



STAR EMPIRE

THE ULTIMATE SPACE
ODYSSEY

PLAYER'S MANUAL

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Introduction

Star Empire! is a game of courage, a game of high adventure, of space travel...and enormous risks!

Starting at the Abatlu star system equipped with a basic Scoutship, you try to build a great galactic Star Empire spanning many solar systems. You'll have to trade with various Starbases, destroy alien menaces and brave dozens of missions to become the greatest space pilot of all time!

Then, and only then, can you even think of building a huge "Frontier Shield" to protect your fragile Star Empire for all eternity.

Important Notes From Admiral Katan...

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Enclosed is a detailed printout of classified information from Admiral Katan.

Trading:

At the beginning of the game you cannot trade, as starbases do not trust you. You will have to complete the first mission before they can trust you.

You can only trade with Empire Starbases, as any other bases cannot be trusted.

If you drop any Pods outside a starbase then it will store those Pods in the base for you to use later. Beware, non-Empire Bases will "lose" your Pods.

The number of items you can purchase from a starbase depends on the amount of raw materials you have in the base. If you have 100% of all materials, then you may be allowed to purchase the starbase and make it yours.

Fighting:

Shooting aliens can reward you with medals. This will also help make systems more friendly. If enough aliens are shot in a non-Empire system, it may become an Empire System itself. On the other hand an Empire System may turn alien, if it is neglected for too long. You will be informed of either occurrence.

Missions:

You will always be informed of any missions available in your vicinity. You must react to a mission call within a certain amount of time, or it may no longer be available.

Some missions have fixed time limits, these are displayed in the mission counter box. If the mission is not completed

within this time limit, then the mission is cancelled, and you will not be rewarded.

There are a few missions which are continuously played in the game. The frontier mission is one of these, and will lead to completion of the game.

Ship's Extras:

There are a number of Add-Ons that can be gained or bought throughout the game. These may have a gauge dedicated to them, like system and galaxy jumps, or may be displayed or used differently, such as radiation shields which is shown as a bar directly below your ship. An extra Pod is marked with an "X" in the middle.

At various points in the game you may be able to purchase these Add-Ons which will better equip your ship for what follows. Add-Ons are described below:

Galaxy Jumper - The box displays the countdown to a jump to a new galaxy. The narrow gauge tells you how many jumps you have left (explained in full later). If you own a Galaxy Jumper, then you may jump to any planet in the galaxy by simply pressing the "O" when the cursor is positioned on the selected planet.

Extra Shield Power - This Add-On will protect your normal shield strength by absorbing collisions. You'll note a dotted outline around your ship on the Viewscreen.

Speed-Up - This addition will increase your thrust and rotation speeds for a fixed amount of time.

System Jumper - Provides you with Three system jumps. You will be allowed to jump to the cursor position in the system map by pressing the "O" key. When you leave the map screen, your ship will be at its new position.

Nova Bomb Counter - At certain stages in the game, you will be able to purchase a Nova Bomb. These may be used to destroy a system completely. To activate a Nova Bomb you must shoot its Pod. The counter will then begin to count down and you'll have to make tracks to get outta there, or you'll be destroyed as well!

This page is provided as a quick reference to you as you play the game.

