STAR LORDS

THE GAME

Until the 24th Century man was confined to earth, exploring the solar system and nearby stars. Space flight was measured in fractions of the speed of light. Then Tamara Newton, inheriting the genius of her ancestor, developed an elegant theory that predicted the occurrence of portals in the universe. Portals drastically cut the length of space flights. Man quickly developed ships that could locate the portals. The galaxy was finally open for exploration.

Exploration proceeded rapidly. Only a few worlds were found suitable for colonization, and a very few of these advanced rapidly and began to dominate. Differences in culture arose. Bloody and devastating wars were fought. When all that man had worked for was on the eve of destruction, peace of a sort was hammered out. Future disputes would be decided by Star Lords especially trained to command unmanned ships and robot satellites, dueling with other Star Lords in the far reaches of space. The ultimate victory was now complete control of the galaxy.

It is now the 27th Century and you are a Star Lord, competing with up to 3 other Star Lords for control of a galaxy having myriad variations. The computer can play the role of as many as 3 Star Lords. Your ability to command the robot fleets and extend your control will determine the outcome of the conflict.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

An ATARI computer with 48K RAM, one disk drive and one joystick.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS:

With the computer turned off, remove any program cartridges and turn on the disk drive and monitor. Insert the program disk in the drive. On 400/800 systems simply turn on the computer. On XL systems, press the OPTION key while turning on the computer. The scenario program will load automatically. After the title screen appears, press the START key when ready to play.

RULES AND BACKGROUND:

1 to 4 players compete for control of the known galaxy. Each player begins with control of a Home world and a fleet of 120 ships. By ordering fleets of various sizes players attack and attempt to eliminate opposing fleets, gaining control of worlds. Worlds controlled by a player will build ships every year for the player controlling the world, and these ships can then be ordered to attack or sent to allied worlds. Additional ships are also built at a rate determined by the total ships built by worlds under a player's control and placed on them for future use.

GAME LIMITATIONS

	MIN.	MAX.
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	1	4
NUMBER OF COMPUTER PLAYERS	0	3
NUMBER OF TURNS (YEARS)	10	99
NUMBER OF WORLDS	10	40

SHIP BUILDING, PER YEAR	0	18
FLEET SIZE, IN TRANSIT	1	1,999
FLEET SIZE, WORLD FLEET	0	1,999
NUMBER OF FLEETS, IN TRANSIT (PER PLAYER)	0	30
4		

THE WORLDS:

40 Worlds are available for game scenarios. Each world has a nominal ship building capacity that is adjusted during each turn according to the stability of that world's economy.

HOME WORLDS:

NAME	SHIPS	ECON.
Triton	12	s
Palladia	12	S
Draco	12	S
Knossos	12	S

NEUTRAL WORLDS:

NAME	SHIPS	ECON.	NAME	SHIPS	ECON.
Orion	9	S	Kepler	8	C
Artica	7	U	Falchion	6	S
Rhea	5	S	Pyxis	4	C
Volans	3	U	Hydra	9	S
Titus	8	S	Lyrae	7	C
Argos	6	U	Einstein	5	S
Alesia	4	S	Ceti	3	C
Ephesus	9	U	Megiddo	8	S
Terminus	7	S	Centauri	6	C
Amazon	5	U	Luxor	4	S
Ishtar	3	S	Baybars	6	C
Krypton	9	U	Tethys	8	S
Terra	7	S	Oberon	6	C
Tycho	5	U	Galileo	4	S
Sahel	3	S	Helios	9	C
Ocean	8	U	Spartos	7	S
Newton	6	S	Elysium	5	C
Irata	4	U	Janus	3	S

WORLD ECONOMY:

A world's economy affects the annual production of ships. There are 3 levels of economic stability.

S = Stable, mature economy capable of building 150% of the nominal building rate.

C = Fluctuating economy subject to declines to 50% of the nominal building rate.

U = Unstable primitive economy where there may be no ships built.

Example A - Orion, an 'S' world will build 9 ships 50% of the time and 13 ships 50% of the time. Odd nominal rates are always rounded to the next lower even number.

Example B - Lyrae, a 'C' planet will build 7 ships 50% of the time, 4 ships 50% of the time.

