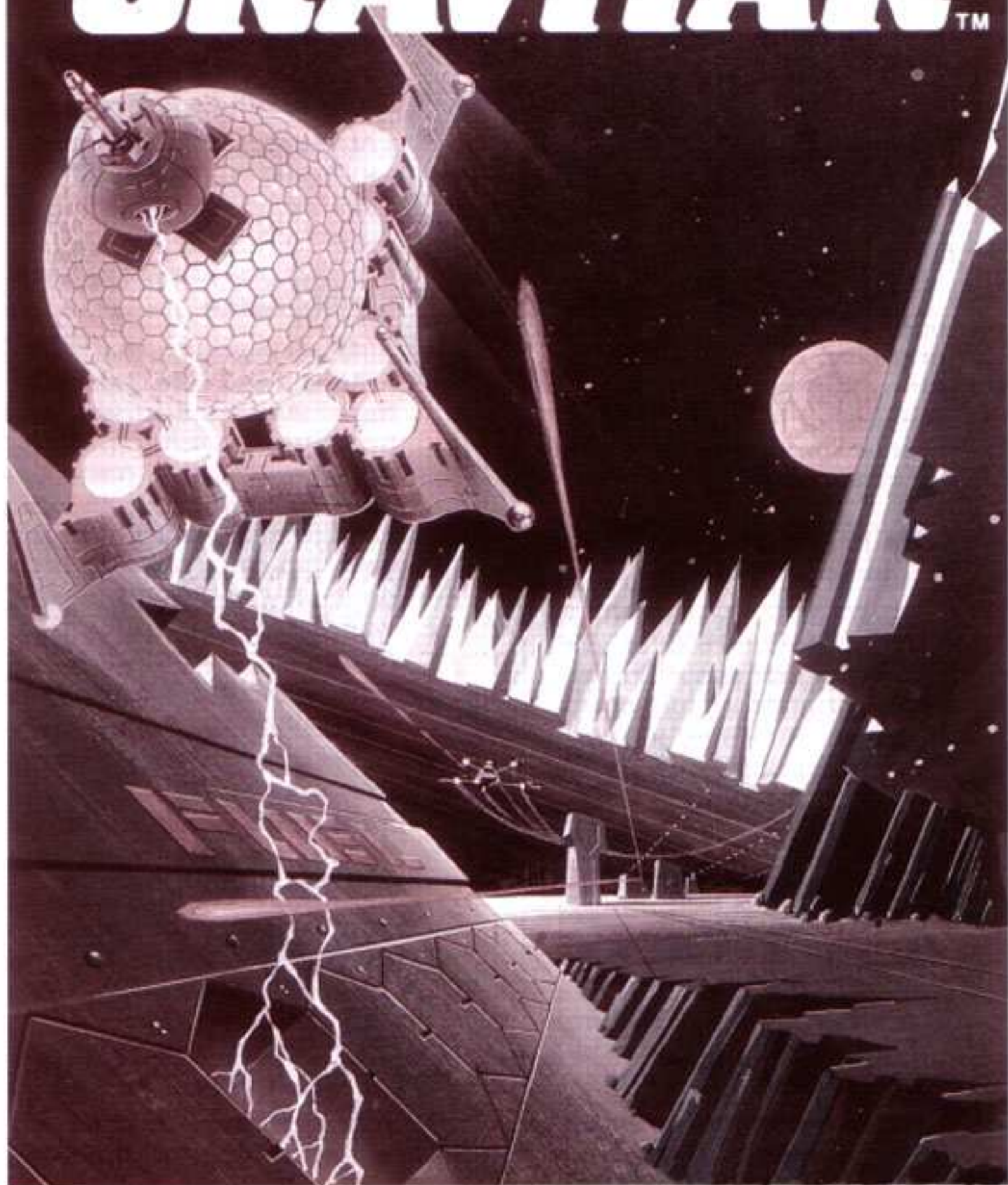# GRAVITAR™

The evil Gravitar has set out to destroy the universe! His deadly weapon? Gravity!

Gravitar bombards unsuspecting galaxies with his hostile gravitational forces. He then installs a powerful reactor within each solar system of the defeated galaxy, creating a killer sun that destroys all life on the surrounding planets. He blockades those planets with lethal rammers and with automated bunkers programmed to shoot.

