

STAR COMMANDER



Welcome to Star Commander

Star Commander is a card game of exploration, colonization, commerce, and conflict. In a single game, you are racing against other would-be empires vying for control of star systems, in order to grow your own influence across the galaxy.

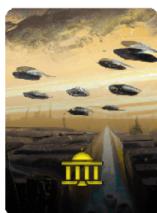
Game Components

This game includes:

- Three 30-card Domain decks (Industry, Statecraft, and Science)
- One 28-card Systems deck
- 107 Ship cards (4 Scouts, 20 Strike Fighters, 18 Corvettes, 14 Frigates, 12 Destroyers, 10 Cruisers, 8 Battleships, and 20 Defense Stations)
- Four sets of 25 colored cubes (Red, Blue, Yellow, and Green)
- 20 1-credit tokens, and 20 5-credit tokens
- This rulebook



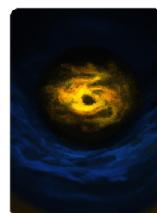
Industry



Statecraft



Science



Systems



Ships

Card Types

There are five card types in the game. Throughout play, you will be interacting with each of these at some point, so it's good to familiarize yourself with them.

Ship



There are four ship types - Fighter, Small, Medium, and Large. Each has a cost, attack, hit points, and speed. Some ships have other abilities written on them. Ships are the only cards that can move between systems.

Ships are built at your Homeworld or in Capital Systems, and are placed on the side of the system

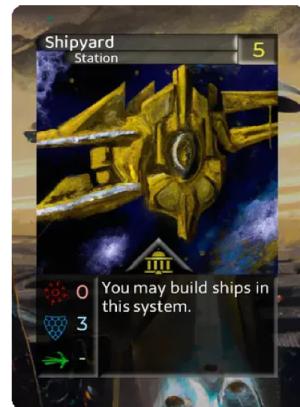
card closest to you. Ships are placed on the board with their text facing their controller. Ships can move (jump) between systems equal to their speed; a ship with a speed of 1 can jump to another system once per turn.

You can only control a number of ships equal to the total number of developments you control. If your number of developments is equal to or less than the number of ships you control, you cannot build more ships.

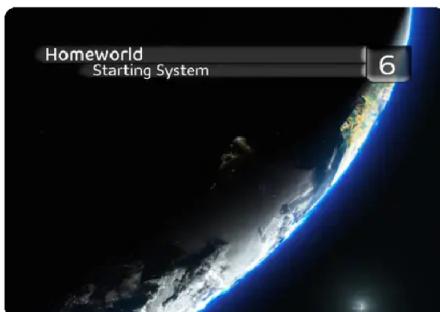
Station

Stations act just like ships, but cannot move between systems. Stations can be built in any system you control. You may only build a number of stations equal to the number of developments in that system.

If a station with no attack remains in a system after it has been conquered by another player, that player gains control of it.



System



Systems are the backbone of your empire. They provide resources to build ships and play other cards. Systems also have a domain (see Domains) and a maximum development number.

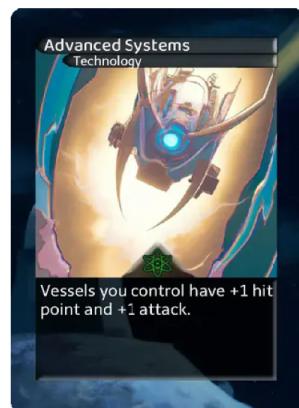
This number, located in the top right of the card, represents the total number of development counters that can be placed on the system at any time.

Technology

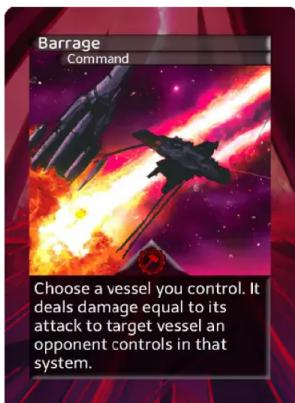
Technology cards allow for additional, long-lasting abilities.

Technology cards are placed in the Technology row closest to the player.

Some technologies provide static abilities, like increasing ship stats or drawing additional cards each turn, while others have abilities that can be activated when needed.



Command



Commands are cards that affect gameplay, then go to the discard pile. You play them from your hand onto the board, then move them to the discard pile. Commands can be played on any player's turn, but if it is not your turn they can only be played as a response (see Responses).

Domains

There are three domains - Industry, Statecraft, and Science. There is one deck for each domain. These domains reflect the focus of your nation, and will provide you with different technologies, space stations, and commands that reflect that focus.

