

MANUAL

# ARMADA

## 2526

GOLD EDITION



# ARMADA 2526

**GOLD EDITION**

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## SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

**OS:** Microsoft® Windows® XP SP3, Windows® Vista™ or Windows® 7™

**CPU:** 2.4GHz Intel® Pentium® or equivalent AMD® processor

**RAM:** 2 GB RAM

**Video:** 256 MB DirectX® 9.0c compatible video card with Pixel/Vertex Shader 2.0 support

**Drive:** 4x speed PC-D VD-ROM

**Hard Disk Space:** 3 GB free hard-disk space

**Sound:** DirectX® 9.0c compatible sound card

**Other:** Mouse, Keyboard and Sound Speakers



## INTRODUCTION

In Armada 2526 you guide the destiny of your chosen race from their first acquisition of faster than light travel, until they become the dominant power in their region of the galaxy. Although each race starts with an advanced planetary civilization, none of them have invented faster than light travel themselves, instead buying it from travelling traders. As you expand out into space, it will become apparent that these traders sold the hyper-drive to many races in a similar state of advancement. Some of these will become you allies and trading partners, others you'll have to fight.

The game has two sections. The majority of your time will be spend on the Star Map, where you'll move your fleets, develop your colonies, conduct diplomacy, and develop new technology. This portion of the game is turn based, so you can spend as much time as you wish planning your strategy. However, when it comes to fighting battles, the action switches to real-time to fully reflect the spectacle of hundreds of ships fighting together. However, the battle system is designed to depend on good tactics rather than fast reactions, and you can pause whenever you need time to think.

It is recommended that you begin by playing the Tutorial which will explain the game, and introduce game concepts in a step by step manner.

## THE MAIN MENU

This is presented when you first start the game. You are presented with seven options

### NEW GAME

Begin a new single player game.

### TUTORIAL

Play the game tutorial.

### MULTI-PLAYER

Begin or continue a LAN or PBEM game

### LOAD GAME

Load and continue a previously saved single player game.

### SPACE BATTLE

Play a one off space battle.

### OPTIONS

This leads to another menu where you can adjust graphics, sound and game settings, view the credits, or access the map editor.

### QUIT

Quit the program and return to Windows.

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## NEW GAME



- A. List of Scenarios
- B. Selected scenario information
- C. Scenario description
- D. Create a fully customised game.

This screen lets you select a scenario to play, or you can opt to play a customised game.

Click a scenario to select it, then press OK to go to the next scenario where you can select which faction to play, and the difficulty level.

## CUSTOM GAME



- A. Set whether this faction is under Human or Computer control.
- B. Change the faction in this slot.
- C. No longer used.
- D. Select the number of players.
- E. The number of turns
- F. Difficulty Level
- G. Research Rate
- H. Map to use

Here you can customize all aspects of your game, including the size of map, the number of players, and which players.

The research rate lets you customize the rate at which technology research progresses. By default it's set to level suitable for the size of map, but you can set the rate explicitly if you wish. This is especially useful for players that like to play long games with a defensive strategy.

The area at the bottom lets you customize the map. You can use a random map or load in a pre-made one. For a random map, you can set the size, star density and star distribution.

## WARNING

It is recommended not to use very large maps with dense or very dense settings, as the large number of stars will lead to very long processing times for computer controlled players. Similarly, using large maps with a very small number of players will also lead to very large and slow to process empires. What constitutes an acceptable set-up depends on both your patience, and system specifications, so players wanting a large game should experiment slowly increasing the settings from the default. Simply setting everything to maximum probably won't yield an enjoyable game.

# THE STAR MAP

## INTRODUCTION

Upon starting a new game, you'll arrive at the Star Map. This is where you manage your colonies, research, diplomacy and move your fleets. The map is a series of offset squares, most of which are empty, but some of which contain stars, wormholes or dust. There are other graphics in the background, but these are just for appearances, and have no effect on play.



- A. Mini-map. Use the buttons on the left hand side to change the information displayed here.
- B. Zoom View. Shows a close up of the square under the cursor.
- C. End Turn Button
- D. How much money you have.
- E. Icons to select what is shown in the List Panel above.
- F. The Advisor
- G. Dust Cloud
- H. Star System.

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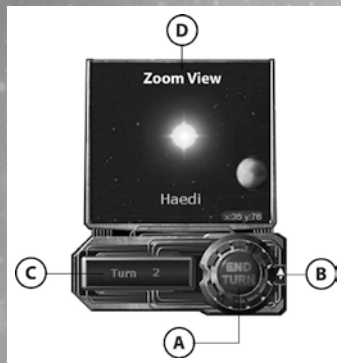
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### URNS

The Star Map portion of the game uses a “turn based” system. This means that you plot your moves, plan production etc. but nothing actually happens until you press the End Turn button. When you do this, the computer calculates everything that happened that turn, carrying out actions for all players simultaneously.

This means that you can take as long as you like to plan things out, and can change your mind as often as you wish. However, remember that all players’ actions are carried out together, so it’s important to try to predict what they will do too.



- A. End Turn Button
- B. Hide Zoom View
- C. The Current Turn Number
- D. Close up of square under the cursor

### MOVING AROUND

You can move around the map by using the arrow or WASD keys, pushing the cursor to the screen edge, or by holding down the left mouse button and dragging. Use the mouse wheel to zoom in and out. Note how the window in the bottom left of the screen shows a zoomed in view of the square under the mouse cursor.

To the right is the mini-map that shows an overview of the map. The icons down the left side of it control the information it show. For large maps, it is often clearer to turn off the display of stars on the mini-map.

The bar in the top right contains various icons that control the display of the map. They allow you to turn on and off, the display of a square grid, movement limits, and the area in range of your scanners.

### STARS AND STAR SYSTEMS

The most important elements are the stars. These come in various colours, which affect the likelihood of them having different types of planets (look at the tooltips for more information). Most stars have a planet (realistically stars would have many planets, but for simplicity the game only considers the most useful planet in a system). Star systems may also have asteroid belts and comets (Oort Clouds) that you can mine. Each star system also has 0-3 small planet graphics in the background (in the zoomed in view). These show the quality of the system; none means a low quality system with few useful minerals, one shows a normal system, two denotes a rich system that will yield extra taxes and reduced production costs, and a select few are “very rich” systems with three background planets. These have all the advantages of rich systems, but more so.

When you begin the game, most of the stars will have a question mark symbol next to them (and after their name) showing that you haven’t explored them yet, and don’t know what sort of planet or resources they have. You only know the details of a few systems near your home world. Send a ship to explore these systems.



## EXPLORATION

As you explore the universe, you'll find that some star systems possess special characteristics, ranging from tachyon storms to abandoned alien technology. Some of these can be seen from afar, some you'll discover when a ship visits a system, and others will only come to light when you have founded a colony. Indeed, some things may not be discovered by colonists for some considerable time.

Depending on their type, these special characteristics are indicated in different ways. If they are characteristics of the system (e.g. Tachyon Storms) then there'll be a graphic in the star system. If they're characteristics of the planet that can be discovered from space (e.g. Biodiversity) they will be indicated by small moon graphics arranged around the planet. You can mouse over these to see what each one represents. If they're characteristics that can only be discovered once a colony has been discovered, then they'll be shown as icons on the colony screen.

## SURVEYS

Some planetary features can only be discovered by ships that are specially equipped to carry out a more thorough survey than normal. Scouts and Survey Ships can do this. If a system has been explored, but not yet visited by a Scout or Survey Ship, its name will be followed by a "\*" on the star map.

If you found a colony at a system, you don't need to survey it.

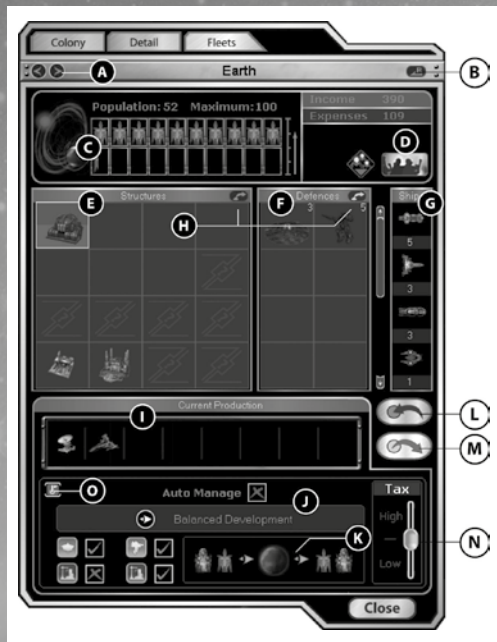


- A. System Feature
- B. Planetary Features



## COLONIES

There can be one colony at each star system. Usually you'll begin the game with just one colony (your home world). You can centre the map on it, by pressing the "Home" key. Double left click the mouse button on it to open its information panel.

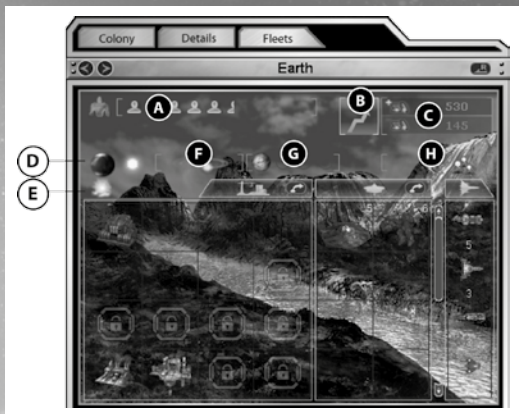


- A. Buttons to switch to next of previous colony.
- B. Rename Colony
- C. Population and system quality display
- D. Unrest and infections
- E. Buildings
- F. Defences and Ground Units
- G. Ships at the Colony
- H. Remove buildings, defences and ground units.
- I. Summary of items in production
- J. Auto-management controls
- K. Immigration / Emigration controls.
- L. Load Ships Button
- M. Unload Ships Button
- N. Tax Rate Slider
- O. Clear rally point for this colony

At the top of the panel are graphics showing the planet and system quality, the current and maximum populations, and the income and expenses. The centre panel shows the buildings, defences, ground units and ships at the colony. The bottom part of the panel allows you set taxation and immigration and emigration policies.

