

STAR TRADERS™

In the year 3250, the Galactic Empire is at peace. Mankind's heroes are not warriors — they're the daring Traders who journey between the stars. With your trusty hyperdrive ship, **you** are a Star Trader. But now the Emperor's old Star Tsar, the Master of all Traders, has retired (at least, that's the official word), and the Emperor has declared a challenge to appoint a new one. You will build trading stations on alien worlds and race other Traders to be the first to deliver cargos from world to world. Your goal: to acquire great wealth — and please the almighty Emperor — until you earn the title of **STAR TSAR**, yourself!

This is actually five games in one, ranging from the Super Nova version for young kids to the multi-hour Black Hole version. The **Nova** and **Super Nova** games are for those who aren't ready for the rigor of adult games — and their friends! The **Imperial** and **Black Hole** games are for those who want a longer, more challenging game. The **Family** game is the intermediate version — for many players, it's not too hard, not too simple, not too cut-throat and still fun to play. It is playable by most kids age 13+.

These rules begin with the Family game, and then describe the differences in the Imperial version (page 8), the Black Hole version (page 9), the Nova version (page 10) and the Super Nova version (page 11).

But first, what's in the box?



Galaxy mapboard with 36 worlds connected by hyperdrive jump lines, spaces for the card deck and discards, the triangular Contract Boxes, and the Prestige Meter

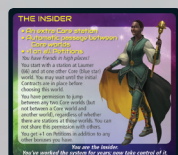


A pile of Imperial \$tarBucks

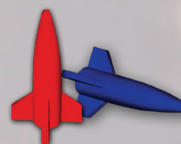
108 Trader's Luck / Contract cards, marked N (for Nova), F (for Family) or I (for Imperial) in upper left corner



9 double-sided Playmats (6 sides yellow for the Nova game, 6 green for Super Nova, and 6 red for the other versions)

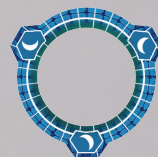


20 Personality cards



8 plastic ship tokens (6 regular ships, plus black and white ships for color-blind players or when you need an extra ship)

16 Cargo markers (8 pairs)



Station Rings in 6 different colors — 15 for each Trader (the difference between the two sides isn't important unless you're playing the Black Hole game)

8 Prestige markers



12 four-sided Contract Dice (6 pairs)

3 Quarantine markers



6 six-sided Action Dice

• this rulebook •



Family Game

This is the basic version of the rules.

Read pages 2–8 first, before you play any of the other versions of the game.

HOW STAR TRADERS IS PLAYED

Your objective is to gain \$tarBucks (money), Prestige and stations until you have enough to petition the Emperor. When you successfully petition, you will be given one final mission. Complete that mission and you will be declared the galaxy's new **STAR TSAR** and win the game!

Traders take turns, going clockwise around the board. You may take up to five *actions* each turn. Each of these takes one action:

- **"Jump"** from one world to another world (usually along a colored jumpline).
- **Pick up a cargo** if you're at a world where a cargo is available. When you reach its destination, you must deliver it. Note that delivering a cargo does *not* cost an action.
- **Build a new station** on a world that does not have one already.
- **Conduct local business.** If you choose to do nothing else for an action, you may spend that action engaging in local business, earning a \$tarBuck.

➤ **Petition the Emperor.** If the Emperor grants your petition, you draw an Imperial Mission; if you are the first Trader to complete your Imperial Mission, you are declared the **STAR TSAR** and win the game! (You may only petition the Emperor once per turn.)

To help you keep track of your actions, place 5 dice in the "Unused Actions" box on your mat at the beginning of your turn. If you might make a jump, roll the die that you have for that action. Each time you complete an action, move a die to your "Used Actions" box.

Each of these actions (except random jumps and petitioning the Emperor) may be taken more than once in a turn.

You may play a Trader's Luck card whenever it says you can.

At the end of your turn, draw a card. If you now have more than two cards, discard down to two. When you are completely finished with your turn, pass the dice to the next Trader.

STATIONS

A *station* is represented by a Station Ring. Each Trader starts the game with at least one station, and can build more. Stations have three important uses:

- Each one has a navigation beacon that makes it easier to travel between worlds — see **Station Jumps** below, under **Movement** (page 4).
- Stations earn money for their owner when a cargo is delivered — see **Station Fee**, in **Contracts & Cargo** (pages 4–5). They can also earn money if other Traders pay for permission to jump there!
- A certain number of stations are necessary to win — see **Winning the Game** (page 7).

Traders may sell, trade or give away stations any time they agree to do so, no matter whose turn it is.

Sharing a World. Any number of Traders can have their ships at the same world at the same time. However, each world can only have one *station* — you can't build a second station at a world that already has one.

Building a New Station

Only one station is allowed per world. When your ship moves to a world without a station, you may build one there in your color by paying 5 \$tarBucks and placing one of your rings around that world. This takes one action.

You get 1 Prestige each time you build a new station.

SETTING UP

- Take a red player mat. If you're playing a Personality, keep the card handy to remember its advantages.
- The Family game uses the 72 cards marked with an "N" (the green cards) or "F" (the blue cards).
- Each Trader gets 10 \$tarBucks.
- Each Trader chooses one of the colored ships. Take the 15 Station Rings, 2 Cargo markers and Prestige marker that are the same color as your ship. Put your Cargo markers near the Contracts.
- Colorblind players and their opponents might choose colors that are more easily distinguishable, and can even select the white or black ship instead of a colored ship. All markers also have a distinct symbol.*
- Each Trader starts with 1 Prestige. Put your Prestige marker at "1" on the Prestige Meter on the board (either side up).
- Deal two cards to each Trader. Look at your cards; note that each card has two ends. One end ("Trader's Luck") is used when you draw a card for your hand. The other end ("Contract") is used when the card is drawn to set a new Contract on the board. These two cards are your first Trader's Luck cards.
- Determine first player. Play goes clockwise around the board.
- **Personalities** (optional). Each Trader selects a Personality to get an advantage throughout the game. Traders may examine all available Personalities before choosing. The last Trader to move is the first to pick a Personality, and so on, in reverse order around the board.

Other ways to assign Personalities include dealing one to each player randomly, or only giving them to the less-experienced players, for a boost.

Building your First Station(s)

Now, in reverse turn order, determine where each Trader's ship starts, and where your first station is. The five worlds marked with red stars (one in each arm of the galaxy) are starting points. You start on the red-star world of the arm closest to you. No two Traders may start on the same world.

Place one of your Station Rings around your starting world. This is your first station.

6-Trader game. One of the Traders starts at a Core world (marked with a blue star). If you start in the Core, you may wait until the initial Contracts are placed before choosing which specific Core world is your starting world.

2- and 3-Trader game. Once each Trader has selected a starting world, they each place stations at 2 more starred worlds (2 Traders) or 1 more (3 Traders), going in reverse order. One of the stations will be a Core world. As with the 6-Trader game, you may wait until initial Contracts are placed to pick this specific world.

Placing Initial Contracts

Draw as many cards as there are Traders — for instance, four cards if there are four Traders. These are the current Contracts that are ready to be fulfilled at the beginning of the game. The first card drawn is Contract 1, and so forth.

Exception: draw 3 Contracts for both 2 and 3 Traders.

Tuck half of each card under the board at its Contract triangle, so that only the Contract half of the card is visible.

Place two Contract Dice (marked with a ▲ or a ▼) on the map-board to show where each cargo can be picked up, and where it will be delivered:

Every world has a two-digit number. The first number identifies its spiral arm (or the Core). The second number identifies a specific world there.

Place the 1▲ Contract Die on the board pointing at the world where cargo for the first Contract can be picked up. Place the 1▼ Contract Die pointing at the world where the first cargo is to be delivered. Do the same with the other Contract Dice.

Note that each Contract box matches the color of the corresponding Contract Dice. This makes it easier to tell which dice go with which Contract.

Here, the fourth Contract has a pickup at Gibson and a delivery at Cherryh, as indicated by the 4▲ and 4▼ Contract Dice.



Take a minute to study the galaxy map to find your most profitable routes and actions at the beginning of the game.

Money

Money in the Galactic Empire is called **\$tarBucks**. Traders may exchange money freely in order to make a deal. You may stack your money, but keep it visible on the table.