Example C - Ocean, a 'U' world will build 8 ships 50% of the time, 0 ships 50% of the time.:

You will be assigned a Home world. The remaining worlds in the galaxy are selected randomly by the computer from the Neutral worlds. If there are less than 4 players, remaining Home worlds may also be selected to start as Neutral worlds. Each world is only selected once, so a 40 world galaxy will have every available world. Each world will also be identified by a number.

NEUTRAL WORLD ACTIVITY:

At the beginning of a game, each Neutral world will have a fleet equal to one full year of its nominal ship building rate. If during scenario design the Neutral worlds are instructed to build fleets, then each year they will build ships equal to one-half the nominal rate, adjusted to their economy. If not ordered to build the initial fleet is never reinforced. Until a player conquers or scouts a neutral world its' ship building rate is difficult to determine. Neutral world fleets never attack other worlds.

Example A - Neutral Worlds build fleets.
Falchion, an 'S' world has a nominal ship building rate of 6. A player invading Falchion on turn 1 would encounter 9-10 ships (6+3+1 possible). Unless the world is conquered it will continue to build defensive ships at the same rate.

Example B - Neutral worlds do not build fleets.
Tycho has a nominal ship building rate of 5. The first player to invade Tycho will encounter 5 ships on any turn. No additional defensive ships will be built.

Once a Neutral world has been conquered it will always be allied to a player. It will build ships at the nominal rate, adjusted by its economic type. These ships are controlled by the player in control of the world.

ROBOT SHIPS:

Each player selects a ship design. There are 6 ship designs which differ in both appearance and accuracy of their weapon when Attacking and Defending. The Attack and Defense factors have a range of 0.8 to 1.2. With 0.8 as a basis the accuracy of fire increases on the average as follows:

0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2
0%	2%	4%	7%	9%

Each ship design Attack and Defense factors when added together always equal 2, so no ship design has an overall advantage. A design can only be selected once. Ships used to defend Neutral worlds will be of a design not chosen by a player and have a Defense factor of 1.0.

THE GALAXY AND FLEET TRAVEL TIME:

The galaxy will vary in size according to the number of worlds it has, and is represented by a grid.

20# OF WORLDS	SIZE OF GALAXY
33-40	18x20
25-32	16x18
17-24	14x16

10-16 12x14

During scenario design, the galaxy will be constructed and worlds placed on the grid by the computer. Each player has their own color to indicate their home world, with Neutral worlds shown as one size colored blue on white. Players have the option to have the galaxy reconstructed. In order to determine if the galaxy is acceptable, it is important to understand Fleet Travel Time.

TIME AND DISTANCE TABLE

Distance from one point to adjacent horizontal or vertical point	500 light years
One year flight, maximum range	1000 light years
Two year flight, maximum range	3000 light years
Three year flight, maximum range	6000 light years

For 4 or more years, add 3000 light years range for each added year.

Using this table and the map "THE GALAXY" on the following page, a fleet sent from world 01 to world 02, e.g., would arrive at the end of the same turn(year) if world 02 is 1000 or less light years away, at the end of the next turn if 1001-3000 light years distant, and so on. A galaxy of reasonable design should have about 20% of the worlds within 2 years flight time of your Home world.

SUGGESTED SCENARIOS:

Beginner: One player, 10-16 worlds, 10-20 turns and Neutrals build fleets.

2 player games: 17-24 worlds, 30-40 turns and Neutrals build fleets.

3 player games: 25-32 worlds, 50-75 turns and Neutrals do not build fleets.

4 player games: 33-40 worlds, 50-100 turns and Neutrals do not build fleets.

SCENARIO DESIGN:

NEW OR SAVED GAME?

To start a new game, press 'N'. To continue a game previously saved, press 'S' and follow the simple instructions.

NOTE that pressing the 'ESC' key during scenario design will restart the entire process.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS (1-4)

Enter the number of players, including any computer opponents that are going to play.

OF COMPUTER PLAYERS (0-X)
) Enter the number of computer players. At least one human player is required.

HOW MANY WORLDS (10-40)
) Enter the number of worlds that the galaxy will have.

