

GAME MANUAL

Version 1.0.0 · Deep Space Exploration Campaign

1-4 Players · Cooperative · Campaign Game

Command humanity's first deep-space exploration vessel across four alien worlds. Manage your crew, your ship, and your resources as you unravel the mystery of the Precursors.

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1. INTRODUCTION & STORY

The year is 2187. Humanity has achieved faster-than-light travel and launched the ISS Vanguard – the first crewed deep-space exploration vessel. Your mission: survey four distant star systems, recover alien technology, and uncover the fate of the Precursors, an extinct civilization whose ruins have been detected across the galaxy.

ISS Vanguard is a cooperative campaign game for 1-4 players. Players work together to complete missions on four planets, manage ship systems, and make decisions that affect the entire crew. The campaign spans multiple turns per planet and culminates at the Precursor Megastructure, Sol-9.

2. COMPONENTS

The digital game includes the following systems:

System	Description
Bridge Screen	Main command hub – ship status, missions, phase tracker, dice
Explore Screen	Hex-grid planetary surface map with fog of war
Star Map Screen	Campaign progress – 4 planets, travel, chapter unlock
Crew Screen	Full crew dossiers, skills, XP, wounds, perks
Research Screen	Tech tree – 9 upgrades purchasable with Science points
Event Deck	8 encounter cards drawn each Event Phase
Mission System	4 active missions per planet, skill-gated, progress-tracked
Dice Engine	Custom difficulty-scaled resolution with partial outcomes
Save System	localStorage auto-save and manual save with continue

3. GAME OVERVIEW

The campaign proceeds across four planets in sequence. Each planet has four missions of different types: Science, Recon, Engineering, and Security. Players must complete all four missions on a planet to unlock the next destination.

Throughout the campaign, the ship's hull integrity and crew health are persistent resources. A destroyed ship or collapsed morale ends the campaign in defeat. Careful crew assignment, resource management, and strategic event resolution are required to reach Sol-9 and achieve victory.

4. TURN STRUCTURE

Each game turn follows five phases in sequence:

Phase	Name	What Happens
1	ORDERS	Review mission status. Plan crew assignments. Select active missions.
2	ACTION	Assign crew to missions and attempt progress rolls. Each crew has 2 actions/turn.
3	RESOLVE	Apply all action results. Check mission completion. Trigger chapter advance if all done.
4	EVENT	Draw one Event Card from the deck. Make a choice. Resolve the outcome.
5	UPKEEP	Spend 1 Fuel. Reset crew actions. Apply morale decay if hull is critical. Medical Nanobots

Advancing the Turn:

- Click END TURN in the Quick Actions panel to complete the Upkeep phase and begin the next turn.
- After 6 turns, the Mission counter advances automatically.
- Fuel is consumed every turn – monitor your supply carefully.

Phase Navigation:

- Click any phase tab at the top of the Bridge screen to jump to that phase.
- The ACTION phase shows the mission grid and dice roller.
- The EVENT phase shows the Draw Event Card button.

5. THE SHIP

The ISS Vanguard has 6 sections, each with independent HP. The ship also has a global Hull Integrity rating (0-20). When hull reaches 0, the campaign ends in defeat.

Section	Max HP	Function
Bridge	4	Command center. Damage impairs phase selection.
Science Lab	3	Research and sample analysis hub.
Engineering	4	Repairs, fuel systems, and equipment.
Hangar Bay	3	Shuttle launch and recovery. Starts damaged (2/3).
Medical Bay	3	Crew recovery. Damage prevents rest actions.
Weapons	3	Defense systems. Damage increases hostile encounter damage.

Repairing Sections:

- Click any section row on the Ship Status panel to open its detail modal.
- Spend 1 Supply to restore 2 HP and remove one damage condition.
- The Adaptive Hull Plating tech (Research screen) reduces incoming damage by 1 per hit.

Hull vs. Section HP:

Global Hull Integrity decreases from failed mission rolls, hostile events, and exploration hazards. Section HP decreases only from specific targeted damage effects. Both matter – a section at 0 HP applies a negative condition even if global hull is healthy.