Traders start with 10 \$tarBucks each. The rest of the money goes in the Imperial Bank. All payments for deliveries come from the Imperial Bank. Payments made to the Emperor or his minions go to the bank.

MOVEMENT

During your turn, you can move your ship in “jumps” between worlds. There are three types of jumps — *Regular Jumps*, *Station Jumps* and *Random Jumps*. All three kinds of jump take one action.

Regular Jumps are made along the jumplines marked between worlds on the map, from one world to the next world. The shorter the line (as shown by its color; see the chart below, and the corresponding chart on the board), the easier it is to make the jump. To make a Regular Jump, roll a die and then move along any jumpline out of your current system that your roll allows, to the next station on that line. Note that if you don’t get the roll you want, you can roll again, but each roll costs an action, whether or not you use it — if you run out of actions, your turn is over!

LINE	REQUIRED ROLL
Orange line	requires a roll of 2 or better.
Red line	requires a roll of 3 or better.
Purple line	requires a roll of 4 or better.
Blue line	requires a roll of 5 or better.
Green line	requires a roll of 6 or better.

Example: The jumpline you want to use is red, so you must roll a 3 or higher to move along that line. If you roll a 3 through 6, you can use that jumpline. If you roll a 1 you can’t make a Regular Jump anywhere; if you roll a 2, you may only jump along an orange jumpline, instead (or do something with the action that doesn’t require a jump roll).

Station Jumps take an action and are made along a jumpline, just like Regular Jumps — but it doesn’t matter what you roll. If there is a station at the other end of the jumpline, *and you have permission to use its navigation beacon*, there is no minimum roll to make the jump — any roll succeeds! You always have permission to use your own beacons, of course.

If another Trader owns the station at your destination, and does *not* give permission to use its beacon, you may still jump to that world, but you must roll a die and do it by a Regular Jump. Therefore, you may want to offer *payment* for the privilege of using that beacon. *A well-located station can be worth a lot of \$tarBucks!*

Random Jumps do *not* use the jumplines. A Random Jump can take you anywhere in the galaxy! To make a Random Jump, you must have at least one action left in your turn. Roll two dice, one after the other, and move to the world indicated. *Example: If you roll a 2 and then a 6, move immediately to world 26 — Wilhelm.*

A Random Jump *ends your actions* for the turn (but you can still deliver a cargo, if you’re lucky enough to land at the right world).

CONTRACTS & CARGO

The way to earn \$tarBucks and Prestige — and eventually to win the game — is to pick up cargos and deliver them to their destinations ... quickly! The first Trader to make the delivery will earn \$tarBucks and Prestige. Latecomers earn nothing!

Delivery runs are determined by *Contracts* like this one:

The contract card is titled "MINIDRAGS" and features an illustration of a pink and green dragon-like creature. It contains the following information:

- FROM FOSTER (34)**
- TO SCHMITZ (15)**
- PAYOFF 23**
- PRESTIGE 4**
- STATION FEE 11**

Callouts point to specific parts of the card:

- F (or N)** points to the "FROM" field.
- Star** points to a star icon at the bottom of the card.
- Where to pick it up** points to the "FROM" field.
- Where to deliver it** points to the "TO" field.
- Delivery Payoff** points to the "PAYOFF" field.
- Prestige** points to the "PRESTIGE" field.
- Station Fee** points to the "STATION FEE" field.

Delivery Payoff. This card says that Foster (world 34) has a cargo of Minidrags for Schmitz (world 15). The first Trader to pick up this cargo at Foster and deliver it to Schmitz will earn a payoff of 23 \$starBucks from the Imperial Bank.

Station Fee. If there is a station at Schmitz, the Trader who owns the station will earn 11 \$starBucks *from the bank* as a fee for brokering the cargo there. (If the Trader who makes the delivery also owns the station, that Trader gets all 34 \$starBucks!)

Prestige. You also receive Prestige for each delivery. The Prestige value of each Contract is listed on its card. When you get Prestige, move your counter along the Prestige Meter on the gameboard. You get 4 Prestige for delivering our example Contract.

This is how Payoffs, Prestige and Station Fees are awarded for all Contracts.

Star. This indicates that the Contract is sufficiently challenging for an Imperial Mission; it has no effect until that point. See **Your Imperial Mission** (page 8).

F & N. The letter in the upper-left corner of the Contract area indicates which set of cards it belongs to. Use the 72 cards marked with an "N" or an "F" for the Family game. Don't use the 36 "I" cards.

VIP Contract. Contract #1 is always a *VIP Contract*. You get two bonus Prestige for fulfilling this Contract in which the Emperor is particularly interested. If our example Contract were a VIP Contract, you would receive 6 Prestige (the base 4 plus a bonus 2) for delivering it.

Picking Up a Cargo

You may pick up a cargo at the world specified on the Contract. Or, if your ship is at the same world as another Trader, either of you may give or sell a cargo to the other one. Picking up a cargo costs one action. (Getting or giving a cargo any other way doesn't cost an action.)

To show that you have picked up a cargo, place one of your cargo markers on the Contract box (on the board) for the appropriate Contract card. *Don't move the Contract Die from the world!* Any number of Traders may pick up the same cargo — but only the first to deliver it will get paid!

You may carry up to two different cargos at any one time. You can't carry two identical cargos unless there are two current Contracts calling for that cargo.

You cannot pick up a cargo for which there is no current Contract. You must abandon a cargo if there is no longer a current Contract for it. You *can* shift a cargo from one Contract to another if two Contracts call for the same cargo (but only in your turn, or *after* one of the Contracts has been fulfilled — you

can't shift a cargo at the last second of another Trader's turn, to avoid losing a race). You can also shift a cargo from an expired Contract to its replacement Contract (if someone else fulfilled the expired Contract) if the two Contracts have the same cargo. Shifting from one Contract to another doesn't cost an action.

Dropping a Cargo

There are three ways to drop a cargo:

Deliver it to the destination on the Contract before anyone else. If you do this, you receive the payoff listed on the card, and increase your Prestige. When you are the first to arrive at a world with a cargo on a Contract that it has requested, you *must* make delivery immediately, before you do anything else (but you must wait till it's your turn, if you arrive while someone else is taking a turn). You can't move past, build a station first or keep the cargo on board — the Emperor would be very unhappy at the delay!

Abandon it. You can drop a cargo during your turn, wherever you are on the board, just to get rid of it. And it is automatically discarded when another Trader fulfills the Contract (unless the replacement Contract is for the same cargo, or there is another current Contract that calls for the same cargo).

In particular, you cannot drop a cargo during someone else's turn, to prevent another Trader from getting bonus Prestige for beating you in a race.

Sell or trade it to another Trader, with that Trader's agreement. The two of you must be at the same world to transfer it from ship to ship.

Dropping a cargo, however you do it, doesn't cost an action.

Races

When two Traders both pick up cargo for the same Contract, they are in a *race* to deliver it. When you win a race by making delivery first, you get 1 *extra* Prestige for every other Trader who has the cargo for that Contract!

New Contracts

When a delivery is made, discard the old Contract and draw another card to replace it. Remove all Cargo markers for the fulfilled Contract. Move the old Contract Dice on the board to the worlds shown on the new Contract.

TIP: To save time when you make a delivery, pick up your completed Contract card. While you (and the station owner) are getting your payoff from the bank and moving your Prestige marker up, another Trader can draw the new Contract and move the Contract Dice, so everyone can see what the new Contract is and make their plans.

PRESTIGE

Prestige is a measure of your status with the Powers That Be. Your Prestige is used to influence the Emperor when you petition him. You can earn Prestige in several ways:

- You get 1 Prestige for each new station that you build. (You don't get Prestige for *stealing* a station, since you aren't building a new station.)
- You get 1 to 4 Prestige for each cargo you successfully deliver. (If it's a VIP cargo, you receive +2 bonus Prestige.) If you win a race to deliver cargo, you get 1 extra Prestige for each Trader you beat!

➤ You may gain or lose Prestige through Trader's Luck.

Traders may not buy, sell or trade Prestige between themselves. However, some Trader's Luck cards will let you affect your own Prestige, or the Prestige of others. You can buy, sell or trade these cards, or agree to use them for other Traders' benefit. Or you can save them to sabotage your rivals' attempts to petition ...

Prestige may not go below 1, or above 30.

