

Starship Command

Introduction

Starship Command is a game of ship-to-ship combat that uses cards to represent ships, damage from ships' weapons, and other possible ship actions. The objective of the game is to destroy or capture your enemies' ships while preserving your own fleet.

In the basic game each player will have a random mixture of different ships from four different races, while in the campaign game a player or team commands one race.

Components

214 Battle Cards (the "battle deck")

- 72 Phasers
- 46 Torpedoes
- 26 Plasma
- 20 Deflectors
- 12 Damage Controls (**two** Damage Control 2s)
- 12 Evasive Maneuvers
- 8 Boarding Parties
- 8 Racial Advantages
- 6 Specials
- 4 Reinforcements

64 Ship Cards (the "ship deck")

- 16 Confederation
- 16 Packtons
- 16 Ritillians
- 16 Shiltons

1 Rule Book (this one)

Playing the Game

Number of Players

From two to eight.

Setup

- 1) Separately shuffle both the ship deck and the battle deck.
- 2) Deal out five ship cards to each player. Each player then places these cards face up in front of themselves – the way a player places them on the table has no bearing on the course of play.
- 3) Deal out seven battle cards to each player – these are kept in the player's hand and are not revealed to other players.

Who Goes First?

Each player randomly draws a card from the battle deck. The player who draws the highest damage card goes first. Cards that are not damage cards (Specials, Deflectors, etc.) are considered a 0 (zero). The cards are shuffled back into the battle deck and then play proceeds clockwise.

Object of the Game

Destroy or capture as many enemy ships as possible, while trying not to lose any of your own.

Order of Play

- 1) Designate attacks
- 2) Play defense cards *
- 3) Calculate total damage to all ships *
- 4) Remove destroyed ships
- 5) Play boarding party cards
- 6) Play damage control
- 7) Declare Reinforcements
- 8) Discard unwanted battle cards
- 9) Replace battle cards (both attacker and defender)

* These actions taken by the defender.

Note: Special Cards and Racial Advantages are played during different phases depending on the card; see the Special Cards and Racial Advantages sections of the rules for more details.

1) Designating Attacks

There are three types of attack cards; Phasers, Torpedoes, and Plasma. Phasers 1-4 are the same type of attack card, but have varying ascending levels of power.

The player whose turn it is currently is called the “attacker” while all other players are “defenders.”

First, a player examines his ship cards and determines what weapons each ship possesses (Phasers 1, 2, 3, & 4, Torpedoes, and Plasma). Next, he examines his battle hand and matches battle cards with his ships’ weapon systems. Each ship may only fire one phaser and one missile weapon (Torpedo or Plasma) per turn. (except in an All Out Attack; see Racial Advantages).

Example: The Cruiser Saratoga is equipped with Phasers 1, 2 and Plasma. It may fire one phaser card (either a type 1 or 2) and one Plasma card during the player’s turn.

Next, the attacker examines his battle hand to determine which attack card(s) he will be able to play and then chooses his target(s). He places damage card(s) (Phasers 1, 2, 3, 4, Torpedoes, and/or Plasmas) face down on the chosen enemy ship(s). A player may fire at more than one ship and more than one enemy at the same time. When a card is placed it must be announced what type of weapon it is (phasers (but not what kind), Torpedo, or Plasma). The attacker may play as many damage cards as are permitted by his ships’ weapon selections and his battle hand.

Example: The player with the Cruiser Saratoga plays a Phaser 2 card and a Plasma card on an enemy’s ship(s). He would announce to the other player(s) “a phaser and a plasma” and place them on the ship(s) fired upon. No other information about the cards should be revealed.

The attacker should place all attack cards face down before any other player plays defense cards. After all attacks have been designated, but before they are revealed, go to the next phase (playing defense cards).

2) Defense Cards

Warp

A Confederation ship may play a Warp at this time. See Racial Advantages.

Evasive Maneuvers

After the attacker has designated all of his attacks, defenders may play an Evasive Maneuvers battle card. This will allow **one** ship to avoid one volley of attacks. A player may play as many Evasive Maneuvers cards as he has in his hand. The Evasive Maneuvers cards and all damage cards evaded are placed in the discard pile.

A volley is a set of attack cards (Plasma, Torpedoes, and phasers) coming at one ship. It can be from one to seven cards in size.

