

# Star Fresco



(stay cool) – Release 1.0

Star Fresco is an official science fiction setting for Fresco, the extra-light universal RPG.

To play Star Fresco you also need the base rules of Fresco. This setting is compatible with release 2.+

As for the main system, we tried to put all the info in a very small space ^\_^

Note: This booklet is intended to give you the most important guidelines, so you can easily start-up. It's not intended to be a complete-and-not-expandible-sourcebook-for-the-universe.

## Galaxy civilisations

It's about 2500 A.D. Two centuries ago, humans discovered a way of interstellar travel. Just in time to realise that they weren't alone in the galaxy. Actually, they contacted at a few other travelling races:

- the Kailers
- the Vairrans
- the Antoids
- the Quids

Every first contact with other race was far from peaceful, (actually humans don't tend to thrust different beings) but, after a few years of conflictual relationships, humans, kailers and vairrans now can get in contact without shooting at each other. A strong factor in determining friendship among these three races, is their occasional conflicts with the antoids. Antoids seem not to consider any relationship with other races: they simply fight whatever can disturb 'em. And, as antoid technology is probably the most advanced in the galaxy, other races though a good idea is facing the common enemy. Anyway... let's describe the races. Consider that there are very few mixed colonies, but it's non unusual for a being to travel (or even to stay for a while) in a foreign planet, es. for a vairran in a kailer planet, or vice versa.

*Human* : (also called Earthlings: home planet: Earth)

I suppose I don't have to describe 'em. Politically, all human colonies are member of the Human Confederation, a sort of trade and military organisation; actually, every planet have a large autonomy. It's not unusual that small human colonies are controlled by a big private corporation, with its own military fleet.

Their home planet, Earth, was nearly destroyed by pollution, and now what remains of it is a natural park. Actually, Mars is now the real centre of human civilisation. There are about 25 human colonies, and maybe 10 frontier planets.

Life expectancy: 100 years - Avg. colony population: 400 millions

*Kailer*: (home planet: Kailanna)

Sort of big and tough lizard, about 1,5m tall. They like warm places (Kailanna is avg 40 °C), are very gregarious people, without a strong will, when alone. Usually the have a strong ecologist feeling. Every kailer has a slight sense of telepathy: if not disturbed, they can listen (not very accurately, actually) other people's thoughts (consider ita as a third special talent).

Their home planet, Kailanna, is considered as sacral, so access is strictly forbidden to non-kailers.

Race modif: - 1 RE.

Life expectancy: 90 years. - Avg. colony population: 500 millions

All kailer colonies are member of the Kailer Fraternity, a very strong and close alliance, which is absolutely not in discussion. There are 20 kailer colonies, and about 5 frontier planets.

Kailer language is the most used for interracial relations.

*Vairran*; (home planet: Vairreh)

Humanoid birds, avg. 2m tall. They have a sort of fingers at the end of their wings, so the can manipulate object, but their flight capabilities are very poor. Vairreh is a windy, mostly water-covered planet, with rocky islands. They're individual people, who tends to mind their own affairs. Not a surprise that many explorers are vairrans.

Race modif: +1 AG; +1 SE; - 1 FO; -1CO

Life expectancy: 120 years. - Avg. colony population: 200 millions

Every Vairran colony is a stand-alone political entity. Just to protect trade and safety, they created the Vairran League, an alliance with very limited forces and political weight. There are about 25 vairran colonies and several frontier planets.

*Antoid*: (home planet: unknown)

Big insects, probably theirs is the most advanced technology in the galaxy. A single antoid is an absolutely stupid creature, without any grain of intelligence. But antoids are constantly in telepathy contact with every other antoid in a limited radius (about 100 m). Actually, a group of antoids is a single mind. To be considered sentient, there must be about 20 members. A group of 100 antoids is an extremely dangerous thinker, even if they lack a bit of creativity.

They never tried to treat with other races: when antoids want to colonise a planet, they simply take it, cancelling any form of resistance.

Many human, colonies experienced antoid invasions. Few of them resisted enough to let fleets of the Confederation arrive to wipe out antoids. Same experience occurred to vairran and kailers colonies.