TRADER'S LUCK

These cards are used to give you an advantage or to interfere with other Traders. You may show them to your opponents, but you don't have to. Sometimes you'll want to hold a card for the perfect time to use it. Sometimes you'll want to play a card as soon as you can, to harass an opponent and let you draw another card more quickly!

Different cards can be played at different times. Each card tells *when* you can play it, usually in the italic text at the top of the card. The non-italic text below the card's title is generally addressed to the Trader(s) affected by it. After a Trader's Luck card is played and dealt with, discard it. Playing a Trader's Luck card doesn't cost an action (unless it says so).

Draw a card at the end of your turn. If you now have extra cards, discard them. (You may not play a card until you've discarded down to two cards.) You may never have more than two cards in your hand at the end of your turn. You may never have more than three cards in your hand at any other time.

Cards may be freely given away, traded or sold, even during another Trader's turn, subject to the hand limits just described.

Calamity! cards are to be played on your *opponents* — you can't play one on yourself unless there is a specific exception on the card. The Trader on whom you play a Calamity must play "Avoid a Calamity" (see below) or suffer the Calamity described below its title. A Calamity always takes effect immediately.

Avoid a Calamity! If another Trader plays a Calamity on you, and you have an "Avoid a Calamity" card (or can get one from another Trader *quickly*), you may play it *immediately*. The Calamity then has no effect, and both cards are discarded. You *cannot* wait till later to play an "Avoid a Calamity" on the Calamity you just got — it *must* be played immediately.

If a card is not marked as a Calamity, it cannot be countered with an "Avoid a Calamity" card.

Other Traders can offer to play an "Avoid a Calamity" for

you, but you are not required to accept it — a few Calamity cards can actually be beneficial in the right circumstances.

Between Turns. There is a very brief period of time between the end of one Trader's turn and the beginning of the next Trader's turn. This time is allowed even if the next Trader rushes to start the next turn. "Between turn" cards and "not currently taking a turn" cards may be played at this time.

Delivering Cargos. A few Trader's Luck cards make it possible to reach your delivery world when it isn't your turn. However, you can only deliver a cargo during your turn.

A **Zap** doesn't need to be played until a Trader announces how a die will be used. For example, you may play a Zap when a Trader announces that the roll (a 6) will be used for a green jump, rather than when the die is initially rolled. If a roll is Zapped so that a longer jump isn't possible, the roll may still be used to make any allowable shorter jump.

Imperial Envoy. You don't simply pick up your ship and move it to the destination in one jump; you travel using normal jumps (Regular and Station Jumps; even a Random Jump if you wish). You may play a card to aid yourself ("Zap," "Stargate," etc.) but you're not required to.

This Trader's Luck card tells you that you can play it on any Trader not currently taking a turn. It can even be played immediately after you draw it, on the next Trader (but only after you've discarded any extra cards you now have).

It is a Calamity card. When you play it, the Trader that you gave it to applies what it says below the title — losing one action next turn — unless that Trader plays an "Avoid a Calamity" card immediately.

Play on any Trader not currently taking a turn.

CALAMITY

A Wrinkle in Time !

As your ship AI slowly sings "Daisy," you

lose 1 action next turn.

EXCHANGES & TRADES

\$tarBucks, stations and cards may be sold, traded, given or discarded at any time. Prestige may *never* be sold, traded or given away to another Trader. Cargo may be traded if both Traders are at the same world, and you may discard a cargo, but only during your turn or when its Contract ends.

Traders may make any deals they like, as long as they do not violate the written rules of the game. You don't *have* to keep your promises, but remember — if you're too shifty, nobody will make any more deals with you!

PERSONALITIES (OPTIONAL)

All Star Traders are smart, talented people. Each Personality has specific abilities that can help you in the game. See the Personality cards for each Trader's special abilities. (There is also a brief summary on the back page of this rulebook.)

You can give each Trader a Personality randomly, or let each player (in reverse turn order) pick a Personality. If you're draw-

ing randomly, use only half the cards (the 10 with figures on the left, or the 10 with figures on the right, or the 10 guys, or the 10 gals), but then you can select from between the two available cards after you've drawn a random Personality, if you wish.

Alternatively, Personality cards can help balance play, if you give them only to the less experienced Traders in the game.

DROPPING OUT

If you drop out of the game, all your money goes back to the bank, and your ship is removed from play. Your stations are auctioned off one at a time to the highest bidder, in numerical order (from 11, 12 ... to 65, 66).

Since there are now fewer Traders in the game, the next time the bottom Contract is fulfilled, do not replace it (so that the number of Contracts stays the same as the number of Traders). For example, if one Trader drops out of a five-Trader game, don't replace Contract #5 when it is fulfilled. (Exception: keep three Contracts for a two-Trader game.)

WINNING THE GAME

The winner of the game is the Trader who successfully petitions the Emperor for an Imperial Mission and then completes that mission before anyone else completes their mission.

Petitioning the Emperor costs an action, and you may not take any more actions (this turn) after a successful petition. (You may continue your turn if you fail.) To petition, you must have at least:

50 \$tarBUCKS

15 PRESTIGE and

a certain number of **STATIONS**:

- 2 Traders: 8 Stations
- 3 Traders: 7 Stations
- 4 Traders: 6 Stations
- 5 Traders: 5 Stations
- 6 Traders: 4 Stations

Pay the 50 \$tarBucks and roll one die. Your Prestige bonus adds to your roll — if your Prestige is in the red area, add +1 to your

roll; if it's in the gold area, add +2. In addition, any Traders (including you) may use an appropriate Trader's Luck card to change your Prestige *before* you roll, or a "Zap!" Trader's Luck card to change your die roll *after* you roll.

If the final result is a 5 or better, the Emperor grants your petition and you are assigned an Imperial Mission! See **Your Imperial Mission**, on the next page. If not, your petition is denied and you must keep trying.

Being snubbed costs you Prestige. The first time your petition is denied, you lose **5 Prestige**. Subsequent petitions cost **20 \$tarBucks** each, and failing costs you **3 Prestige** each time.

Optional Max Prestige Petition

If everyone agrees, anyone who petitions with 30 Prestige is automatically granted a success. (The Trader must still have enough stations and pay the required fee.)

YOUR IMPERIAL MISSION

When you successfully petition the Emperor, you haven't won yet! He grants you an *Imperial Mission*, so you can show how good you really are. Discard any cargos you have on board and turn up the top card in the deck. If it has a star in the payoff area (see sample card on page 4), place it in front of you. This Contract is your Imperial Mission. (If the card doesn't have a star, it isn't challenging enough for an Imperial Mission. Discard it and draw again. Keep drawing until you get a Contract with a star.)

Flip your two cargo markers to the sides with black stars and place them on the board, the "Pick Up" marker next to the world with your cargo and the "Deliver" marker next to the destination world.

You may take no more actions this turn. Beginning in your next turn, you start trying to pick up the specified cargo and deliver it to its destination. When you pick it up, place the "Pick Up" mark-

er on the Contract card to indicate that you have it. No other Trader may fulfill that Contract — it's just for you. When you reach your destination and deliver your cargo, you become the **STAR TSAR**, and you win!

But it won't be easy. Your rivals will do their best to stop you. And while one Trader is trying to complete an Imperial Mission, any or all of the other Traders may also petition for their own missions. It's possible for *all* Traders to be on Imperial Missions at once.

Good luck, Trader. Hot jets!

Optional Short Ending

If everyone agrees, you can end the game with the first successful petition — the Emperor can declare that person the **STAR TSAR** without any Imperial Missions.



The Imperial game is for players who want a more cutthroat and complex game than the Family game. It includes the red "I" cards. Most of the red cards add more strategy and/or conflict to gameplay. The Imperial game also tends to take longer — while the Family game takes about 90 minutes, the Imperial game takes closer to two hours.

The Imperial game uses the Family game rules and pieces, with the following changes and additions:

Use all 108 cards and the Quarantine markers.

IMPERIAL TRADER'S LUCK EXPLANATIONS

A Glitch in the System. You may even play this on your own Imperial Mission if you don't like it. A new Imperial Mission must still have a star (see **Your Imperial Mission**, above).

Quarantine. If you play this, put a *Quarantine* marker on the world you choose. Traders on the quarantined world, or arriving while the marker is there, are stuck until the marker is removed — they may not move away. However, they don't *lose* any turns. They can still build or steal a station, conduct local business, draw cards and so forth, while quarantined. Quarantines affect the playing Trader just as much as they affect other Traders.