Deflectors

After all Evasive Maneuvers cards have been played, the defender can then play Deflector cards. A ship may not play a Deflector card and then play an Evasive Maneuvers card (or vice-versa). Each ship may play one Deflector card to defend itself only. Each Deflector card will stop one phaser damage card. If more than one phaser is used against a ship, one card is randomly drawn from the **face-down** cards identified as phasers. That card is the one stopped by the Deflector. The phaser card along with the Deflector card are then placed in the discard pile.

Note: Deflectors have no effect on Torpedoes or Plasma.

3) Totaling Damage

After all defense cards have been played, add the value of the damage cards that hit each ship to the damage that ship has suffered in previous turns (if any). This total is the amount of damage the ship has taken, and is subtracted first from shields and then from the Structure (Structure Points). These cards are placed under the ship with their amount of damage showing to ensure that a proper total of damage that the ship has sustained is maintained. Do this for all ships hit.

Damage to the Shields

After the total amount of damage is calculated, determine if it is greater than the ship's shield points. If it is, the shields are considered to be "down." If shields are down, the ship is vulnerable to Boarding Parties (see Boarding Parties section). Otherwise the damage is subtracted from the shields. This is now the current strength of the shields.

Example: The cruiser Saratoga has a shield strength of 20. It suffers 15 points of damage. The shields now have 5 points left.

Damage to Structure

If total damage is greater than a ship's shield value, the ship will suffer Structure damage from whatever damage remains unabsorbed by the shields. When a ship has taken damage that drops it to half Structure or less, the ship is considered to be **crippled** and loses many of its capabilities (see below). If a ship takes damage that equals or exceeds its **Full** Structure value then it is destroyed.

Crippled ships are incapable of defending themselves with Deflectors. They also lose the ability to use Racial Advantage cards. However, a crippled ship may still play Evasive Maneuvers cards.

Example: The Cruiser Saratoga has already taken 15 points of damage to its shields. It is then hit for another 20 points of damage. Five points of damage are absorbed by the remaining shield points, but the remaining 15 points reduce the SP. Since the damage to the Saratoga is equal to or greater than its crippled total, it's now a crippled ship and may no longer play Deflector cards or use its Racial Advantage (Warp in this case).

Note: The "crippled" amount stated on the ship cards includes the shield points for the ship, so once the amount of total damage to the ship is equal to or greater than this number, the ship is crippled.

4) Removing Destroyed Ships

The player that actually destroys a ship gets that ship's value added to his point total for that battle (see scoring points). Each player should set aside the ships he destroys until the end of the battle – destroyed ships are not returned to the ship deck until after the end of that battle.

5) Boarding Parties

When a ship's shields are reduced to 0 (zero) it is vulnerable to Boarding Parties. The attacker may attempt boarding actions to take control of any vulnerable enemy ships (whether fired on that turn or not). This is done by playing a Boarding Party card on the enemy ship to be taken over.

The defender may counter a Boarding Party with a Boarding Party card of his own (if he has one). This exchange may continue until one or the other runs out of Boarding Parties. No other player may participate in this exchange.

If the defender is unable or unwilling to counter a Boarding Party he may elect to **Self Destruct** his ship. In order to do this he must play a Self Destruct card (see Special Cards for more details). The ship is immediately destroyed and no one receives points for its destruction. A self-destructed ship is placed face-up at the bottom of the ship deck.

If a boarding party succeeds, then control of the ship is transferred to the attacking player and he may now treat it as his own ship. All damage cards remain with the ship. The player taking control of a ship may play Damage Control cards at this time; (see Damage Control).

Note: A Cloaked ship may not be boarded nor board other ships.

Example: The cruiser Repulse has its shields knocked down. The attacker now plays a Boarding Party card. The defending player, however, has his own Boarding Party card and counters the boarding party. Unfortunately for the defender, the attacker plays another Boarding Party card and, since the defender has neither another Boarding Party card nor a Self Destruct card, the attacker takes control of the Cruiser Repulse.

6) Damage Control

If the attacker has any damaged ships in his fleet he may now play Damage Control cards. Each Damage Control card allows the player to remove the indicated number of damage cards from his ships (one or two). The player may choose which damage card(s) to remove – there is no upper limit on the amount of the damage removed (just number of cards). This may bring the shields back up or cripple a ship.

Example: The cruiser Repulse was just captured. The new owner now plays a Damage Control card, removing a Plasma that struck for 20 points of damage. The cruiser Repulse has now only suffered 15 points of damage and shields are once again operational. A player may play as many Damage Control cards as he has in his hand. Damage Control 2 cards may be used to repair two different ships (one card removed from each ship).