Double click the title bar to centre the map on the colony.

For the Supernova expansion, the information display at the top of the colony panel has been modified to show additional system features.



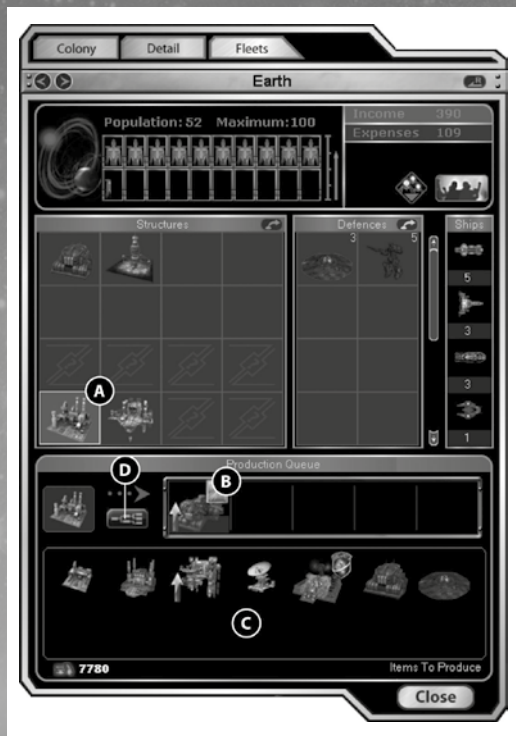
- A. Population
- B. Growth Rate
- C. Income and Expenses
- D. Planet Type
- E. Colony Features
- F. System Quality
- G. Planetary Features
- H. Infections and Unrest

## BUILDINGS AND PRODUCTION

The centre panel shows the buildings at the colony, and the number of slots free for new buildings. The number of buildings allowed depends on the population of the colony up to maximum of 16. Each colony has 2 slots plus one for every 7 population. At the top of the panel are the normal buildings, and in the bottom row are buildings that perform production.

To have the colony produce something, click on one of the production buildings, and see that the bottom part of the colony panel changes (click it again to change back). It now shows the production queue for that building, and the things it can produce. Each building can only produce one thing at a time, but each building at the colony can be working on different items at the same time. An item with a green arrow is an upgrade to an existing building.

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- A. Production building
- B. Production queue for this building.
- C. Items that can be produced.
- D. Show buildings that can be constructed here.

Left click on one of the items in the panel to add it to the production queue for the building. Right click an item in the queue to remove it. You can also drag items in the queue around to change their order. A stack of coins next to an item indicates that the money for an item has been deducted. Normally money is only deducted for the first item in the queue. The cost of other items is deducted when they begin production. If an item has a stack of coins with a red cross, it means that you don't have enough money to start producing the item.

Buildings, defences, and ground units are produced by the industrial buildings. (Colonist Workshop, Light Industry, Heavy Industry, and Technology Complex). Ships are produced by the various shipyard buildings. More advanced buildings produce more advanced items.

A colony may have up to 2 industrial production buildings, and up to 7 shipyards.

### Auto Management

If you wish, you can opt to have the computer manage the colony for you. It will set tax rates, and order production. You can give it an overall policy for the colony, and set the specific types of things it can build.



### **Taxes and the Economy**

To build new things, you need money. Money comes mainly from taxes, mining and trade. Mining income comes from mine buildings you construct, and trade is generated from trade mission buildings that are created via diplomacy.

The amount of tax revenue from a colony is directly proportional to the size of its population and the tax rate. You can set the tax rate to one of three levels, using the slider in the lower right of the colony tab. Setting it low increase population growth, and reduces unrest. Setting it high generates cash, but reduces growth and increases unrest. Leaving it high for a long time further increases unrest.

### **Unrest**

As the game goes on, you may start to suffer from unrest in your colonies. This can lead to loss of income and production, buildings lost or damaged due to rioting, and even to outright rebellion. Unrest is caused by overpopulation, prolonged high taxes, a poor environment, and bureaucracy. Keep a close eye open for messages about unrest, and also monitor the colony list for where you're unpopular. Being unpopular by itself is not a problem, but can be a sign of worse to come.

When problems occur, you can solve them in the short term by reducing taxes, and increasing security by stationing ground units (not militia), and ships with high ground attack values at the planet. The larger the population, the more forces you need to control it this way. You can also build "Security Centre" buildings, but these are expensive to build and maintain.

The longer term solution is to increase happiness, by reducing overcrowding (ship some population elsewhere), improving the environment with suitable buildings, or building "Entertainment Centres" to keep the population distracted. While the latter are more expensive to build than "Security Centres" they're cheaper to maintain, and the victory scores of many races depend on the happiness of their population. Check the "Details" tab to see what's causing the unrest.

As the size of your empire increases, the amount of bureaucracy will also increase, reducing income and increasing unhappiness. This is a fundamental law of the universe, and there's nothing you do about it except to cope with the consequences.

### **Details Tab**

This shows a detailed breakdown of the colony's economy and political system. It shows income and expenses, factors affecting population growth, and population happiness. It also shows the factors affecting your popularity, and what security you have to counteract unrest.

### **Infections**

Sometimes your colony may be infected with a plague, or nano-infestation. Plagues kill population, while nano-infestations generally attack buildings and defences, though they also attack population of some races. To combat these you need to build Decontamination Centre buildings. The rate at which the plague is cleaned up depends on the number of such buildings at the colony, and your technology. Untreated, plagues and infestations will devour everything they can at the colony.

## **SHIPS AND FLEETS**

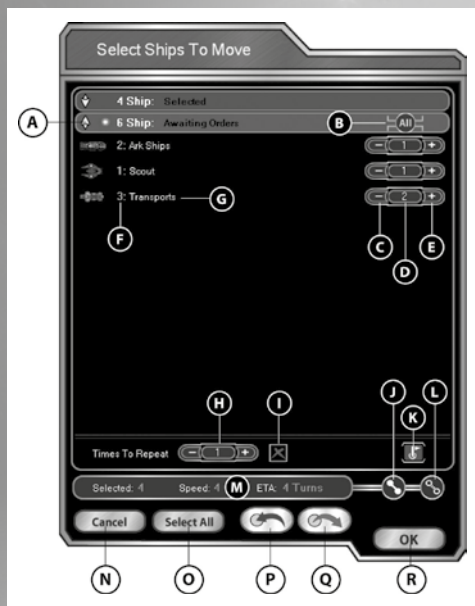
Your ships are used to found new colonies, transport population and other items, and to wage war. They're shown on the map as small ship icons, with a blue tail to help you see them more easily. Fleets of other players have

tails in red, green or yellow, depending on whether they are enemy, allied or neutral. Double clicking a square containing a fleet opens the information panel for it. If the square also contains a colony, the colony tab will be selected, and you will need to select the fleet tab at the top of the panel. You can also double click on other player's fleets to see what you know about them.

### Movement

To move your ships, first left click on the square containing them to select it (if the info panel is open, the square is already selected), then right click on the square you want them to move to. You can now select which of the ships in the source square you wish to move by clicking on the plus and minus buttons. Right clicking the plus button selects all the ships of that type.

When you press ok, a series of lines will link the source square to the target showing that the order has been plotted. However, at this stage the ships have not begun to move, and you can still change your mind. They won't start moving until you've ended the turn.



- A. Show / Hide details of this fleet.
- B. Select all ships in this fleet.
- C. Decrease number selected
- D. Number of this ship type selected
- E. Increase number selected. Right click to select all.
- F. Number of ships of this type present.
- G. Ship type. Right click on icon for details.
- H. Number of times to repeat trip.
- I. Repeat forever.
- J. Use / Don't use wormholes
- K. Set rally point. All ships produced at the source colony will move to target square.
- L. Use / Don't Use unstable wormholes
- M. Fleet speed and number of turns to arrive.
- N. Cancel Move
- O. Select all ships in source square.
- P. Load Ships Button.
- Q. Unload Ships Button.
- R. Order move and close panel.



### Movement Limits

The area where you can move ships is shown by the blue line on the map. This area will expand as you found new colonies.

At the beginning of the game you can only order ships to move to squares containing stars, and once a fleet begins its movement, you can't change its orders until it arrives. You can develop technology to overcome these limitations.

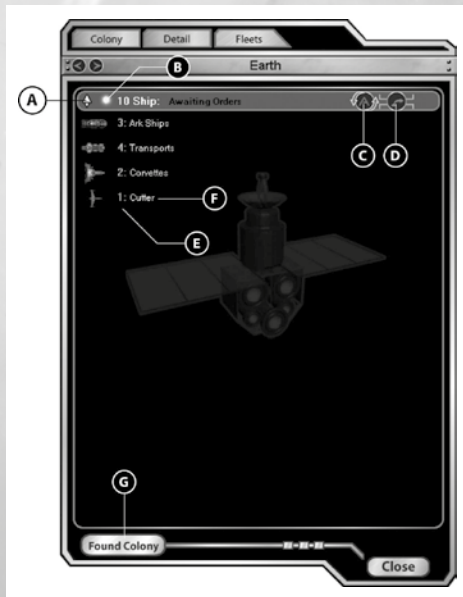
### Dust

The map contains various areas of thick dust that constitute a navigation hazard. Generally ships will try to route around dust, but sometimes flying through it is unavoidable. Heavy dust slows movement to 1 square per turn, and light dust reduces movement rates by half. Use Ctrl + U to highlight dust areas.

### Starting New Colonies

In order to start a new colony at an uninhabited star system, you'll need to use an Ark Ship. Order the Ark Ship to the target system, and wait until it arrives. Double click the square to open the panel for the fleet, and use the "Found Colony" button at the bottom to found a new colony. Founding a colony uses up the Ark Ship.

