



STARDRIVE II



GAME MANUAL

EPILEPSY WARNING

Please read this caution before you or your child play a videogame:

Certain people are susceptible to epileptic seizures or lose consciousness after exposure to flashing lights or light patterns in our daily environment. Such people may have a seizure while watching particular televised images or when they play some videogames. This phenomenon may appear even if the subject has no history of previous difficulties. If you or a member of your family has ever had symptoms related to epilepsy (seizures or loss of awareness) when exposed to flashing lights, please consult your doctor prior to use. We advise that parents supervise the use of videogames by their children. If you or your child experiences any of the following symptoms while playing a videogame: dizziness, blurred vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of awareness, disorientation, any involuntary movement or convulsion, IMMEDIATELY discontinue use and consult your doctor.

Standard Precautions When Playing Videogames:

- 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.

GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING

If you're experiencing any problems with the game (distorted graphics, cut-off sound, game crashing on start-up etc.) make sure your video drivers and DirectX are up-to-date.

- Download your video drivers only from official manufacturer website or another trusted website.
- Download the latest DirectX version from official Microsoft website.

If the above steps did not help, you can always contact our customer service either through the contact form on our official game website or by directly sending an E-mail to support@iceberg-games.com. We'll answer every E-mail as soon as possible. When contacting us by E-mail, please include the following:

- A short description of the problem
- Game log generated on game crash
- DxDiag report file

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to StarDrive 2! In this game you will be taking command of an interstellar empire in a quest to explore the galaxy, expand your territory to new worlds, exploit the resources you find there, and to exterminate your foes. You'll be designing ships to command in battle, you'll be engaging in diplomacy and trade with other races, recruiting heroes and spies, researching technologies, and uncovering the mysteries of the galaxy, all without ever leaving your computer! Amazing!

Pro-Tip: StarDrive 2 is filled with useful tooltips. You can hover your mouse over almost anything to get some useful information about how to play the game!

GAME MODES: CAMPAIGN AND BATTLE ARENA

You can experience StarDrive 2 in two different ways. The Campaign mode puts you in charge of an empire where you will be responsible for every facet of your empire's development. However, if you're in a mood to just blow some stuff up, then the Battle Arena mode will allow you to find some quick story-driven action right off the bat. You can choose between these two modes from the main menu.

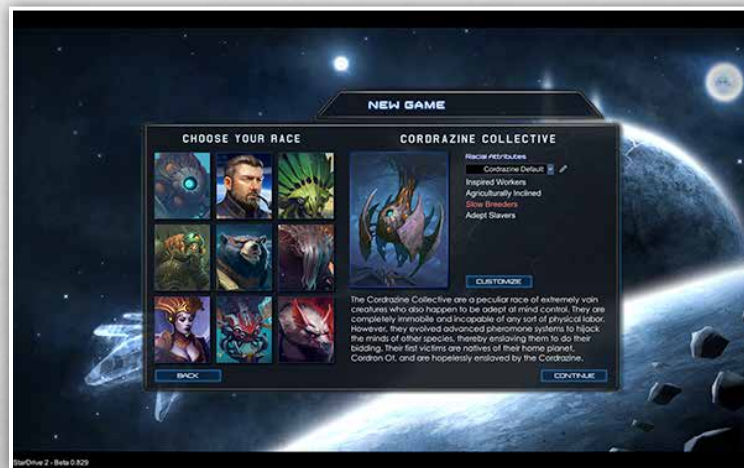


THE CAMPAIGN

The point of the campaign is to conquer the galaxy, plain and simple. But don't forget that the journey is more important than the destination! You've got a huge galaxy to explore, you've got dangerous aliens that want to kill you coming out of the woodwork, and it's up to you to (A) not die and (B) have fun while doing it. There's a campaign story to discover while you play and a whole array of random encounters and strange quests to embark upon as you explore the galaxy.

CAMPAIGN SETUP

Your first order of business in starting a new campaign is to choose your starting race. StarDrive 2 has nine races to choose from. You can click each race's portrait to see a description of the race as well as a list of their traits. Mouse over any of the traits for a detailed description of the trait's effect!



No matter which race you choose, you are able to customize its racial traits by pressing the large button marked "CUSTOMIZE", which makes sense when you think about it.