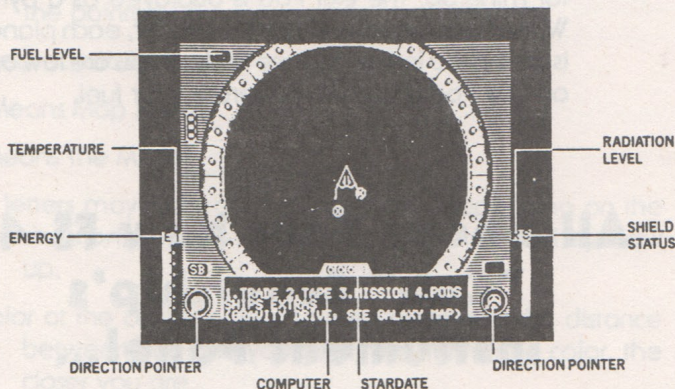


Figure 1

- A. **Energy Level:** Indicates the amount of battery power and life support that is available. The level decreases whenever you are shot at or suffer a collision. If it drops to zero, the player dies.
- B. **Temperature:** The temperature rises if you are too close to the sun. Death will occur if the temperature is raised to its maximum level.
- C. **Radiation:** The ship becomes radioactive when there is ORE on board the scoutship. If the radiation level reaches its maximum, the player dies.
- D. **Shield Energy:** This is closely related to the ship's energy level. The shield energy level decreases with each collision or shot at the ship. When the level drops to zero, so does your life.
- E. **Lifeline:** The small horizontal computer screen displays all incoming messages.
- F. **Stardate Clock:** Displays the current stardate. When you begin the game the clock will read "Stardate 0." Keep in mind that one stardate is equivalent to 10 seconds of playing time.
- G. **Direction Pointers:** Indicate the direction in which you should travel to reach a certain position in the current solar system.

On the approach to a planet, your orbit is displayed as a square area. Pods on the planet are represented by triangular shapes marked with "P" for people, "O" for ores and "M" for minerals. The exit Pod is displayed as a pyramid. When Pods are taken from the planet, each planet Pod is converted into two space Pods. If you are low on fuel, an Ore Pod is used to generate your fuel.

All About Your New FS-42 "Cub" Scoutship's Instrument Panel...

Looking at the instrument panel (Figure 1 on page 5), you'll see several gauges and indicators surrounding the view-screen. More will be available as Add-Ons are purchased.

- Energy Level - Battery power and life support will decrease whenever you are shot at or suffer a collision. If this drops to zero, the player will die.
- Temperature - This level will rise if you are too close to the sun. You'll die if this level reaches maximum.
- Radiation - Your ship will become radioactive if you carry any Ore. Again, watch the level - at maximum - you'll die.
- Shield Energy - Is closely related to ship's energy level. The level will decrease with each collision or shot on the ship. Remember - when this drops to zero, your life drops to zero!

There are three other instrumental devices that will help you:

- Computer Screen - The small horizontal screen displaying all incoming messages.
- Stardate Clock - Displays the current stardate. You start out at stardate 0. One stardate is 10 seconds of "real-time."

—Direction Pointers - These show the direction in which you should travel to reach a certain position in the current solar system. The letters above indicate the direction of the pointer.

SB - Means Starbase

PO - Means Map Pointer

XX - Means The Mission

Other letters may appear at certain times depending on the situation, and you'll get to recognize them as they show up.

The color at the center of the pointers represents the distance between you and your goal. The lighter the color, the closer you are.

There are a few other "Dashboard" devices you'll want to keep your eye on:

Fuel Gauge - Shows the current fuel level. If the fuel becomes low, then the ship's movement will become sluggish. You can collect more fuel by picking up more Ore from nearby planets.

Mission and Plague Counters - Some missions have pre-defined time limits placed on them. This time is in Stardates and the mission counter counts down.

If you catch the dreaded plague, then you will have 200 stardates to find a cure. Any system you enter will also become infected. If this counter reaches zero — that's it pilot — you're dead.

Starbases...

During the course of the game, you'll need to visit the Starbases for four important reasons:

- 1) To trade and collect ship's equipment Pods.
- 2) To leave collected Pods for safekeeping.
- 3) To receive "special mission" instructions.
- 4) To save your current position.

Docking...

Look for the rings of concentric circles to initiate docking procedure. To Dock you must fly between them and roll your ship so that it lies exactly on the line connecting the centers.

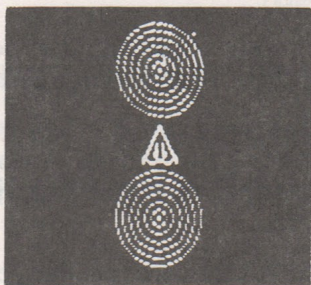


Figure 2

Once you've docked, a System Controller will appear in a screen above the computer. Above her, you'll see three Pod Symbols. These represent that Starbase's Ore, Mineral and People resources. you'll note a Percentage Counter indicating how much of each is present here. The Starbase needs all three to produce equipment Pods for your ship. The more it has, the faster it can produce for you. If the Starbase wants what you've got, it will pull it in and the counter will rise.