So far, Gravitar has conquered four galaxies, each made up of three solar systems. And intelligence reports hint that our galaxy may be next. Gravitar must be stopped before he adds our galaxy to his list!

Getting Started

1. With your television turned on, insert the Gravitar cartridge into your Atari 2600 (or 7800) as explained in your Owner's Manual, and then turn on your console. The Gravitar title screen appears.

2. Plug a joystick into the left controller port.

3. Press **[Select]** to choose one of five game levels. (The game level number appears at the bottom of the title screen.)

   • **Level 1** is the most challenging, with only 6 spaceships at your disposal.

   • At **level 2**, you have 15 ships in your fleet.

• At **level 3**, you have 6 spaceships, but the planetary bunkers and enemy saucers cannot fire at you.

• **Level 4** offers a good practice game. You have 100 spaceships in your fleet; but watch out for shooting saucers and enemy bunkers.

• At **level 5**, you have 25 spaceships and no gravity to fight; this level is a good place for beginners to start.

4. Press the joystick fire button to begin the game.

5. Hold the joystick so that the red button is in the upper left corner. Move the joystick handle right or left to rotate your ship in that direction. Push the joystick handle forward to thrust in the direction your ship is pointing. Pull back on the joystick handle to activate your tractor beam and to raise your protective shields. Press the joystick fire button to release missiles.

6. During a game, press **[Reset]** to return to the title screen to make a new game selection.

Playing the Game

Your task is to break Gravitar's hold on the 12 solar systems under his power. You can do this by destroying all bunkers on every planet or by setting off the reactor in the alien reactor base.

Each solar system consists of a killer sun, an alien reactor base,

and three or four blockaded planets—each housing fuel depots and enemy bunkers.

To move from one solar system to the next, you must either visit all the planets and destroy every enemy bunker or activate the reactor at the core of the alien reactor base and escape before it explodes.

When you complete your mission in the three solar systems of one galaxy, you are automatically transported to another galaxy, where your rescue mission will continue.

You start the game with 6 to 100 starships, depending on the game level, and with 10,000 fuel units. Your ship consumes fuel every time you use your thrust engines, activate your shields, or extend your tractor beam. A warning beep sounds when your fuel level goes below 2,000 units.

The game ends when you run out of fuel or lose all your spaceships. When you complete your mission, the game resets and your points continue to accumulate.

Solar Systems

As the ship leaves its entry port in the solar system, you must steer out of the gravitational field of the

killer sun and head for a planet. If your ship is drawn into the killer sun, you will crash.

The alien reactor base of each solar system sends out enemy saucers to shoot at you, except in game level 3. If you fly near a saucer, you will both be thrown out into deep space, where you must duel until your ship or the saucer is destroyed.

The Cosmic Menace!