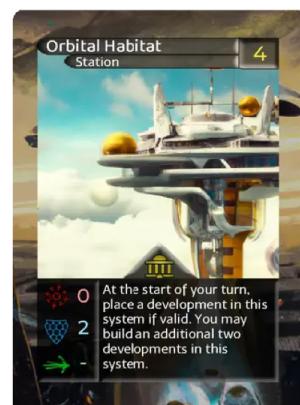
Industry



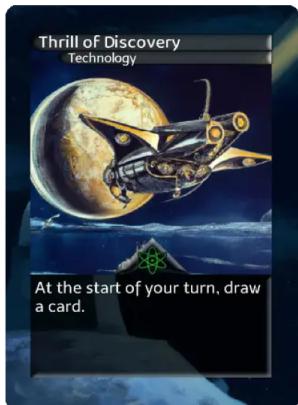
Industry is primarily focused on getting the most out of your resources. If you focus on the industry domain, you will be earning more credits, building the largest ships, and dealing the most damage. Industry wants to build out large, powerful fleets and overwhelm their opponents.

Statecraft

Statecraft focuses on defensive play, building up their systems efficiently and building a strong support network to defend them. Statecraft relies on building defensive stations and smaller ships, while manipulating events in ways not related to combat.



Science



Science is all about finding new ways to bend the rules, and get an advantage over your opponents. Science cards help you draw more cards, move your ships around faster, and prevent your opponent from destroying your ships. Building up an advantage is what science does best.

Systems and Domains

Most systems are associated with a domain. You can see which domain a system is associated to by the colored symbol in the center of the card.



- A red gear and hammer represents Industry.
- A golden building represents Statecraft.
- A green atom represents Science.

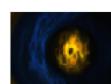
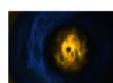
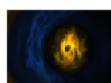
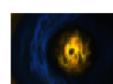
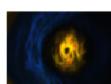
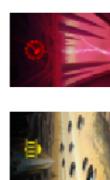
If you control a system with a domain, you are considered to control that domain. Whenever you draw a card, you may only draw a card from a domain that you control.

Setup

Shuffle the three Domain decks and the Systems deck, then lay out a grid of Systems (3x3, 4x4, and 5x5 grids are recommended), with a corner system with a Homeworld starting system for each player. Place a Scout ship adjacent to each Homeworld. Cards should face their owners when possible. Return the remainder of the Systems deck to the box.

Place the shuffled Domain decks to the side, within reach of each player. Place all ship cards in piles of each type, face up, near the playing field. Each player also receives 3 credits.

Technology Row



Technology Row

Objective

Star Commander is a competitive game where players are attempting to dominate a region of space. The objective of each player is to build the most developments in their systems before the end of the game. You can do this by building a strong defensive position, or by being aggressive and preventing your opponents from establishing their own empires.

At the end of the game, whichever player has the most developments wins!

Game Overview

First, determine who goes first by some random method. Then, going clockwise, each player takes a turn that proceeds with the following phases:

- Ready Phase (skip on first turn)
 - Gain credits
 - Draw a card
 - Perform Start of Turn actions
- Command Phase
 - Move Ships
 - Explore
 - Build Ships/Stations
 - Develop Systems
 - Trade
- Combat Phase
 - Initiate Combat
 - Assign Damage
 - Resolve Damage
 - Retreat
- End Phase
 - Conquest
 - Cleanup

Ready Phase

Do these in order.

Gain Credits

Gain 1 credit for each development you control in systems that are not under siege (see Siege). Gain credits as stated on other cards you control.

Draw a card

Draw a card for one of the domains you control. Draw any additional cards as stated on other cards you control. If you already have five cards in your hand, you must skip drawing a card.

If you draw the last card in a deck, the game ends. See Game End.

Perform Start of Turn Actions

Perform any other actions on cards you control that take place at the start of the turn.

Command Phase

Do these in any order

Move Ships

Ships that you have controlled since the start of your turn are able to move (or jump) to another adjacent system. Ships may only jump according to their speed. For example, a Corvette has a speed of 1, and so can only jump once per turn. A Fighter has a speed of 0, and so cannot jump.

Some cards (like Enhanced Jump Drive) can increase a ship's speed, which allows for additional movement actions. The only time a Fighter can jump while having a speed of 0 is if a Carrier is in the same system as the Fighter and it jumps to another system.

Explore

Whenever a ship enters a system with a face down System card, you must immediately flip it over. This is called Exploring. Some systems may have effects when they are explored, which are to be done before play continues and cannot be responded to.

Build Ships/Stations

You may build any ships or stations that you can afford. Stations can be built in any system you control, while ships can only be constructed in starting systems and capital systems. There are some restrictions on when you can build ships or stations:

- You can only build a number of stations in a system equal to the number of development counters in that system. If a system only has one development counter, it can only have one station.
- You can only build a number of ships equal to the total number of developments you control.
- You cannot build a ship or station in a system that is under siege (see Siege) or in a system where combat has taken place since your last turn, and opposing ships are still in the system. The exception is your starting system, where you can always build ships (but not stations).

Develop Systems

You may build developments on systems. If you control a ship in an uncontrolled system, you may pay 1 credit to build a development. This gives you control of the system. You may build additional developments by paying the number of developments on the system plus 1. (In order to go from 1 development to 2, you must pay 2 credits).

Systems can only have a number of developments on them equal to their maximum development value in the top right corner of the card.