HOW MANY TURNS (10-99)
) Enter the number of turns(years) that the game will be played.

WILL NEUTRAL WORLDS BUILD DEFENSIVE FLEETS (1-YES 2-N0)
) Press '1' if the Neutral worlds are to build fleets. Press '2' for no additional defensive ship building.

ENTER PLAYER'S NAME

The Home world that you control is indicated. Enter your name which will be prefaced by 'Lord'. If your name is less than 6 letters long, press RETURN after entering it.

ANY CHANGES (1-YES 2-N0)

Press '1' if changes to the scenario are desired. All preceding steps will be repeated. If no changes are needed, press '2'.
Now plug a joystick into the left port.

SHIP SELECTION:

The ship designs are now displayed. Select a ship by moving the joystick up or down until the number corresponding to the design is shown at the bottom of the screen. The ship is assigned to you and erased from the screen. The other players then select from the remaining ships until all players have a design.

GALAXY CONSTRUCTION:

The computer now constructs a galaxy. Each player's Home world is indicated by its own color, with the Neutral worlds shown as smaller blue on white worlds. Each player should have the choice to have the galaxy remade. Move the joystick right for a new galaxy. Move it left if the galaxy is satisfactory. All computer opponents, if any, will then accept or reject the galaxy.

GAME LOAD:

Once all players have accepted the galaxy, the computer will request that a formatted disk be placed in the drive. You may use the game disk to store one scenario file. When the proper disk is in the drive, press the joystick trigger to save the scenario. Then make sure the game disk is in the drive and press the trigger. The Game program will load and run automatically.
Once the game program and scenario have been loaded, the World Status Chart is displayed.

WORLD STATUS:

Human players take their turn in a random sequence. Each player has their own color which indicates the worlds that they control. Neutral worlds are shown simply as blue on white numbers. Information about each world is listed. From left to right, the Star Lord controlling the world, the world number, the nominal ships built per year by the world, and the size of the fleet stationed at the world. All fleet orders are given when WORLD STATUS is displayed.

FLEET ORDERS:

All fleet orders should be top secret. To order a fleet, move the

joystick up or down until the world that the fleet is being sent from (one that you control) is shown next to 'FROM-' and press the trigger. Then move the joystick up or down until the world the fleet is being sent to is shown next to the 'TO-' and press the trigger. Next move the stick in the same manner until the fleet size is correct and press the trigger. Press the trigger again to launch the fleet. You may cancel the order at any time prior to launch by moving the joystick left. After a fleet is launched it cannot be ordered back. Use the Fleet Log provided to note your fleet moves.

To end you turn, move the stick right before starting a fleet order. Do this only after you've issued all of your fleet orders.

To exit the World Status display, press the trigger before starting a fleet order. A menu will appear. Position the arrow by moving the stick up or down, and press the trigger when the flashing arrow is next to the desired selection.

MENU SELECTIONS:

WORLD IDENTITY MAP:

This is the layout of the galaxy showing the worlds in their respective positions. Each player has their own color which indicates the worlds under their control. Neutral worlds are shown as blue on white. Color designations will change as players lose or gain control of worlds. A chart has been provided to note the location of the worlds if desired.

WORLD SHIP BUILDING MAP:

This map portrays the galaxy with the worlds sized according to their nominal ship building rate. A scale is shown on the lower portion of the screen indicating the nominal ship production of different sized worlds. Color designations are the same as for the World Identity Map. Neutral worlds are always shown as size '5' worlds, blue on white.

FLEET TRAVEL TIME:

The World Identity Map is displayed to aid calculations. Move the stick as in ordering fleets. The distance between any two worlds can be determined, along with the year that a fleet would arrive if sent from one to the other.

PLAYER STATUS:

The Player Status chart shows for each player the number of worlds that they control, the combined size of the fleets stationed at those worlds, the total nominal ship building rate of the worlds, the number of fleets in transit and the combined size of the fleets.

PREVIOUS YEAR SHIP PRODUCTION:

The Ship Production chart is displayed, showing the number and name of each planet, the number of ships it built in the previous year and the type of economy it has. The current player's worlds are indicated by the world numbers shown as inverse. Neutral worlds do not have an ID number and are in a random sequence, if possible.