While you are in the Starbase you may choose four options (or hit RETURN to leave the screen):

1. Trade - This will allow you to select the Pods you want - if they are available. Use the "Up" and "Down" keys and press "Select". The Pod will then be released and you must collect it from Outside the base with your ropes.

Note: The Pod indicators show you what the Starbase can produce with the materials it possesses—if it's fairly empty, nothing much can be produced.

2. Disk - Use this option to SAVE your game or RELOAD a previously saved game.

3. Mission - The Starbase may require you to perform a special

mission. If this is the case, it will broadcast a message which will be displayed on your ship's computer.

Note: Most missions have a time limit, and if you take too long to reply to a radio mission, the reward may be decreased (or dropped!)

4. Pods - Similar to Trade, you may select these Pods from Outside the base.

Should you desire to leave a Pod for safekeeping or trade, move close to the base and extend the ropes. A rope will reach out from the Starbase and collect the Pod.

Note: Be careful not to get too close. You may damage the Starbase!

Flying Your Spaceship...

Moving the joystick Left rolls the ship counterclockwise. Moving the joystick Right rolls the ship clockwise. Pushing the joystick Forward applies Thrust. Pulling the Joystick back Reduces the speed. The fire button fires the Photon Cannon (note that firing the cannon will cause your ship to heat up slightly. If the temperature becomes too high, the cannon will only work intermittently).

Pod Story...

Small circular containers, Pods, are used to transport cargo around the solar system. The Pods come in various designs dependent upon their use.

There will be some Pods you'll want to pick up during the game. To do this: Hit the "S" key to release the cargo ropes. maneuver the ship so that the tip of the rope touches the Pod.

"W" retracts the ropes with the Pods.

NOTE: If you carry Pods containing radioactive Ore, your ship will become contaminated by radiation. So if you see the radiation level going up - drop the Pod, or Die!

At the beginning of the game, your ship may only carry a single Pod at a time. If you are carrying a Pod, and you've just picked up another, retracting ropes will drop that second Pod.. Later in the game, you may earn a Wolf-style attack ship. The Wolf is able to carry ten Pods without the need of ropes. When flying over a Pod, a "tray" will open up and collect the container.

Flying Around Systems...

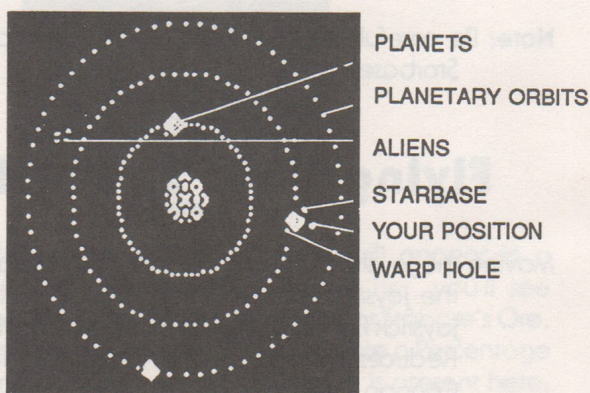


Figure 3
System Map:

Press the "T" key to display a map of the current solar system. See Figure 3.

The marker is displayed as a large flashing circle in the center of the screen. Pods are displayed as green dots (white on Commodore).

To zoom into your position, press "A"

To zoom out press "Q"

To return to that might be in your path!

Planets: You will need to land on planets to pick up Ore, minerals or people for the Starbases. You will have to fly around the planet until you find a "warp hole".

Once in this hole, your ship's computer will change your controls and plot an orbit for you to follow. The orbit consists of lots of squares (on the IBM, circles) you have to fly through. If you make it through them without collision, you'll find yourself above a planetary landscape.

Control your ship on the planet using "O" and "P" keys to move left and right. Fire by pressing "X". (In the Commodore game you land in a forest, which must be navigated before you can reach the next screen—how far you land within the forest depends on how well you followed the orbit).

When you fly over the planet's surface, missiles will be fired at you; and if a missile hits you, your shield and energy banks will be drained. You can either avoid or destroy them—the more you shoot down, the less frequently they will appear. If you shoot all the missiles, no more will appear during the game on that planet.