At the beginning of the game you will only be able to found colonies on Ideal, Habitable and Barren planets (if playing as Human. Some alien races can land on different types). As your technology develops, you'll be able to build more advanced Ark Ships that can found colonies on other planet types.



- A. Show/Hide details
- B. Star Type
- C. Place Transports under Auto-Control
- D. Scrap unwanted ships
- E. Number of ships of that type
- F. Ship type. Right click icon for details.
- G. Start a new colony.

### Transportation

In order to maximize population growth, you'll need to transport population from your home world to the new colonies. Use transport ships for this. Each transport ship can carry one unit of population. You can load population onto ships using the buttons on the colony panel, or on the ship movement panel. Usually, the ships will unload themselves when they arrive,

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but sometimes you'll want to do it manually (for instance when you send loaded transports along with an Ark Ship) using the button on the colony panel.

You can also use Transports to move Light Missiles and Space Marines.

#### **Shuttling**

A key to doing well at the game, is to move population off your home world onto the new colonies as quickly as possible. This will involve your transport ships making several round trips between the home world and the colonies. This can become tedious, so when you give a move order, you can instruct that it is carried out two or more times, by using the control near the bottom of the movement panel.

For instance, if you want to move 20 population, but have only 5 transports, first load the transports with population, and order them to their destination, but before clicking ok, use the plus button at the bottom of the panel to set "Times To Repeat" to 4. The transports will deliver the currently loaded population, then fly back to the source square, load more people and fly back to the destination until they have completed the required number of trips.

Any non transport ships you order together with the transports will shuttle back and forth with them as an escort. The transports carry whatever cargo was loaded when the order was given (so be careful to ensure that they're loaded, otherwise they'll fly back and forth empty). If no cargo is available, they'll wait until it is.

You can also tell non transport ships to repeat a move a number of times, which has the effect of making them patrol back and forth between the origin and destination squares. Use the tick box next to the trip count to make them do this forever.

You can cancel one of these multiple orders just by giving the ships involved an order to go somewhere else, or using the "Stop" button on the fleet tab.

#### **Wormholes**

Wormholes are discontinuities in space that let you jump from one mouth to the other in one turn, regardless of how far apart they are. You won't initially be able to see any, as you won't have the technology, but once you do, you'll be able to see any within range of your scanners. Once a wormhole is detected, you need to explore it to find the other end. Move a ship onto the wormhole, then when it's arrived, select it, and right click its square again to have it explore the wormhole. Once explored, wormholes will be used automatically for movement if that is the fastest path.

Some wormholes are unstable, and there is a chance that fleets using them may be destroyed. Unstable wormholes are indicated by their graphic expanding and shrinking. By default paths through unstable wormholes will not be selected, but you can use the button at the bottom of the movement panel to override this.

#### **Relay Stations**

If you capture a colony that was founded by another player, it will not extend your movement range until you have constructed a relay station building on it.

## POPULATION

Your population is your key resource in the game, for it is they that pay the taxes that fund your empire. The greater your population, the more powerful you'll be, so you should pay attention to maximizing the growth rate of your population.

Growth rate is determined mainly by the type of planet, and how much population it contains. Generally, Ideal type planets are the best for growth, followed by Habitable, although it varies for some races. Other planet types offer zero or limited population growth. Growth is also determined by the size of a planet's population, the more it has the slower it will grow, so it's important to move population away from full worlds to newer emptier ones. As a rule of thumb, keeping your colonies one third to one half full will give a good balance between growth rate, and having useful sized populations (remember the more population in a colony, the more buildings you can construct).

Population is also affected by taxes and pollution. Setting taxes low encourages population growth, while setting them high gives you more cash in the short term, but slows growth. Pollution comes from mines, and heavy industry. It's often best to build no mines (or just the first level) on colonies where you need population growth.

### Automatic Population Management

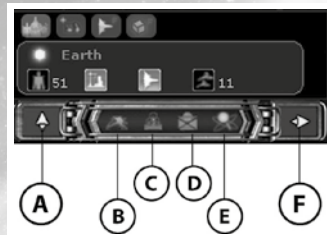
Managing your population is an important part of the game, and the balance between spreading it thinly for growth, and keeping it concentrated for easy protection, is a vital strategic choice. However, in your safe rear area it can be tedious to shuffle population around to maximize growth, so you can have the computer do it for you.

To do this, you need to assign some empty transport ships. Find a fleet with some empty transports, and double click to open the fleet panel. Press the "Auto Control" button, and then select the number of transports to assign to "Auto Control". The computer will now use these to move population between your colonies to maximize growth. The more transports you assign, the better job it can do. Fleets under "Auto Control" are shown in dark blue in the list of fleets in the bottom left.

Sometimes, what's best for growth may be at odds with other strategic interests, so you can prevent the computer moving population to, or from, certain colonies. Use the buttons at the bottom of the colony tab for this. You can allow/disallow immigration/emigration separately for your own race, and those of other races. Note that these settings, only affect transport under auto-control. You can still load or unload population manually.

## LISTS AND FINDER

The area in the lower left of the screen is used to show messages, or lists of colonies or fleets. Use the icons in the bar at the bottom to control which to display.



- A. Hide/Show list panel
- B. Show list of fleets
- C. Show list of colonies
- D. Show messages
- E. Show Finder
- F. Show/Hide money panel.

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At the start of your turn, the list will show any messages you have. Generally you can left click on a message to show the square it applies to, and double click to open a panel for it. You'll receive messages when items are produced, and when fleets arrive at their destination. It's usually easier to play the game by watching for these messages, rather than checking every fleet or colony each turn.



- A. Item
- B. Location
- C. Production status. Grey means idle. Green or yellow means colony has other items to construct.

These are the most common message types, but there are many other message types too.

This area can also be used to show a list of your colonies of fleets. The icons at the top of the list allow you sort these lists in various ways, for instance to find the colonies that produce the most income, or to easily find fleets that aren't moving.



- A. Buttons to sort list
- B. Colony population total
- C. Industrial production status. Grey mean idle, green fully utilised, yellow partly utilised. A red border means the colony cannot construct any new buildings.
- D. Ship Production Status
- E. Number of ships at colony



- A. Icons to sort fleet lists
- B. Current action
- C. Location or Destination.

## The Finder Panel



- A. Select item category to display
- B. Items. Click to show appropriate list.

This panel both summarizes your assets, and helps you locate them. The icons at the top are used to select the items of interest. For instance if you select the leftmost icon, the finder panel will with icons for each type of ships you possess, together with the number

you have. Clicking on one of these icons will list all the fleets that contain that type of ship. You can do the same for defences, ground units, and buildings, and items in production.

The other three “finder” icons work slightly differently.

One shows uninhabited systems within your move range, broken down by both planet type, and system quality. Clicking a planet icon will list all the systems with an uninhabited planet of that type, whereas clicking a quality icon will show all the systems with that quality. Thus you can quickly locate all the known rich systems, or ideal planets.

The “Unexplored” icon shows the systems within range that you have yet to explore, broken down by star type. It also shows wormholes that you have located but not yet explored.

Finally, there is a button to show what buildings you have on foreign colonies (trade missions or relay stations). Click on a player icon, to list all the colonies of that player where you have a building.

## ADVISOR

The advisor lives in the top left of the screen, and will offer useful tips about how to play. You can hide the current piece of advice, by pressing the space bar. If no advice is showing, pressing the space bar will show the last piece. The advisor can be turned off by pressing the F2 key.



- A. Show a summary of advice given so far, and a listing of all tips and advice.
- B. Open a menu giving options to load, save or quit the game, and to change sound graphics and game options.
- C. Hide the current advice item, or show the last one. (Use the space bar as a short cut)

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- D. Pressing here, tells the advisor not to present the same piece of advice about the same location again. The same advice about a different location will still be given.
- E. Select the concerned square on the map

## HOW TO WIN

There are two ways to win the game.

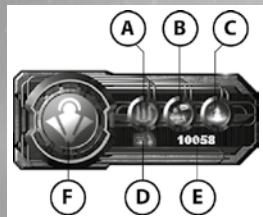
You can win by domination, which requires you to be powerful enough, that even if all the other players combine they will be unable to defeat you. This game will grant you a domination victory when you control 60% of all population and income and also have to have the most victory points of any player.

You can also win by being the player with the most victory points when the set number of turns (as determined by the scenario or game setup) has finished. The way you score victory points depends on the faction you decide to play, as how well you are judged to have played, depends on how well you have advanced their agenda. Most factions score will depend on heavily on the amount of population of their own race, but the score may also depend on their happiness, aliens incorporated into your empire, profits gained, military glory, or the number of aliens killed. You can check your victory conditions on the Player Panel.. The "Charts" panel shows how well you are doing in comparison to other players.

Even after you've won, you can continue playing the game if you wish.

## SPECIAL GAME PANELS

The console at the bottom of the screen provides access to several other panels.



- A. Open the "Player Panel"
- B. Open the "Diplomacy Panel"
- C. Open the "Technology Panel"
- D. Open the "Finance Panel"
- E. How much money you have.
- F. The currently active player.

### The Player Panel

This opens a panel with three tabs.

The "Player Tab" provides information about the player's faction, their special abilities, their score, and how they score victory points.

The "Charts" tab show charts of various types of information, including victory points, income, number of ships, and many others. You can view these charts as a line chart, a stacked chart, or a histogram. You can view the top players overall, the top in each area, enemies, and allies. You can also opt to view information on all players in the game, or just those that you've encountered so far.