Roll a die at the end of every Trader's turn (beginning with the next Trader's turn). If a 1 is rolled, the quarantine is lifted — remove the Quarantine marker. If it goes around and the first

roller rolls again, now a 1 or 2 lifts the quarantine. The quarantine is automatically lifted at the beginning of the third subsequent turn of the Trader who first rolled to lift it.

An "Avoid a Calamity" card played *immediately after* the "Quarantine" card is played lifts the quarantine. An "Avoid a Calamity" played by or on a trapped Trader anytime later will let *that* Trader move away, but will not lift the quarantine and free other quarantined Traders. A second Quarantine played on the same world causes both quarantine conditions to cancel each other out, removing both quarantines. Any Trader may enter a quarantined world, but no one can leave (without playing an "Avoid a Calamity") until the quarantine is lifted. Exceptions: "Ion Storm" and "Warp in the Space-Time Continuum" can move Traders *to* or *from* a quarantined world.



STAR TRADERS™

Black Hole Game

The Imperial game can usually be played in about two hours. If you want an even longer, more challenging game, add these Black Hole rules. (It's called "Black Hole" because it takes so long, everyone else will think you've disappeared!)

IMPERIAL STATIONS

In the Black Hole game, you are trying to build a network of *Imperial Stations*. The first Trader to build a large enough network and *then* complete an Imperial Mission will be named the **STAR TSAR**.

To make one of your stations Imperial, you must be at that station, and you must meet several Imperial criteria:

- ➔ You must have enough **STATIONS** (the same as the Family & Imperial game requirements for petitioning the Emperor). Your other Imperial stations count toward this total.
- ➔ You must have at least **15 PRESTIGE**. Any Prestige Meter bonuses you have still count on your die roll.
- ➔ The first time you petition the Emperor, you must pay a **30-\$STAR-BUCK** filing fee before you roll. (No other fees are required *before* any subsequent petition rolls.)

You may now call the Emperor's Court on the hyperwave relay and petition for Imperial status. Roll a die and check the **Black Hole Petition Table**. Use this table in place of the Family and Imperial games' petition rules.

A successful roll promotes your station to an Imperial Station, *if* you can pay the price on the table. Note that you usually have to spend both Prestige and cash. You're calling in favors at the Imperial Court!

In this game, it's important to distinguish between normal and Imperial stations. Note that each Station Ring has a side without any stars and a side with stars. Station Rings for normal stations keep the

non-star side face up. When you successfully petition to make one of your stations Imperial, turn the Station Ring over to its starred side.

An Imperial Station cannot be taken away from you or destroyed by a Trader's Luck card or any other means. You may still sell or trade it to another Trader, but it loses its Imperial status if it changes hands.

WINNING THE GAME

The winner of the game is the first Trader to put together a large enough network of Imperial Stations, and *then* complete an Imperial Mission. (Use the **Black Hole Petition Table** to petition for your Imperial Mission.) Each Imperial Station in your network must be *directly* connected (by a jumpline) to another Imperial Station in the network. Unconnected stations don't count, and your network cannot be split into two or more pieces! To petition for your final Imperial Mission it takes a network of:

2, 3 or 4 Traders:	4 Imperial Stations
5 or 6 Traders	3 Imperial Stations

(If all players are agreed, feel free to adjust these up or down before you begin a game — perhaps require 5 for a three-player game, or 3 for a four-player game.)

DROPPING OUT

The victory conditions do *not* change when a Trader drops out. If you started with five Traders, and one drops out, it will still only take a network of three stations to win.

Black Hole Petition Table

Note. In all cases, if you don't have as much money as the result requires you to lose, you lose all that you have. If you don't have enough to pay for a successful petition, your petition is denied and you lose 4 Prestige (but no money).

- 0 (or less)** The Emperor is angered by your presumption ... and because your bribe was not large enough! Your petition is denied. Lose 20 \$starBucks and 5 Prestige.
- 1** Your petition is denied. Lose 10 \$starBucks and 5 Prestige.
- 2** The Emperor goes on holiday; your petition is not heard. Your failed attempt makes you lose 5 \$starBucks and 4 Prestige.
- 3** Red tape! Your petition is granted if you pay 40 \$starBucks and spend 10 Prestige. If you can't pay \$40 (or don't want to), lose 4 Prestige for wasting the Emperor's time.
- 4** Greedy bureaucrats delay you. Your petition is granted if you pay 30 \$starBucks and spend 8 Prestige. If you can't pay \$30 (or don't want to), lose 4 Prestige.
- 5** Your petition is granted if you pay 20 \$starBucks and spend 6 Prestige. If you can't pay \$20 (or don't want to), lose 4 Prestige.
- 6** Your petition is granted if you pay 10 \$starBucks and spend 4 Prestige. If you can't pay \$10 (or don't want to), you still lose 4 Prestige.
- 7 (or more)** The Emperor is impressed. Your petition is granted at no \$starBuck cost! Spend 3 Prestige.



STAR TRADERS

Nova Game

The Nova game is a simpler version of the Family game, designed for those who can identify key words (such as "Calamity," "Zap" and "Lost in Space"). This version of STAR TRADERS is playable by most kids age 10+ (and some even younger). It is intended to be played with an older person, and these rules assume at least one player knows the Family game rules. An older person should read through both the Family game and Nova game rules before teaching the Nova game to younger players. ("Nova" can mean both a brightly shining star and something new, or young, like the players of this version.)

THE NOVA GAME USES:

- The board
- \$tarBucks money
- The 36 green cards marked with an "N"
- Plastic ship tokens (1 per Trader)
- Station Rings (15 per Trader)
- Cargo and Prestige markers (2 and 1 per Trader)
- Contract Dice (1 pair is used per Trader)
- 4 Action Dice
- The yellow Nova playmats (one per Trader)

HOW THE GAME PLAYS

Traders take turns, going clockwise around the board. You can try to take four **actions** (or jumps) each turn. (*Note that this is one fewer action than in the Family game, and only jumps count as actions.*)

As you move, you can **pick up and drop off cargos**. If you deliver a cargo, you get paid for it.

At the end of your movement, if there isn't a station where you are, **build a station** there. You get 2 Prestige for each station that you build.

At the end of your turn, **draw a card**. If you now have more than two cards, you must immediately discard down to two. When you are completely finished with your turn, pass the dice to the next Trader.

Note that in the Nova game, actions are only used to move. Picking up a cargo and building a station don't cost an action, and building a station doesn't even cost any \$tarBucks. It happens automatically at the end of the turn, if the world doesn't have a station. Building a station earns 2 Prestige.

SETTING UP THE GAME

Set up like the Family game, with these exceptions:

- Use only the 36 "N" cards
- Don't use the Personalities

MOVEMENT

The Nova game uses Regular Jumps, Station Jumps and Random Jumps, just like the Family game. Each roll to jump counts as one action.

A **Random Jump** ends your actions for the turn, but you can still deliver a cargo and build a station (if there isn't one) at the world where you end your movement.

Each time you roll and don't move, take 1 \$tarBuck.

STATIONS & PRESTIGE

As noted above, building a station doesn't cost \$tarBucks or an action, and gives 2 Prestige. It happens automatically at the end of your turn, if the world doesn't have a station.

Prestige is the same as in the Family game in all other ways. Stations are still useful for Station Jumps and to give the station owner a fee when a cargo is delivered.

CARGO

Picking up a cargo doesn't cost an action.

Payoffs are all the same as in the Family game, including the Delivery Payoff, Station Fee, Prestige and Contract #1 VIP bonus.

Races still give additional Prestige to the winning Trader.

TRADER'S LUCK

The "N" cards are the cards that are easiest to understand. They are played the same as in the Family game; they just aren't as complicated as some that only appear in the "F" and "I" decks.

EXCHANGES AND TRADES

These rules are the same as in the Family game.

PERSONALITIES

Don't use Personalities in the Nova game.

WINNING THE GAME

There are no petitions in the Nova game. If you're the first Trader to have **15 PRESTIGE** and **60 \$STARBUCKS** during your turn, you win the game. (No one may play Trader's Luck cards to affect your Prestige once you've won.)



