queue. However, you must also pay 1 Credit for each unit of production that is rushed. If you have enough production and money, you can also control click the Rush Production button to apply all of the available stored production to the item.

BUILDING IN DEEP SPACE

It is possible to create small and large space stations in the depths of space. You may build these stations by accessing the Deep Space building menu. You can do this through the button on the minimap, or by pressing the B key.

To build a station in deep space, simply select a station from the list of available stations and left click where you want the stations to be created. Note that you can place stations near to planets and the stations will orbit the planets. This is useful for creating defensive platforms. Another good use of stations may be as sensor stations or listening posts near to enemy territory.



Placing Platforms

Note that placing a station using the building menu does not *create* the station. Instead, it orders that a construction ship be queued at the nearest shipyard. When the construction ship is completed, the ship will fly to the desired station's location and then deploy into the station, consuming the construction ship.

Subspace Projectors are unique in that these platforms will expand your territorial claims. However, the primary use of subspace projectors is to create **star lanes** inside which your ships will be more efficient.

The normal rule for faster than light travel in StarDrive is that a ship will drain power at a rate much faster than its normal power drain rate while at warp. This means that a ship's range can be severely limited while warping if it does not have enough Fuel Capacity or Power Generation. However, warping while within your own friendly territory does not cause this extra power drain. Therefore, one benefit of creating these star lanes with subspace projectors is that ships with limited range can move long distances more quickly.

Finally, there are several technologies that allow for faster FTL travel while within your territory. Therefore, subspace projectors provide a number of advantages to those who build them.

Orbital Construction

It is possible to build structures that orbit planets, following the planet's orbital path around the sun. To do this, you can place a building from the deep space building window (accessible via the minimap or with the **b** hotkey), then place the desired structure close enough to a planet that the indicator will appear stating that the structure "Will Orbit" the planet.

Alternatively, you can build space stations at any planet with a space port. Doing so will automatically deploy the space station into a geosynchronous orbit of the planet once completed.

EXPLORATION

Exploring in StarDrive is easy. At the beginning of the game you start out not knowing anything about your galaxy unless you have selected the Astronomer perk when designing your race. You will not see the names of any unexplored star systems and you will have a very limited sensor range.



To explore a system, simply send a ship there with a right click. When you enter the system you will be able to see how many planets are there but you will not be able to see the quality of the planets. To see the planetary quality you will need to send a ship into range of the planets.

You can also follow the recommended practice of ordering your starting scout ship to automatically explore for you. You can do this through the ship's command menu. You can assign multiple ships to this task.

Each one of your colonies projects a sphere of influence around it. This sphere is considered your territory. You have sensor knowledge of everything inside your territory. However, your sensors can extend well beyond your territory - especially with various technological upgrades. Wherever you do not see a fog of war is where you have sensor coverage.

ENCOUNTERS AND ARTIFACTS

While exploring, you may come across characters or locations that require a closer look. You may need to send troops to a planet to explore a ruin, for instance. The results of these exploration expeditions are typically beneficial, so be sure to chase down any leads you may find. Artifacts are powerful relics that grant your empire bonuses. You can trade for these relics with other empires.

PLANET SCREEN

The Planet List screen is accessible through a button on the minimap and displays all known planets. You can double click an entry to zoom directly to the planet.



AGENTS AND ESPIONAGE

Espionage is a valuable tool for gaining intelligence about your opponents, disrupting their activities, and gaining power. To spy on an alien race, you must train Agents. Agents can be trained in the Diplomacy screen at a cost of 250 credits per agent. Note that Agents begin at Level 1, meaning that they are fresh recruits with no special talents. Agents gain levels by successfully completing missions and can achieve a maximum of 10 levels.

Agents with no assigned mission will automatically engage in counter-espionage, reducing the effectiveness of enemy Agent activities within your empire. To assign an Agent to a Mission, select the Agent in the Agent list, select the Empire you wish to send the Agent against, and then choose the appropriate mission from the missions list. Every mission has an associated credit cost and a number of turns until completion. Advanced spying technologies can reduce these costs while increasing your chances of success on the mission. Success or failure will be calculated at the end of the indicated number of turns.