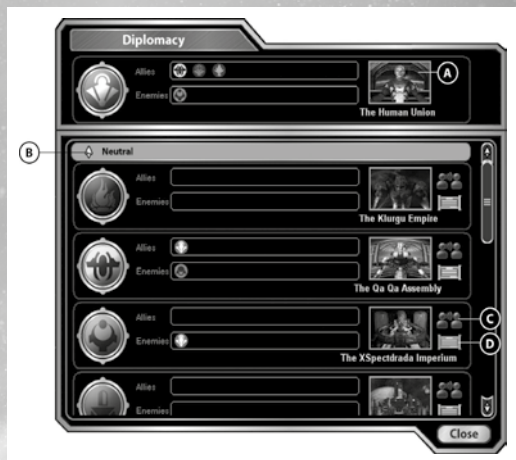
The third tab is the Finance Panel.

## THE FINANCE PANEL



- Show data for whole game.
- Show data for previous turn.
- Show projected data for current turn.
- Show or hide details.
- Set the amount of money that can be spent by the computer at colonies that are “auto-managed”.
- Financial summary information.

## DIPLOMACY



- Click to Open Negotiation
- Declare War
- Set Trade Policies
- Review Agreements

The Diplomacy panel shows a list of the other players you've come across so far, your relations with them, and their relations with each other. From here you can open negotiations, or review existing agreements.

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Sometimes it won't be possible to open negotiations. This may be because your two empires are out of contact, or because they refuse to negotiate with you.

## Negotiations

From the negotiation window, you can make a variety of agreements with other players. These include non-aggression pacts, defensive alliances, gifts or loans, technology exchanges, and trade agreements.



- A. Items to offer.
- B. Speech Area
- C. Current Offer Details
- D. Items to request
- E. Show details of existing agreements.
- F. Ask for opinions of other players
- G. Make offer a gift.
- H. Ask for a favour.
- I. Make a threat.
- J. Make offer an ultimatum. Accept or you will be at war
- K. Offer balance
- 1. Trust Level. How much the other party trusts you
- 2. Current relationship.
- 3. Liking. How much the other player likes you

You can construct an offer by selecting items to offer from the left hand side, and selecting what you want on the right hand side. If you want to remove an item from the offer, right click on it in the centre panel. You can also edit many items by left clicking on them.

When you've compiled your offer, press the "Send Button". The other player may accept or reject the offer, or make a counter offer. You can then accept or reject the counter, or make another counter offer.



The bar at the bottom gives a rough indication of which side the deal favours. If it is to the left, it is more favourable to you, and if it is to the right, it is more favourable to the other party. Even if the bar is all the way to the right, there is no guarantee that they will accept, but generally the more favourable the terms, the more likely this is.

The icons at the top show the other party's thoughts about you. The large centre icon is your current relationship; the one to the left shows how much they trust you, and the one to the right how much they like you.

Trust is earned by keeping agreements, and lost by breaking them. Breaking agreements damages your reputation and causes all other players in the game to trust you less, not just the aggrieved party. If you're not trusted, you'll find it hard to make any deals that extend into the future, such as alliances, or spreading payments over a number of turns.

You make other players like you by making agreements that favour them, or giving them gifts. If players like you, you'll be able to get better deals from them, ask favours, and they're less likely to attack you. Forcing them to accept poor deals, wars, and killing millions of their population will make them like you less. You'll also find that as you become more powerful, you'll be feared more, and liked less.

### **Gifts, Favours, Threats and Ultimatums**

The four buttons below the offer panel allow you to modify the type of offer you're making.

You can make, or ask for a gift, by just selecting items to give or receive, and pressing the "Gift" button. If you don't use the gift button, then the other player will assume that you're asking them to make you an offer for an item, or to tell you what they want in exchange.

If you're on good terms with the other player, you can ask them to accept the deal as a favour. Even if they agree, they'll like you less, but it can be a way to get something you need when you have little to offer in exchange.

You can also use the "Threat" button to tell the other player to agree, or there'll be trouble. If they have reason to be afraid of you, then maybe they'll agree to your deal, even if it's a poor one for them. Of course, no-one like to be bullied, but whether it's better to be loved or feared is a choice you have to make.

Finally, you can make the deal and ultimatum. If they don't agree, then you will immediately be at war.

### **Pacts and Alliances**

You can make non-aggression pacts, defensive alliances, and agreements to attack other players. In a non-aggression pact, you agree not to attack each other for a certain number of turns. In a defensive alliance, you agree not to attack each other, and if either of you is attacked by a third party, then you'll declare war on them in support of your ally. Be careful making too many pacts, or two players you have pacts or alliances with might go to war, causing you to have to break one of your agreements, and suffer a reputation for being untrustworthy. You can use the button "C" on the negotiation panel to see what deals you currently have.

### **Trade Missions**

Trade between players is conducted by constructing trade missions on colonies owned by other players. This is done by making a diplomatic agreement. When you construct a trade mission on another player's colony, you have to pay the construction cost, and the upkeep each turn, and in return you will receive income from selling your goods there. The player receiving the mission will gain a lesser amount of income from custom dues. See

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the "Trade" section for more details.

It is assumed that trading low cost items across inter-stellar space will be uneconomic, so what each player has to sell are the unique luxury products produced by their race. Some factions have secret access to other collectable antique alien artifacts that they can also sell, giving them increased trade income. Specialist trading factions can sell speciality goods of one race they are in contact with, to other races. This becomes very lucrative when they have trade missions to several different races who are not trading with each other.

The income generated by a trade mission depends on the population of a colony, the number of different items the trader has to sell (most races have only one, their race specific luxuries), whether other players are selling the same goods on that planet, and the total number of different items available on a planet. If this is more than 4 then the revenue for each will be decreased pro-rata.

There are pros and cons to accepting a trade mission to your planet. The advantages are that you will receive money, and the availability of luxuries will increase your government's popularity, and reduce unrest. The disadvantages are that each trade mission will use up a building slot, and since trade provides an excellent cover for espionage, the owning player will be able to see all the buildings, defences and ground forces you have at the colony.

You can remove a trade mission on your colony by using the usual "remove building" button. To remove a mission on another player's world, double click to view it, and use the same button.

Trade is suspended when at war, but missions are not removed.

#### Relay Stations

Like trade missions, you can build these on another player's colony by means of a diplomatic agreement. They allow you to use that colony to extend your movement range as if it were one of your own.

#### TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH

Each player has more than 100 different items they may research. Some of these allow construction of new types of ship, defense, ground unit or buildings. Others grant special or improved abilities.

These items are divided into seven different areas. Only one item can be researched at a time in each area, but research in each area can proceed in parallel. The rate at which research progresses, depends on the number of research points allocated in that area.

The small icons represent the items that can be researched in each area. Left click on one to make it the active one. The number in the top right corner shows how many turns it will take to research with the number of points currently allocated.

Research points come from research buildings on each planet. There are two types, general and specialised. General research points can be assigned to any area, and are generated each turn by Research Lab buildings. These can be upgraded into a lab specialised in one of the different areas. Specialised labs produce three times as many research points as general ones, but these points can only be used in their particular area. One specialised lab per colony may be upgraded to a Research Centre which produces even more points. Furthermore, each player is allowed one Research Nexus that creates even more research points for its area. Since each player is allowed

only one nexus, it is important to consider carefully which area it should be specialised in.



- A. Slider to allocate general research points.
- B. The currently selected item for the area.
- C. The total points for this area
- D. Potential research item.
- E. Cancel Skunkworks research
- F. Show all research items.

### Skunkworks

In addition to the 7 research areas, there is also the “Skunkworks”. This represents a concentration of brilliant, but slightly wayward scientists given free reign to research whatever interests them. A Skunkworks researches 50% faster than a regular lab of the same level, but you can’t control what it researches, instead the scientists secretly pick an item from one of the other areas. When research is half complete, they will reveal what they’ve been working on. You can allow them to complete their research, or tell them to cancel it and start something new. In order to use the Skunkworks, you need to upgrade at least one Research Lab to a Skunkworks. You can build additional Skunkworks, and upgrade them to centres or to a nexus in the same way as specialised labs in other areas.

## SCANNERS AND STEALTH

Information on enemy ship movements is a crucial part of security and military planning. You can only detect the presence of ships belonging to other players when they are close to one of your own ships, or within range of one of your scanners. You can turn on and off the display of the scanned area, using the button on the bar above the mini-map. The blue area shows the area within scan range, the stronger the color the better the coverage.

Technologies can be developed to build longer range scanners, but there are also technologies to make ships harder to detect, or to make them invisible altogether.

Scanners are also used to discover wormholes. When you have the technology to discover a particular type, any within range of your scanners will show up automatically.

## TRADE

### Introduction

Moving bulk goods between stars is prohibitively expensive, and advanced civilizations can manufacture almost anything necessary locally, so interstellar trade is restricted to items that are very valuable, or where originality is prized. As you explore, you’ll find that some star systems possess items that would be worth trading. These are

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precious gems, rare minerals, alien artifacts and anti-matter.

Trade is carried out automatically, but you have to build the necessary infrastructure. In order for a planet to import goods, it requires a "Landing Station". In order to export goods, the Landing Station must be upgraded to a "Commercial Space Port". Once a planet has a Commercial Space Port, it will automatically create trade routes to any nearby colonies that have Landing Stations or Space Ports.

You can mouse over the trade route on the map to see what is being traded, and how much income you receive from it. You can also check the details tab for the exporting colony. Generally, the value of the trade depends on the population and wealth of the importing planet, but for rare minerals, the number of buildings and production capability of the importer are the determining factors.

#### **Tourism**

Tourism is a special form of trade, that's treated as an export for the colony that the tourists visit (as that's the colony that makes the money). Only certain systems have sights that are worth crossing the stars to see and can establish a tourist industry. The tooltips on the moon icons will indicate whether a feature enables this.

To make money from tourism requires further investment in infrastructure, so a colony's Commercial Space Port must be upgraded to a "Passenger Space Port" before it can export tourism.

Tourism can be lucrative, but very sensitive to pollution, political instability and war. If a colony is within range of an enemy, tourism revenue will drop very significantly.