STAR TRADERSTM

Super Nova Game

Like the Nova game, the Super Nova game is intended to be taught by an older player. However, since Trader's Luck isn't used, the younger players only have to know how to read numbers (and the difference between "From" and "To"). This version of STAR TRADERS is playable by most kids age 7+ (and some even younger).

THE SUPER NOVA GAME USES:

- All the Nova game pieces. (Note that since the "N" cards are only different on their Trader's Luck ends, which aren't used in this version, you can actually play with all 108 cards.)
- The green Super Nova playmats (one per Trader)

TRADER'S LUCK

Don't deal out cards to players or play the Trader's Luck end of the cards.

CARGO

Eliminate the VIP Contract bonus — don't award bonus Prestige for Contract #1.

Eliminate the Prestige bonus for winning a race.

WINNING THE GAME

If you're the first Trader to have **15 PRESTIGE** and **60 \$STAR-BUCKS** during your turn, you win the game.

Designer's Notes

STAR TRADERS combines my enjoyment of science fiction and of gaming; the worlds are named after many of my favorite SF authors (with their gracious permission, where permission was applicable). My first version was published 30 years ago by Steve Jackson Games; with the renaissance of table games, I have the opportunity to implement a wide range of modifications and improvements, particularly things that weren't easily possible in 1987.

One important new feature is that even for a game that so strongly uses color, it is now accessible to color-blind players. All pieces and map features except the ships have distinguishing markings, and you can replace a non-contrasting ship with the white or black ship.

STAR TRADERS shares an important feature with many other table games — it teaches while it entertains. Younger players learn basic counting and planning skills, but also significant lessons in social development, including negotiation and the recognition that in some circumstances winning is possible only if losing is also possible.

As we wind up design for this version of the game, we are beginning to hear from librarians who are excited about the chance to introduce kids to reading through playing the game. It would be nicely appropriate if a game that was partly fueled

by my interest in reading turned full circle and fired up kids to do more reading themselves. If you're a librarian who wants to get a copy for your library, let us know and we might be able to work something out.

There are many potential variants and combinations of these rules. For example, you can play a Black Hole game with just the Nova/Family cards, and you can adjust the victory conditions in any way that is mutually agreeable.

You can also go old-school, incorporating rules from the original version of **STAR TRADERS**. For example, you can require that jumps be declared: you must state where you are trying to jump *before* you roll a die. If your die roll isn't high enough to make your announced jump, you can't use it to make an easier jump — that action is lost. This rule can be used any time you play **STAR TRADERS**, but it's more recommended when you're feeling competitive enough to play the Black Hole game.

Players have suggested various other Personalities over the years; we might be posting some of the more interesting on the web.

Please feel free to post your own suggestions, for Personalities, Trader's Luck cards or anything else about the game — we're interested in what you have to say.

www.TradersLuck.com david@tradersluck.com

STAR TRADERS™

Introduction

The Star Tsar is no more. Rumors have spread to every corner of the galaxy; retirement, assassination, and treason have proven the most popular speculations, but only one actual truth has emerged: the head of the largest civil organization in the galaxy, the omnipresent Trade Commissariat, must be replaced. The galaxy's most powerful trade organization can only be leaderless for so long before the economy grinds to a halt. Steps must be taken to fill that void. Hints, vague at first, had been circulating about who the new Star Tsar would be. Some said the Emperor would make the obvious choice — a long-term senator, favored by the mega-corporations. Others, analyzing the Emperor's more recent tendencies, pronounced it would be a crony of his, currently on the board of the Galactic Bank. No one was prepared for what the Emperor actually announced: to determine the new Star Tsar, there would be a trade competition. Anyone, any citizen of the Empire, would be eligible to compete.

The Emperor declared a convocation to be held at the imperial capitol on Laumer to reveal the rules for this unprecedented measure. Thousands flocked to the great amphitheater to hear the Emperor's declaration. Billions more watched a live presentation on the trideo stations. Everyone wanted to know the criteria for the Emperor's choice of a new Star Tsar. Unofficially, some of the rules had already filtered out: lone captains; single ships; it was to be about trade, not war, so no weapons were to be allowed. Little more had leaked, but it was enough to attract a cross-section of the galactic citizenry.

At the amphitheater, the crowds mingled together, awaiting the appearance of the Emperor. Small-time traders rubbed shoulders with corporate-backed pilots. Independently wealthy captains shared drinks with owners one payment ahead of repossession. Every economic class, all social strata were represented on the floor of the coliseum, each hoping for a chance for fortune, glory and the Emperor's favor.

The competition would be open to any citizen, but looking across the floor — at the anxious faces, the calm demeanors, the nervous glances — a handful of personalities stood out from the crowd. Scattered across the amphitheater, they each had a certain something that set them apart from the others. Like that one, standing near the corner ...

I gratefully acknowledge the permissions that I have been given to include the names of my favorite science fiction authors in this game. These permissions should not be taken as endorsements of the game.

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The Estate of Philip K. Dick has not granted approval, but has no objection to naming a world after him.

Special thanks to Marie Anello.

I appreciate the assistance and encouragement that have been provided by Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy, Lauren Akamine and Mothership Books and Games, Professor Meeple and The Malted Meeple, Titan Moon Comics, and other game stores.



They said it was a tragic accident. A lone star-tours vessel had a navigational error and wandered into the exploding asteroid band of Verne. The politicians were already on the trideo feeds, weeping crocodile tears about the terrible losses and their heartfelt prayers, when all the news agencies cut them off. A live feed was broadcast on all channels of a lone ship emerging from the flaring asteroids, its engines straining, its life support working overtime — a lone search and rescue ship, with every single passenger from the lost liner safely onboard. Interviewed, the distraught passengers all said the same thing. They all thought they were lost, with no hope to escape the asteroids bursting around them. But then a single voice, calm and collected, came over the public address system. That voice led them to the rescue ship, it led them out of the field. It was calm and strong and told them they would be ok. One single voice; your voice.

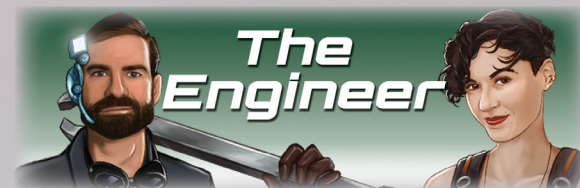
Your own interviews on the trideo feeds followed. You were humble; you weren't doing anything amazing or special, you were just doing your job. People were in danger and you went in to help them. Helping is your job. The press loved it.

Each interview and news bite led to another. You had a charming personality, a quirky and lovable blend of self-deprecation and supreme confidence. Combine that with a smile that a supernova couldn't outshine and a black hole couldn't dim and you became a sensation. People recognized you when you docked at a starport, they recognized you when you went to fill out paperwork at the starship licensing agency. You couldn't walk into a restaurant and pay for a meal; someone always covered your tab. People stopped you for photos or just to shake your hand. You became the ideal so many people were looking for.

When the Empire leaked the news of the Star Tsar's retirement, you finally made a decision to capitalize on the adoration you had acquired. People knew you were a good pilot, they knew you were honest and upright. They wanted someone like you, no, they wanted YOU to take over the trade consortiums for the Empire. They wanted someone they could trust. Anonymous donors made sure you had a ship, ready and capable to take on the task of establishing yourself as a premiere trader.

The Empire needs someone honest and determined to be the new Star Tsar. The Empire needs a hero to show them the way.

***You are the Hero.
And you are just what the galaxy needs.***



When you left home, you signed on to work a long-haul freighter with the engine crew; you had no experience but a great willingness to learn. Your first six months demonstrated your natural talent with ships and engines. You impressed your crewmates, and (more importantly) you impressed the captain. You signed up for another six months.

It was on your second tour that you found her.

Your freighter had gone off course and had to make an emergency refueling at an out-of-the-way gas giant. The refueling station also doubled as a ship salvage yard. She was an old wreck, and had been sitting abandoned for years. But you knew the moment you saw her: *this* was a ship, *this* was *the* ship. Gutted and broken, but you could detect the lines of a dancer, graceful and sweeping. You just had to make her *your* ship. Every bit of money you'd made so far got you the ship and a berth to house her.