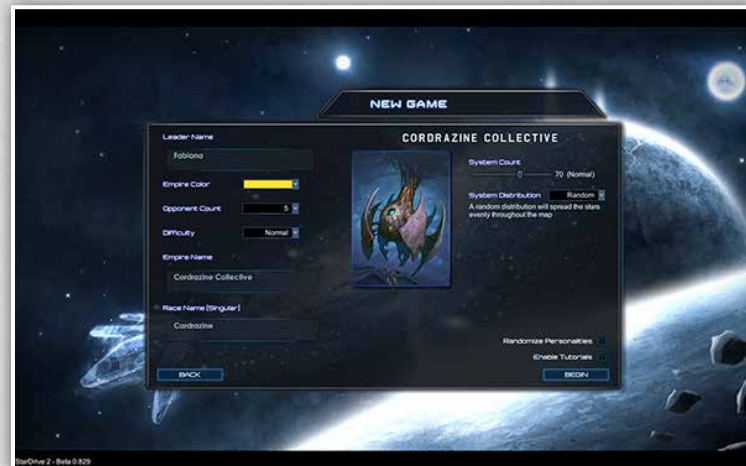
You will also see a dropdown menu that will allow you to choose a racial configuration from a list of presets. The pencil icon next to this drop down allows you to save and load racial configurations for re-use later.



Inside the race customization menu you will see a list of all of the available racial traits and characteristics that are available to you. Mouse over any of these for a complete description of the trait.

Note that each trait has an associated point cost, and that some traits are **negative** traits. Negative traits will hinder your race but also provide you with more points to spent on positive traits. Some traits are also mutually exclusive. For instance, your people cannot be both master farmers and poor farmers. You've got to pick one! Finally, you are limited in the number of negative picks that you can take to -10 points. Other than that, you're free to create a wildly overpowered race! Or woefully underpowered. It depends how good you are at choosing, I suppose.

When you're done setting up your race, you can click continue to set up the galaxy.



In the galaxy setup screen you can name yourself, name your empire, choose the number of opponents, the difficulty, and your imperial colors.

You can also choose the number of star systems in your game as well as the distribution of those star systems. For example, you could play in a spiral galaxy or a galaxy with tight clusters that are widely spaced from one another. As always, try mousing over items in the interface for more detailed descriptions of their functionality.

Pro-Tip: Turn on the Tutorials for your first game by clicking the Enable Tutorials checkbox. Granted, you ARE reading the manual right now so it may be a bit redundant. But still, Pro Tip.

STRATEGIC VIEW

The strategic view is where you'll be doing the important work of exploring the galaxy and managing your empire.



Camera Controls

Navigating the strategic view is accomplished as it is in most games: by using your mouse to click on stuff. Want to check out a planet or a fleet? Click on it. Want to move the camera? Scroll your mouse to the edge of the screen. You can also use the WASD keys to move the view around as if this were some sort of FPS game instead of a strategy game. You can also drag the camera around by holding the middle mouse button down. I mean really, if you've played any game ever, your eyes have already glazed over at this point in the paragraph.

Generally speaking, clicking the Right Mouse Button will exit you from any menu. Keep this in mind as you navigate through the game. Left click to get into something and right click to get out.

Finally, you can scroll the view in and out using the middle mouse wheel or the two-finger equivalent on trackpads. If you're mouse-wheel challenged then you can zoom the view in and out by clicking the + and - buttons next to the minimap. You can also zoom the view to anywhere in the galaxy by clicking that location on the minimap.

Taking a Turn

StarDrive 2 is a turn-based game. To progress the game you will need to click the "Next Turn" button. However, the preferred method to play is to hold the Space Bar down to progress turns in rapid succession.

The Game Economy

Before going into the details of how to manage your empire, you should have a basic understanding of how the game economy operates. There are three main producible resources: **Food, Production, and Science**.



Generally speaking, each citizen in your empire requires 1 **Food** Per Turn. If you don't have enough food, then citizens can start dying off.



Production is used to build stuff: ships, planetary improvements, spies, etc.



Science, sometimes referred to as RP or Research Points, contributes to the discovery of new technologies to power your empire.

These three resources are produced at your planetary colonies by your citizens, whom you will need to assign to the jobs of Farmer, Worker, or Scientist. Citizens will reproduce on their own over the course of the game, although there are ways to increase their reproduction rate and even to build new cybernetic citizens.



Money is referred to as BC, or "Billions of Credits", in StarDrive 2. BC is produced at a flat rate by each of your citizens regardless of their job. You can improve this tax collection through technological improvements and you can also set an imperial tax rate that will turn production into BC each turn.



Pollution is a by-product of Production. Each planet has a tolerance for pollution based on its size. As you create more and more industry on a planet, the amount of pollution will increase. As pollution increases, the efficiency of your workers will decrease. You can control pollution by creating planetary improvements such as the Atmospheric Filter.



Command Points indicate your empire's ability to command and control a space fleet efficiently. This topic will be covered more thoroughly in the fleets section of this manual. You do not produce command points. Instead, you gain command points through construction of planetary improvements such as Starbases or Military Antennas.