6. RESOURCES

Six resources are tracked throughout the campaign:

Resource	Max	Primary Sources	Spent On
Fuel	12	Refuel actions, resource hexes, 1 event	Turns (Upkeep), 3 to travel between planets
Supplies	10	Events, exploration, Research Boost	Repairs (1), mission attempts (1 each), refuel conversion
Science	20	Scans, samples, research boost, Research	Research and Technology unlock costs
Morale	10	Rest, successful events, mission completion	Hostile events, critical hull (1/turn below 6 hull)
Artifacts	10	Ruins hex, events, planet completion	Damage and; required for some tech unlocks
Intel	15	Scan action, decoded signals, events	Campaign narrative gates; future content

Critical Thresholds:

- Fuel 0 – Ship adrift. Cannot End Turn without consequences. Refuel immediately.
- Morale 0 – Mutiny. Campaign ends in defeat.

7. CREW MANAGEMENT

The ISS Vanguard launches with four crew members, each specializing in a different discipline.

Name	Role	Specialty Skill	Trait
Cmdr. Reyes	Science Officer	Science 4	Analytical: +1 Science on all checks
Lt. Okafor	Chief Engineer	Engineering 4	Resourceful: Repair at reduced Supply cost
Sgt. Volkov	Security Lead	Security 4	Iron Will: Immune to first Shock per mission
Ens. Nakamura	Recon Specialist	Recon 4	Agile: May reroll 1 Recon die per mission

Crew Skills:

- Each crew member has four skills: Science, Recon, Engineering, Security (rated 1-5).
- Skill 4+ is Specialist level – grants +1 bonus die on that mission type.
- Skill below the mission's minimum requirement causes an automatic failure (action still spent).

Action Points:

- Each crew member has 2 actions per turn, shown as orange pips in the Ship Status panel.
- Spending both actions marks the crew member as EXHAUSTED for the rest of the turn.
- Actions reset when you click END TURN.
- Wrong-crew attempts (below minSkill) still consume an action point.

Wounds:

- Each crew member has 3 HP (wound slots). HP lost from hostile events and failed mission rolls.
- Each wound reduces the crew member's dice pool by 1 (minimum 1 die always rolled).
- A crew member at 0 HP is incapacitated and cannot take actions until healed.
- Heal using the Rest action (recovers 1 wound to selected crew + 1 Morale).
- The Medical Nanobots tech heals 1 wound to all crew at Upkeep.

XP and Levelling:

- Crew earn XP for every action: 4 XP (strong success), 3 XP (success), 1 XP (partial or fail).
- On level-up a random skill increases by 1 (max 5). A notification is displayed.

8. MISSION SYSTEM

Each planet has four active missions – one of each type. Missions have a progress track that must be filled to complete them. All four missions must be complete to advance to the next planet.

Mission Types and Required Skills:

Type	Skill Required	Colour	Specialist
Science	Science	Cyan	Cmdr. Reyes
Recon	Recon	Green	Ens. Nakamura
Engineering	Engineering	Orange	Lt. Okafor
Security	Security	Red	Sgt. Volkov

Attempting a Mission:

- Step 1: Select a crew member by clicking their card in the Ship Status panel.
- Step 2: Switch to ACTION phase (click the ACTION tab).
- Step 3: Click a mission card. If the crew member is selected and the mission is also selected, a roll is triggered automatically.
- Step 4: The result (strong success / success / partial / failure) is applied immediately.

Minimum Skill Gate:

Every mission has a minimum skill requirement shown at the bottom of its card (e.g. 'Requires Security >= 4'). Sending an underqualified crew member wastes an action and produces no progress.

Supply Cost:

Every mission attempt – regardless of outcome – costs 1 Supply. Plan your supply chain accordingly. Running low on Supplies makes repeated attempts unsustainable.

Difficulty	Success Target	Need for Full Progress	Failure Consequence
2 (Easy)	5 or 6	1 success	Hull -1
3 (Normal)	6 only	1 success	Hull -(diff-1) or crew wound
4 (Hard)	6 only	2 successes	Hull -3 or crew -2 wounds
5 (Brutal)	6 only	2 successes	Hull -4 or crew -2 wounds + morale loss
6 (Extreme)	6 only	2 successes	Hull -5 or crew incapacitated + morale -3

9. DICE & RESOLUTION

ISS Vanguard uses a custom dice pool system. Dice are six-sided. Results depend on the mission's difficulty rating.

Result	Difficulty 1-2	Difficulty 3+	Effect
Success	Roll 5 or 6	Roll 6 only	+1 progress (or +2 on Strong Success)
Partial	Roll 4	Roll 5	+1 progress WITH a consequence
Failure	Roll 1-3	Roll 1-4	No progress. Consequences scale with difficulty.