Nowadays, human or vairran typical reaction in front of an antoid ship is to flee away, and alert the HC or the VL, or (if the ship is well-armed) to shoot at sight.

Kailers sometimes still try to capture alive antoids, in order to study them (actually, what is known about antoids is due to kailer efforts).

*Quids:* (home planet: unknown)

They aren't a sentient race: they're just parasites he can affect nearly every living being in the galaxy, quids are big molluscs, which dimension can vary from 50cm to 5m of full extent (rumours of 25m long quids aren't confirmed). Their reproduction system is to harm an host, put their egg (about 2cm diameter) in it and let it grow inside the host. It's supposed that quids could travel in space in sentient races' ships, but strange thing is that quids were sometimes found in planets without any trace of vairrans, kailers, humans or antoids.

## Technology

Humans, Kailers and Vairrans have a similar level of technology, and there is some co-operation among their scientists. So we can describe their tech just once.

### *Space travel*

There is still an annoying limit to space travels: light speed is not reachable. Actually, not in normal conditions. But a very interesting discovery is that most planetary systems are connected each other by space-time anomalies, known as "wormholes" (also "space tunnels"). When a thing enters a wormhole, it's catapulted on the other side in a very short time, even if the other side of the wormhole is several parsec far away. Many colonies usually have 3-4 well-explored wormhole, although frontiers systems may have just one known wormhole. Usually wormhole are situated far from the stars, so it takes a few hours for a spaceship to travel from rocky planets (which are commonly near to the stars) to the wormhole. That's also the reason why wormholes are quite difficult to discover.

A wormhole is like a storm inside, so passing through with a damaged ship is not exactly riskless.

The state of art about moving is the ionic engine: space is far from empty, so the spaceship can electrically charge particles, in order to create a reaction that moves she ship. Ionic engine in atmosphere, even if used at minimum power, can cause big fires. That's why usually spaceships have a secondary engine, usually an anti-gravitational one (just to take off and land). Energy is provided by solar cells, so spaceship can afford very long travels.

All spaceship ha a "transponder code", provided by the HC, the VL or the KF: this is a code that the ship *must* give if requested and that states the origin planet, the size class, the weapon class and the name of the ship.

There are two size class: vehicle class (small ships, from 5 to 50 m long), and cruiser class (over 50m)

Weapon classes are:

- ◆ unarmed (U)
- ◆ standard (S, most common)
- ◆ escort (E)
- ◆ military (M)

Obviously there is al license to drive and own each type of ship. Almost everybody can have an U license, but it's quite easy to take a S license. It's very hard to obtain a M license, if you're not under a planet or alliance official force.

### *Land travel*

The most advanced system is teleport. Unfortunately, its' still far from reliable, so its use is still limited, and only for goods. Consolidated colonies have efficient transport systems like city tapes a and hover trains.

In-recent colonies, frontier planets or little settlements, usually people travel via hover vehicles (usually max 300 km/h).

### *Communications*

Colonies have very efficient planet networks which standard is more or less compatible in every planet. You can easily find terminals in street corners, or at least in cybercafés (here is at least one in each town). The typical net terminal is a keyboard, a credit card slot, a screen and a speaker. Sometimes you can find a voice control, a small emulation terminal, and a direct access (that you can use with your own datapad).

Interplanet communication (within the same star system) is usually provided, but, due to light speed, it can't be in real time. Anyway, more than one colonised planet in the same star system is quite uncommon.

Interstellar communication can't be done via radio. So the only way is via messenger (spaceship): a daily mail system is maintained by the alliances among the most important colonies, while frontier planets are usually served on a monthly basis. That's why there's work for messengers.

### *Weaponry and protection*

Typical hand weapon is a neural stunner, or a shocking spray: they don't give serious damage, and are useful for self defence. In some planets (especially kailers) civilians are not allowed to keep weapons. Licensed people (like free traders, explorers and civil security) usually carry light laser or blaster handguns. Heavy laser, blaster or flamers are reserved to military forces.

Here's a description of most common weapons, with range in meters, damage (see fight rules on base manual) and effects.

