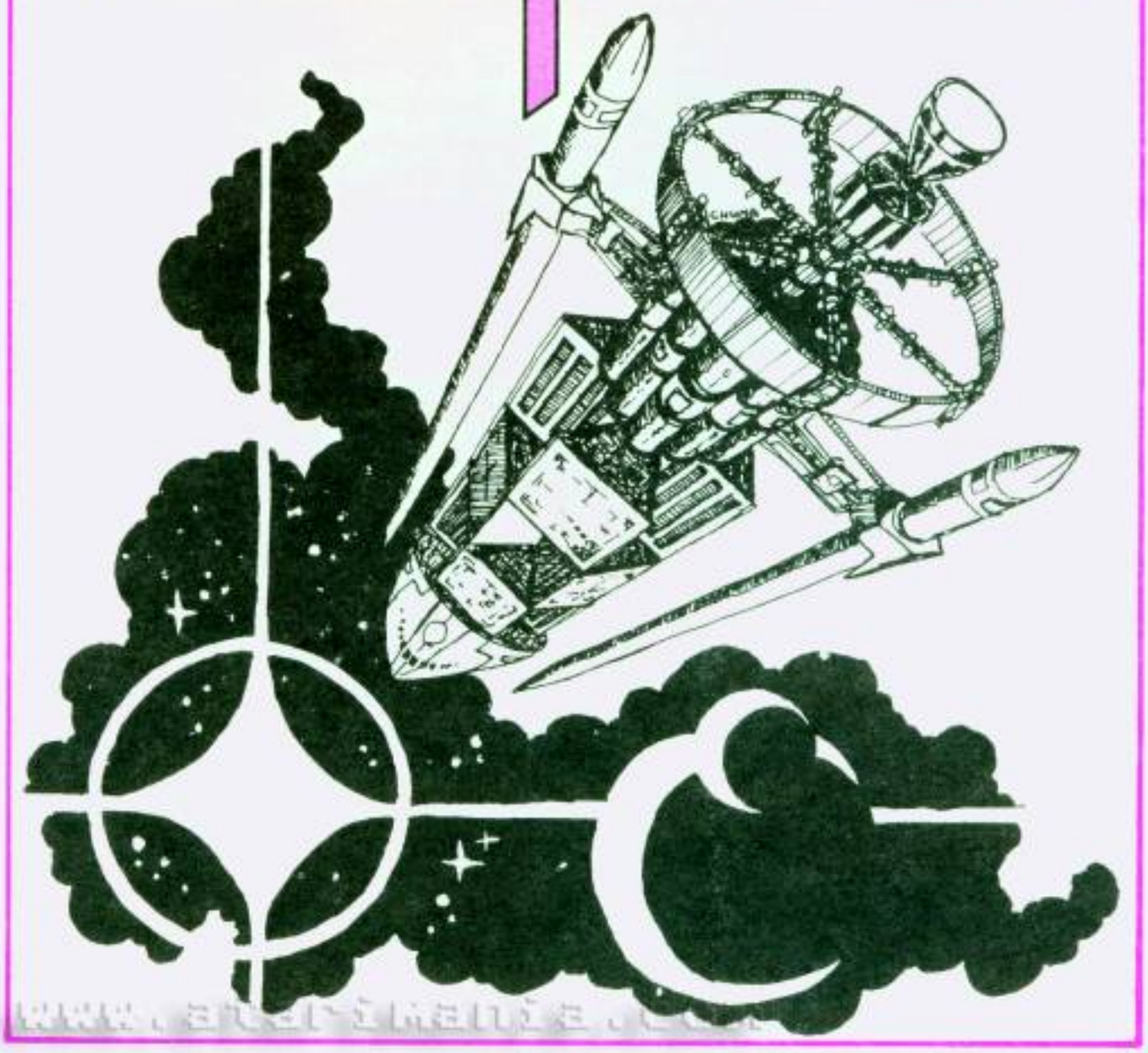
FREE TRADER



INTRODUCTION

You are the proud owner of a new merchant starship. It cost you every cent you had; indeed, you are in debt up or your ears. But it was worth it. Valiantly, but unpreparedly, you must now venture into the far reaches of space.

But life in the universe is not all goodness and light. One of the more obnoxious features is the Thoth Empire. From various outposts their spider attack cruisers will sally forth to shoot you full of holes. Kill them swiftly, for they seldom give up the chase.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

To win you must accumulate (10,000 Apple, 50,000 Atari) Megabucks or destroy 100 Thoth ships within one year (365 days/turns). Each Thoth ship destroyed is worth one point.



LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

The Apple/Atari disk is an auto-boot diskette. Insert the game disk into the disk drive and "boot" the system. The Atari® program is located on side one of the disk (the "label side"), the Apple® on side two.