Calculating an Agent's success or failure while on a mission is started with a random decimal precision dice roll between 0 and 100. A roll greater than 97.5 will result in automatic success of the mission regardless of the number and quality of defenders. A roll of 2.5 or lower is a critical failure and generally will result in the death of your Agent in addition to political consequences. Otherwise, the dice roll is thereafter modified by the attacking Agent's level, gaining a bonus of the Agent's level plus the 1d5 times the Agent's level. With the best possible rolling, a level 10 Agent could receive a bonus of 60 to his initial dice roll, not accounting for bonuses applied by technological advances or artifacts that affect espionage.

The Attacker's roll is then reduced by the best Defensive roll produced by any Defenders. For each Defender, the roll is reduced by the Defender's level plus 1d3 times the Defender's level. A level 10 Defender could therefore reduce an attacker's roll by as much as 40. However, only the highest Defender roll is applied.

Finally, the modified dice roll is then tested against the difficulty of the chosen mission. Some missions, like training, have no defenders and are generally easy to succeed at. Other missions, like Steal Technology, are very difficult and will require a trained agent to be successful.

Agent Mission Types

The following data applies to espionage missions that may be undertaken by your Agents. In every case, a success will result in a gain of +1 level for your Agent. Failures will damage your relations with the target Empire but your Agent will live. Critical Failures will result in your Agent's death.

Agent Training takes 25 turns and costs 50 credits. The goal of Agent training is to increase the level of your agents without risking them on more difficult missions. Critical success is achieved with a modified role of 95 or greater and results in a gain of +2 levels for the Agent. Success is achieved with a roll of 25 or greater. Rolling less than 25 will result in failed training. Rolling less than 10 will result in a training accident that kills your Agent.

Infiltration takes 30 turns and costs 75 credits. The goal of infiltration is to place an Agent on a random enemy colony so that you can monitor their activities. If successful, the Agent's status will change to "Undercover" and you will have sensor data for the infiltrated colony plus access to their colony screen. Success is achieved with a roll of 50 or better. Rolling less than 50 will result in a failed infiltration and political consequences. Rolling less than 25 will result in your Agent being captured and killed. Once an Agent has successfully infiltrated a colony, he will remain on that colony until he is killed by an enemy with the Assassinate mission, or until you reassign the Agent to a new mission.

Sabotage takes 30 turns and 75 credits. Successful sabotage will cripple the production of a random enemy colony for a number of turns dependent on the level of your agent. A roll of 80 or better is a critical success, which will result in the colony being crippled for a number of turns equal to 5 + 5 times the Agent's level. A roll of 50 or better will cripple the colony for 5 + 3 times the Agent's level turns, but you will be detected. Rolling less than 50 is a failure; less than 15 is a critical failure. If multiple Agents sabotage the same colony then the effects are cumulative.

Assassination takes 50 turns and requires 75 credits. Successful Assassination will remove a random enemy Agent from the targeted empire. A roll of 85 or better is a critical success. A roll of 70 or better is a success, but you will be detected. A roll of 40 or better is a failure, but your Assassin will escape unharmed. Rolling less than 40 will result in your Agent being killed. Assassination is therefore a mission for higher-level agents. \n

Steal Technology takes 50 turns and requires 250 credits. If there are no technologies to steal at the end of 50 turns, then you will be refunded 125 credits. A roll of 85 or better is a critical success, whereas a roll of 75 or better is a success that results in detection. A roll of 20 or better results in a failure but your Agent will escape unharmed. Rolling less than 20 will result in the death of your Agent.