Dice Pool Calculation:

- Base pool: 2 dice.
- +1 die if crew's skill in the mission type is 4 or higher (Specialist).
- -1 die per wound on the acting crew member (max -2 dice from wounds).
- Minimum: 1 die always rolled.

Strong Success:

- Achieved when the number of successes exceeds the 'needed for full' threshold by 1 or more.
- Grants +2 progress instead of +1. No consequence.

Partial Success:

- +1 progress is awarded, BUT a consequence is triggered.
- Consequences scale with mission difficulty: hull damage, crew wound, or morale loss.

Manual Dice Rolling:

- Switch to ACTION phase to see the dice pool. Click any die to roll it individually.
- The result panel shows total successes, partials, and failures with an outcome summary.
- Manual dice rolls do not affect mission progress – use the mission card click for that.

10. EVENT CARDS

During the EVENT phase, draw one card from the 8-card event deck. Each card presents an encounter with 2-3 choices. Your decision triggers a dice roll or an immediate outcome.

Card	Type	Choices Available
Sentry Drones	Hostile	Engage (Security roll), ECM (Engineering roll), Retreat
Alien Transmission	Neutral	Decode (Science roll), Respond (Science roll), Ignore
Survivor Cache	Friendly	Open (gain supplies), Scan first (Science roll)
Atmospheric Storm	Hostile	Evacuate (Engineering roll), Shelter (Recon roll), Endure

Ancient Observatory	Neutral	Analyse (free), Extract components (free)
Xeno Predator	Hostile	Fight (Security roll), Tranquilize (Science roll), Abandon
Ruins Discovery	Friendly	Recover archives (free), Study (Science roll)
Fuel Deposit	Neutral	Extract (Engineering roll), Mark for later (free)

Event Outcome Tiers:

- Strong Success – maximum reward, no penalty.
- Success – full reward, minor or no penalty.
- Partial – reduced reward with a complication (hull, wound, or morale).
- Failure – no reward, significant consequences that scale with the encounter threat level.

11. EXPLORATION SYSTEM

The Explore screen shows a hex grid representing the planet surface. Each hex is initially hidden (fog of war). Revealed hexes show their terrain type and can be explored for resources.

Hex Type	Symbol	Reveal Reward	Explore Reward
Base Camp	■	Starting revealed	– (Home base, no explore action needed)
Terrain	■	None	+1 Science
Ruins	■	None	+1 Science +1 Artifact
Hazard	■	None	+1 Science (risk: hull damage on failure)
Resource	■	None	+2 Supplies OR harvest 2 Fuel
Anomaly	■	None	+1 Science (special event may trigger)

Hex Actions:

- Scan Region – costs 1 Fuel. Reveals the hex type. Click an unknown hex then press Scan.
- Explore – deploys crew to a revealed hex. Triggers a Recon dice roll. On success: earn rewards. On failure: hull damage.
- Harvest Fuel – only on Resource hexes. Yields +2 Fuel. Hex becomes depleted (shown as grey stone).
- Take Sample – any revealed hex. Yields +2 Science. No roll required.

12. REFUELING

Fuel is the most critical resource. It costs 1 per turn and 3 to travel between planets. The Refuel button (orange, on Bridge and Explore screens) opens a menu with five options:

Method	Cost	Fuel Gained	Notes
Planetary Deposit	1 Supply	+4 Fuel	Only on Fuel-Rich worlds (Vega-4, Sol-9)
Resource Hex	None	+2 Fuel	Depletes the hex. Also available on Explore screen.
Supply Conversion	3 Supplies	+2 Fuel	Emergency only – poor exchange rate
Fuel Synthesizer	2 Supplies	+3 Fuel	Requires Fuel Synthesizer tech (Research screen)
Solar Collection	1 Turn	+1 Fuel	Slow but free. Consumes an entire turn.

Fuel Priority:

- Always keep at least 3 Fuel in reserve if you plan to travel to the next planet.
- Fuel-Rich worlds (Vega-4, Sol-9) allow rapid refueling – reach them before running dry.
- The Fuel Synthesizer tech is the most efficient conversion method and worth researching early.

13. RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY

The Research screen has two components: the Active Research list (four items requiring Science points) and the Tech Tree (nine upgrades). Science points are earned through scan actions, field samples, successful events, and research boost actions.