7) Reinforcements

A Reinforcement card allows the attacking player to draw one additional ship card from the ship deck. The new ship cannot fire until the player's next turn. Note that the Reinforcement card has a different function in the Campaign Rules (See Campaign Rules). The attacking player may also play a Self Destruct card on his own ships during this phase.

8) Discarding

The attacker may now discard any or all of his remaining cards he does not wish to keep. This is done by simply placing them face up on the discard pile. These cards may be examined by other players.

9) Replacing Battle Cards

The attacker now draws from the battle deck the appropriate number of cards to bring his hand back to seven cards. When the attacker has his full compliment of cards, the defenders, in clockwise order, should refill their hands to seven cards, replacing any cards played for defense. **All players should have a full hand of seven cards at the start of each turn.** If a player forgets to replace his cards, he must wait until the end of the next turn if any attacks have been designated. When everyone has replaced their battle cards, play continues in clockwise order, with the next player becoming the attacker.

10) Racial Advantages

When a player plays a Racial Advantages card he must announce which Race and (if necessary) ship he is using it for. Each race has a different special ability. The player must have the race's ship in his fleet in order to use that race's special ability and the particular ability may only be used by a ship of that race. Racial Advantages cards cannot be played by ships that are crippled.

The Confederation,

The Confederation's Racial Advantage allows one ship to "Warp" out of battle. This is done in one of two ways. The first way this card can be used is at the beginning of the player's turn. Before any weapons are fired, he can Warp any ship that is not crippled out of the battle by playing the card and announcing that the ship is Warping out. Ships that Warp out cannot fire that turn and cannot return to the battle. The second way the card can be used is as a defense card. The card can be used to Warp a ship out of battle when it is being fired on. The card is played immediately after attacks have been designated. The ship is then Warped out of the battle without taking any damage from the volley. All ships that have been Warped out are still worth their value points at the end of the battle. In both cases, any damage that the ship has taken before Warping out remains with it until the end of the battle (see scoring points).

The Packtons,

The Racial Advantages card for the Packtons gives them the ability to do an All Out Attack. An All Out Attack gives the player the ability to fire all of a ship's weapons at one time and as many times as limited by the cards in his hand. This means that all Phasers (1,2,3,4), Plasma, and Torpedoes can be fired as many times as the player has cards in his hand. The Packton ship must be capable of firing the weapon.

Example: A player has two Plasma, two Torpedoes, a Phaser 1, and a Phaser 3 in his battle hand. The player could fire all of these weapons using the All Out Attack if the Packton ship is capable of firing them.

The Ritillians,

The Ritillians have Superior Boarding Parties as their Racial Advantage. Superior Boarding Parties are played in the same way regular Boarding Parties are, but the Racial Advantages card counts as TWO Boarding Parties. The player does not play a Boarding Party card when playing a Racial Advantages card for this purpose. The player must at the time of playing the Racial Advantages card announce which Ritillian ship the Superior Boarding party is coming from. This card can be stopped by TWO regular Boarding Parties, or if the ship being boarded is Ritillian, another Racial Advantages card. Ritillian ships cannot aid any other of the player's ships to help stop a boarding party; defensively, the Racial Advantages card may only be used on a Ritillian ship.

The Shiltons,

The Racial Advantages card allows the Shiltons to Cloak one of their ships per card played. This is done at the beginning of the player's turn, before firing. The player plays the Racial Advantages card and announces that a ship is Cloaking. He turns the ship card over and any damage cards the ships may have on it. The ship cannot fire on the turn that it Cloaks. A Cloaked ship cannot be fired on by any other ship (Except with the "Super Science Officer" See Special Cards) nor boarded. On subsequent turns a Cloaked ship may fire on another ship. When this is done the Cloaked ship becomes unCloaked for the rest of the battle or until another Racial Advantage is used. Any ship that is fired on by a Cloaked ship may NOT use Evasive Maneuvers. Deflectors still can be used. A Confederation ship that is being fired on by a

Cloaked ship may NOT use a Racial Advantage to Warp out to avoid the volley. A ship may stay Cloaked as long as the player desires. Ships may use damage control while they are Cloaked. If a ship is crippled while Cloaked (from an attack using the Super Science Officer special card), it immediately becomes unCloaked unless the Miracle Worker is played at that time (see Special Cards) and enough damage is removed so that the ship is no longer crippled. If the ship becomes unCloaked it could be boarded that turn. A Cloaked ship may not board another ship.