Tourism exported to foreign colonies can be especially valuable, but depends on the state of diplomatic relations between the governments. While admitting foreign tourists is a great way to make cash, there is also the danger that some of them may be spies.

#### **Foreign Trade**

In order to trade with colonies belonging to other players, you must establish a Trade Mission on that colony via diplomacy. The Trade Mission then acts as a landing station for goods exported from your colonies.

If the colony contains mainly inhabitants of another race, you can export a special trade item, "Cultural Goods" to them which represents whatever items your race is renowned for producing. Any colony with a Commercial Space Port can export "Cultural Items" even if it doesn't have any other items to export. However, they can only be exported to colonies of other players.

The importing player will receive some of the benefits of the trade via import duties. Note though, that no import duties are collected for tourism.

#### **Blockades**

Trade can be blocked by the presence of ships hostile to either party at either end of the trade route.

Trade cannot be conducted when at war.

#### **Neutronium and Anti-Matter**

These are special items that are for military use, and produce no income when exported. Exporting them to another player requires a diplomatic agreement, and players can agree whatever compensation they feel is adequate.

Anti-matter allows the importing player to use anti-matter warheads on missiles, which greatly enhance their power. Neutronium can only be exported from colonies at neutron stars that have a Neutronium Forge. The importing planet can then construct items that require neutronium, just as if they were at a neutron star themselves.

### Embargos

You can control what items you export to other players via the button on the Diplomacy Screen. You can block the export of specific items, or declare a general embargo that cuts all trade, both imports and exports.

### Benefits

Importing gems, tourism and cultural goods increases happiness on the importing planet. Importing neutronium allows the construction of items that could otherwise only be constructed at a neutron star.

### Competition

If more than one planet exports the same item to a particular colony, each will receive less income. A colony that is much further away will not be able to compete, and will not be able to export that item to that market at all.

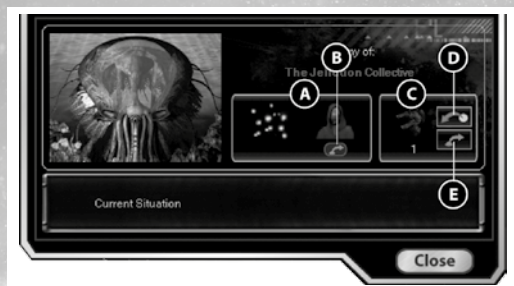
## AESPIONAGE AND COVERT OPERATIONS

### Spies

You can create spies on other players' colonies to provide up to date information about defences and ships stationed there, reveal information about what technology they possess, and maybe even steal the plans. However, there is always the risk that your spy will be caught, which will likely offend the player you've been spying on.

You can create a spy on any colony where your race has a legitimate reason to be. This may be because you have a trade mission there, are sending tourists there (i.e. importing tourism) or because some of them live there. Double click the colony to open its panel, and then use the button at the bottom of the screen to create a spy. You can have as many spies as you wish, but only one per colony. Each one has a recruitment cost, and an upkeep cost each turn.

Use the ground unit display of Finder Panel to see where you have spies.



- A. Spies Present
- B. Land Special Forces
- C. Create or Remove Spy
- D. Disband Special Forces
- E. Special Forces Present

#### **Special Forces**

Once you have the technology, you can create Special Forces units that use their advanced camouflage skills to secretly camp out on planets belonging to other players. They provide information in a similar way to spies, except that they will not reveal or steal technology. To be dropped on a foreign colony, they must be carried there onboard a special type of assault ship called an "Insurgent" that you'll be able to build once you've researched the Special Forces technology.

To land the unit, double click the colony to open its panel, then use the button near the bottom to unload it. You can have as many Special Forces units on a colony as you wish. Once landed, they cannot be re-embarked unless you conquer the planet, but can be disbanded to save on cost. Special Forces can be landed on any planet that you could colonize with a normal Ark Ship. The Extreme Ops technology will allow them to land on any planet.

#### **Sabotage**

If you attack a planet where you have Special Forces, you can use them to sabotage the defences. They will start the battle deployed on the planet, but invisible to the enemy until they attack. Their first attack will have a special bonus and high chance of destroying the target. This can be invaluable for eliminating major defense infrastructure such as Sunbeams or Area Shields.

Special Forces are recruited in the same way as other ground units, and can function in the same way, although this is not a particularly cost effective use for them.

#### **Counter Espionage**

Security Centres increase the chance of detecting enemy spies or Special Forces on your colony.

### MILITARY FORCES

There are three types of military units in the game, ships, ground units, and defences.

Ships move between the stars, and can fight other ships. Most war ships have a ground attack capability that allows them to also attack ground units and defences. Right click on a ship's icon to see full details of its capabilities.

Defences protect a colony against attack by enemy ships. They cannot be commanded in battle, but fire automatically. Some are based on the ground, and some in orbit. Small defences can be moved between colonies on transports.

Ground units are mobile units that fight on a planet's surface. They can be used in both attack and defense, and are generally more effective at attacking ground based defences and other ground units, than ships. The most basic ground units are Militia. You don't actually produce these; instead they appear at a colony in proportion to its population. They cannot be transported.

When you have the technology you can build Space Marines and other ground units. You can move these around between your own colonies using transports, or use them to attack enemy colonies. To attack an enemy colony, they need to be carried to battle in special "Assault Ships". When you gain the technology to build a ground unit type, you'll also gain the ability to build an appropriate type of Assault Ship.

## COMBAT

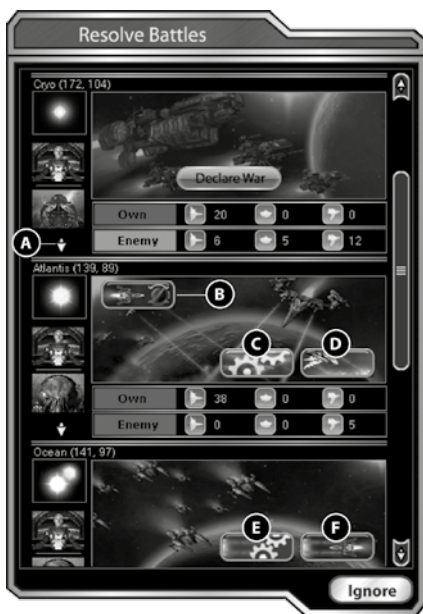
Combat may occur when your ships end the turn in the same square as ships or a colony of another player. When this occurs a panel will open showing all the potential conflicts, and allowing you to resolve them.

If the potential conflict is with a neutral player, then you have the option to declare war and fight a battle. If all the potential conflicts are with neutrals, then you can ignore them all and carry on with the game.

If your forces or colony shares a square with a hostile player, then a battle may be fought. Use the expander button to show full details of the forces on each side. Left click anywhere on that item to show the square on the map. You can resolve these battles in any order you choose.

An attacker may instead choose to blockade a planet, rather than attacking it. Defending ships can opt to force a battle by selecting the "Attack in Space" option but will then not have the benefit of the planet's defences.

You may either choose to control the battle yourself in the battle module (see Battle section) or have the computer automatically decide the outcome.



- A. Expand Details
- B. Blockade Planet
- C. Auto-resolve Attack
- D. Fight Battle Manually
- E. Auto-resolve Attack in Space
- F. Attack in Space

## AFTER BATTLE OPTIONS

If you win a battle at an enemy colony, you have to decide what to do next. The choices available depend on the situation, and the forces you have, but will be some of the following.

### Subjugate

Take control of the colony. Generally you will need some ground forces for this, but very small colonies will surrender to just ships. On assuming control of the colony, there will be a period of unrest and maybe rioting, but this will die down after a few turns as you assume full control. The colony won't expand your movement range until you've constructed a Relay Station.

#### **Liberate**

Take back control of one of your own former colonies.

#### **Exterminate**

Attack the population. The number you kill will depend on the ground attack power of your ships and ground units. The enemy retains control of the colony.

#### **Devastate**

This means ransack the planet destroying buildings, and carrying away anything of value. The enemy will retain control of the planet, but you'll receive money from the looted goods. Pirates are particularly effective at this. The amount of money you get depends on the number of buildings on the planet, and the ground attack strength of your ships and ground units.

#### **Contaminate**

Attack the planet with a virus or nano-agent. Only available if you have ships able to do this. Sometimes you have this option even if you didn't win the battle, as while resolving the computer determined that some ships got close enough to the planet to make an attack. If you manually control the battle, then you should do contamination attacks in the battle module.

#### **Obliterate**

Attack the planet with an asteroid (if you have one). If you control the battle manually, do the attack from within the battle module. Asteroid attacks cause massive damage to buildings, population, defences and ground units.

#### **Do Nothing**

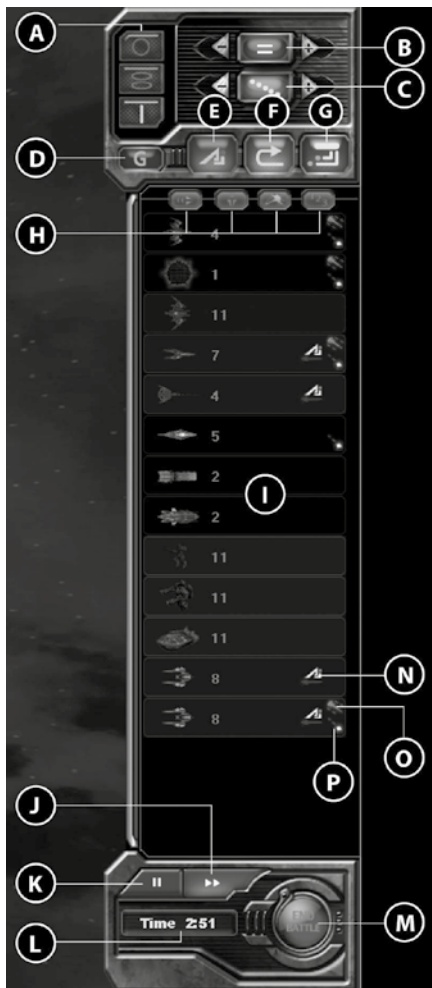
Sometimes useful if you want to capture a planet, but your ground forces haven't arrived, or you want to avoid antagonizing an enemy by attacking their population. Sometimes enemy psychic powers will prevent any other option.