Planet Climate

Every planet that you encounter in the game will have an associated climate type. The climate of a planet generally indicates its suitability to sustain life. For example, a Terran planet is far more suitable and hospitable than a Barren planet, which has no atmosphere or organic compounds. Planet Climate is the primary indicator of how much food your farmers will be able to harvest on the planet.

Very hostile planetary climates, such as toxic climates, will increase the maintenance cost of the buildings you create there.

Planet Mineral Richness

A planet can have mineral richness ranging from Ultra-Poor to Ultra-Rich. The mineral richness of a planet determines how much production your workers could produce on that planet per turn as a base amount.

Planet Size and Gravity

Planets can range in size from Tiny to Huge. The size of a planet contributes to how many citizens can live there. The size and richness of a planet also contribute to the determination of the planet's gravity, which can be Low-G, Normal, or High-G. Races have penalties when working in high gravity unless they are from a High Gravity homeworld. Races that come from Low-Gravity homeworlds will suffer penalties in Normal gravity as well as in High Gravity.

Planet Specials

Planets can have a wide array of specials that modify how it behaves. Some of these specials are good and some of them are bad. When viewing a planet on the strategy map, Good specials will be displayed in green and bad in red. Mouse over the specials for a description of what they do.

Strategic Resources

Strategic resources are special items that can be found on planets in varying quantities. If a planet has a strategic resource then that information will be displayed in orange when viewing the planet on the strategy map. Every strategic resource provides a basic bonus to your empire for each source of the resource controlled. A planet will generally have between 1 and 3 sources of a given strategic resource if it does have a resource at all. You can gain an additional exploitation bonus by controlling 4 or more strategic resources of the same type. You can see what each resource does by mousing over the orange text on the strategy map when you find one.

With this basic understanding in place, we now turn our attention to the Colony Management Interface.

Colony Management Interface

You start the game with a single planet, your homeworld. Your ships will be stationed next to it and its name will be displayed in your empire's color. Clicking it will bring up the management interface for that colony.



This screen shows you all of the citizens living on your planet as well as all of the economic data that you'll need to run this colony effectively. On the left side of this interface you can see your citizens in the Labor Allocation panel. Your citizens can be assigned, from top to bottom, as Farmers, Workers, or Scientists. You can click and drag these citizens around to reassign them.

Pro-Tip: You can have many different races living on a single planet. To select a specific Citizen, hold the Control Key while picking it. Otherwise, you will select a stack of citizens

The economic output of the citizens is listed right next to their icons. You can see how much food, production (and pollution), and research they are creating each game turn. Hover over each of these icons for a detailed breakdown of how these

figures are calculated! This is critical to understanding how your colony is operating, and the tooltips are very detailed.

In the upper-center of the interface you can see the colony name, which can be changed by clicking on it. Underneath you can see the planetary gravity type, biome type, size, population cap, monetary output, and approval rating.



The **Approval Rating** can affect the output of the planet. A happy planet will be more effective than a content planet. An unhappy planet can suffer severe penalties to production and science output. Hover over the approval icon for details.

Pro-Tip: Overcrowded planets make your people unhappy. If you're having approval problems, try shipping some citizens off to newly founded colonies. This process is covered in detail in the **Empire Management Screen** section of this tutorial



The **population icon** shows the current and maximum population of the planet, expressed as the number of citizens. The progress bar next to this icon shows the progress of this colony towards a new colonist. Hover over this bar and the numbers next to it to understand how the growth rate for this specific colony is computed.

The button part of the interface shows the Ground Troops stationed at this planet, if any. You can access the Troop Upgrade panel through this interface and you may also launch troops into space from this panel. This is covered in detail in the **Troop Management** section of this manual.

The right hand side of the interface displays a Hex Grid, where you can see the improvements made to this planet. Hover over any improvement for a description. You can also click an improvement to scrap it and get some BC back. Note that most improvements cost BC per turn to maintain. If you find yourself in money troubles, you might need to scrap a building to stay afloat.

Finally, you can access the Build Queue Interface by clicking the Build Button.

Build Queue Interface

The build queue interface allows you to manage the build queue for a colony. You can create new ships, buildings, spies, and other buildable items here.



The operation of this screen is fairly straightforward. Click an item to add it to the queue. You can hover any item to see a detailed description of it. When the item is added to the queue, it will appear in the "Build Queue" section of the interface. You have the option to Rush the Construction of any item in the build queue by spending BC.

Pro-Tip: You can drag items in the build queue to rearrange the build order

On the right-hand side of the build queue interface you can see all of the ships available in your Ship Roster. This roster helps keep your interface tidy. You can manage it by clicking the "Edit Roster" button. You can view and edit any of the ships in your roster by clicking the Pencil Icon next to the entry. This will launch the Shipyard Interface which is covered elsewhere in this manual.


