BSM PANDORA

Tronsoft Games Browser Implementation
Based on ARES Magazine #6 (1981)

Game Manual — Version 1.0.0
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ARES Magazine #6 Original Design by Michael Gray
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1. GAME COMPONENTS

The following components are used in BSM Pandora:

COMPONENT	QTY	DESCRIPTION
Planets	9	Korkran, Paleo, Suwathe, Opoplo, New Alto, Birss, Mephisto, Mezo, Picole
Creatures	15	Alien life forms to capture, kill, communicate with, or flee
Crew Members	7	Survey specialists with Endurance, Capture CR, and Kill CR
Tools	9	Equipment including capture nets, weapons, and scientific instruments
Bots	4	Automated helpers: rovers and collectbots
E-Cages	10	Environmental containment units for live specimens (4 per shuttle load)
Ship Supply	30 pts	Consumed during interstellar travel and resupply
Tour Months	20	The total duration of the mission; time spent on all activities
Paragraph Book	—	Implemented as in-game narrative text; each event is a numbered paragraph

2. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each game turn follows this sequence:

Phase 1 INTERSTELLAR PHASE

Choose a destination planet and travel there. Each planet has a Transit Cost in months (1–3). Subtract transit months from your Tour Months. An interstellar event may occur.

Phase 2 ORBIT PHASE

Upon arrival, perform an Orbital Scan: reveal the planet's creatures, terrain, atmosphere type, gravity, and Life Support Value (LSV). Plan your expedition.

Phase 3 EXPEDITION SETUP

Choose up to 4 crew, select tools and bots (combined weight ≤ expedition capacity), and load up to 4 e-cages into the shuttle. Land at any hex on the surface map.

Phase 4 SURFACE EXPLORATION

Move hex by hex. Each hex entry costs Entry Hours. Exploring a hex costs Exploration Hours. Both drain Expedition Supply at a rate affected by terrain and atmosphere. Expedition events and creature encounters may occur.

Phase 5 RETURN TO SHIP

When expedition supply is low or objectives met, return to the shuttle hex and recall the crew. Transfer captured specimens to the cargo hold. Repeat from the Interstellar Phase.

Phase 6 MISSION END

When Tour Months reach 0 or ship supply is exhausted, the mission ends. Total your VP. Consult the Mission Rating table.

3. PLANETS

Nine planets are available for survey. Each planet has the following attributes:

ATTRIBUTE	VALUES	EFFECT
Gravity	Light / Earth / Heavy	Heavy increases supply drain; Light reduces it
Atmosphere	Breathable / Poisonous / Corrosive	Poisonous requires Envirorigs; Corrosive –2 to all combat ratings
Hydrographic	Liquid / Ice / Dry / Submerge / None	Affects terrain type distribution
Climate	Tropical / Arid / Temperate / Arctic / Hot	Sets base terrain
Size	Tiny / Small / Large / Giant	Affects number of hexes on surface map
LSV	1–4	Life Support Value: how teeming with life the planet is; affects encounte
Transit Cost	1–3 months	Months consumed traveling to this planet
Interstellar Hex	2-digit number	Position on the printed interstellar display

4. CREATURES AND ENCOUNTERS

When exploring a hex, roll for creature encounter based on the planet's LSV. If an encounter occurs:

OPTION	REQUIREMENT	VP RESULT
CAPTURE	Empty e-cage in shuttle	Full VP awarded when specimen returns to ship
KILL	None	Half VP, rounded down; no specimen transported
FLEE	None	0 VP; costs expedition hours; creature may pursue
COMMUNICATE	Neuroscan tool + creature Intel > 0	Bonus VP if successful communication roll
HOLOGRAPH	Holographer tool + creature eligible	Fixed VP for visual record; no capture needed

Combat Resolution

Roll 2D6 and add the Expedition Combat Rating (sum of all crew, tool, and bot CRs in the expedition). Subtract the creature's Combat Modifier. Consult the Combat Result:

RESULT	NET ROLL	OUTCOME
CAPTURE SUCCESS	10+	Creature secured in e-cage
CAPTURE PARTIAL	7-9	Captured but crew/tools take damage; check for injury
FLEE FORCED	4-6	Expedition must flee; supply lost

DISASTER	3 or less	Crew injured, tool damaged; creature escapes

5. HEX MOVEMENT AND TERRAIN

The surface maps use a flat-top offset hex grid. Each hex has a 4-digit ID: the first two digits are the column (left to right), the second two are the row (top to bottom). Example: hex **0917** is column 09, row 17.

Adjacency Rules

Each hex has six adjacent neighbours. Because even columns are offset downward by half a row height:

• From an **odd column**: diagonal neighbours are at ROW and ROW–1 in the adjacent column

• From an **even column**: diagonal neighbours are at ROW and ROW+1 in the adjacent column

TERRAIN	ENTRY HRS	EXPLORE HRS	SUPPLY MOD	NOTES
Flat / Plains	1	3	0	Easy movement
Forest	2	4	1	Common on many worlds
Jungle	3	6	2	Dense; slowest exploration
Desert	2	4	1	Arid; watch supply
Mountains	3	5	2	Impassable without climbing gear
River / Ocean	2	4	1	Requires aqua equipment on some worlds
Cave / Underground	2	5	1	Hidden fauna; bonus encounters
City Ruins	2	4	0	Artifacts possible; high Intel encounters
Glacier / Ice	3	5	2	ARCTIC terrain; cold exposure
Volcanic	3	6	3	HELLSCAPE; high supply drain

6. VICTORY POINTS AND MISSION RATING

VP is awarded throughout the mission:

SOURCE	VP
Capture live specimen	Creature VP value (on return to ship)
Kill creature	Half creature VP (immediate)
Successful communication	Bonus VP based on Intel level
Holograph record	Fixed VP per creature type
Planet survey completion	Bonus VP for first visit to each planet

Artifact discovery	Variable VP

Mission Rating Table

RATING	MINIMUM VP	DESCRIPTION
Legendary	240	Exceptional scientific breakthrough
Outstanding	180	Major contribution to xenobiology
Distinguished	130	Successful survey mission
Successful	90	Mission objectives met
Partial Success	50	Significant findings but below quota
Marginal	20	Minimal return on mission investment
Failure	0–19	Survey deemed unsuccessful

7. QUICK REFERENCE

KEYBOARD / UI	ACTION
Click planet on star map	Navigate to that planet
CHOOSE DESTINATION button	Open interstellar navigation map
Click hex on surface map	Move expedition to that hex
MOVE HEX button	Open movement popup with adjacent hexes
¶ LOG tab (left edge)	Open/close paragraph history drawer
⊕ DB link (mission log)	Open database editor in new tab
ROLL D6 / ROLL 2D6	Manual dice roll (shown in log + sidebar)
⊕ ZOOM (map)	Full-screen zoom of current map with overlays
✕ CLOSE (popup)	Confirm first choice and dismiss popup