Ships Remaining

Enemy Saucer   Killer Sun

Alien Reactor Base   Planet

Entry Port
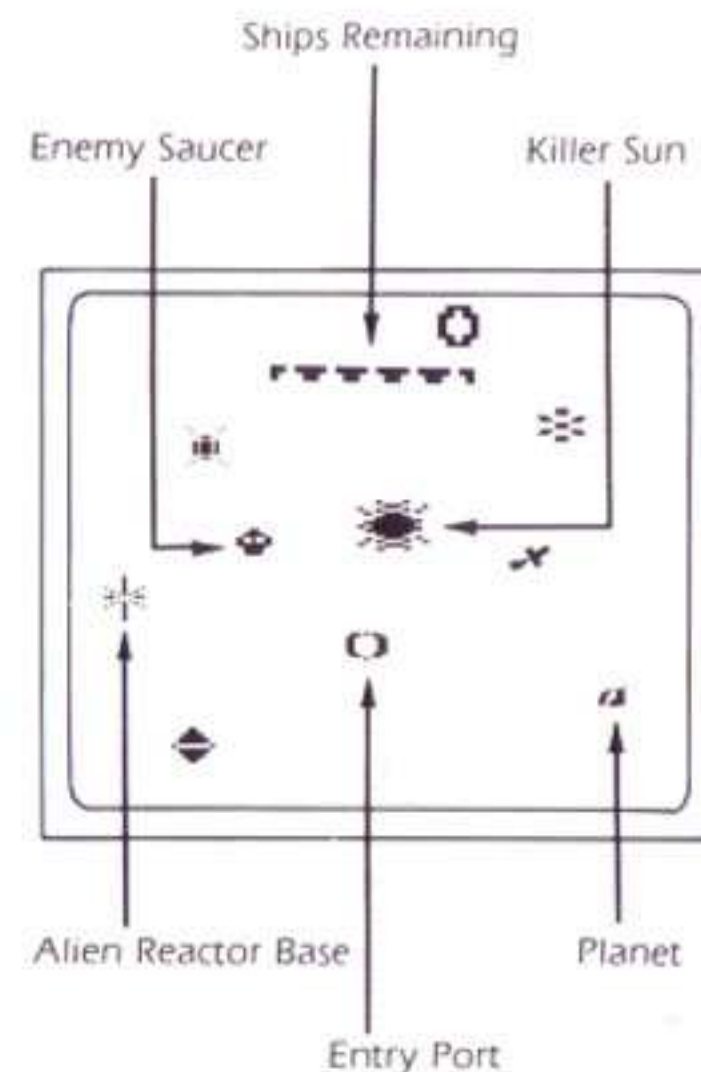
Planets

One way to complete your mission in a solar system is to visit every planet and destroy all bunkers. You enter a planet's atmosphere by flying very near it. You cannot leave a planet until you have blown up every bunker.

Each planet has its own craggy landscape, and, except at game level 5, each has a strong gravitational force that makes your flight around the planet very treacherous. If you fly too close to a planet, your starship will be crushed by its gravity.

Watch out for the rammers that hover above most planets. If one of these enemy ships rams you, you lose a starship.
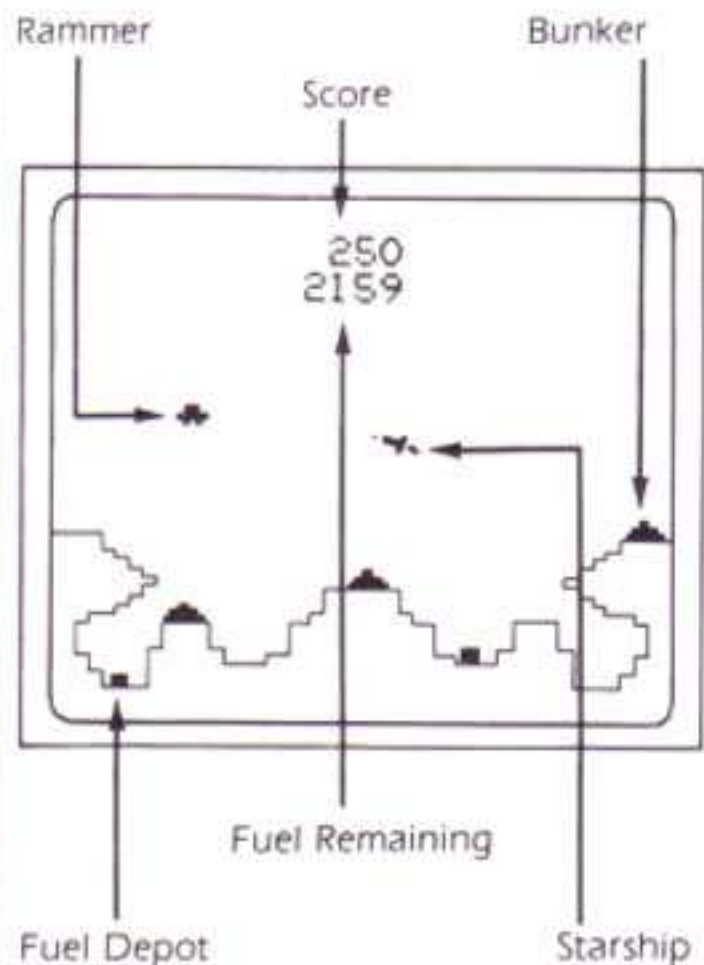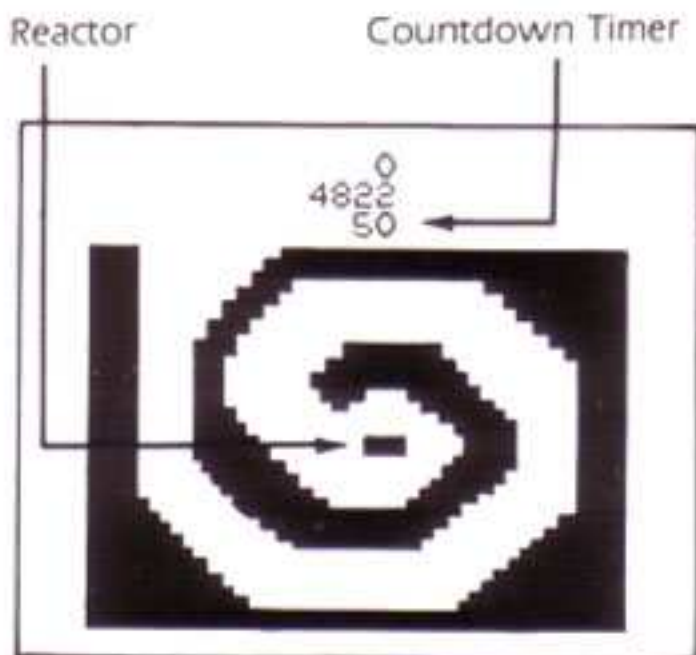
Shoot your missiles to blow up the bunkers and the rammers. You can also destroy a bunker by crashing into it, but you'll lose a spaceship. Use your tractor beam to pick up fuel capsules as needed.