Active Research:

Project	Cost	Prerequisite	Effect
Alien Materials Analysis	4 Science	None	Unlocks Dark Matter Shielding
Xenobiology Basics	3 Science	None	Unlocks Precursor Language Decode
Dark Matter Shielding	8 Science	Alien Materials	Passive hull protection
Precursor Language Decode	6 Science	Xenobiology	Required for Sol-9 narrative missions

Tech Tree:

Technology	Cost	Effect
Enhanced Sensors	5 Sci	Reveal 2 additional hex tiles per turn
Adaptive Hull Plating	8 Sci	Ship sections take 1 less damage per hit
Portable Lab	6 Sci	+1 Science on all field missions
Drone Scouts	7 Sci	Explore hazardous hexes remotely (no crew risk)
Neural Translator	9 Sci	Unlock Precursor encounter dialogue choices
Quantum Comms	5 Sci	+2 Intel per scan action
Medical Nanobots	7 Sci	Heal 1 wound to all crew at start of Upkeep
Emergency Thrusters	4 Sci	Spend 1 Fuel to escape any encounter
Fuel Synthesizer	6 Sci	Convert 2 Supplies to 3 Fuel at any time

14. STAR MAP & TRAVEL

The Star Map screen shows all four planets in the campaign. Planets unlock in sequence – complete all missions on the current world to unlock the next.

Planet	Type	Threat	Fuel Rich	Chapter
Kepler-7f	Temperate Terrestrial	3/6	No	1
Vega-4	Volcanic Desert	5/6	YES	2
Cygnus-2	Ocean World	2/6	No	3
Sol-9	Precursor Megastructure	6/6	YES	4 (Final)

Travel Rules:

- Travel costs 3 Fuel. You must have 3 Fuel in reserve before initiating travel.
- Click a planet node on the Star Map to travel (only unlocked, non-completed planets).
- On arrival, the hex map is reset with a new randomized surface layout.
- Crew wounds, resources, research, and tech carry over between planets.
- Completed planets show a green COMPLETED badge and cannot be revisited for missions.

15. VICTORY & DEFEAT

The campaign ends in one of three ways:

VICTORY:

Complete all four missions on Sol-9 (the Precursor Megastructure). The end-game screen displays campaign statistics: planets explored, artifacts recovered, Science points earned, crew survived, total turns, and technologies unlocked.

DEFEAT – Ship Destroyed:

Global Hull Integrity reaches 0. The ship is lost. Campaign ends immediately. All progress is erased from local storage.

DEFEAT – Mutiny:

Morale reaches 0. The crew refuses orders. Campaign ends. Monitor morale carefully – it decays automatically when hull is below 6.

16. SAVE & LOAD

- The game auto-saves after End Turn, planet travel, refueling, and chapter completion.
- Use the SAVE button (top-right of Ship Status panel) to save manually at any time.
- A green SAVED indicator flashes briefly to confirm the save was written.
- To resume a campaign, return to the title screen and click CONTINUE CAMPAIGN.
- Starting a New Campaign deletes any existing save. The end-game screen also clears the save.

17. QUICK REFERENCE

Dice Outcomes:

Outcome	Trigger	Effect
Strong Success	Successes > threshold+1	+2 progress, no consequence
Success	Successes >= threshold	+1 progress, no consequence
Partial	1 success or 2+ partials	1 progress + hull/wound/morale cost
Failure	No successes or partials	No progress, consequences scale with difficulty

Resource Quick Reference:

Action	Resource Cost
End Turn (Upkeep)	-1 Fuel
Travel to Next Planet	-3 Fuel
Scan Region (Explore)	-1 Fuel
Repair Section	-1 Supply
Mission Attempt	-1 Supply
Research Boost	-1 Supply → +3 Science
Emergency Refuel	-3 Supplies → +2 Fuel
Rest Action	+1 Morale, +1 crew HP
Scan Action	+2 Intel (+2 more with Quantum Comms)

Key Thresholds:

- Fuel <= 3 – header shows red warning. Cannot travel. Refuel urgently.
- Hull < 6 – morale decays 1 per Upkeep. Repair ship sections.
- Hull = 0 – DEFEAT. Game over.
- Morale = 0 – DEFEAT. Mutiny.
- Crew HP = 0 – Incapacitated. Cannot take actions. Use Rest or Medical Nanobots.