

STAR RUNNER



The Manual

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TL;DR

Destroy every enemy spaceship in the level while mining asteroids for resources to power/repair your spaceship. Special (yellow) resources must be collected each level to win.

5 asteroid types provide 3 resources:

- Energy (green): Powers thrusters, shields and most weapons (lasers, photon cannon, create missile warheads)
- Materiel (blue): Repairs ship damage, creates missiles and railgun ammo.
- Special (yellow): Powers special weapons, builds the mysterious StarBuster superweapon required to finish the game. All special resources are drained each level to power the Star Drive to go to the next level and slowly create the StarBuster.
- Explosive (red): These explode and can damage spaceships.
- Inert (white): These are almost indestructible, and therefore good to hide behind.

Essential tips

- Destroy enemies to advance levels while collecting resources for weapons (green) and ship repair (blue).
- Keep collecting special (yellow) resources each level to build the StarBuster weapon and win the game.
- Use lasers to mine asteroids. Use any other weapon to destroy ships. Learn to switch weapons! R and T keys cycle gun types, a critical skill.
- The 3 vertical bars on the left indicate health (blue), power (green) and StarBuster progress (yellow). These bars go up if you mine asteroids.
- The 3 vertical bars on the right indicate how much of each resource you have mined to replenish the left-side bars. Keep mining green and blue asteroids to power and repair your ship. Mine yellow asteroids to build the StarBuster and use special weapons.

More tips

- This should be obvious, but don't hit asteroids. Less obvious is you can fly through busted asteroids.
- Destroying stuff is fun, but to win the game you need to load up on special (yellow) resources during every level. Before you kill the last enemy, try to make sure you have topped off special resources storage (right yellow bar).
- Firing and thrusting constantly will deplete ship power (left green bar). Learn to shoot and thrust sparingly, but accurately and to good effect.
- Lasers are cheap and have a much higher chance of creating a resource than the photon cannon or railgun, which destroy the asteroid.
- Use special weapons (cloak, wormhole generator, hack) to get out of jams (or for fun).
- The annoying beep you hear is telling you you lack a resource required to fire a weapon (a bar flashes to tell you which resource you need), or your ship is about to explode.

Controls: Basic

Thrusters: W (thrust), A (left), S (flip), D (right), Spacebar hold (afterburner), Spacebar tap (emergency boost). Learn to use the spacebar to zip around asteroids and avoid fire.

Gun: Left mouse button, Shift, R or T key cycles gun type.

Missile: Right mouse button (forward), Right mouse button hold (aft), Ctrl, Ctrl hold, F or G cycles missile type.

Special weapon: Center mouse button, C or V cycles special weapon.

Camera: Mouse wheel zooms/unzooms, Q (hold) for high cam, Z (hold) for low cam.

Shield: Manually activate with E (hold, blocks some energy damage, especially nukes).

Controls: Other

Esc: Quit

Backtick: Toggle debug info

Caps Lock: Pause/Unpause

F1: Settings (game difficulty)

F2: Stats (your performance)

F3: Controls & Instructions

F4: Options (system)

F5: Credits

Comma: Volume down

Period: Volume up

M: Mute volume

L: Spotlight

O (letter): Overhead light

P: Running lights

1-9: Directly activate specific weapon

0 (numeral): Show StarBuster progress

Meters: Left side of screen

The 3 vertical bars on the left side of the screen represent:

Yellow: Progress towards creating StarBuster weapon that wins the game. Special resources currently in storage (yellow bar on the right side of the screen) are added to this total as soon as you kill the final enemy in the level.

Blue: Hull integrity/Health. If this hits zero it's Game Over. Slowly restored if material resources are in storage (blue bar on the right side of screen).

Green: Power available for thrusters and weapons. Power is restored if you have energy resources in storage (green bar on the right side of screen).

Meters: Right side of screen

The 3 vertical bars on the right side of the screen represent resource storage:

Yellow: Special resources power special weapons (cloak, wormhole generator, etc). They also create the StarBuster weapon you need to win the game. Special resources are drained completely each time you use the Star Drive to warp to a new solar system.

Blue: Materiel resources slowly restore your ship's health and are needed to build/fire missiles and railgun ammo.

Green: Energy resources slowly restore ship power, which is needed to power thrusters, shield, lasers, photon cannon and create missile warheads.