SAVE GAME:

Make this selection to save a game in progress. Follow the simple instructions on the screen. The game disk may be used to save one scenario.

END GAME:

You may end the game prematurely. The game should be saved occasionally just in case this option is selected by accident. The computer will verify that you really want to end the game, and announce a winner, if any.

SUBSPACE COMMUNICATION:

After all human players have taken their turn, computer players will take theirs. During a computer player's turn, communications are picked up by the computer via Subspace channels. The messages are encoded and impossible to read. The level of activity can be ascertained, however, for each communication is a fleet order of one sort or another.

EMPIRE SHIPS:

After all players have taken their turn, each player will have their worlds displayed with the number of ships built by each world during the past year. A tally is made of the total number of ships built. Empire or bonus ships are then allotted to the player equal to one-third of the total (rounded to the lowest whole number). These ships can be placed on any one of the player's worlds. Move the stick up or down until the world to receive the ships is shown and press the trigger. The remaining players will proceed in a similar manner. This ends the Fleet movement phase of a turn.

FLEET ARRIVALS AND WORLD ATTACKS:

Fleet arrivals and invasions will now begin. Fleets do not arrive in the order that they were sent. After all fleets due have arrived and attacks made the turn ends and the next begins until the game ends.

SHIP COMBAT:

Combat is resolved by the computer in accordance with the Peace of Oberon, signed by all world leaders in 2486. Regardless of fleet size a maximum of 15 ships per side duel at a time, defender on the left, attacker on the right. Sides alternate fire of the ships' Photon torpedoes until the last ship has fired. Replacements, if any, arrive and combat continues until one side is completely eliminated. If the attacker or a neutral world fleet has been wiped out then combat has ended.

WITHDRAW FLEET:

It is possible to withdraw attacking fleets during Ship combat. Prior to the initial appearance of the attacking fleet, or before replacements arrive, a green background will signal to the attacking Star Lord that he may withdraw his fleet to the nearest world in his control. Pressing the trigger at this time will automatically withdraw the fleet. Do not hang on the trigger, as this will allow the opposing fleet to jam the signal, indicated by a red background. Subspace channels are clear for transmitting orders to withdraw only occasionally.

COMMAND SATELLITES:

If a world under attack has been controlled by its Lord for at least one full turn, the defender will send the world Command Satellite to battle if the defending fleet was eliminated. The Command Satellite's offensive weapon is the Mark IV disruptor missile, rated 90% effective against all ships within range. The missiles are fired in tandem at the attacking ships. After any replacements arrive, the attacking ships then fire on the Satellite. A torpedo must hit the power core at the exact center of the Satellite to be effective. Combat continues until either side is destroyed. If the defender is eliminated then control of the world passes to the attacking Star Lord.

ANTI-MISSILE PLASMA FIELD:

All attacking fleets are equipped with this defensive weapon. Used to destroy Mark IV missiles, the technology for Plasma Fields is immature and the energy requirements to generate one are extreme. Thus the weapon is unreliable. Prior to a Mark IV missile launch, an operational Plasma Field is signaled by a green background. Press the trigger to activate the field. Pressing the trigger too soon will abort activation of the field, signaled by a red background. A Plasma Field is operational just long enough to desegregate and atomize Mark IV missiles.

SATELLITE SNUB MISSILES:

As a counter measure to Plasma Fields, it is sometimes possible for the defending Star Lord to destroy them with Snub Missiles. The defender launches Snub missiles by pressing the START key on the computer console. The Snub missile will explode when in contact with the Shield generators. Pressing the START key before it is needed does NOT abort a Snub missile launch.

THE LORDS:

AKBA SCIPIO;Last of the ancient Star Lords, Scipio is more machine than man. Prosthetic manipulators for arms and treads for legs, his nutritional requirements include a daily recharge of his batteries. He has refused to take on any apprentices, claiming youth at the age of 306.

DOMO TRAJAN:

Over 200 hundred years old, Trajan is no spring chicken either. A veteran of many campaigns, he trained under Callisto, greatest of the ancient Star Lords. He replaced his master after triumphing over him in a duel that lasted fifty years.