Fleet Interface

You can access the basic fleet interface by clicking on any fleet while viewing the strategy map. The selected fleet will be highlighted and its interface panel will be displayed.



To give a fleet an order, simply right click where you want the fleet to move. The right click is context-sensitive, so if you right click an enemy fleet or an anomaly, then the fleet will know how to properly attack or interact with whatever you clicked.

The fleet interface displays a wealth of information about the selected fleet.

 The **command points icon** displays the current command point cost of the selected fleet. Note that fleets that are nearby friendly planets are Garrisoned, which halves the command point cost for the fleet.

Each ship class – Corvette, Frigate, Cruiser, Battleship, and Titan – has an associated command point cost, ranging from 1 to 5 command points. Non-Combat Ships like the Colony Ship require 1 command point as well. So long as your currently used command points are less than your empire's command point cap, then you will pay no BC per turn to maintain your fleet. If you exceed the cap, then you must pay 10 BC per turn per Command Point exceeded. This can be very expensive.



The **sensor icon** indicates the sensor range of your fleet. By default, fleets only have a sensor view of 10 Astronomical Units (AU). You will need to install sensor modules on your ships to increase the range of your fleet's sensors. The range of your fleet's sensors can be seen as indicated by a dotted blue circle centered on your fleet. You will be able to see any enemy ships or spatial anomalies inside your sensor range.

Note: You automatically have sensor vision of any fleets that are inside your empire's territory



The **Speed icon** indicates the speed of your fleet in Astronomical Units (AU) per turn. For reference, a Solar System has a radius of approximately 30 AU, and you begin the game being able to move at a rate of 25 AU per turn. Your fleet's speed can be upgraded with the appropriate research. It can also be affected by spatial phenomena such as nebulae, and it can be decreased if your ships are heavily damaged.



The **troop icon** indicates the number of troops being transported with this fleet. Troops can be launched from the colony management interface provided you have the freighters necessary to act as troop transports. See the **Troop Management** section of this manual for more information.



The **Repair Rate icon** indicates the speed at which this fleet can perform repairs in the field. Generally, fleets can repair 5% of the total damage done to it each turn when in the field. Fleets will fully repair by visiting a friendly planet. This rate may be modified as you upgrade your technology or install new ship modules into your ships that aid in repair.



The **Fighters icon** indicates the number of fighters being transported by carriers in this fleet. Fighters can be destroyed in combat, but the mechanics on the carriers can repair them at a rate of 1 per turn in the field. Fighters can be fully restocked by visiting a friendly planet.



The **Slave Pens icon** will display if your fleet has a Slave Ship in its ranks. Slave ships allow you to steal slaves from enemy planets. This topic is covered in more detail in the **Blockade** section of this manual.

With the camera view zoomed out a little bit, we can see our empire borders clearly.



Looking back now at our fleet interface, we can see the fuel icon.

Fuel



The **Fuel icon** and the progress bar next to it indicates the current fuel capacity and fuel reserves of the selected fleet. When a fleet is traveling inside its empire's borders, it uses no fuel. It is assumed that the ship is capable of efficient navigation within these regions.

However, fleets will consume fuel at a fixed rate per ship when traveling outside of imperial borders. The rate is approximately 1 fuel per AU traveled per ship in a fleet. If a fleet runs out of fuel then it will lay in a course for the nearest colony or refueling station. Its crew will be forced to enter cryostasis and will be unable to receive new orders until it returns to imperial space. The fleet will only refuel upon reaching a refueling station or friendly colony.



The **Ordnance icon** indicates the amount of ammunition this fleet is carrying. The heaviest weapons in the game tend to require some form of ordnance to fire, although many weapons are based on energy and require no ordnance whatsoever. In any case, if a fleet is carrying ordnance it will be indicated here. Fleets can restock their ammunition by visiting a friendly colony.

Splitting Fleets

Each ship in a fleet is represented by an icon in the fleet interface. You can click each icon to toggle the selection of that particular ship. If you wish to split a fleet into two, simply deselect the ships that you don't wish to give new orders to, and then give the fleet a new order. The selected ships will break away into a new fleet.

Each ship icon will also display the health level of the ship. Note that Non-Combat ships will not have a health bar because they cannot engage in combat. If a Non-Combat ship is caught by an enemy while unescorted then it will simply be destroyed. Otherwise, a normal combat will occur. Any damage to a ship will be represented by the health bar in the fleet interface.

Fleet Zone of Control

When a fleet is selected, a faint circle will appear around it. This is the fleet's Zone of Control. It can intercept any fleets entering that zone of control. It can also interact with any anomaly it encounters so long as the anomaly is inside its zone of control.

Anomalies



As you explore the galaxy with your fleets, you will encounter anomalies, marked by Question Mark icons. Send a fleet to the anomaly to interact with it. If an anomaly is inside your fleet's zone of control then you can right click the anomaly to interact.