- *Neural stunner*: r2, d2, causes a shock in the nervous system of the opponent, special damage: 1rd stunned
- *Spray*: r1, d2, an irritating gas, special damage, wounded part is unusable for 2rd; several hits can corrode the target part.
- *Knife*: r5, d2; just cuts, usable to launch or melee
- *Laser handgun*: r5, d3: a medium-power laser beam. The target part burns
- *Blaster handgun*: r2, d3; an electrical blast stuns the target (1rd) and can burn the wounded part.
- *Vibraknife*: r5, d3; a knife with an ultrasonic blade. Easily cuts most materials
- *Laser rifle*: r20; d4; a high-power laser beam. The target part burns
- *Blaster rifle*: r10; d4; an electrical blast stuns the target (2rd) and can burn the wounded part.
- *Laser sword*: r1 d4; sort of sword with a laser blade. Easily cuts nearly whatever is in range.
- *Stun grenade*: r5; d1; causes 2rd stunning in radius
- *Fire grenade*: r10; d4; just a little explosion.

Let's talk a bit about vehicle and cruiser class weapon: every described weapon can be of vehicle or cruiser class. Range is in km (vehicle class/ cruiser class).

- *Ionic blast*: r0,5/2 d1; actually it's not a weapon. It's just an interesting way of use engines.
- *Turbolaser*: r1/4 d2; just the enhanced version of a laser
- *Particle accelerator*: r1/4 d3; a flow of particles (may be only on E or M ships)
- *Atomic torpedo*: r2/8 d3; an atomic bullet (may be only on E or M ships), may be intercepted
- *Plasma blast*: r 1/4 d4; just burns out, military ships only
- *Antimatter torpedo*: r 2/8 d4; military ships only, may be intercepted

There are some personal protections that can reduce damage:

- *work clothes*: 1 HP less per hit
- *police/security jackets*: 2HP less
- *special armour* (Kevlar, special alloys): 3 HP less

About spaceships, there are essentially two types of protections: deflectors and ship armours.

*Standard deflectors* are energy fields around the ships that can increase the difficulty of hitting the ship, and also lower weapons impact. Actually they increase by 1 difficulty and lower by 1 damages.

*Strong deflectors*; are the enhanced version of 'em: the effect is doubled (only allowed in E or M ships)

*Standard armours* are protective panels that can absorb damages, preserving the ships. They have "2" structural value. If the ships would take a "normal damage", it's taken completely by the armour (until it's destroyed), even if it's greater than 2. If the ships takes a "special damage", the armour is destroyed and the ships only takes the normal damage.

Strong armour (usually only on military ships) have a "4" structural value. They also can completely absorb 1 special damage.



### *Ship/vehicle combat*

Let's explain some special damage on ships:

1-2 Engine burst: an engine is useless. It's very hard maneuvering with only one engine.

3 Sensors tilt: the ship can only maneuver with sight.

4 Weapon explosion: a weapon is destroyed

5 Dazzling controls: the ship is completely out of control for 2 rounds.

6 Hull crack: there is a crack in the ship with air loss. A few of them can destroy the ship.

If the selected special damage is no more applicable (es a 2 but all engines are already destroyed) consider the special damage as a hull crack.

What if there is a combat with different sizes involved? First, let's simplify all into 4 size class:

small – human – vehicle – cruiser

When the attacker is bigger by 1 class (es: a vehicle vs a PC), add 5 to difficult to hit. But, if the target is taken, consider all normal damages as special, and consider all special damages as “target destroyed”.

When the attacker is bigger by 2 or more classes, it is normally impossible to hit. But if taken, the target is destroyed.

When the attacker is smaller by 1 class, lower by 5 difficult to hit, but ignore all normal damages, and consider special damages as normal.

When the attacker is smaller by 2 or more classes, the target is impossible to miss, but the damage is irrelevant.

### *Spaceships stats*

Interesting info about ss are: engine power, length, places, cargo, structure.

Engine power means the acceleration/deceleration that a ship can do in a round. It also affect maximum speed.

Acceleration :  $EP/10$ , in  $km/s^2$

Max. speed:  $(40000 + 100 * EP)$  km/s

so, a ship with 200 EP, can accelerate by 200 km/s in a round, and can fly at 60000 km/s. Fastest ships in the galaxy have about 300 EP, usually commercial ships have 50 to 100 EP.