Meters & Indicators: Bottom of the screen

White bar: Ship speed.

Squares and Arrows: Squares represent the number of enemy Nests (starbases) remaining in the level. Red arrows represent the number of enemy Eagles (capital ships) and orange arrows represent enemy fighters (Turles, Falcons, Hawks).

Red and Orange bars: Timers representing when a new enemy Eagle (red) or fighter (orange) will appear, thus prolonging the level.

Weapons group: The central cluster of indicators and text shows which weapons are active. The numeral in the center is the current level. You can cycle your weapons by hitting the following keys: R or T for gun, F or G for missile, C or V for special weapon. Or use the numeral keys (1-9) to switch directly to a specific weapon.

Indicators: All screen edges

The HUD (Heads Up Indicator) represents offscreen ships and asteroids. Nearer objects have brighter indicators. Unidentified objects are grayscale.

Circle: Asteroid, gray is distant/unknown type, color is identified type.

Square: Nest, gray is distant/unknown starbase, red is identified.

Arrow: Enemy ship, gray is distant/unknown ship, red is Eagle, orange is fighter.

TIP: Do not fly directly towards any offscreen object or you will get a face full of asteroid or missile.

Weapons: Guns

Guns are fired with the left mouse button or shift keys.

Gun type can be cycled with R or T keys or 1 (laser), 2 (photon), or 3 (railgun) keys.

Laser: Useful for mining and shooting enemy missiles. Uses power. 100% energy damage.

Photon cannon: High damage, but drains ship power quickly. Uses power. 50/50 energy/physical damage.

Railgun: High damage, but drains materiel resources quickly. Uses materiel (storage). 100% physical damage.

TIPS: Use lasers to mine, destroy enemy missiles. Use photon/railgun on enemy ships. Physical damage is not effectively blocked by shields, so avoid enemy railguns.

Weapons: Missiles

Fire with right mouse button or Ctrl keys. Hold the button to fire aft. All missiles require power (green) and materiel (blue) resources. More powerful types require more power. Missiles always track the closest enemy.

Missile type can be cycled with F or G keys or 4 (plasma), 5 (antimatter), or 6 (nuke) keys.

Plasma: Weakest, but powerful enough to one-shot some enemies. Inexpensive.

Antimatter: Deadly, but uses more resources. Can leap to nearby ships, including yours.

Nuke: Highest damage, expensive. Huge splash damage range.

TIPS: Shoot enemy missiles before they hit your ship. Manually activate your shield (E) before impact to block more damage. Shooting your own nearby missile can damage your ship, so don't do that. Enemies can also fire mines, which are, essentially, slower missiles.

Weapons: Special

Special weapons are fired with the center mouse button or Alt keys. All consume special (yellow) storage resources and power (green) to trigger.

Special weapons can be cycled with C or V keys or 7 (cloak), 8 (wormhole generator), 9 (hack) or 0 (show StarBuster progress).

Cloak: Invisible to enemy, can fly through asteroids. Consumes power (green) to maintain.

Wormhole generator: Quickly escape to a random, distant location, but you can be followed.

Hack: Your enemy's experience will definitely vary.

StarBuster: Automatically fired at 'The End.'

Weapon damage & shield explainer

Weapon damage consists of two types: physical and energy. A laser, for example, does 100% energy damage while a railgun does 100% physical damage.

The photon cannon and nuke missile blend the two, doing 50% damage of each type.

Plasma and antimatter missiles do 100% physical damage.

A manually activated shield blocks 50% of energy damage, 5% physical damage.

Your shield will still block some damage even if you don't manually activate it.

Game settings

If the game settings screen looks confusing, only use the top master difficulty slider. By adjusting it you change multiple other settings automatically, making the game easier ('clown') or impossible ('godlike').

Those who wish to experiment (or cheat) can fiddle with the other settings, which can drastically affect gameplay. Individual settings that affect difficulty will change the overall difficulty to 'custom.' Achievements exist for all difficulties, including 'complete' for winning the game at every difficulty.

TIP: Click and hold the name of a setting to better understand what it does.

Credits

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Catering: Lynn Mathis

Music: Brothers Crank

(George Mathis, Bradley Daugherty, Mike Goodson, Scott Pruden)

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