Researching New Technologies

As your empire produces Research Points (RP), these RP are applied to your chosen area of research. To choose an item for research, press F1 or press the Research Button in the upper left portion of your screen.



The research screen displays the six main categories that you can focus upon when researching new technologies. You must select one item to research from among the research categories. Note that you can only choose one application of a given technology category, when there can be as many as three potential research applications per category. When you finish researching that specific “leaf” of the tech category, then the category will move on to the next level of the tree.

So, for example, the Level 1 Energy Research Category (“Plasmatic Applications”) presents three options: Plasma Fuel Cells, Defensive Flares, or Plasma Cannons. You can examine the options by mousing over each of them. When you choose one, your research will begin in that category, but you will lose the option to research the other two available applications.

But don't worry – you can always trade for technologies that you missed using diplomacy. Many technologies also have advanced analogues that are available deeper down the tech tree. Note that you can also change your mind about which application of a category you wish to research up until you finish researching that category.



The Tree View button that is displayed next to each Research Category title will show you all of the available techs in that given category. You can use this button to plan your progress through the tree.

Special Projects

From time to time you will gain access to Special Projects, which exist outside of the normal research tree. You can choose to allocate a percentage of your research budget towards a specific special project. These projects tend to provide unique bonuses or unlocks to help you through the game. When you gain a special project it will appear in the research screen.

Experimental Tech Tree

The experimental technology category is unique in that the technologies in this tree are randomized for each new game. Additionally, some technologies in this tree are completely unique to the race that you have chosen to play as.

Empire Management Screen

The empire management screen allows you to manage your entire empire from a single screen. It can be accessed by pressing F2 or by clicking the appropriate button in the upper left of your screen.



Empire Tab

The empire tab lists all of the colonies in your empire and displays all of the citizens at each colony. You can reassign workers to different tasks here just like you can in the planet management screen. You can also access the build queue manager for each colony here. All of a colony's vital statistics are also displayed here. You can mouse over the relevant icons for a detailed breakdown of the underlying calculations (i.e. for food, production, science, etc).

You can also move citizens between colonies on this screen. Simply select citizens from one colony's entry and drag them to the colony where you wish for them to live. To do this, you need **freighters**. Freighters are special ships that can be built at your colonies. See the detailed freighter entry in this manual for more information.

Pro-Tip: You can click a planet's icon in the colony list to immediately zoom to that planet's detailed planet view

Strategic Resources Readout

Strategic resources are special items that can be found on planets. See the Planets entry in this manual for more information. Any strategic resources that you acquire will be listed next to its icon on the empire tab of the management screen.

Leaders Tab

Throughout the game you will have the opportunity to hire heroic leader units. These leaders can be reviewed and managed in the Leaders tab of the empire management screen.

Planets Tab

The planets tab provides a list of all known planets in the galaxy. You can sort this list by climate, mineral richness, size, and other criteria to help choose the best prospects for colonization.

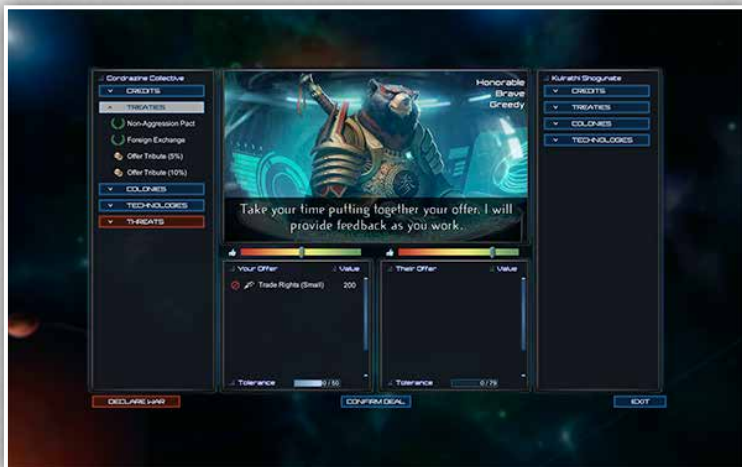
Political Screen

The political screen allows you to view information on all other known major races. Here you can initiate political contact with the races to engage in various diplomatic actions. You can also assign spies that you own defensive or offensive spy actions.



Diplomacy Interface

The diplomacy interface allows you to make deals with other races. On the left hand side of the screen you can see items that you have available for trade. On the right you can see the other race's items. When you click one of these items, it gets added to the appropriate offer area in the middle of the screen.



There are several detailed mechanics to understand here to be an effective diplomat.

Approval Rating

Each race, including your own, has an approval rating for each other known race. This approval rating is represented by the color gradient bar ranging from Red to Green. Mouse over these bars to see exactly why a race approves or disapproves of the other. Approval rating primarily affects the Tolerance of a race for making deals with one another.