Structure is the amount of damage that a ship can bear. Usually a standard ship has about 5 structure. When structure reaches 0, the ship explodes.

Usual cargo for a vehicle class ship is from 10 to 50 tonnes. A cruiser class commercial ship can carry up to 1000 tonnes.

### *Artificial intelligence*

There is nothing to do: an electronic brain IS different from a biologic one: robots are still lacking of intuition and analogic thinking. And, of course, of emotions. A robot can simulate humans in very common situations, but appear to be absolutely stupid in unpredictable situations. Actually use of robots is very limited in Kailer worlds, cos Kailers tend to fear them a bit. In other worlds, robots are used for hard and dangerous jobs. Sometimes they are use as soldiers, but without co-ordinations they are very easy to fight. and disturb radio transmissions is not difficult.

## Trade and economy

Each colony can face its own needs, in foods and main raw materials. But, of course, planets are different; so wheat can be difficult to produce somewhere, and maybe uranium is very common or vice versa. That's why, even if transport is quite slow, there is a lot of space for traders. That's why the three alliances decided, with the Credit Threat (2424 AD) to create a common way of payment: the “granted credit entity” (or, simply, entity = E): they are magnetic cards, granted by an alliance (the VL, the HC or the KF), and accepted in every world of the alliances.

Usually planets impose taxes on traders, which amount is about 10% of the value of imported goods; no taxes on exported goods.

Economic system is quite different in different civilisations: while big corporations are common in human colonies, kailer system is a sort of social-democracy, and vairran firms are usually quite little and organised in guilds.

Consider that an average monthly earning for a worker is about 1000E.

## Attribute application

Here's some example of using attributes:

### **Force (FO):**

use melee weapons – parry – rise weights – push – pull – throw in distance

### **Agility (AG):**

avoid missiles – use ranged weapons – run – jump – steal

### **Constitution (CO)**

long march – resist cold/heat – carry weights

### **Intelligence (IN)**

trace route – understand languages – repair vehicles – program computers – hacking

### **Sensibility (SE)**

perception – use sensors – meditate – intuition

### **Reactivity (RE)**

drive spaceships – use vehicle weapons – diplomacy

### **Fascination (FA)**

charm –

## Special talents

A special talent is just the ability of doing something very well. Some examples are just shown above in “attribute application”. When a PC is skilled in something, every try he makes on that skill is a success, if the action is easy or slightly difficult (+5), if it's harder just give him a “+10” bonus on the attribute for that FAR.

Other than skills, you can grant a PC a “very special talents”. I strongly suggest no more that one VST (choose a skill for the other ST), because just a person on 1000 in the galaxy has a VST. What are some example of VST?

*Telepathy sense* (Vairran or Human)

It's the same ability that every Kailer has: if concentrating and not disturbed, they can know what another being is thinking at the moment. The target must be near and reachable by at least another sense (es. to be in sight)

*Telepathy projection* (Kailer only)

The ability to transmit some message to another being. The target must be reachable by at least another sense. If there is somebody else in sight who has telepathy sense, he can hear the message.

*True flying* (Vairran only)

Vairran flying capabilities are very poor, but a few of them have well formed wings, and by a good training can learn to fly again.

*Bionic plant* (Human only)

Kailers absolutely reject the idea of bionic plants, and Vairrans use 'em only if there is no alternative solution. Humans, instead, quite like the idea of strengthen arms, legs or any other body part with a bionic plan. Consider that every time the part is involved, the plant gives a “+2” bonus on the FAR.

*Self-reconstruction* (Kailer only)

Kailers are known for being quite fast to recover from wounds and illnesses, but some of them are a bit more than that. Their bodies can reconstruct any part that can be destroyed (if the kailer is still alive) in a few days of rest.

*Chemical reaction* (any)

It's a mutation: the PC can create on his own skin a chemical reaction that can stun (2rd) whoever is touched. Doing that costs 1 point CO.

*for info and comments*

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You can freely distribute *Star Fresco AS IS*, without charge. If you wish to write any adventure, scenario or expansion for *Star Fresco*, you're welcome, but please send a copy to the author of the game.