When your tour on the freighter was done, you left with a little bit of money and a bigger reputation. You spent your savings on new parts; you lived on board her and ate reprocessed soy-yum. When the money for parts ran out, you signed on with a new ship. You were back in a new engine room; you kept learning about new ships, new engines. Your good-natured attitude endeared you to your crewmates, and each ship you worked on added to your reputation. It was the same for years; any free waking moment was spent in the salvage yard, tinkering, tuning, tweaking. The rest was spent moving from ship to ship, from crew to crew. Everyone you worked with was amazed by your skills. What had been talent was refined by hard work and experience on countless different models. Your reputation continued to grow and soon people were actively trying to recruit you. But you were always selective about where you went. You'd turn down lucrative contracts to go at half-pay on a ship class you'd never worked on before. You never stopped learning.

Then one of your former employers contacted you with a job. The Emperor wanted a new Star Tsar; he would be using a trade contest to determine who that would be. You were offered a job as part of the maintenance crew for the contest, working on the engines in between flights. You turned him down. You had a better idea.

You walked into your hangar and contemplated the ugly duckling that over the years had transformed into a graceful swan. Her hull was gleaming, as though brand new from the shipyards. She was a technological wonder — a merger of a hundred designs and systems, integrated together through skill and hard work. No other ship could compare. This ship was meant to be dancing among the stars, not sitting in a hangar. You just needed to find the right waltz. You didn't build for pure speed, but for strength and efficiency; she now had the ability to continue on long after another ship would give up. Most people look at you and just see a mechanic. They look at your ship and just see a wreck.

***You are the Engineer. It's time for you and your ship to
show the galaxy a few new steps.***



The Maverick

They say that lucky people always win. You know that's not true. Being lucky doesn't mean you always win, it means you always come out on top. Sometimes that means losing. Fortune may favor the bold, but Lady Luck picks a favorite and sticks tight. You're her number one pick.

Even as a child, you knew something was different about you; something special. You'd find a little bit of money, then walk to the street hustlers that ran the rigged games. You'd walk away with enough money to eat for a week. You were on your own, but that was all right. You had your wits and you had your luck. You didn't need anything else.

The little tries were always the easiest; the quick, low-stake games — contests that won you free meals, lotteries that netted you small earnings. You were a wizard; you never lost and always had an edge. You didn't really lose at all until the first big stakes game you got in. It was a private game, in the back room of an upscale bar. You were doing well most of the night, until the last play. Your bluff was called, and you got wiped out. You were shocked, half dazed as you walked out the room. You couldn't understand what happened ... until the authorities rushed past you, kicked in the doors, and arrested everyone at the table. Looks like luck was still on your side. You found another game the next week; you won back your losses and then some.

You moved from system to system, planet to planet, working your angles. Sometimes you were on top of the world, only to be down low the next week. But as soon as things got bad, your luck intervened and something unexpected showed up. You rode a streak into a five-star hotel on a resort world for a month. You lost a luxury trip on a starliner cruise, only to hear that it disappeared without a trace. You worked casinos; you'd inevitably end up banned by one, only to be back a month later when it was bought by a new corporation. You started playing the stock market; your trades were so chaotic that your broker cringed at your call, but you managed to accumulate a hefty retirement fund within a year. You loved it.

You got involved in a card game with a group of rich jet setters. One of them kept talking all night about his great plan to join in the competition to become the new Star Tsar. He was bragging about his new starship, his cargo, his nest egg of cash to finance the trades. He even talked about some of the inside information on trade routes he had acquired. By the end of the night, you had his ship, his money and his cargo. You graciously informed him that you would call the ship the "Lucky Lou" in his honor. He tripped over his own chair lunging at you in anger, while you smiled as you walked out. You don't know anything about running a trade empire, but if life has taught you one thing, it's better to be lucky than good.

You are the Maverick.

It's time to roll the dice and win the game.



The Navigator

Some people travel for fun. Some people do it for profit. For you, traveling the stars is neither a hobby nor a job. It's a way of life.

Your parents are part of the Explorer Corps, charting new and faster routes between worlds. You were born in space. You plotted your first jump when you were five and shocked your parents when it cut a light-year off their best trajectories. You absolutely terrified them when, at 10, you reprogrammed the nav computer and jumped the ship on your own. You were grounded and banned from the bridge, despite your insistence that the ship clearly missed the supernova by several million kilometers.

You shocked your parents again when you failed to follow in their footsteps. You'd been around the Explorer Corps your whole life; you always had a passing interest in discovering new places, but that was never your driving goal. It's not about finding the new places, you just want to find faster, more efficient ways to get around. Pushing the edge of the known routes, running closer to the dangerous hazards of space, that was your thrill. Nothing held the pleasure of taking a route and being able to cut off another parsec by shaving closer to a black hole.

You bounced from ship corp to ship corp. Your natural talent backed up by a lifetime of experience would get you hired. Your constant attempts to "optimize" the trade routes and never sticking to a schedule would get you fired. You had just concluded a final conversation with your newest ex-employer (you admitted to taking the ship through the space station's gravity wheel, but you took almost fifteen minutes off the transit time and it's not like you actually hit anything) when you received a very unexpected communication from your parents.

The Explorer Corps had gotten inside information from the Trade Commissariat. The Star Tsar was gone; no one was sure why, but the Emperor would be announcing a trade competition to appoint a replacement. Whoever could move the most cargo the quickest would win. The Corps wanted to make sure they had an in with the winner. Your parents immediately thought of you and recommended you to the Corps. You've always wanted to get from here to there faster than anyone before. They thought that maybe now you could put that desire to some good use. The Explorer Corps had arranged a fast ship for you, a license to trade, and no questions asked about the routes you would take. Frankly, you stopped listening at "no questions." You've got a chance to prove once and for all you're the absolute best. You'll be a legend, and the whole galaxy will be watching.

You are the Navigator.

It's time to go as no one has gone before.



The Negotiator

It was a worthless load of junk and everyone knew it. Twenty sealed cargo containers, packed to the seams with ... smaller cargo containers. You easily convinced the cargo master to pay you to haul them off, just to clear up the space. You moved them right into the hangar of a small export company, who gladly paid you top money for them. You smiled, thanked them, and took the cash. You moved on, looking for your next deal.

People always have something to sell, and someone else is always looking to buy it. The trick is to be able to move the goods without anyone knowing what a huge profit you make by doing it. And you have always been very good at that. The profits from the cargo containers were handed over to a bemused tradesman for a load of foil blankets that had been gathering dust for a year. The next day they were being shipped out to a newly founded arctic colony world and you pocketed your profit.

Each day was a new deal, a new adventure. One trade led to another, each one bringing in a bigger payday for you. A warehouse full of discarded solar panels found its way to a desert world. Crates of old lamp shades were shipped to a giant space mall to be gobbled up in the sudden antique craze. Other traders tried to follow your example, but you stayed one step ahead; people thought it was skill, but you knew the truth. It wasn't skill; it was art. The art of the deal. You always came out ahead and made more money than anyone else would have thought possible.

You amazed your friends when you managed to trade eleven crates of plastic figurines (still in the original packaging, of course) for a shiny new starship. You thought that this could very well be the best trade you had ever made. The next day you heard about the competition. The old Star Tsar was out — no one seemed to really know why, but he was definitely not in charge anymore — and the Emperor was going to hold a trading contest to determine the new one. You smiled to yourself and looked over at your new ship.

Could someone trade a starship for control of the entire galactic trade network? It would be incredible, it would be amazing, it would be the biggest deal of the century. There's no star trader out there who could pull that off. Well, no trader except you.

You are the Negotiator.

It's time to inform the galaxy what the real deal is.

And I am grateful for the those who helped along the way and agreed to serve as models for the Personalities:

Lauren Akamine, Mikayla Beebe, Alysia & Marvin Bobo, Megan Cheever, Charlie Duncan, Becca Farone, Sandi Gardiner, Richard Garriott de Cayeux, Jonathan Hensley, Steve Jackson, Evie, Jesse & Will Ladyman, Alexis & Ben Lesnick, Chris Roberts, Stefanie Sustaita, Jackie Washington & Clifford Zernicek



The Rogue

You were born in the slums outside a large spaceport. You watched hundreds of people move through the spaceport every day, people from all walks of life, all strata of society. You watched and learned. Everyone had mannerisms, quirks, tells. You studied them as they moved through the spaceport and learned to mimic them. You knew that a lone, uneducated orphan could never get ahead and make it away from these slums. So you became someone else.