Incite Rebellion takes 100 turns and 250 credits. If this mission is a success then rebel troops will spawn on a random enemy planet and attack the infrastructure there. Critical Success 85+ / Success 70+ / Fail 40+ / Critical Fail 0-40

Robbery takes 30 turns and 50 credits. If successful, your agent will steal 1-50 credits times the Agent's level from target empire. The Agent cannot steal more money than the target empire has. Critical Success 85+ / Success 70+ / Fail 20+ / Critical Fail 0-20

WARFARE AND SHIP DESIGN

Combat is inevitable in StarDrive. To be successful at combat you should familiar with a few concepts such as the basics of ship design and ground invasions.

SHIP DESIGN

To access the ship design screen, click the "Shipyard" button in the main gameplay screen.



SHIP MODULES - GENERAL

Ships are designed by placing **ship modules** into slots on a **hull**. Both new hulls and new ship modules can be unlocked through research and exploration. Each ship module slot has a restriction associated with it: I, O, IO, or E. Likewise, each ship module has a restriction of I, IO, O, or E. You can only place a ship module into a slot that has the same restriction as the module. So a module with an "I" restriction can go into an "I" slot or an "IO" slot because they both share an I restriction. It could never go into an "E" slot.

"I" slots indicate internal ship hull and are the most important to keeping your ship alive. Your ship will explode when the internal hull reaches 30% health -- that is, if an enemy manages to destroy 70% of your internal hull, then your ship will die. "O" slots are slots on the exterior of the ship and are useful as weapon mounts and armor mounts. "IO" slots are multipurpose slots that are just under the exterior hull and are general purpose. "E" slots are for your engines.

Every ship requires a command module such as a bridge or a cockpit. These modules provide basic sensor functionality and field-repair functionality. Better command modules provide superior efficiency. You can also unlock special sensor modules with increased performance over command modules.

Every module also has a mass and a cost associated with it. A ship's speed is determined by its thrust to mass ratio. Therefore, a heavy ship with a lot of massive armor installed will perform less nimbly than a smaller ship with just some shields and weapons. The cost of the module influences the ship's overall production cost. For instance, a Laser Beam turret with a cost of 10 would increase the production cost of a ship by 10 units.

POWER LEVELS

It is important to manage your ship's power levels. Every module in your ship must be within range of a power generator or else it will be unpowered and ineffective. However, power generators (also called power plants) are volatile and will explode if destroyed, possibly causing severe damage to your ship. Depending on your design choices, it may make more sense to use **power conduit modules** to carry power from your well defended power generators to the necessary systems somewhere across the ship.

Each module also has a **power cost** associated with it, indicating how much power per second this module will draw from your ship's power stores. Having a net positive power flow to power consumption ratio is critical. While at warp, power consumption is increased even further. A negative power consumption at warp will rapidly drain a ship's power stores and limit its range. When a ship runs out of power, it cannot warp. It is up to you to find a good balance and to create ships to fit the roles that you want them to play.

Every weapon in StarDrive has a "Field of Fire" and a "Facing." Some weapons have a fixed facing, meaning that they can only be faced along the spine of the ship, facing forward. Weapons like this include heavy beam weapons, rail guns, and larger missile weapons. Other weapons are mounted on turrets and can have their facings set manually. A weapon can only fire in the direction that it is facing and inside its field of fire. To change a turret's facing, just click it and drag the arc that appears to the desired facing. You can see all of your ship's weapon arcs by pressing the Tab key.



WEAPONS

Weapons in StarDrive come in three primary forms: cannons, missiles, and beams. Cannons are weapons that fire individual shots such as flak cannons or disruptor cannons. Missiles are self-propelled items such as rockets, guided missiles, or torpedoes. Beams are sustained rays of focused energy that can instantly reach out and hit their targets.

Every weapon has a maximum range and a cost to fire that weapon. Some weapons are more or less efficient than others. Weapons that require power to fire will deplete their ship's power stores when firing. However, some weapons like missiles require ammunition, called Ordnance.

Ordnance

Ordnance is a catch-all phrase that refers to the ammunition needed to fire various weapons such as missile launchers, torpedoes, and other non-energy based weapon systems. Most ordnance-based weapons have a small ordnance capacity that will allow them to fire a few shots. However, in any extended battle, it is critical for a ship firing ordnance-based weapons to carry ordnance in storage modules.