Once you're on the planet, you can then look for Pods to pick up. To find Pods, use the direction pointer to the left of the screen to guide you to the nearest Pod, or to the exit point. Any Pods collected will be dropped outside the warp hole when you return to outerspace—unless you're very low on fuel, in which case the first Ore Pod collected will be used to re-fuel you.

Galaxy Map...

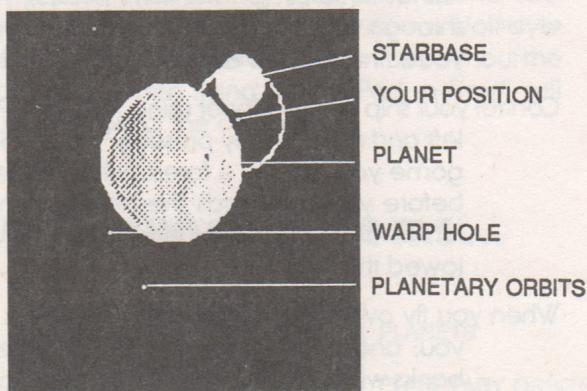


Figure 4

Press "G" to access the galaxy map. See Figure 4. This shows you all the systems you can visit, and the number of alien controlled systems you've already visited.

The pointer (a small square on the map) can be moved around using the cursor keys. When it's positioned over a system, the border will change color and system information will be displayed. The flashing dot on the map shows the system you are currently in. Press "X" to return to the game.

Information on the selected system is as follows:

Name: System name

Plan: Number of planets in the system

Sick: Is the planet infected with the plague? ("Y", yes or "N", no).

Beware! If you enter a "plague" system you will be infected, and you will infect other systems you visit. A system that stays "sick" for more than about 200 stardates may be destroyed. There is an antidote, but you will have to find it. (If you enter a "plague" system, the screen background will turn blue).

Ruler: One of three: Empire, Alien, or You

Ore: The amount of ore available in the system

Min: The amount of minerals available in the system

Pop: The number of people available in the system

Inv: The number of invading aliens in the system

Visited: Tells you that you've already visited the system

Inter-System Travel...

To travel between systems, leave the edge of your present system and travel through the asteroid belt, avoiding collisions. Most can be reached directly, but to get to some you'll need a Hyperspace Pod.

To reach the system shown to the left of your present position in the galaxy map, simply fly to the left hand edge of your present system and so on. The time it takes to cross the asteroid belt depends on how far away the next system is.

Beware! If there's nothing in the direction you're heading, you could go on forever—or else turn back!

The left hand direction pointer shows the system you're heading for, while the right hand pointer shows the one you've come from.

Some systems are overrun, and controlled by very fast aliens—so you won't find the Starbases at all helpful! If you manage to wipe out aliens in a solar system the Empire will be able to reclaim it, and you may be richly rewarded.

As you get better you'll find the game starting to change, with more aliens, different equipment, even new ships and Starbases.

Once you've visited every system, strange things will start to happen and you can begin to purchase Starbases!

When you own all the systems, there's one final task you must complete to insure the safety of your newly founded Empire.

You'll need to construct a Frontier Shield, using eight frontier generators. Each generator has a destination system

which is displayed when you pick up the generator. You must deliver each one to its correct destination before the shield can be activated. The shield's current status is displayed as a line around the systems in your galaxy map. (Once the generators are in place, the boundary will enclose your Empire—and the game has been won.

End of Game...

When you die, you are given a percentage of the game you've completed. It reflects both the stage of gameplay—and the manner in which you performed as a player. It's possible, then, that you could finish the game having completed less than 100%.

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Commodore
64/128

- Disconnect all fast-loading peripherals from your computer.
- With the disk in the drive, type LOAD "*",8,1 and press the return key.
- When "READY" type RUN and press the return key.
- Usually, the Joystick should be in port one, in some machines, however, it will be in port two.