MOJO KHUFU:

By contrast Khufu is a newcomer to the Star Lord clique, only recently turning 80. Vicious and unrelenting, he rose through the ranks quickly by assassinating the opposition if he couldn't beat them in a fair fight. He claims direct lineage to the ancient Pharoahs.

DESIGNER NOTES:

Some space strategy games are more like 'Visicalc in Space' than stimulating competition. Star Lords attempts to provide the best of two

worlds; challenges to the mind by making it hard to win decisively and enjoyable graphics and sound. The end result is I hope hours of enjoyment.

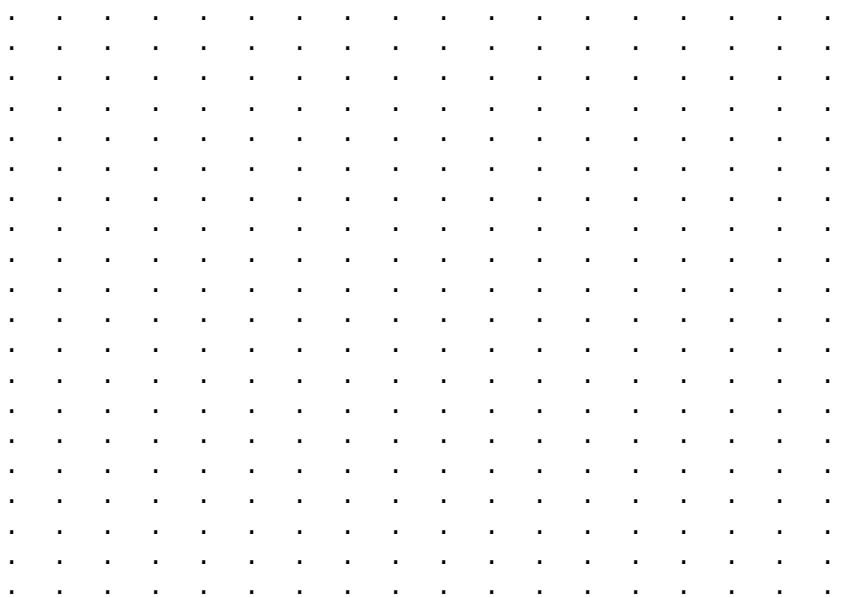
My favorite Star Lord games are the wide open ones with 40 worlds, no Neutral Ship building and 3 opponents. This game must initially resemble the Oklahoma Land Rush, as players snap up neutral worlds as fast as their fleets can get to them. After the neutrals are eliminated a period follows where players consolidate their holdings and plot against the opponents.

Don't spread your ships too thin or your empire might get torn to shreds. Attack worlds that are in good locations where they can be protected as well as offer protection. The ability to counterattack and regain lost worlds is significant. When attacking, make sure that you send enough ships to take on the Command Satellite after eliminating the enemy fleet. In multi-player games where there is still a balance of power, try to avoid frequent large battles. This will inevitably weaken your overall position. The computer players can be very tough if they have the advantage. When one player gets stronger than the rest they try to gang up on him. The ability to manage your ships, putting them where you need them and discouraging large battles that you don't want to fight are the two most important skills in Star Lords.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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PLAYER CHART:



THE WORLDS:

__Triton	12	S	__Palladia	12	S
__Draco	12	S	__Knossos	12	S
__Orion	9	S	__Kepler	8	C

__Artica	7	U	__Falchion	6	S
__Rhea	5	S	__Pyxis	4	C
__Volans	3	U	__Hydra	9	S
__Titus	8	S	__Lyrae	7	C
__Argos	6	U	__Einstein	5	S
__Alesia	4	S	__Ceti	3	C
__Ephesus	9	U	__Megiddo	8	S
__Terminus	7	S	__Centauri	6	C
__Amazon	5	U	__Luxor	4	S
__Ishtar	3	S	__Baybars	6	C
__Krypton	9	U	__Tethys	8	S
__Terra	7	S	__Oberon	6	C
__Tycho	5	U	__Galileo	4	S
__Sahel	3	S	__Helios	9	C
__Ocean	8	U	__Spartos	7	S
__Newton	6	S	__Elysium	5	C
__Irata	4	U	__Janus	3	S