## **BATTLE**

This section describes how to fight a battle using the battle module.

Usually battles take place at planets, so you'll see a planet, maybe with defences and ground units, and ships above. Your forces are blue, and those of the enemy are red. If attacking, your forces will be on the left, if defending on the right.

Use the "Home" key to centre the camera on your forces. Move the screen around using the arrow keys, or WASD keys, or drag it by holding down the left mouse button. Zoom in and out with the mouse wheel.



- A. Formation buttons
- B. Change number of lines
- C. Change spacing
- D. Group selected units
- E. AI Control Button. Place selected group under computer control
- F. Retreat Button
- G. Launch Button. Launch landing pods, asteroids, and infection attacks
- H. Buttons to sort groups
- I. Display of ship and ground groups.
- J. Turbo Button. Hold down mouse to increase game speed.
- K. Pause Button
- L. Time left in battle
- M. End Battle under computer control
- N. Indicates group is under computer control.
- O. Group attacking
- P. Group under attack.

### GROUPS AND MOVEMENT

During the battle you can control your ships and ground units. Defences are controlled automatically. Ships and ground units are divided into groups of similar types, and you give orders to groups rather than individual units. The groups are set up automatically at the start of the battle, but you can change them if you wish.

Select a group by left clicking on one of its units. Order it to move by right clicking where you'd like it to go. Double right click to order it to move without keeping formation.

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Hold and drag with the right button to set both position and facing.

Right click on an enemy to attack that group.

Your groups are also listed in the panel on the right hand side. You can select a group by left clicking on it in the panel, and move the map to show it by double left clicking. The panel shows the composition of the group, if it is moving, and whether it is firing, or under attack.

## COMBAT BASICS

When units get within range of each other, they will automatically fire. You don't control the firing of individual units. There are two base weapon types, beams and missiles. Beams only do damage to the target unit, whereas missiles explode and damage all nearby units.

When a unit is attacked, the energy from the attack is absorbed in its shield. As the shield absorbs damage, it starts to change color and intensity, going from red to yellow to white to blue and finally to ultra violet (purple). Once the shield becomes blue white, there is a chance it will fail, destroying in the unit. When the shield becomes purple, the chance of destruction is high. If no further damage is sustained, the energy sustained in the shield is gradually dissipated, and its color will fade.

## FORMATIONS

Ship groups can be in one of three different formations, and you can control the number of lines and spacing for each formation. Ground unit groups always have a fixed formation.

### Line Abreast

By default, groups are deployed in "Line Abreast" formation as this is the most versatile.

### Circle Formation

Circle formation has the ships continually moving round in a circle. Because the ships are continually moving, it is hard for the enemy to concentrate fire on any one ship, making a good defensive formation. However, it is also difficult for the circling ships to fully utilize their own firepower.

### Caracole Formation

This is somewhat similar to the Circle Formation, but the ships travel in an oval shape in the depth dimension. The indented effect is to have each ship discharge its weapons in turn at enemy located at the end of the oval. It can be effective, but is also easy to outmaneuver or disrupt. The name comes from a similar formation used by Renaissance era cavalry.

### Spacing

Three buttons on the formation bar let you set the group into close, loose or open spacing. Close spacing maximizes concentration of firepower, but means that missile explosions will damage multiple ships.

### Number of Lines

The number of lines each formation is in can be set from 1 to 4. Using multiple lines can make larger groups easier to maneuver, and a second line of ships can usually add their firepower to that of the first.



## GROUPING

Although the groups are set up by default, you can modify them. Doubling clicking on a unit, selects just that unit. If you order it to move or attack, it will be separated into its own separate group. If multiple individual units are selected, they'll be formed into one group.

Holding down the Ctrl key while selecting a group or unit, adds to the selection. Pressing the "G" key or the "Group" button will bring them together into one group.

Holding "Shift" and double clicking will select all the units of that type.

You can assign a number to a selected group by holding down the Shift key, and pressing a number key. You can then quickly select that group by pressing the key corresponding to its number. The group numbers are shown on the panel on the right.

If you have too many groups to control, you can place a group under computer control using the AI Control Button.

## TIME CONTROL

You can pause the battle by using the "P" key "Pause" key or the button on the timer battle in the bottom right.

Sometimes, when you are waiting for something to happen, you'll want to speed up the passage of time. You can do this by holding down the left mouse button over the "Turbo" button, or you can toggle between normal and accelerated time using the F9 key.

Sometimes the outcome of a battle will be clear, but there will be tedious mopping up operations to perform. In this case, use the End Battle button, which will cause all forces to be placed under computer control, and for the battle to be finished in accelerated time. Note that the screen update will become jerky as the computer tries to finish the battle as soon as it can, and saves time by not updating the screen so often.

## INFORMATION

If you want to get information about the ships or other units in the battle, you should pause the game. When paused, hovering the cursor over a unit will show its type and basic statistics.

Attack, is the unit's attack power against objects in space (ships and space stations)

Ground Attack is the unit's power against ground units and ground based defences.

Defense is its ability to absorb damage before being destroyed.

Press the "Enter" key to bring up full details of the unit under the cursor.

You can use the F10 key to show the ranges and firing arcs of the selected units. Blue show ground attack weapons, red shows space weapons, and yellow shows duel purpose weapons. Press F10 again to turn this display off.

## WINNING A BATTLE

For an attacker to win a battle at a planet, he must destroy all the defender's defences and ground units, and either destroy all their ships, or land his own ground forces on the planet.

The defender wins if all the attacker's forces are destroyed or retreat.

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Often battles end without either side clearly winning. This usually happens when the time limit expires, and sometimes when neither side has forces that can hurt the other. If neither side moves their forces away, then the battle will continue in the next turn, together with any reinforcements that have arrived.

#### RETREATING

If a battle looks like it will go poorly, then ships can retreat. Landed ground units and defences cannot. To retreat, select a group, and press the retreat button. It will then start moving towards one of the retreat portals on its side of the battlefield. Only one ship at a time can move through each portal, so if you have a large fleet, it can be important to set the order of retreat, and to leave a rear guard. To cancel a retreat, just order a group to move somewhere else.

Note that it is not possible to retreat during the early period of a battle.

After the battle, ships that retreat will set course for the nearest friendly colony, and move one square in that direction.

#### GROUND COMBAT

At the start of the battle, any defending ground units at the colony will be deployed on the planet, but attacking ground units will still be in their ships. To land them on the planet, select the assault ships, and use the Launch Button. The landing pods will detach from the assault ships and move towards the planet. When they reach the surface, they will be replaced by the ground unit. Only ground units carried in Assault Ships can land this way, any in normal Transports cannot. If the defender has any ground units loaded on Assault Ships at the colony, they can be landed on the planet in the same way.

Once landed, ground units cannot be re-embarked. If the battle finishes without a clear winner, then any attacking ground units will be returned to their Assault Ships. If these have retreated or been destroyed, they will be destroyed too.

In general, ground units can be selected and ordered to move and fight in the same way as ships.

#### SPECIAL UNITS

##### Asteroids

If the attacker has one or more Roid Roller ships, then a powered asteroid ship will be created for each one. These asteroids can be moved around like normal ships, but can also be sent to collide with the planet creating a massive explosion killing any ships, ground units or defences nearby.

Use the Launch Button to send them to attack. Each asteroid will aim for the nearest cluster of defences.

##### Infectors and Plaguewingers

These ships can fly low over the planet and infect it with plagues or nano-agents. Use the Launch Button to send them on an infection attack run. This will involve them flying low over the centre of the planet under automatic control. Try to soften up defences and destroy enemy ships before commencing the attack.

Each ship can make only one infection attack per battle. If the colony is not susceptible to your infection technology, then infection runs may not be made.



### **Giant Spores**

Giant spores are another way to infect a planet. They travel towards the planet, exploding when they get close, spreading their contagion over the surface. Again, use the Launch Button to initiate the attack.

### **Carriers and Fighters**

Carriers and some other ships carry small fighter ships to battle. The fighters take off automatically, join the battle for a while, and then return to their carriers when their fuel is exhausted. When they launch they are placed in groups under computer control, but you can take control of fighter groups manually if you wish.

Any fighters lost are regenerated after the battle (may take several turns), so the best use for them is to distract enemy forces from shooting at regular ships.

### **Space Stations**

These are types of defences that are placed in space, including Orbital Lasers and Guardians. They exist a little off the normal place of action, so it can be hard to attack them. Order attacks on them, by right clicking on them. Since they are space objects, ships attack them using their space weapons and regular attack factors, so specialist ground attack ships may be poor at attacking them.

### **PSI WARFARE**

There are various technologies that allow for attacks using psychic powers. The effects range from confusion preventing a unit from firing its weapons, to temporary or permanent retreat, self destruction, and surrender. When a unit suffers a psi attack, a sound effect will play, and a green brain icon will flash over it. Targets are selected automatically by the computer. The strength and number of attacks depends on the relative technology of the two sides, and the balance of force in an area, more force means more attacks. There are also some special ships that boost psi attacks in the area around them.

Sometimes ships will retreat in fear or panic, and you won't be able to control them. They will be surrounded by a yellow shell to indicate this. Ships may also surrender, in which case they will be surrounded by a white shell. They cannot be used or attacked by either side, but at the end of the battle will come under control of the winner.

### **CAMERA AND VIEW**

Usually the battle is played from the overhead perspective. When you zoom out, units are shown enlarged and brightly colored to make them easier to see. You can turn this off with the F11 key. You can tilt the view with by holding down the middle mouse button.