After destroying all the bunkers, fly your ship to the top of the screen to leave the planet and return to the solar system screen. The planet you have just left will then explode.

Alien Reactor Base

The other way to complete your mission in a solar system is to destroy the alien reactor base. The alien reactor base is a port into the next solar system. It consists of a winding tunnel that leads to a reactor at the core of the planet.

A clock at the top of the screen counts down the seconds you have to reach the reactor, activate it by firing into its center, and escape before it explodes.

Rammer — Score — Bunker

250
2I59

Fuel Remaining

Fuel Depot — Starship

Reactor — Countdown Timer

0
4822
50

As you move through the first two galaxies, your countdown time on the alien reactor base decreases, from 60 seconds in the first solar system to a harrowing 25 seconds in the sixth. When you reach the third galaxy, the countdown cycle starts over.

You can leave the alien reactor base without setting off the reactor. If your ship is destroyed on the base, you will be returned to your entry port in the solar system. If you blow up the alien reactor base, the explosion will catapult you into the next solar system.

Galaxies

When you make it through all three solar systems in one galaxy, you automatically go on to the next galaxy.

The four galaxies are similar, except for factors of light and gravity. In the second and fourth galaxies, each planet exerts a reverse gravitational force that repels your ship. In the third and fourth galaxies, the landscape of each planet, including the alien reactor base, is completely dark; only the bunkers, rammers, and fuel depots are visible.

Strategy

Be careful when using your shields. Although they protect your ship from enemy fire, your shields will not withstand a crash or a collision with an enemy ship.

When leaving the entry port, rotate the ship to the left or right;

then thrust forward to move away from the sun.

Use a light touch on your joystick when thrusting. If your ship hits the side of the screen, it will be repelled by a force field and may be hard to control.

Since the force of gravity gets stronger as you near a planet's surface, aim the nose of your ship away from the planet when picking up fuel. You can then thrust away from the surface as soon as you have the fuel.

To pick up fuel, steer your ship over the fuel depot and activate the tractor beam by pulling the joystick handle toward you. You can pick up fuel with your ship aimed in any direction.

When picking up fuel, pull back on your joystick handle and quickly release it. You'll use a minimum amount of energy, and your chances of crashing will be reduced.

You may want to wait until you have destroyed every bunker on a planet before you beam up the fuel. Be careful not to fly near the top of the screen or you'll enter the solar system before you get all the fuel.

When traveling through the dark galaxies, you can find out where the planet surface is by firing missiles. Each time your missile hits, the explosion will briefly illuminate the landscape. This technique works in the alien reactor base as well.

Scoring

You score points for destroying enemy saucers, rammers, and bunkers. Each time you enter a new solar system, you receive 7,000 fuel units, two bonus ships, and 4,000 extra points. You can earn a total of 999,950 points before the score resets. At the end of a game, your final score appears below the game level number.

Saucer . . . . .100 points

Rammer . . . . .100 points

Bunker . . . . .250 points

Fuel depot . . . . .5,000 fuel units

Bonus ship . . . . Every 10,000 points