

OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

Four rival galactic civilisations are eager to colonise an unexplored sector of space so they can exploit its rich natural resources. The players represent the commanders of four small task forces, each sent to establish a foothold in the sector by founding new colonies, exploring unfamiliar areas, gathering resources, or delivering goods to other planets in the sector.

Throughout the game, players receive secret orders from their respective headquarters. But carrying out these orders will frequently require the cooperation, or at least the consent, of other players. Since no player starts the game in a dominant position, accomplishing these goals implies careful negotiation between neighbouring civilisations — at least until one of them has managed to gain a significant advantage in military force or economic power.

In general, players aim to complete as many orders as they can. But each player's exact victory condition is determined in secret at the start of the game. Some players must seek dominance over their opponents, while others are more concerned with preserving the peace or forming a lasting alliance. The game is partly competitive and partly cooperative, and players are free to choose their own allies and rivals, shifting allegiances as new situations unfold. Only by carefully navigating this entangled military and economic landscape will one or more players emerge victorious.

The **board** represents an unexplored sector of space.

The **orders track** is used to record how many orders each player has successfully completed.

Each player has a **colony supply** on one corner of the board, where he stores tokens for the colonies he has not yet built.

The board is divided into 24 named **regions** (delineated with white lines). Between them there are also 8 small **nebulae**.

Each side of the board has a **quick reference** to remind players of the cost to build colonies and ships.

Resource tokens represent resources that players extract from worlds.



Colonies are players' main bases, used for building ships and occupying territory.



Runabouts are civilian ships that can extract and transport resources.

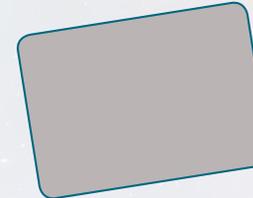


Warships allow players to attack each other's ships and colonies, and can be assigned to escort and guard duties.



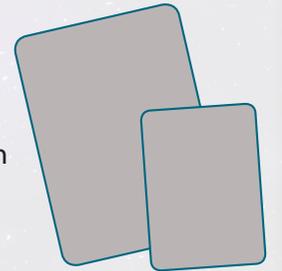
Neutral ships are not controlled by players, but can be escorted from place to place.

CARDS



Each player draws one secret **Objective card** from his own deck at the start of the game. This sets his overall victory condition.

Players draw **Orders cards** throughout the game, either when they complete one of their existing Orders cards or when they reveal an Orders symbol on the colony supply after building a new colony. Each Orders card is associated with a random **Region card** which defines where the orders must be carried out.

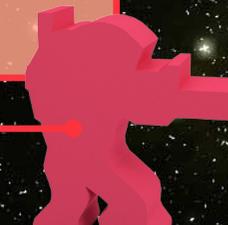


Nebula cards add new challenges in the form of random events and one-off bonuses. Players draw Nebula cards when they use a runabout to explore one of the eight nebula regions on the board. Some cards take effect immediately, while others can be kept until the time is right or even traded with other players.

World markers identify locations with resources for players to exploit.



Score markers are used to keep track of the number of orders each player has completed.



The **player die** is used to choose a random player for various purposes during the game.