Special Cards

1) **The Miracle Worker** – This card is an instant Damage Control card that may remove one damage card. It may be played as soon as the ship is damaged, provided the ship still has at least one Structure left. It can also be used to disarm a self destruct played by an enemy, negating the effects of that card. This card can also be used as a Damage Control 2 card on the player's turn.

2) **Super Science Officer** – This card may be played in one of three different ways. The first two of these may only be played during the player's turn.

1) Allows the attacking player to examine one opponent's battle hand.

2) It may be used to fire on a Cloaked ship. The attacker plays the Super Science Officer card and announces he is firing on a Cloaked ship. He then proceeds to designate attacks in the normal way. A ship that is fired on while Cloaked cannot use Evasive Maneuvers.

3) It may also be played as a defense, allowing the defending player to examine any volley of attacks against one of his ships. This is done before playing any defensive cards. If playing a Deflector as the defensive card, the player may pick the phaser blocked.

Note: When firing on a Cloaked ship the player cannot see the shields or Structure value of the ship, because the card had been turned over at the time of Cloaking. Therefore the attacker is less likely to know how much damage is needed to destroy the ship.

3) **Superior Weapons Officer** – This card is announced just before an attacking volley is designated. It prevents the defending player from playing any defensive card (Deflectors, Warps or Evasive Maneuvers). This card can only be stopped by the Computer Defense card.

Example: The cruiser Saratoga has only 5 shield points, but has full Structure of 24 for a total of 29 points. Another player plays the Superior Weapons Officer along with two Torpedoes and one phaser on the Saratoga. The defender can take no defense, except the Computer Defense (even though he did have an Evasive Maneuvers card in his hand). The three damage cards are turned over and totaled for 30 points of additional damage. This damage, along with the 15 points The cruiser Saratoga has already sustained is greater than the ship's combined shields and Structure value. The cruiser Saratoga is now space dust! The attacker gets the ship card to add to his total points at the end of the battle.

4) **Computer Defense** – This card is an Evasive Maneuvers card for an entire fleet, and is played in the same phase as Evasive Maneuvers would be played. All attacks against that player's fleet miss the turn that this card is played. It can be used to negate the Superior Weapons Officer, but then only this attack is avoided. The rest of the fleet may still defend normally.

Example: If the player who lost the Cruiser Saratoga played this card in its defense, then the cruiser would still be around for this example. But alas, he didn't, so it isn't.

5) **Self Destruct** – This card may only be played on a ship in the player's fleet. It will cause the ship to be destroyed. This card can only be played on the owner's turn during the Reinforcement phase or when one of his ships is being boarded. However, any ship that Self Destroys is not worth any points for any of the players; the ship is simply discarded (placed face-up at the bottom of the ship deck).

Retreating

A ship may leave the battle at any time without using any card. This is done when a player announces that a ship is leaving. The ship is set apart from the rest of the fleet. The ship is still able to be attacked and defend normally and it may play damage control. The ship may not make any attacks of any form after it has been designated as leaving the battle (including using Boarding Parties). The ship remains set aside until the beginning of the player's next turn, at which point, if it has survived, it has successfully retreated from battle and is considered a surviving ship when determining score at the end of the battle. A Cloaked ship may leave battle in this way without uncloaking.

Note: Damage cards stay with the ship once it successfully retreats.

Ending the Battle and the Last Draw

Play can end in one of two ways:

- 1) All ships except for one player's have been destroyed and there are no unplayed reinforcements.
- 2) Once the last card is drawn it becomes the last round of the battle and every player gets one more turn. The player on whose turn the last card was drawn will also be the player to take the last turn. At the end of his turn the battle ends. **The battle deck is not reshuffled** to allow players to refill their hands – they must play out the last round with whatever cards they have remaining.

Scoring Points

Every ship that a player destroys is worth a certain number of points. This total of value points is marked on each card.

Example: 29 points for the Saratoga class heavy Cruiser.

Every ship that the player has surviving at the end of a battle is worth its value points minus any Structure damage that was sustained during the battle.

The total value of enemy ships destroyed and the player's surviving ships is the amount of value points earned for that battle.

Victory – Winning the Game

The player with the most value points at the end of a predetermined number of battles, or the first to reach a pre-determined number of value points is the winner. If two or more players exceed the set point value at the end of a battle, the player with the most points wins. We recommend either 2 battles or 250 points for a shorter game (45-60 Minutes) or 4 battles or 500 points for a longer game (2 hours).