If your ship runs out of ordnance, it can resupply in one of two ways. First, it can just visit a friendly planet with a shipyard and be refilled automatically. Second, it could navigate to the proximity of a ship equipped with an ordnance supply module such as a shuttle bay or a transporter room. These ships will automatically resupply nearby friendly vessels running low on ordnance.

COMMAND MODULES

Every ship requires at least one command module. Command modules are where the ship is piloted and combat directed. Command modules include the Cockpit, Bridge, and Combat Information Center. Command modules are versatile in that they provide several bonuses to the ship. First, they provide a small default sensor range. Second, they provide a small measure of ship **boarding defense**. Finally, they provide a measure of **ship repair**. The bigger and better the module, the bigger these bonuses are.

CARRIERS AND FIGHTER BAYS

Some ships are large enough to equip with fighter bays. To do this, simply install the module as normal. Once it is installed, select the fighter bay by clicking on it to bring up a menu of available fighter class vessels that can be carried in the fighter bay. You can then assign any of your valid fighter designs to deploy from that fighter bay.

Fighters may be launched and recovered from carriers using the advanced orders menu on the carrier's selection bay. You can also select a fighter and right click its mother ship to order that fighter to return home for resupply and repair. If a fighter from a fighter bay is destroyed, then a respawn timer will begin. The time is 30 seconds. When the timer is up, a new fighter will be available to deploy from the fighter bay.

Combat Behaviors

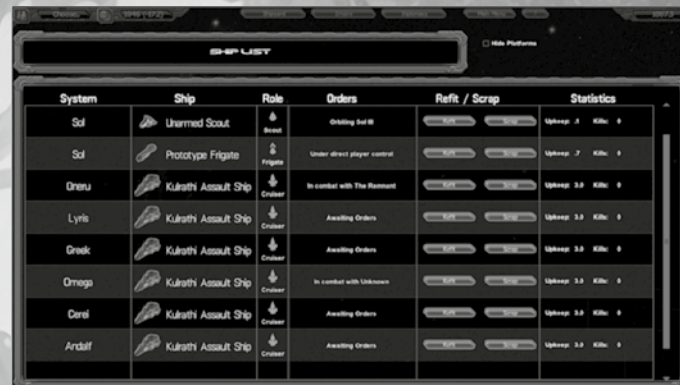
Finally, every ship can be assigned a custom combat behavior. You can set these using the array of buttons in the shipyard. The basic combat behaviors are:
Finally, every ship can be assigned a custom combat behavior. You can set these using the array of buttons in the shipyard. The basic combat behaviors are:

- a** Attack Runs: the ship will strafe its target and then set up for a new attack run
- b** Artillery: the ship will keep its forward firing weapons facing the target at all times
- c** Hold Position: the ship will attempt to hold position while rotating to face its target
- d** Orbit Left / Orbit Right: the ship will orbit around the target
- e** Evade: the ship will avoid combat

Save your design when you are done placing modules. You will now be able to build this ship at your colonies.

SHIP LIST SCREEN: REFIT AND SCRAP

You can access a list of all of your empire's ships through the shipyard and also through a button on the minimap. Using the ship list screen you can also order that your ships be upgraded or scrapped.



When you press the refit button, you will be presented with a list of ship designs that it is possible to upgrade or refit to, if any such designs are available. When you select a refit, the ship will move to the nearest shipyard for refitting.

If you order a ship to Scrap instead, then that ship will move to the nearest shipyard where the ship will be disassembled. The colony at which the ship is scrapped will receive Production equivalent to half of the scrapped ship's production cost. This Production will be placed into storage. However if there is not enough storage space, some Production will be lost.