Tolerance

Tolerance is the measure of how willing a race is to make a deal with another race. It is primarily influenced by respective approval ratings. Each time you make a trade with another race, your race's tolerance for making a deal is used up, as is theirs. You cannot make a deal that exceeds your race's tolerance for making deals and vice versa.

Over time, tolerance will reset, allowing you to make more deals. The more races approve of one another, the larger the deals they can make.

Note that different items have different tolerance costs. So, for instance, if you add a payment of credits to your side of the offer, then you will use up 10 Tolerance on your side of the trade, but the other race will not have any Tolerance used up. If you demand that they provide a technology in return, then the Tolerance cost is 25 tolerance per tech on offer. So long as you have 10 tolerance available and they have 25, then the deal is theoretically possible. However, the final consideration before a deal can be struck is the value of the deal.

Value

Every item offered in a trade has an associated value that is expressed as a generic number that is roughly equivalent to the BC value of the item. For reference, an offer of 100 BC has a value of 100. However, race leaders all have their own unique personalities. They may value items more or less based on their personalities. i.e., a technologist will place a higher value on technologies than they will on cash.

Making a Deal

Making a deal is, in the end, simply a matter of providing equal value in trade while not exceeding the tolerance level for each race. As you add items to the trade offer, the other race will update their messages to you to indicate how they are feeling about the offer. There is no mystery to this process – if the other race is willing to accept the deal then they will say so, and the “Confirm Deal” button will be available for you to click.

Threaten

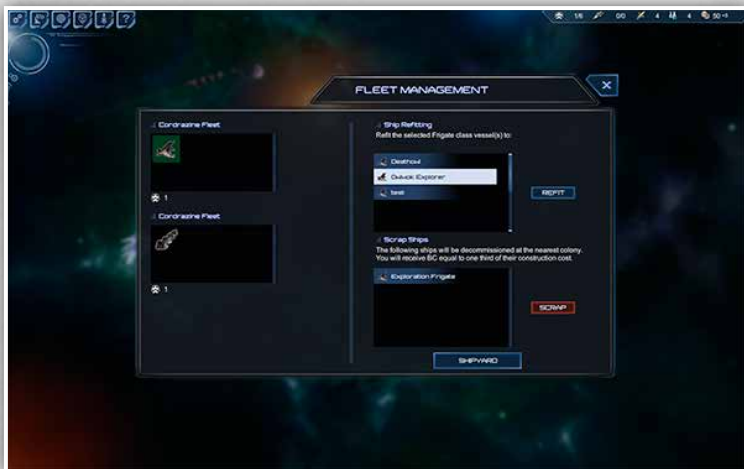
You can also decide to threaten another race at times. This may give you an edge in diplomacy but it will cost you a severe approval hit with the threatened race. They also may not respond kindly to being threatened. If you issue a threat then they can capitulate and give you what you want. Alternatively, they can call your bluff. You will be forced to choose whether you want to follow through with your threat by declaring war, or if you wish to back down. If you back down, then other races may see you as weak.

Declare War

If you just want to get a war started then you can always click the “Declare War” button. This will immediately make all of your fleets hostile to one another, and the game will be afoot.

Fleet Management Screen

The fleet management screen provides a list of all of your fleets. You can access the screen by pressing F4 or by pressing the appropriate button in the upper left part of your screen. This menu allows you to order ships to be refit or to be scrapped entirely. You can also access the shipyard through the button in the fleet screen.



When you unlock new shipmodules you may want to upgrade older ships to newer designs. To do this you simply select the ships that you want to refit from the list of ships on the left, and then the refitting panel will display a list of available designs for you. When you click the Refit button, the ships will move to a nearby colony to begin upgrading. The cost of upgrading is simply the difference between the new design and the old design.

You can also scrap ships and recover some BC from them. You can select any number of ships and order them to scrap with the scrap button. They will then fly to the nearest colony to be dismantled.

Tutorial Interface

You can access the game's tutorials at any time by pressing F5 or by clicking the question mark button in the upper left part of the screen. You can view a number of detailed tutorials there.

Freighters and Their Importance



Freighters are an important strategic asset. Freighters can be built 2 at a time at your colonies. They have multiple uses, including troop transportation, food transportation, and civilian population transportation.

Food Transportation

It is possible for you to have agricultural worlds whose purpose is to export food to planets in need. The process is automated. All you need is a food surplus at one planet and a food deficit at another. You also need 1 freighter available per food that you wish to transport. Food transports will appear on the strategy map. Watch out! They can be intercepted by hostile ships and destroyed. You cannot give orders to food freighters.