There are two other views that put you right in the action. They aren't really useful for controlling things, but look spectacular. Use the F5 key to get the view from the unit under the cursor (or the selected unit). Use the middle mouse button to look around. Use the F6 key to get an orbital view of the unit under the cursor. Use the middle mouse button to look around, and the mouse wheel to move in and out. Use the F8 key to return to the normal view.

Use Alt + U to hide the user interface elements to get the full cinematic battle effect.

### **DEPLOYMENT**

For very large battles, there will be a deployment phase before the battle that lets you arrange your forces. Use the same controls as for movement to move groups around. Note that there is a limited area in which you can place them. Press the green Start Battle button to begin the battle.

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There is no deployment phase for smaller battles, as it's easy to move things around at the start, and there's probably no need for a complicated plan.

## CUSTOM SPACE BATTLE

By choosing "Space Battle" from the main menu, you can fight a one-off battle. This will let you practice your tactics, try out ships and technologies, or just have fun.



- A. Select Race
- B. Set which side is human controlled, and which is computer controlled.
- C. Load a set-up from disk
- D. Set Star Type
- E. Set Planet Type
- F. Select the points allowed for attacker forces
- G. Select points used for defender forces
- H. Set technology limit
- I. Choose whether or not to have a time limit.
- J. Choose whether or not there will be a deployment phase.

The first screen lets you set up the conditions for the battle. You can choose the star and planet type (although these have no real effect), decide which races will take part, and how many points are available to each side. You can also set the maximum level of technology allowed for this battle. This will restrict what ships can be used.

One or two races are allowed for each side. If two are selected, then the points will be shared between them, but you will be able to choose ships designs from both.

When everything is set to your liking, press the "Next" button to choose the exact forces to be used.

If you load a saved set-up, you'll be taken straight to the force selection screen. From there you can use the back



button if you want to change any of the settings on this screen. Choose the “Custom: Last Custom Battle” set-up to repeat the last custom battle you played.

## FORCE SELECTION



- A. Chose which race's ships to show.
- B. Show the Attacker's forces
- C. Show the Defender's forces
- D. Switch between choosing forces and technologies
- E. Buy 1 of the selected item
- F. Buy 5 of the selected item
- G. Buy 10 of the selected item
- H. Have the computer choose forces for the current side
- I. Clear forces of the current side.
- J. Save the battle set-up

Here you can choose the exact forces and technologies used in the battle.

The forces to select from are shown at the top. Left click to buy one of an item. Right click for information about it. If the side has more than one race, use the icons below the ships to change which race's units are displayed. The forces selected are shown at the bottom, together with how many points the side has left. Click an item to remove one unit of that type. Use the two icons above to switch between attacking and defending sides.

If you begin the battle without selecting any units for a side, the computer will select them automatically. This lets you face an unknown enemy.

You can also select special technologies. Use Button D to switch the top panel between displaying technologies

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and ships. If a side has more than one race, they'll both have any technologies selected.

Press "Start Battle" to begin the battle.

#### OPTION MENU

This menu gives options to alter graphic and sound settings and game settings, access the map designer and view the credits.

#### Graphic Settings

This lets you tweak detail and quality settings to best suit your system configuration.

If you suffer from slow performance in battles, particularly when many missiles are in flight, reduce the effects quality. If battles are not displaying properly, reduce the shadow quality setting to lowest.

#### Sound Settings

This lets you set volume balance between the various types of sound, and the overall volume. If you have any quality problems with sound, try reducing the sound quality setting, or changing the sound provider.

#### Game Settings

Here you can set scroll rates, and fleet animation speeds, select which types of units are automatically unloaded from transports, adjust bureaucracy, and choose whether to show the offer balance during negotiation.

## MAP DESIGNER

This lets you create new maps.

#### Menus

The file menu provides options to load and save a map, and to create a new blank map of the desired size. The map menu provides options to randomly fill the map with stars, and to set star names.

#### Editing

There are four editing modes. Use the following keys to select the mode.

**S** for Stars

**W** for Wormholes

**B** for background graphics

**D** for dust clouds

In star and wormhole mode, double click on the map to place a star or wormhole at the square under the cursor. A dialog will appear allowing you to set details.

For stars, you either set the various system properties explicitly, or set them to random. If set to random, they will be set when the map is used in a game, and will be different for each game.

In background and dust mode you select an item from the menu on the right hand side, and double click on the map to place it. Use the Z key to switch the selection menu between large and small items.



In background mode, you can use the plus and minus keys to alter the depth of the graphic, and the period and comma keys to change the size of the graphic without changing its depth.

In all modes, the object under the cursor can be deleted using the delete key, but you have to be in the correct editing mode for the object you want to delete.

## PLAYING TIPS

Make sure you explore your environment thoroughly, and note the quality of the various systems. Poor systems can be good for population growth, but are expensive to develop. Rich systems will become your production centres, but are often poor for growth. Asteroid belts and Oort clouds are also valuable economically. When you've explored as far as you can, found new colonies to extend your range.

Population is your most important resource, and during the early part of the game it is important to maximize growth rate. Be aggressive about building Ark Ships and settling as many worlds as possible. Move population from your home world to colonies with higher growth rates. If you have a lack of planets to colonize, develop technology to colonize and improve less desirable planets.

It's easy to get into trouble economically by constructing too many buildings. Try to build only where there's a clear need, and don't try to fully develop every planet. Pick a few colonies to be production and economic centres, and protect them well. Leave other colonies as lightly protected farm or mining worlds. Remember the adage that whoever tries to defend everything, defends nothing.

Pay attention to your population, and keep them happy. At first this won't be a problem, but as worlds become overpopulated and bureaucracy increases, unhappiness and unrest will grow. It's easy to get into a downward spiral where worlds start to become unhappy, you don't have enough money to fix it, they riot and stop paying taxes, meaning you have even less money to sort out the next unhappy world, and pretty soon all your major colonies have become failed states. Build terraformers, weather controllers and entertainment centres as soon as you start to become unpopular. Don't keep taxes too high for too long, and don't mix populations of different races. Consider destroying polluting mines on heavily populated planets.

Don't be afraid to specialize in one or two areas of research. It may seem like you need items from most branches, but remember that you can trade for the tech you're not researching yourself. Specializing can give you decisive edge.

Trade is a great way to raise income, but choose your partners carefully. The loss of income from going to war with a major trading partner can cripple your economy. Decide early which players are going to become your partners, and which you conquers.

Security is important, so make sure you build enough scanners to keep an eye on the enemy, and keep up with scanning and stealth technology. Try not to let them settle planets inside your empire, as this will put many of your planets at risk of attack.

Remember that war is expensive, but a key part of the game. Try to build up a treasury in time of peace, so that you can spend freely in times of war, and overcome your enemy quickly. It's cheaper to build a new ship that to maintain it for twenty turns, so while you need a certain number of ships for deterrence, it's better to have the production capacity to expand your forces quickly, than to have a huge fleet standing around idle.

Don't neglect ground forces. They let you capture enemy colonies with their facilities intact, protect against unrest, and are very effective against strong ground defences.

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Finally, make sure you know what you score victory points for. How well you've done is judged by how well you meet the objectives of your chosen faction. Some want to grind the galaxy under their heel, while others just want everyone to be happy.

## MULTIPLAYER

You can play against other players in one of three ways: via email (PBEM), via a local area network (LAN) or with two or people at the same computer (hot seat).

To begin or continue a multi-player game use the "Multi-Player" button from the main menu.

## LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN) GAMES

### Selecting a Player Name

Before you can play in a LAN game, you need to access the "Multi-Player Settings" menu and enter a player name. Don't worry about the other fields; they are only used for PBEM games.

### Hosting a Game

One player must host they game. They set up the game, and choose a name for it. The other players then join the game

To host a LAN game, use the "Host LAN Game" button on the multi-player menu. Then set the game up as usual, selecting either a scenario or a custom game type. When the setup is complete you'll be taken to a new screen where you must choose a name for the game, and select which faction you want to play. Once you've chosen a name, the game will be visible on the network, and other players can join. You'll see details of who has joined in the "players" panel. When all the players have joined, press "OK" to begin the game.

Any factions that are not chosen by a player will be computer controlled. A game may have any mix of human and computer controlled factions.



- A. Game Name
- B. Host Player Name
- C. Select Host Faction
- D. List of Player Who Joined Game



## Joining a LAN Game

One player must host the game, and all the others are joiners. To join a game use the "Join LAN Game" button from the multi-player menu. You'll see a list of games currently waiting to begin. Double click the one you want to join. You'll then be taken to a lobby screen where you select which faction you want to play. Wait here until the host begins the game.



- A. Game Name
- B. Your Player Name
- C. Faction You Control
- D. Other Player Details

## Game Play

Play proceeds in a very similar way to single player. Each player carries out their turn at the same time. When you press "End Turn" you then wait until all the other players have finished their turn. You may then have to wait while other players resolve any battles. All battles must be auto-resolved, so this won't take long.

If you send a diplomatic offer to another human player, they'll receive it on their next turn, and you'll get their response on your following turn. Generally, it'll be fastest to negotiate terms via chat, and then send the final offer for the other player to agree to.

## Chat

You can chat with other players during the game by pressing the F3 key, or using the button on the left of the map bar in the top right of the screen. Press F3 again to close the chat window.



- A. Button to Open and Close Chat Window
- B. Conversation Area
- C. Select Player to Send Message To
- D. Tick Box to Select All Players
- E. Area to Type Message

## Saving and Resuming

Any player can save the game, but any orders given up until that point are not saved. The game is also auto-saved at the start of each turn.

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To resume a LAN game you must use the “Load Game” button from the multi-player menu. The player who loads the game acts as the host and other players then join the game. The player who loads the game does not need to have been the original host, and the players who join do not need a copy of the saved game.

## Firewall

The installer should open the necessary ports in your firewall, but if you need to configure it manually, you should open ports 2302 and 2303 for both UDP and TCP.