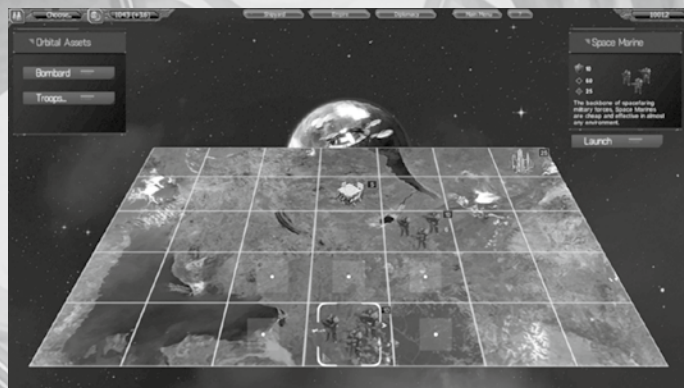
You can rename any ship in your fleet in this screen by clicking its name. Finally, you can double click any entry in the Ship List screen to zoom the camera to that ship.

GROUND COMBAT

Ground combat occurs whenever two or more opposing forces have ground troops on the same planet. Ground combat happens in real time and will be managed automatically by the AI. However, you can take direct control of ground combat as well. To view ground combat or to issue orders to ground troops, open the relevant planet's tactical view by selecting the planet and pressing the flag icon in the selection panel.



In the Ground Assault view, you can see all of the ground troops and buildings here as they are arrayed on the colony's 7 x 5 tile grid. Each ground troop and combat building has four main attributes: Troop Class, Strength, Hard Attack, and Soft Attack.



A troop's class indicates whether it is a hard or soft target. Fleshy infantry units are always soft targets, whereas buildings, tanks, and mechs are hard targets. Each unit has a strength which acts both as its hitpoints and how strong it is in combat, and then a unit has a "Hard Attack" which is used against hard targets and a "Soft Attack" which is used against soft targets.

The calculations used in combat are as follows. For each point of a unit's Strength, it rolls a 100 sided die. If the result of the die roll is less than or equal to the unit's attack value for the given target type, then 1 point of damage is inflicted on the defender. For example, if a Space Marine with 10 Strength were attacking an Outpost, which is a hard target, the Space Marine would have 10 chances to do 1 point of damage to the Outpost. The die would roll 10 times and if the roll was less than or equal to the Space Marine's Hard Attack value (because the targeted building is a hard target) then the Outpost will take 1 damage. The maximum damage the Space Marine could inflict, if it hit each of its attack roles, is 10 damage.

Each unit has a move timer and an attack timer. Whenever a unit moves, its move timer is reset to 10 seconds. Likewise with the attack timer. When the timer resets, an icon will appear next to the unit indicating that it can move or attack or both.

It is possible to destroy troops and buildings from orbit with a planetary bombardment. To do this, select a bomb-equipped ship and order it to attack the planet using a right click. Alternatively you can order this attack using the Orbital Assets panel in a planet's Tactical View. It is possible to completely destroy a colony and kill all of its inhabitants with a bombardment. A colony destroyed in this manner will need to be recolonized.

A planetary invasion is successful when all defending troops and buildings are destroyed.

FLEETS AND THE FLEET SCREEN

It is possible to create and save custom ship groupings called **Fleets**. You can create a fleet at any time by selecting a group of ships and by hitting the CTRL key plus a number. You can then access that group of ships by pressing the corresponding number. This keeps with the traditional controls of real time strategy games.

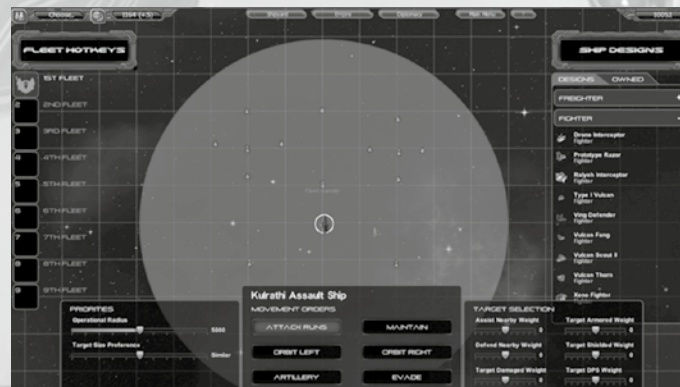
However, you can create custom formations for your fleets by accessing the "Fleet Screen" through the Shipyard, or by pressing the "i" key as a shortcut. This brings up the Fleet Screen.