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GAME PLAY

Command Level Menu

After the game has loaded, you will need to choose one of three galaxies to explore (Apple only). Upon starting the game, you will see a display and Command Level menu. On the Apple, the display is of the star system your ship ( ) is currently in. On the Atari, the display is an image of the ship's bridge. Around the bridge are several indicator signs: Laser (how many laser shots remain), Rifter (number of pods in your launching racks), Shield (indicates the number of force-field cells available), Fuel (shows the number of fuel cells for sublight travel remaining in the Ion Drive fuel tanks), Hyper (the number of hyperspace fuel cells currently in your hyper drive) and Day (number of days that have elapsed. To replenish these items see the Cargo Level command menu.

Command Level Menu Options

APPLE	ATARI
0 Command	**0** Command
1 Navigation	**1** Navigation
2 Weapons	**2** Cargo
3 Cargo	**3** Ship Log
4 Ship Log	

Command This is a "dead" command. You are already in the Command Level menu.

Navigation Sends you to the Navigation Level menu.

Weapons (Apple only) Calls up the Weapons menu.

Cargo Displays the Cargo menu and allows you to conduct trade (barter).

Ship Log Gives data on the current status of the ship. To return to the Command Level menu press the SPACE BAR.

Navigation Level Menu

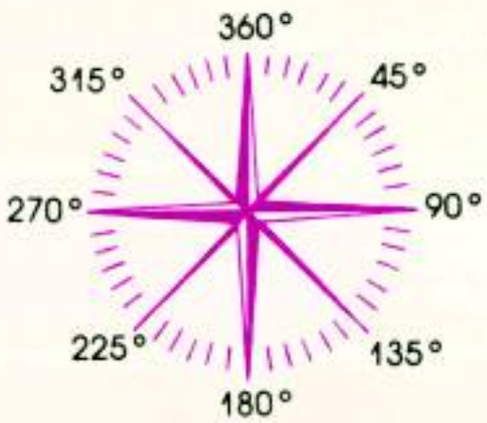
This menu is used for moving your starship from place to place. Invoking this menu on the Atari will display the star system you are currently in and your ship's position. (This display is always up on the Apple.)

Your ship has two separate propulsion systems: sublight Ion Drive and Hyper Drive. The Ion Drive can move your ship anywhere you need to go, but is a trifle slow. Hyper Drive can instantly "jump" your ship from one star system to another but is worthless for moving within a system.

The Ion Drive uses ion fuel cells and the Hyper Drive uses hyper fuel cells. In the Apple version, you start with 250 ion fuel cells and 100 hyper fuel cells. In the Atari version you start with 500 ion fuel cells but no Hyper Drive fuel cells. The Hyper Drive fuel cells must be purchased at trading posts that stock them.

All ship movement on the Atari is controlled with the joystick. On the Apple you must input the ship's intended trajectory in degrees from 0 to 360 (0/360 is towards the top of the screen, 90 to the right, 180 to the bottom and 270 at the left. (See compass diagram below.) You can use any number from 0 to 360.

The starburst symbols (Apple) or Pink crosses (Atari) represent suns. If your ship moves into one of these objects it will be destroyed. The other symbols on the starmap show the location of various types of planets, your ship, and sometimes Thoth spider ships.



Navigation Level Menu Options

APPLE	ATARI
0 Command	**0** Command
1 Status	**1** Status
2 Starmap	**2** Sublight
3 Sublight	**3** Starmap
4 Hyperspace	**4** Hyperspace

Command Returns you to the Command Menu.

Status (Apple) Gives star name, quadrant and sector of system, number of planets in the system and remaining amounts of hyper and ion fuel cells.

Status (Atari) Displays the number of ion and hyper fuel cells remaining in the fuel tanks.

Sublight (Apple) Is used to input your sublight move. When selected, it will indicate the number of Ion Drive fuel cells you have remaining and prompt you for the trajectory you wish your ship to move in (see compass above). After entering the trajectory you will be prompted for an "ion factor". This is the distance you wish your ship to move in the heading (trajectory) you previously indicated. The ion factor must be a number from 1 to 9, inclusive; the higher the number the farther the ship will move that turn. After you have entered all of the pertinent information and pressed RETURN your ship will move and the appropriate number of ion fuel cells will be consumed. Moving onto a planet symbol will cause your ship to land there. Moving onto a star will kill you.

Sublight (Atari) Selecting this option will ignite your Ion Drive. Your ship can then be moved using the joystick plugged into port #1. To land on a planet just move your ship's symbol onto a planet symbol. When you land on a planet, or select another menu option, the Ion Drive will be turned off. The appropriate number of ion fuel cells will be consumed as your ship moves.