## PLAY BY EMAIL (PBEM)

### Setting up an account

To play via email, you need to set up a Gmail account ([www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com)). This is free and easy. You can use an existing account, but this is not recommended for security reasons. The game knows how to communicate with the Gmail servers, and so can automate the sending and receiving of mail.



- A. Player Name
- B. Account Name and Password for Gmail Account
- C. Notification Address

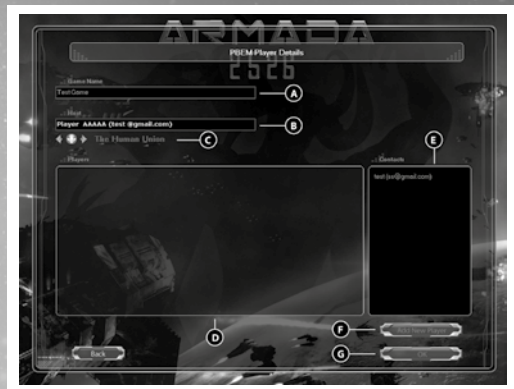
Before you play you must enter your Gmail account details on the “Multi-Player Settings” screen, and also choose a player name for yourself. If you

wish you can add your regular email address as a notification address. A mail will be sent to this address when you are sent a game move. The game uses your Gmail address to track who is who in a game, so you shouldn't change it in the middle of a game.



## Hosting a Game

One player sets up the game, and acts as the host. The other players send their orders to the host, and the host is responsible for “processing” the turn once all the orders have been received.



- A. Game Name
- B. Host Player Name
- C. Host Player Faction
- D. Player Details Area
- E. List of Contacts
- F. Add New Player to the Game
- G. Begin the Game

To begin a new game, select “Host PBEM Game” from the multi-player menu. You then set up the game as normal, selecting either a scenario, or a custom game.

When set-up is complete, you will be taken to the “PBEM Player Details” screen where you can choose a name for the game, select which faction you will control, and select the other players to include in the game.

To add a player, use the “Add New Player” button, then fill in the details of their name, email and address, (optionally a notification address) and which faction they will play. If you’ve played with this person before, you can add them quickly by double clicking on their entry in the “contacts” panel on the right hand side.

When you’ve entered all the player details, press the “OK” button, and the game will be sent to the other players. The game will then begin, and you should enter your orders for the turn. When you press “End Turn”, you will exit from the game. You wait for the other players to send back their orders, and then process the turn.

Any factions that are not controlled by a player, will be controlled by the computer.

## Processing a Turn

When all players have sent back their orders, it is the host’s responsibility to “process” the turn. The results will then be sent to the other players for them to enter their next turn, or to resolve battles.

To process a turn, use the “Join/Continue” button on the multi-player menu, then press the “Hosted” button to list the games you’re hosting. If it says “Ready” after the game name, then all orders have been received and the game is ready to be processed. Double click on it to load it. The game and other player orders will be loaded, and the orders carried out. The game will then be sent to the other players for their input.

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One of three things will then happen.

If there are no battles to resolve, you will be asked to do your next turn.

If you have battles, then you will be asked to resolve them, and then you then may or may proceed to your next turn, depending on whether or not other players have battles.

If other players have battles, but you do not, then the game will exit immediately.

You then wait for the other players to send back their orders, and then process the next turn.



- A. Status Display
- B. Check for New Mail
- C. Details of New Mail
- D. Show Games You've Joined That are Waiting for Your Orders
- E. Show Games You're Hosting
- F. Details of Unsent Mail Waiting in Your Outbox

## Joining a PBEM Game

If you're not the host, then the process is a little different. There is no special process to join a game; you'll just see the new game in your inbox. To access your inbox, use the "Join/Continue" button on the multi-player menu. You'll then see a list of all the games that are waiting for your input. Double click a game to load it.

You then either need to do a turn, or resolve your battles. When all the battles are resolved, or you press "End Turn", your orders will be sent to the host, and the game will exit to the menu. You then wait until the host sends the game back to you for your next turn.

## Game Play

All players do their turn at the same time, and then send their orders back to the host.

If there are battles between human players, then they are resolved by the attacker. The defender will receive a message describing what happened.

An important difference between PBEM games and normal games is that you must declare war in advance using the button on the Diplomacy Screen. You cannot declare war during the battle resolution phase. This is designed to keep the game moving faster by removing the need to ask players what they want to do every time they encounter a neutral.

## Sending and Receiving Mail

The game will check your mail when it starts, and periodically while it is running. There is also a button you can use on the screen that lists your games.



If the game is running in the background and new mail is received, then it will flash in the task bar. This is useful when all players are online at once, and sending orders back and forth quickly.

The game will try to send your orders immediately when you finish your turn, although sometimes it won't be able to access the server. In this case you can either try again, or save the mail in your outbox. The game will keep trying to send mail in your outbox while it's running. If you select cancel, your input will be lost, and you will have to do your turn again.

### **Dropped Players**

The host can, if necessary, process a turn before all the players have returned their orders. This can be useful if players have dropped out of the game, are away, are late, or their orders have been lost.

### **Trouble Shooting**

If you're not receiving mails that you expected to receive, the most likely problem is that Gmail has diverted them to your Spam folder. You'll need to log into your Gmail account via your web browser, and mark the missing mails as "not spam".

However, email can be an uncertain medium; emails may be lost, or not downloaded correctly. If a game or set of orders are lost, you may be able to fix things by accessing your Gmail account directly through the web. Since Gmail never deletes anything, you can always re-send a game or orders manually, or re-download a file that was incorrectly downloaded. Order files ".2526Orders" should be downloaded to the folder "**My Documents\My Games\Armada 2526 Gold\PBEM In Progress**".

Game files ".2526Sav" should be downloaded to "**My Documents\My Games\Armada 2526 Gold\Inbox**".

If the game reports that your user name or password are incorrect, when you're sure that they are, it may be because your firewall is blocking the ports needed to send and receive email. The game uses port 587 to send mail, and port 995 to receive it.

### **HOT SEAT**

This is the same as in the base game. However, to start a hot seat game, you should now use the "Hot Seat Game" button from the multi-player menu.

### **MULTI-PLAYER ADVICE**

Multi-player games work best when there is lots of player interaction, so try to keep the maps small and the players close together. If you play on a huge map with only two players, it may be hundreds of turns before you come into contact, and the experience will be the same as a single player game played very slowly.

Try the scenarios especially designed for multi-player. The Triangle scenario is especially good for PBEM as the players start with three planets, thus skipping the early expansion phase where there will be little player interaction.

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### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

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

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

#### When contacting us, please be sure to include:

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

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

#### To generate a DXDIAG file. Please follow these steps:

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

Please email the generated DXDIAG file to our support desk.

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

### 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.



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## KEYS AND CONTROLS

### GENERAL

<b>F1</b>	Show keys and controls
<b>F2</b>	Show / Hide advisor
<b>F4</b>	Show command console
<b>F12</b>	Mute sound
<b>Alt + Enter</b>	Switch to windowed mode
<b>Arrow Keys or WASD keys</b>	Scroll map
<b>Shift key</b>	Scroll faster
<b>Left Button Drag</b>	Scroll map

### STAR MAP

<b>Left Button</b>	Select square
<b>Left Double Click</b>	Open panel
<b>Right Button</b>	Move ships
<b>Right Double Click</b>	Move all ships
<b>Esc</b>	Show load, save and settings menu
<b>Home</b>	Centre map on home world.
<b>R</b>	Reports screen
<b>N</b>	Diplomacy screen
<b>T</b>	Technology screen
<b>F</b>	Finance screen
<b>L</b>	Load ships
<b>U</b>	Unload ships
<b>Enter</b>	Open colony or fleet panel
<b>C</b>	Show/Hide scanned area
<b>Ctrl + G</b>	Show/Hide grid
<b>Ctrl + U</b>	Show/Hide dust highlight

### BATTLE

<b>Left Button</b>	Select group
<b>Double Left Click</b>	Select single unit
<b>Right Click</b>	Move \ Attack
<b>Double Right Click</b>	Move without formation
<b>Home</b>	Centre on largest group
<b>Enter</b>	Show unit details
<b>P or Pause</b>	Pause
<b>Esc</b>	Finish battle under computer control
<b>F9</b>	Toggle accelerated time
<b>G</b>	Group selected units
<b>Ctrl + Left Button</b>	Select multiple groups/units
<b>Shift + Double Click</b>	Select all of same unit type
<b>Shift + 0 - 9</b>	Assign number to group
<b>0 - 9</b>	Select numbered group
<b>F5</b>	Unit eye view
<b>F6</b>	Orbital view
<b>F8</b>	Normal view
<b>Middle Button</b>	Mouse look
<b>F10</b>	Show weapons
<b>F11</b>	Turn off high visibility mode
<b>Alt + U</b>	Hide UI
<b>Ctrl + C</b>	Circle Formation
<b>Ctrl + B</b>	Line Abreast Formation
<b>Ctrl + V</b>	Caracole Formation
<b>Alt + 1- 4</b>	Set number of lines
<b>Alt + C</b>	Close spacing
<b>Alt + L</b>	Loose spacing
<b>Alt + O</b>	Open spacing
<b>Ctrl + I</b>	Toggle computer control of group
<b>Ctrl + R</b>	Retreat
<b>Ctrl + L</b>	Launch
<b>Ctrl + A</b>	Select all
<b>Delete</b>	Stop moving



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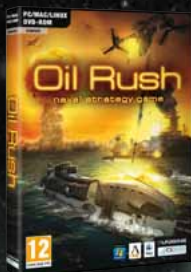
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Strategy



Strategy



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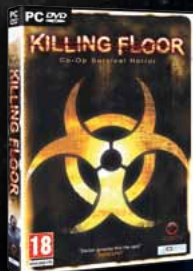
MMO Shooter



Strategy



Action



FPS

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