You quickly grasped the art of watching people's reactions. You discovered an often overlooked characteristic: people see what they want to see and rarely question their assumptions. If you wore decent clothes, carried a briefcase and seemed terribly preoccupied, people assumed you were an executive. A worker in coveralls with a tool box was never questioned when walking in the back hallways of the starport.

You finally got an opportunity to test your conclusions. You scavenged a discarded flight suit and made repairs to it yourself. You steadied your nerves, then put on the suit and a winning smile. You walked onboard an off-world transport just as if you belonged. You were light-years from the system when they figured out you weren't part of the crew. They handed you over to the authorities when they docked.

You were released with a warning: you hadn't technically done anything illegal. You found yourself on a new world, at a new starport. It was depressingly like the one you had left behind. You spent time at an electronic documents center, pulling up technical manuals. A week later, you walked onto a new starship, fully conversant with the interior cooling mechanics of large scale reactors. They didn't figure out you weren't really their newly assigned technician until you failed to show back for their next departure. You had already found something new to try.

You survived by bluff and guile. With a healthy dose of charm and native intelligence, you did more than survive: you thrived. You moved from system to system. Each new locale birthed a new identity. From construction works to financial institutions to entertainment networks, you fooled them all. You even spent six months once as a starship pilot, where you received a top performance rating despite the fact that you never actually piloted anything.

When you heard of the trade competition to determine a new Star Tsar, you knew it would be a challenge, but you were ready. You crammed stock reports and star charts for the latest information on routes. You went to a shipping company — the same company that owned the ship you first left home on. You gave the best of credentials, using your old pilot competency reports. You dazzled them with your knowledge of shipboard systems from your time as a "mechanic." By the time you finished your evaluation of the current trade markets, they were scurrying to sponsor you for the contest. You walked out with handshakes, congratulations, and a brand new starship. They had no idea who you were.

You are the Rogue.

Who are you going to be tomorrow?



The Builder

Whenever someone mentions space travel, they're thinking of ships — it's always about the ships. What's the point of a ship though? It takes you from one place to another. The ships aren't important; the places they connect are. You wanted to experience the galaxy, not see it pass by through a view screen.

When you reached the age for enlistment, you joined the Imperial Navy. Everyone always tries to get into the pilot training program. You went for the construction battalions. CBs don't have the glory or fame, but you didn't care. You learned practical skills. The Imperial Navy gave you training and some of the toughest equipment known to play with. They even paid you for it. It was a dream job.

Your first job out of initial training was ground construction. You weren't the fastest or the smartest, but you were the hardest working in your unit. Your superiors took note. Promotion didn't come easy, but it did come. After a few years working on the ground you got the most coveted, and the most dangerous, job for a CB. You went to Zero-G Construction school.

Once you were in orbit, your true talents began to shine. You had an innate awareness, all too rare, of how objects move in space. Interlocking hab modules isn't like piloting a starship — you have computers to help and robot arms to manipulate, but when it comes down to it, it's you, your tools, and the void. People always think that fighter pilots have the dangerous job. Those pilots have no concept of the fear of really being outside — no ship, no help, when just a thin layer of plexi-fiber is all the protection you have in a micro-meteor burst. You acknowledged the danger, but you had a job and you never let the fear get in the way. Orbital repair yards, ship construction facilities, macro-storage — the Navy needed everything, and you found there was nothing you couldn't build.

Your reputation was firmly established when the reductions came. Oh, there was a lot of talk of "drawdowns" and "force redistribution," but in the end it was simple. The budget got cut and people had to go. You faced a decision: take the severance and the early out, or be prepared to languish in a gutted job. You got out. Your expertise, if no longer needed in the military, was a boon in civilian life. It didn't take long before your initial investment grew into ownership of a leading construction company. You stood by the same guidelines you had in the military: charge a fair price, work hard, and build whatever was needed.

When the trade competition was first announced, you didn't pay much attention. You didn't trade goods, you built things. When the rules started filtering out though, you gradually took notice. The way the competition was devised, people would need stations. There weren't enough to support what was going to happen. At first you thought you might be able to boost business by supplying needed skills to one of the competitors. After a little more research, you reached a different conclusion. You've got the skills to put up stations faster and better than anyone else. Thanks to your reputation and military background, you've got contacts and connections throughout the major trade routes. Sure, you could help someone win the competition. Or you could just go win it yourself.

You are the Builder.

You've got what you need. Go build an empire.



The Strategist

Generations of your family served with honor and distinction. You were raised on the stories of the glorious past — of officers, enlisted, men and women, all of your ancestors who donned the uniform and served the Empire. You knew, even as a child, that was your destiny.

You parents provided encouragement; you began reading at an early age, swiftly digesting every bit of military history you could find. Sun Tzu, Alexander, Patton, Schwarzkopf, Berezniki; all those and more became your inspiration. You read them all and studied their histories and analyses. At fourteen, you very solemnly informed your parents of your intention to apply to the elite military training institute on Roberts. They didn't even try to dissuade you.

At school, your studies on the past continued, but they were augmented with more current military tactics. As all the plebes did, you started in the ranks of a small unit. You showed drive, intelligence, and the ability to adapt. You became a squad leader, then a platoon leader, then a company commander. By the time of your graduation, you were the highest ranked cadet at the school, and their undefeated chess champion.

You petitioned the Imperial Senate for an appointment to the Naval Academy. You were accepted without hesitation. You were enrolled in the normal engineering and chemistry courses, physics and math. You were also put into some of the more advanced courses on Games and Theory. You went from the small unit tactics of the military school to the large-scale formations of space combat. Three dimensional mapping, stellar routes, fighter tactics, dreadnought battles — you studied it all, and you studied it well. You observed tricks and strategies that instructors had all missed. They said you were a natural. You felt like this was something you were born to do.

Your work at the Academy earned you a commission and a position at the Naval War College. You continued to excel at your assignments. You found yourself on strategic planning committees, then promoted to the General Staff. You fought thousands of battles and countless scenarios in the simulator. Every time contingency plans were required, your name was the first to be mentioned.

You looked back on your accomplishments and you slowly came to a realization, and it was terrible: the galaxy was at peace and was going to remain that way. You continued to train, you continued with your contingency planning, but the zeal you once had was gone. You thought of all the glorious stories of your ancestors. Everything you had done with your life had been a preparation for events that would never come to pass. Part of you wanted to believe it was all for the best, that peace was better. Mostly you felt an empty hole where the sense of purpose had been. You finally had enough; you resigned your commission and tried to find a new sense of purpose.

You were drifting from system to system, still searching for that sense of purpose, when you heard of the trade competition. Rogue traders, entrepreneurs, everyone was going to join in. It would be chaos. The trade routes would be clogged

and shifting, ships moving seemingly at random. No one would be able to make sense of all that. No one but you. You reached out to some old contacts from the military; they knew your skill and were eager to help.

You are the Strategist.

Marshal your strengths and forge your way to victory.



Your great-grandmother was born into poverty. You were born into wealth. She had worked and built up a massive company, and passed control on to her children. You went to the best schools, where you excelled academically. Science, mathematics, economics — anything you studied you mastered. Mother and Father were quick to point out that it was the result of your great-grandmother's hard work that gave you such opportunities. Your academic success, they implied, was clearly derived from your ancestor's efforts more than yours.

Meanwhile, Father proved just as effective at running the company into the ground as his father had before him. He was less effective at piloting a starship, as both your parents were killed in a tragic accident when their ship jumped too near the sun. That's how you found yourself, 21 years old, at the helm of a large, mostly bankrupt, corporation. You utilized your business skills and began to diversify into many new areas. Within two years you had the company out of the red.

Within five years, you had reversed all the damage caused by Father. Two years after that and it was as wealthy as it had been when your great-grandmother died. Just over ten years after you had taken control, it was five times more valuable. The business journals talked about the amazing turn-around of your great-grandmother's company. They spoke of the restoration of a once tarnished family name to glory. They mentioned your great-grandmother's name more than yours.

You kept expanding your company, but no matter what you did, you could never seem to escape the shadow of the company's founder. And then the Emperor announced his trade competition to name a new Star Tsar. You acquired a copy of the actual rules and went over them with the scrutiny only a business magnate could muster. You put all the assets of your company into play.