The Fleet screen allows you to create a fleet by first pressing the 1-9 keys to select which fleet you will be editing. You can then add ships to your fleet by dragging ship designs from the "Ship Designs" panel on the right hand side of the screen. Note that these ships are not yet in play but are just the designs. To add ships that already exist to your fleet, you must click the "Owned" ships tab. From there you can drag existing ships onto the fleet screen.

Once you have added a few ships or ship designs to your fleet screen, you can select the individual ships to move them around and set custom formations. You can also manipulate the various sliders and check boxes to modify a ship's targeting priorities and behaviors.

Ships that display only as red Tactical Icons are ships that are missing from the fleet. Ships that display as 3D models (if zoomed in) or green Tactical Icons are ships that are alive and well and in your fleet.



A fleet with one active ship and a number of ship designs shown in red

Once you have placed your ships into the desired formation and set their behaviors, you can save the fleet design if you so wish. Then, if you are missing any ships from your fleet, you can click the Requisition button.

The requisition button will open a small screen showing you some fleet statistics including the total cost of the fleet, the number of ships needed, and other data, and it will provide you with the option to build that fleet and, if there are any ships in your empire that will fit in the fleet, to assign those ships to the fleet.

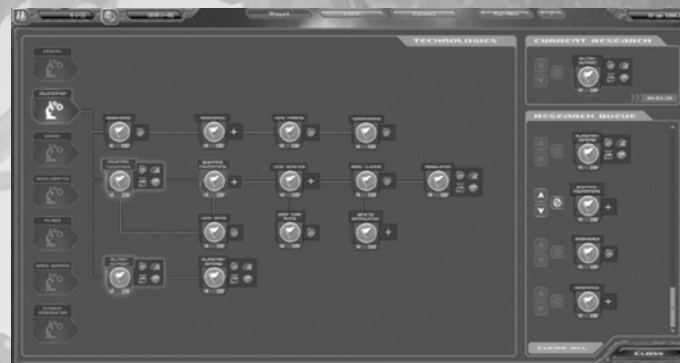


If you press the "Build Now" button, then the appropriate ship orders will be placed at shipyards across your empire. Your fleet will assemble automatically.

RESEARCH

Researching new technologies is a critical gameplay component. The Research screen is accessible through the main gameplay screen's top bar by pressing the Research icon. You must choose a technology to research by first selecting a research field and then by double clicking the technology you wish to research. Research fields are broad topics such as Starship Construction or Physics, and then each of these broad topics has a number of technologies to unlock.

You can place more than one technology into the research queue. You will receive a notification when you have unlocked a new technology and then the next item in the queue will begin being researched.



COMBAT

Combat in StarDrive occurs in real time. Your ships will execute the attack patterns assigned to them in the Shipyard; you can also change these orders in the ship's selection panel on the fly. You can press the Tab key at any time to view a module overlay of your ships. This will show you which modules are damaged.

When a ship is out of combat it can focus on damage control and repairs. A ship's repair rate indicates how many hit points a ship can be healed per second. Unless your ship has advanced damage control systems such as a Main Engineering module, your ship will repair quite slowly. To repair your ship's faster, order them to return to the nearest shipyard. Whenever a ship is in close proximity to a friendly shipyard, it will automatically repair very quickly. It will also replenish its ammunition stores.

Combat will also, of course, decrease a ship's ammunition stores for any of its ordnance-based weapons. This can be remedied by returning to a shipyard; alternatively, you can use ships equipped with special supply modules to resupply your vessels. Some ships may also equip extremely advanced modules that convert energy into ordnance.

WINNING THE GAME

To beat StarDrive, you must eliminate each other opponent through military or diplomatic means. To eliminate an opponent through diplomacy, you must ask them to join your Federation in peace. Doing so will combine your Economic and Military Strength and represents a complete alliance.