Campaign Rules

The campaign game is played the same way that the regular game is played, except each player takes command of a particular race. Two players may play the same race but with different ships, allowing more than four players. Players of the same race may not exchange battle cards but may exchange ships between battles. Players playing the same race are a team.

Number of Battles

Determine how long the game is going to be or how many battles there will be. We recommend three battles.

Buying your fleet

At the beginning of the game separate the ship deck by races. Each player is given 150 points to buy a fleet. Ship costs are determined by their value points. Any points unused for fleet purchase may be banked for later use.

Starting the game

After the fleets have been bought, each player decides which ships are going to be sent out to do battle. The number of ships sent is completely up to the player. After all players have done this, all players reveal their ships at the same time. All ships purchased do not have to be brought in for the first battle of the game. Any ships that are not brought in are said to be back at a starbase and may only come into battle by use of a Reinforcement card. The Reinforcement card **does not** allow the player to draw a new ship from the deck.

Ending a campaign battle

There are two ways a battle can end in the campaign game. The first is when the battle deck runs out. The other is when only one player or team is left because the others have been destroyed, have Cloaked (and say they have no intention of returning for more battle), retreated, or Warped out and have no more ships left to do battle.

Ships leaving a battle

When a ship leaves a battle by using a Warp or retreating, that ship is then sent to that player's starbase and remains there until that battle is over. Any damage done to it remains until the end of the battle when damage is repaired (see below). Ships that Warp out of battle may not return to that battle.

Making repairs and buying new ships

After each battle, all players receive 50 points to make repairs to their ships and buy new ones at value cost. If it is a team game, then each player gets 50 points. On top of these 50 points a player gets any points left over from previous battles. Cost for repairing shield points is one point per two shield points (round down), and one point per point of Structure damage. Any ship that was not purchased before the battle may be purchased now (destroyed ships cannot be purchased again – they are out of the battle permanently). Ships may also be exchanged between team members at this time. Any points left over may be saved for use after the next battle. These are cumulative with the points saved from previous battles of the campaign, if applicable.

Campaign Victory

After the predetermined number of battles have been played, each player counts up how many points he has by adding up all the value points of the ships left in his fleet, plus the value points from all the ships that he destroyed plus any points that were banked and not used. Any ships that are captured are worth double their value. Subtract points for any Structure damage remaining on captured ships before doubling their value, but the minimum value (after doubling) for a captured ship is its normal value points (i.e. a captured ship is worth at least the amount of points that would be received for destroying it). Teams figure one total for all players. The player (or team) with the highest total is the winner.

The Races

The Confederation

Members of the Confederation come mostly from the planet Earth, but there are other races that sometimes serve on board Confederation ships. These other races usually did not develop the technology for space travel on their own, and were discovered by the Confederation. The Confederation ships are the fastest made in this section of the galaxy, and can slip out of battle very quickly. Currently it is believed that the Confederation has explored more of the galaxy than the other known races.

The Packtons

The Packtons appear to be a cross between a spider and a human. Much about this race is unknown. First contact with them by the Confederation happened only recently, with both sides exchanging fire shortly thereafter. One thing is apparent about them, the Packtons seem to fire first and ask questions later. The Packtons are able to concentrate vast amounts of firepower at one time, thereby destroying opponents in one blow. Other races seem to have encountered similar problems when dealing with the Packtons, and will attack them out of self defense.

The Shiltons

These catlike humanoids are the most warlike and aggressive of the known spacefaring races. They have continuously attempted to occupy systems claimed by other races. The Shiltons have the ability to Cloak their ships in battle. There are rumors that say the Shiltons and the Ritillians have been at war for almost 50 years over one sector of space. All other space faring races loath the Shiltons and will attack them on sight.

The Ritillians

The Ritillians are reptilian-looking humanoids that, like the Shiltons, are known to be very aggressive. One of the main differences between them and the Shiltons is that the Ritillians usually respect other race's territorial claims. The Ritillians have equipped their ships with excellent and numerous troop transport systems that allow them to bring huge Boarding Parties over to enemy ships to take control of them. The Ritillians will sometimes negotiate with Confederation ships, but only when at a disadvantage.

Credits

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Rules questions? Comments? Always wanted to write to a game company? Well, we will gladly answer any inquiries about this or any of our other games (actually, this is the first, but wait . . .). Just send your thoughts to:

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(Oh yeah, include a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) for a quicker (and often nicer) reply. We are always running out of stamps and we visit the post office about as often as Bill Clinton eats health food.)

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Computer versions of the above and even a few other titles are also in the works. Who knows what else will arise from the Inferno