Play Commands

You may play Commands by revealing the card and performing the action on the card. Other players may respond with their own abilities or Commands (see Responses). Discard the card afterward.

Trade

You may do any of the following:

- Pay 3 credits to draw a card. If you already have five cards in hand, you may not take this action.
- Discard two cards, then gain three credits.

You may also trade with players. These trades may include credits, cards in your hand or in play, and systems or vessels you control. If you trade a system to a player, remove all of your development counters and replace them with an equal number of that player's development counters.

Combat Phase

Do these in order for each system

Initiate Combat

For each system where the active player and at least one other player control vessels, each player in that system, starting with the active player, decides whether to initiate combat. If all players decline, then combat is concluded in that system for the turn. If there are multiple systems where combat is possible, the active player chooses the order to resolve combat.

Assign Damage

The active player assigns all damage being dealt by ships they control. Not all ships must declare targets. Going clockwise, each other player involved in combat assigns all damage being dealt by ships they control.

Resolve Damage

Damage is resolved. All assigned damage is dealt to assigned targets. If a ship or station has received more damage than its hit points, it is immediately destroyed.

Retreat

Starting with the active player and going clockwise, any ships that have not moved this turn may now move into another system that player controls. This is referred to as retreating.

Playing Commands During Combat

After each of these steps, starting with the active player and going clockwise, each player may play any commands or abilities they choose. If a ship is destroyed before the Assign Damage step, it does not deal damage. However, if a ship is destroyed after the Assign Damage step and it assigned its damage, that damage will still be applied.

End Phase

Do these in order

Conquest

For any system under siege (see Siege), remove development counters from it equal to the number of non-Fighter ships the non-controlling player controls in that system. When the last development counter is removed, the besieging player has conquered the system, and places one development counter on the system. Any stations that remain in the system change control to the player who now controls the system.

Cleanup

End of turn effects end. If any player's Homeworld has been captured, they lose. Remove all ships and counters they control from the board.

Game End

The game ends when either:

- A player's Homeworld has been conquered.
- The last card of a Domain deck has been drawn.

When one of the above conditions happens, the game immediately ends. Each player counts their total developments. The player with the most developments wins!

Additional Rules

Drawing Cards

Whenever a card or an action directs you to draw a card, you may only draw from a deck that matches a domain you control. For example, if you play Explore the Unknown, and you only control systems with a Science domain, then you must draw from the Science deck.

Fighters

Fighters are small, single-occupant ships that are unable to jump or support themselves. Fighters are unable to participate in a siege (see Siege). If a fighter is abandoned (only fighters remain in a system you do not control) at the start of your turn, and remains abandoned at the end of your turn, it is destroyed.

Hand Limit

You may only have up to five cards in your hand at a time. If you attempt to draw a card with five cards already in your hand, you must skip your draw. At no time should you have more than five cards in hand.

Responses

Whenever, during either the Command or Combat Phases, a player plays a card or uses an ability, it can be responded to. In each case, the active player chooses whether to use another card or ability, then each other player may choose, going clockwise from the active player. When all players pass, the sequence of cards and abilities is resolved. These actions are resolved in "last on, first off" order.

Siege

A system is considered under siege when an opponent has non-Fighter ships in that system, and the controlling player has no ships or stations with attack values. Systems that are under siege do not generate credits from developments, and players cannot build ships or stations in systems that are under siege. Effects of that system do not trigger and abilities cannot be used.

Note that for the purposes of drawing cards, a player may still choose the domain of a system under siege.

Turn Order

If there are more than two players in a game, players will take turns in a clockwise order. The same applies for performing any actions, such as playing Commands, taking turn actions, or activating abilities (see Responses).

Targeting

Ships and stations can only target in their current system. If an ability on a card says that a ship or station you control does something to another ship, this same rule applies. Any card that refers to “target ship or station” (or similar) may perform its action in any system.

Vessels

Some cards refer to vessels. A vessel is either a ship or station.



UNDER THE SILIS PROJECT, humanity built its first interstellar ship, capable of reaching a neighboring star. After hundreds of years of travel, the generation ship reached its destination, and found a planet already terraformed to sustain human life. A crashed alien ship led to the next major discovery - the Jump Drive. Engineers from the generation ship repaired the alien vessel, then returned home to Earth - only to discover humanity's birthplace in ruins, its children scattered across the Sol system.

The colonists shared their discovery with the survivors of Sol, and began to ferry people to their new home - Silis Major. The exodus from Sol allowed humanity to spread across the stars. New ships were built, new nations established, and humankind thrived.

Since then, space has only become more dangerous. The larger governments have come into conflict with each other, creating an arms race to weaponize space. Raiders, pirates, and mercenaries have taken shelter on the outskirts of civilization, interrupting trade for the outer systems. Some search for more advanced technology, seeking out any advantage they can find, while others use an ever-growing network of spies to manipulate events around them. With tensions rising, it will be up to the local governors and commanders to decide whether peace will last, or if war will prevail.

Meanwhile, a strange signal has been picked up in the Sol system.