Otherwise, you must defeat your enemies through conquest by capturing or destroying all of their planets.

In the Ascension Game mode, the goal is to ascend to godhood by reaching the planet at the center of the galaxy. This is the only valid victory in Ascension.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you encounter a software problem when installing or playing the game and the particular solution could not be found in this manual, or solved by updating your computer with the latest audio or video drivers, we strongly advise that you visit our website at <http://www.iceberg-interactive.com> to download the latest patches or updates,

if the solution to the problem is not listed on the official game website or it's forums, please email us at: support@iceberg-interactive.com

When contacting us, please be sure to include:

- The exact title of the game
- A brief description of the problem. (e.g. my game crashed after reaching level x or picking up object Y)
- The hardware configuration of your computer.

Note: in order to give any support we require a Direct X Diagnostic-report for this purpose. We can't guarantee a reply if the DXDIAG file is missing.

To generate a DXDIAG file. Please follow these steps:

From the desktop click on Start > Run, (search on Windows 7) type "DXDIAG: and press OK). Start and wait for the program to finish and click "save all info" to copy all hardware info to a .txt file.

Please email the generated DXDIAG file to our support desk.

Note: Please do NOT e-mail us using a Hotmail or Yahoo e-mail address. Hotmail and Yahoo automatically filter out (and delete) our replies, making it hard for us to get in touch. If you don't have any other accounts than Hotmail or Yahoo, then please check your "unwanted items" or "spam" folder regular or ads the domain@iceberg-interactive.com to my 'safe senders' list in order to minimize the risk losing our response.

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- Do not stand or sit too close to the screen. Position yourself as far away from the screen as the length of cable allows.
- Play video games on a small screen (preferably).
- Avoid playing if you are tired.
- Make sure that the room in which you are playing is well lit.
- Rest for a period of 10 to 15 minutes for every hour you play a videogame.

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CREDITS

Zerosum games

PROJECT LEAD
Daniel DiCicco

PROGRAMMING
Daniel DiCicco

DESIGN
Daniel DiCicco
Jeff Dodson

ART LEAD
Ariel Chai

2D ART
Ariel Chai
Tyvon Thomas
Nick Wiley
Clint Bellanger (OpenGameArt.org)
Cat Black Design

3D ART
Ariel Chai

VISUAL EFFECTS
Jeff Dodson

CHARACTER DESIGN
Nick Wiley
Matthew Oswald

MOTION GRAPHICS
Matthew Oswald

MUSIC & AUDIO
Jeff Dodson

WEB DESIGN
Sam Balcomb

KICKSTARTER PRODUCERS

Joshua Peachy
Gracie Daniel
Luke Weber
Feng Juan
James P Walker

DEDICATION
This game is dedicated to my wife, Alana, whose unwavering support made StarDrive a reality

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The great team at GreenLink for their awesome QA
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All of our Kickstarter backers

Iceberg Interactive

CEO
Erik Schreuder

SALES DIRECTOR
Howard Newmark

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Raymond Snippe

GENERAL MANAGER GERMANY, AUSTRIA,
SWITZERLAND
Andy Litke

PRODUCT MANAGER
Tamara Robeer

COMMUNITY MANAGER
Niels Kooijman

PR MANAGER
Mayke Griffioen

PR OFFICER
Patty Winder

ASSISTANT PR
Claudia Engelsman
Sarah Reymond

ASSISTANT ONLINE MARKETING
Lars Verweij

ART DIRECTOR
Michael van Zijl

ASSISTANT PRINTED MATERIALS
Mariska Visser

www.iceberg-interactive.com
www.iceberg-shop.com

GreenLink Group

CEO
Costin Mihai

STUDIO MANAGER/PROJECT COORDINATOR
Ionut Roman

QC CONSULTANT
Mihai Vasile

QC TESTERS
Alexandru Bojica
Laura Savu
Matei Popescu

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