The rules said that there could only be one pilot and one ship for entry into the contest. Well, you weren't going to let the rules hold you back; you'd just work around them. You commandeered the design department of your shipyard holdings. A few days later you walked out and handed plans to the ship builders. It's registered as a single space super-yacht. It's not a rules violation if it happens to split into two independent, fully functioning ships.

To tackle the issue of piloting, you preempted your robotics R&D division. Working with the engineers, you designed a special virtual reality chamber allowing you complete control of two robot pilots. You didn't even bother consulting with the prototypers — you just handed them designs for the robots and told them to get to building. Since you can only control one at a time, it still meets the rules. Your telecommunications subsidiary was prioritized with custom al-

gorithms you wrote. They allow you to reroute transmissions to give you instantaneous commands and real-time control of each part of your "ship."

The Emperor may control the galaxy, but he's not the genius that you are. You know how to analyze a contract, and you always read the fine print.

You are the Tycoon.

Now is the time for the galaxy to learn your name.



You started working as a page to a minor functionary in the Trade Commissariat. It was a sprawling bureaucracy, spanning the whole of the Empire. Like any government body, it was riddled with layers of redundant procedures, pointless functionaries, and hideous wait times. You started watching how the game was played. You discovered the great truth of the galaxy: it's not about what you know, it's who you know.

You began laughing at terrible jokes, you complimented the good looks of ugly and boring spouses, you smiled when everyone else was frowning. You began running mind-numbing errands for people, helping speed up the process of pushing paper. Your network of contacts in the commissariat was small at first, but it began to grow. You began to get noticed by people higher up the rungs. Each little favor you performed led to another opportunity.

You stayed one of the faceless appointed clerks, because that's where the real power was. You latched onto one particularly charismatic commissioner; she was very personable, even if she was almost totally incompetent at her job. Officially you were supposed to be processing trade forms and certifying economic reports. In reality, you were just trading favors around between other workers. You worked very hard to make sure you had the right people in the right place at the right time. Your network of favors owed to you kept growing.

You never quite crossed over the edge into doing anything actually illegal; you just greased the wheels to speed up the process for people who couldn't afford to wait. A trade company needed to move goods quickly to take advantage of a shift in the market; in exchange for their application going to the top of pile, they agreed to shift their operations out of a system. The remaining company in that system agreed to prioritize shipments from a mining company. The mining company agreed to provide a generous donation of material to a construction project on your patron's home world. Your web of contacts was spun bigger, and the importance of the favors grew with it. Your work made your patron more important; she moved higher in the bureaucracy, and she took you with her. Each time a new election came around, you were appointed to a new position.

Thanks to a friend in the Imperial court (who also held a now-lucrative chunk of the spice guild, owing to you) word of the "retirement" of the Star Tsar reached you long before anything was officially announced. The plan for appointing a new Tsar came moments later from another friend at the top of the Trade Commissariat (a friend, and also the owner of a recently recovered diary that had some rather compromising informa-

tion in it). You thought about bringing this information to your patron, but the more you considered it, the more you realized that the Star Tsar is not an elected official. The office is appointed — just like all those others you've held over the years.

You'd spent a lifetime building up favors. It was time to call them in. A word to the comptroller of an impound lot and you had a brand new starship. Reminders were sent to certain people and permits appeared, giving you special access to key installations. Whispers spread throughout the Trade Commissariat; you let the right people know you were making your move, and they stand ready to help.

You are the Insider.

You've worked the system for years; now take control of it.

Commencement

As the time grew closer for the Emperor's declaration of the contest, the coliseum grew more and more packed. From the highest private balcony to the standing room at the base of the seats, the huge building was filled to capacity and beyond. Millions more watched on trideo feeds, sending a live broadcast out, even to the fringes of the empire. At the precise scheduled moment, an imposing holographic projection filled the amphitheater. The voice of the ruler of the galaxy boomed through the massive stadium; it was calm and serene, but its underlying power and authority could not be denied.

"Citizens of the Empire, as you know, the office of the Master of Trade, the head of the Trade Commissariat, stands empty. We have determined this to be unacceptable. Ours is a galaxy founded on peace and commerce. Trade is essential to maintaining our peace. We have therefore determined to name a replacement for the office of Star Tsar. Our councilors and the Imperial Senate have each made their recommendations. It is our pleasure, however, to choose a more unorthodox approach. We wish that the Master of Trade be the one known as the best trader in the galaxy. To that end, we do hereby announce a trade competition. From our Office of Legal Matters, you may acquire the specific regulations for this contest, but it is sufficient to say this: all captains will have a short time to reach the registered home world of their ships and complete final preparations. Then go forth into the galaxy; show by word and deed that you are worthy of becoming a master trader. Petition the throne with the evidence of your exploits, and if they please us," a faint smile came across the Emperor's face, "we shall give a special challenge. A mission direct from our Imperial Majesty, suitable for a worthy captain." Murmurs raced through the crowd; none of the rumors had mentioned any special missions. "The first to be found worthy and then complete our final task shall be named as Star Tsar, head of the Trade Commissariat and Master of All Traders."

The holographic projection looked out across the crowded stands of the amphitheater, its gaze seeming to meet the eyes of everyone there.

"This is our imperial will and pleasure. We seek only the greatest to assume this office; this competition shall determine who that may be."

The arms of the holographic Emperor reached to the domed ceiling, towering above the throngs of people. His voice rang out, loud and clear:

"LET IT BEGIN."

KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE GAME VERSIONS

VERSION	ACTIONS PER TURN	HOW TO WIN	CARDS
<i>Super Nova</i>	4 (only jumps count)	15 Prestige, 60 \$tarBucks	all (no Trader's Luck)
<i>Nova</i>			36 (N only)
<i>Family</i>	5 (jumps, pickups, local business, builds, petitions)	Petition successfully (15 Prestige, 50 \$tarBucks, enough stations) and then complete Imperial Mission	72 (N & F)
<i>Imperial</i>			all (N, F & I)
<i>Black Hole</i>		Make Imperial Network and then complete Imperial Mission	all (N, F & I)

FAMILY & IMPERIAL PETITION REQUIREMENTS

- 50 \$tarBucks (initial petition); \$20 (thereafter)
- 15 Prestige
- Stations:

2 Traders:	8 Stations
3 Traders:	7 Stations
4 Traders:	6 Stations
5 Traders:	5 Stations
6 Traders:	4 Stations

BLACK HOLE

PETITION REQUIREMENTS

- 30 \$tarBucks (initial filing fee)
- 15 Prestige
- Stations: same as Family & Imperial games

IMPERIAL STATION NETWORK REQUIREMENTS

- 2, 3 or 4 Traders:
4 connected Imperial Stations
- 5 or 6 Traders:
3 connected Imperial Stations

PERSONALITIES

See *Personality cards* for complete details.

BUILDER. Normal stations cost \$3 • can build stations on jump-adjacent worlds for \$3 x value of jumpline (\$6 for orange, etc.)

ENGINEER. 6 actions per turn

HERO. +2 bonus delivery Prestige

INSIDER. Laumer plus one other Core station • can jump between any 2 Core worlds with no minimum roll • +1 on all petition rolls

MAVERICK. Keeps 3 Trader's Luck cards at end of turn • draws 2 cards if holding fewer than 2 cards; can hold 4 cards

NAVIGATOR. All blue and green jumplines require a 4 (rather than a 5 or 6)

NEGOTIATOR. Bonus delivery payoff = Prestige • Bonus Station Fee = \$1

ROGUE. Uses one station's navigation beacon once per turn without permission

STRATEGIST. Rolls all dice at once, combines two into one roll, and uses the resulting rolls in any order

TYCOON. 2 ships (but still just 5 actions)

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Original Star Traders playtesters: Steve Jackson (developer), W. G. Armintrout, Dr. Isaac Asimov, Norman Banduch, Stephen Beeman, Terence Blakely, Richard Boriskie, Karen Boswell, Mark and Julie Chandler, Earl Cooley, Pat Cuney, Ben Ellinger, Jeff George, Scott Haring, Kathy Hench, Karen Horan, Bing Hsu, Matthew Huff, Rod and Tammy Julien, Sharon Kingsford, Martha Ladyman, Christine, Creede and Sharleen Lambard, C. Mara Lee, Cynthia Manson, Mike Moe, Ray Morriss, Don Palmer, Timothy Russell, Dave Seagraves, Steve Shepperson, Melissa Snell, Monica Stephens, Mike Vragel and Dan Willems.

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