Starmap Shows the relation of systems to one another. On the Apple your location is marked by the flashing cursor. Systems you have visited are marked in white. On the Atari your position is marked by the ship symbol.Thoth ships are indicated by a Thoth ship symbol.

Hyperspace Allows you to move your ship from star system to star system. Each hyper fuel cell used will jump your ship one star system. The computer will prompt you for the proper input.



WEAPON LEVEL MENU

This menu is used for firing your weapons. On the Atari, when your ship is attacked, the computer will automatically dump you into the weapons-firing mode. On the Apple, you must bring up the Weapon Menu by selecting option **2** (Weapons) on the Command Level Menu.

You have two weapons systems: Gamma-Ray Lasers (which use extremely short wavelengths for more armor-piercing ability) and Rifter Pods (which contain probability inverters that tear a long "riff" in the fabric of space, thoroughly shredding any unfortunate in its arc).

Weapon Level Menu Options

APPLE	ATARI
0 Command	**1** Laser
1 Status	**2** Rifter Pods
2 Laser	
3 Rifter Pods	

Command (Apple only) Returns you to the Command Menu.

Status (Apple only) Displays how many laser cells and rifter pods remain. On the Atari this is displayed on the bridge display.

Laser (Apple) First you must input a range (from 5 to 150). If you input a range too short the beam will fall short; a range too long will cause the beam to hit with a weakened effect. After entering the range, you will be prompted for a sighting angle (trajectory of shot, see compass). Finally, you will be asked to determine the number of laser cells you wish to expend. This will determine the beam's strength.

Laser (Atari) This command will allow you to fire your laser. You will not be able to see the target ship on the display. Using the joystick, position the crosshair in a trial position. Push the joystick's "fire" button to execute the shot. If the shot missed, the computer will then display on the bridge screen the direction the shot was off. Move the crosshair in the opposite direction indicated on the bridge display until you have locked in on the target. When the shot is directly on, the target will be eliminated.

Rifter Pods Selecting Rifter Pods from the menu will transfer control to these weapons. They are controlled in a manner similar to the laser weapons.

Cargo Level Menu

This menu is used for buying and selling items on the different planets and space stations. There are fourteen unique planet types: asteroid, desert, atlantean, tropical, arctic, high tech, volcanic, terran, starbase, pleasure, pirate hideout, penal colony, trading post and agriculture. Each type has three trade items it exports and three items it imports. There are thirty-five trade items. As a general rule, a given item is imported or exported from only one planet type. For instance: fungi can only be obtained from tropical planets and is only in demand on agricultural planets.

Cargo Level Menu Options

0 Command
1 Cargo
2 Barter
3 Use or Jettison

Command Returns you to the Command Menu.

Cargo Displays what is currently in your ship's cargo holds.

Barter If you are on a planet this will show you what items the planet has for export and which items it is in need of importing. Under this option you can buy or sell your goods.

Use or Jettison Certain items can be diverted from the cargo holds for your own use. These items are: hyper fuel cells, ion fuel cells, laser cells, rifter pod cells and forcefield cells. "Using" them will transfer the item from the cargo hold directly into your ship's own tanks. The jettison command will throw items overboard. This is done when you cannot unload a trade item on any sucker and you desperately need the cargo space.

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QUESTIONS ON PLAY

The clarity of these rules has been verified by *Software Testers of Universal Microcomputer Programmers (STUMP)* and deemed *"complete"* in all facets of instruction. Please re-read them in areas that seem unclear at first reading. Questions on play can be answered by the factory *only* upon receipt of a self-addressed envelope bearing first-class postage.

IF YOU CANNOT LOAD THE PROGRAM

1. Check your equipment carefully to be sure that all cables and connections are correct.

2. Re-read the section in your computer's manual that tells you how to load software. Try to load software again.

3. If possible, load another program from a tape or disk you know works on your computer. This will prove that your equipment works. Try once more to load your game.

4. The normal reason software will not load is tape recorder or disk drive head misalignment. Your computer may be able to save and load programs on its own disk drive, but be unable to read software made on a different disk drive for this reason. Be sure your heads are correctly aligned. Your local computer store or dealer can help you with this.

5. If the program still cannot be loaded, send the software, with a complete description of the problem (what type of computer you have, what the computer says, if anything, when you try to load the software or play the game, and what you did to try to get it to load) to:

Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games
4517 Harford Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21214

Defective software will be replaced.



CREDITS

Game Design:
John Bell

Program Development:
Winchell Chung

Playtesters:
Greg Handy
Thomas Shaw
Larry McCaughly

Package Art:
Janet Lopez

Rules Art:
Winchell Chung

Production Coordinator:
Phyllis Suddeth

Graphics:
Charles Kibler

Typesetting:
Colonial Composition

Prep Dept. Coordinator:
Elaine M. Adkins

Printing:
Monarch Services, Inc.

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