Civilian Transport

You may from time to time wish to move citizens from one world to another. You can accomplish this using the Empire Management screen. Simply drag the citizen from its origin to its destination on that screen. You will need 1 available freighter per citizen that you wish to transport. These freighters will appear on the strategy map as units that can be intercepted, so be careful! You cannot give orders to Civilian Transports.

Troop Transport

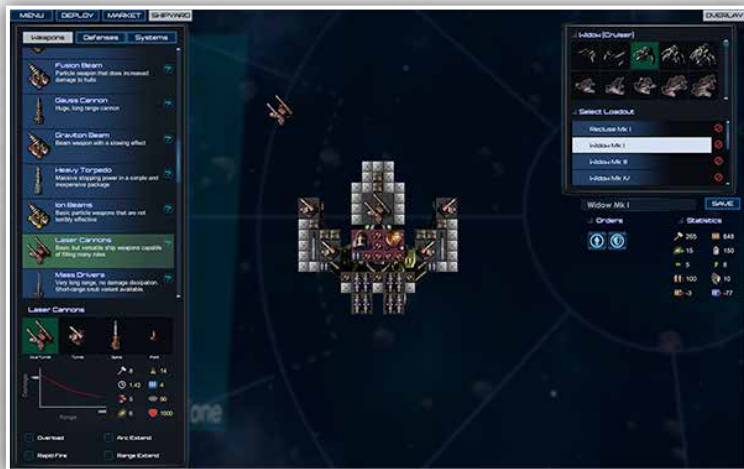
Freighters play an important role in transporting troops. You can launch troops into space by selecting them from the Colony Management Interface and by pressing the launch button. You can have up to four troops per freighter. They appear as units on the strategic map. Unlike food and civilian transports, Troop Transports can be given orders. They appear as regular units that can be merged into your war fleets and escorted to their destination.

SPACE SHIP DESIGN AND COMBAT

StarDrive 2 allows you to design your own spacecraft for use in the campaign mode and in the battle arena mode. Each race has access to a limited number of Hulls which serve as the platforms for your ship designs. You design ships in the shipyard by placing ship modules onto a hull.

The Shipyard

The shipyard provides you with a top-down view of a ship hull. You can change which hull you are looking at using the panel on the right hand side of the screen. You can view existing designs that fit the selected hull by browsing through the Loadouts list below the hull selection area. You can save new loadouts or overwrite existing ones by typing in a name for your new loadout and clicking the save button.



Ship Statistics

The performance statistics for a ship are listed underneath the hull and loadout selection panel. Mouse over these statistic to understand what they are and how they are calculated. As you install modules into your ship, you will see its mass increase. Additionally, most modules require power to operate. Each ship will need engines to move, ammunition lockers for its heavy weapons, power capacitors for its energy weapons, sensor modules, command modules, fuel modules, and so on.

It is important that you explore the user interface and the tooltips therein to understand everything that you're seeing.

Ship Orders

You can setup some basic ship orders for a design. These orders designate whether a ship should try to keep moving in combat versus holding position. You can also designate whether the ship should prefer to show its forward weapons to its target or its broadside weapons.

Ship Sections

Each ship is comprised of 5 sections – Forward, Aft, Port, Starboard, and Center. A ship will be destroyed when every module in its Center section is destroyed. Generally, you can only attack the Center of a ship by first destroying one or more of the surrounding quadrants.

Ships take fire in a logical manner. If you have armor plating on the outside of the Starboard quadrant, then that armor plating will be the first module hit by enemy weapons fire coming from the right. It is therefore highly advisable to protect your softer ship components with harder armor modules.

Ship Module Selection

On the left hand side of your screen is a list of all unlocked ship modules, categorized under Weapons, Defenses, and Systems. Click a header to change which modules are displayed. You can click on a module entry to select it and then click on the ship hull to place it. Generally, any module can go in any slot. However, you can only install engine modules in the Aft section of a ship. You can only install weapon modules in the outer sections of a ship.

Many modules have variants available, such as medium or large shield generators. You can select which variant you want using the panel below the available modules list. You can also see the various statistics of a module and how it will affect ship cost, performance, and so on.

Module Modifiers

Many ship modules can be further upgraded or modified by checking one or more of the optional modifier checkboxes. These can be found below the module statistics readout, and offer improved performance in some aspect for increased cost or decreased performance in another. For instance, you can choose to overload many energy weapons, which increases their damage, but this will increase the cost of the module and require more energy per shot. Mouse over these modifiers for a full understanding of how a module can be modified before deciding which modifiers you wish to apply, if any.

General Ship Design Strategy

When designing a ship, you want to balance its usefulness in battle versus its usefulness on the strategy map. A sensor module or a fuel cell is useless to you in battle, but can provide you with extra range and sensing ability on the strategy map. Think about this balance when designing a ship.