SUMMARY OF KEYS

FUNCTION	Key
Rotate clockwise	O
Rotate anti-clockwise	P
Thrust	,
Slow	M
Fire	X
Extend cargo rope	S
Retract cargo rope	W
System Map	T
Galaxy Map	G

FUNCTION	Key
Sound on/off	F3
Music on/off	F1
Swap left pointer function	1

IN PLANET ORBIT

Left	O
Right	P
Abort Planet Mode	X

FUNCTION IN PLANET MODE

Left	O
Right	P
Fire	X
MAP MODE	
Left	O
Right	P
Up	,
Down	M
Zoom out	
(System map only)	Q
Zoom in	
(System map only)	A
Exit map	X

When you get equipment that requires the use of extra keys, you'll be told by your computer which keys to use.

LOADING STAR EMPIRE

Note: *Star Empire* runs best at a speed of 8 MHz.

After booting your system with DOS, insert the game disk, type EMPIRE and press the RETURN/ENTER key.

- To exit a map (System or Galaxy) use ENTER (RETURN).
- Arrow keys (NOT numlocked) are used to “fly the ship”. the last key pressed REMAINS IN EFFECT until changed or cancelled. “Del” cancels and puts the program in a “no key pressed” state.
- The ESC key goes directly to DOS.
- To play *Star Empire* using the Keyboard see the other side.

Use of Joysticks

According to IBM publication 84X1514, there is no BIOS support of the game interface prior to 11/8/82, and thereafter, it was supported only on the XT, AT, and upward models. Therefore the game contains its own hardware-level joystick interface. It assumes the game interface is compatible with the specification supported by the BIOS after 11/8/82. Any game interface card and joystick which claims to be “IBM PC compatible” should work, but only “Kraft” hardware has been tested.

Because of the wide variety of joystick resistance values

which may be encountered, the game software custom-calibrates itself to the joystick. The results of this calibration are stored in the DEFAULT DRIVE:PATH in a file called “empire.cfg”. This file is only 8 bytes in length. The first time you attempt to select the joystick option (by using “J” to begin the game) you will be routed automatically to the joystick calibration procedure, which gives clear instructions on-screen as to how to proceed. If you wish to change or recalibrate a joystick, delete the “empire.cfg” file from the directory or subdirectory in which the game is operating; it is the absence of this file which triggers the calibration routine.

Since the game was originally designed to be a one-player situation, only “joystick A” as defined by IBM is supported.

Disk Options

When docked at a starbase, you have a “DISK” option on the menu. Selection of this option leads to choosing between “LOAD” (to restore a previous game state) and “SAVE” (to save the current game state). When “SAVE” is chosen, a file called “empire.sav” is created in the current subdirectory, with a length of 9,412 bytes. A previous SAVE in the current subdirectory is overwritten. LOAD assumes this file is there, and uses it (if it isn’t present, the state of the game will not actually be changed). Through use of multiple subdirectories, a group of players can keep individual game states saved.

For example, suppose Phil, Ryan, and Dan are all enthusiastic *Empire* players, and get together frequently at Phil's house to play. Phil begins with a disk containing the game program ("empire.exe") in the ROOT directory. He then creates subdirectories "PHIL", "RYAN", and "DAN". Each of the three players enters his own subdirectory (using the DOS "CD" command) BEFORE giving the "empire" command to

start the game. If a joystick is in use, it will need to be calibrated separately in each subdirectory...This allows each player to use his/her own favorite. If this is not desired (there is only one joystick) the "empire.cfg" file can be copied into each subdirectory after it has been created the first time. Using this method, approximately 30 individual setups can be accommodated on one 360K disk.

SUMMARY OF KEYS—IBM/TANDY/PC COMPATIBLES

FUNCTION	Key	FUNCTION	Key
Rotate clockwise	O	Sound on/off	-
Rotate anti-clockwise	P	Music on/off	-
Thrust	Symbol shift		
Slow	M	IN PLANET ORBIT	
Fire	X	Left	O
Extend cargo rope	S	Right	P
Retract cargo rope	W	Abort Planet Mode	X
System Map	T	Swap left pointer function	1
Galaxy Map	G		

When you get equipment that requires the use of extra keys, you'll be told by your computer which keys to use.

FUNCTION IN PLANET MODE

Left	O
Right	P
Fire	X

MAP MODE

Left	5
Right	8
Up	7
Down	6

Zoom out	
(System map only)	Q to P

Zoom in	
(System map only)	A to Enter
Exit map	Caps to Space