Another important consideration is your ammo and power storage abilities. Each weapon needs either Ordnance or Energy to fire. You need to install Ordnance Lockers or Power Capacitors to ensure a steady supply of ammunition for your weapons. Note that Ordnance, unlike power, does not renew automatically – at least not without the right technologies! Power, however, will renew at whatever positive powerflow you can achieve for a ship. Powerflow is simply the power added per second by your power modules minus the power demanded by all your ship systems.

Finally, don't neglect point defense systems. Missile weapons tend to hit the hardest of any weapons in the game, but they can be intercepted by point defenses or jammed using ECM and other techniques. Consider adding some form of missile defense to your war ships, or alternatively create screen ships whose job is to protect your more vulnerable ships.

Space Battles

Space battles are relatively straightforward affairs. When your fleet encounters an enemy fleet, you will be brought to the space battle screen to resolve it.



You begin a space combat with the ability to deploy your forces in whichever formation you choose. When you're happy with your deployment, you can click Begin.

When you have a ship selected, you will be able to see its details in the lower left selection panel. Here you can issue specific orders such as launching or recovering fighters. You can also set a desired engagement range and change whether it should hold position or keep moving and what facing it should show its target.

To give a move order to a ship, simply right click where you want it to go. Right click an enemy ship to order an attack. Ships will attack any enemy ships in range automatically, but they will not maneuver using their default combat behaviors unless you specifically order an attack.

Battle Arena Battles

In the battle arena mode, the whole point is to get straight to the combat. In this mode you will start a scenario with a limited amount of cash and the ability to unlock the technology that you want to use in the market. You can spend your cash to unlock the modules, and then you can design ships using these modules.



Finally, you will use the remaining cash to buy the ships that you want in your fleet. Your fleet is persistent through the battle arena scenarios. Most scenarios have more than 1 battle to fight through, so it is important to manage your resources wisely to be successful!

To buy a ship, just select it from the list of available designs and then click on the deployment zone. You can reposition a ship after you buy it. You can also click and hold the mouse button over a ship while pressing the Delete button to sell the ship back.

WARFARE ON THE STRATEGY MAP

To defeat an enemy on the strategy map, you will need to fight your way to the enemy's colonies, defeat their orbital defenses, and either bombard the planet to death or invade and capture it with your own ground forces.

Planetary Blockades

When you defeat an enemy's orbital defenses, the planet will become blockaded by your fleet in orbit. So long as the planet has no planetary defenses and is also inside the zone of control of one of your fleets, then the planet will be blockaded.

Effect of Blockade

Blockading a planet disallows it from receiving food shipments. Furthermore, your fleet will siphon BC (money) and RP (science) from the blockaded planet and send them to your empire. The more ships you have in the blockade, the more you will siphon per turn.

Taking Slaves via Blockade

If your blockading fleet contains one or more Slave Ships, then you can begin to fill up your slave pens with captured slaves. The Selected Fleet panel will display your progress towards capturing a slave.

Invasion and Bombardment

With a blockading fleet selected, you can right click the blockaded planet to initiate a ground invasion. If the fleet has bomb modules equipped in it, then you can optionally bombard the planet before moving in. If you choose the bombard option then you will be presented with the bombardment interface, which will allow you to designate targets between Civilians, Infrastructure, or Military. Note that most bombs cause fallout radiation to occur, which increases planetary pollution drastically.

Ground Troop Setup

In the colony management interface you can see a troop panel at the bottom of the screen and a button marked “Upgrade”. Clicking this button allows you to customize any ground troops stationed at a planet.



Throughout the game you will have the opportunity to unlock all sorts of different equipments for your ground troops. Each troop can have up to three equipped items. It's a good idea to create a diverse troop roster for your invasions. As with everything else in the game, try mousing over the skills and icons to get an understanding for how they work.

Ground Combat

Ground combat in StarDrive 2 works kind of like a game of science fiction chess. Combat takes place on a gridded map. Each side takes a turn moving all of its units. The objective is to completely eliminate all of your opponents.



Each unit has a Unit Card which contains all of the details of its abilities and statistics. Every unit has a base Speed and Hitpoint amount, as well as a Shield amount. Every turn, the unit gains Action Points equivalent to its speed. It then uses those action points to move or to execute skills.

You can select a unit by clicking on it and then click on a valid tile to move it. You can right click an enemy to execute the most logical skill – usually some form of basic attack – or you can choose one of the other special skills from the icons listed next to the unit card.

After you have made all of your moves, click the “End Turn” button and the enemy will make their moves. Combat ends when one side is completely defeated.

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I've lost track of all the great assets purchased from this store. Thank you to all the wonderful artists and contributors there and to Unity for making such a great product and marketplace.

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