



1-4 players | 45-90 minutes | Age 13+

Design by Mark Elsdon & Søren Brandborg

EXPERT

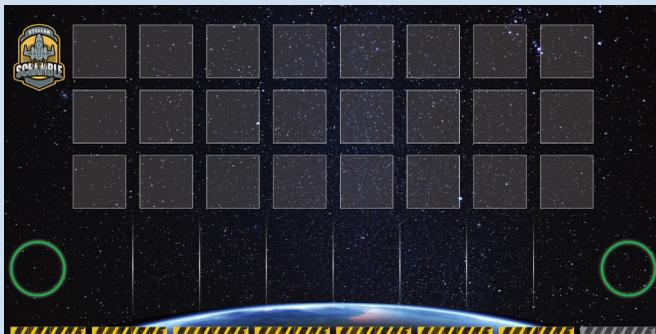
Introduction

The Earth is under attack! An armada of alien invaders has appeared on long-range scanners, and it is up to a handful of reckless and competitive starpilots to scramble into deep space and battle the oncoming threat.

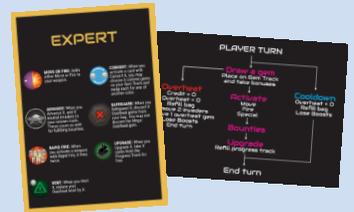
Players each take the role of a Starfighter pilot, and will compete to destroy the most invaders while avoiding enemy fire and trying to ensure nothing slips past them to attack their home base. As the alien attacks continue the invaders will become ever larger and more powerful, and the starpilots will need to make use of system upgrades and improved energy gems to give themselves the edge.

Components

1 Game board



4 Player aids



4 Player boards



4 Starfighter meeples



8 Tracker pawns



4 Gem bags



4 x 15 Energy gems



40 + 4 Overheat gems



16 Boost tokens



24 Bounty cards



3 x 16 Invader tokens



8 Defeated Invader tokens



12 Assist tokens



1 Alien Aggression token



6 Damage dice



6 'Aliens Move!' cards
3 'Aliens Fire!' cards



3 x 30 Upgrade cards



1 First Player card tray



Game Setup

- Put the main board **1** in the center of the table. Make sure there is space for cards to be placed on the Progress Track **2** below the board.
- Give each player a player board **3**, a player aid **4**, a Starfighter meeple **5**, a gem bag **6**, two pawns for tracking overhear **7** and credits **8**, and three Assist tokens **9**, in matching colors.
- Give each player one Defeated Invader token **10** to place on the first slot of their Victory Track **11**.
- Give each player seven Overheat gems, one Mega Overheat gem and eight Energy gems (two of each color) to put into their bags **12**.
- Divide the Invader tokens **13** into Levels 1, 2 and 3.
- Shuffle each Invader token pile and then place the three piles near the back of the main board.
- Randomly place the level 1 Invader tokens on the second and third rows **14** of the main board.
- Place the Alien Aggression token **15** above the first slot on the Progress Track.
- Place seven random level 1 Upgrade cards on the Progress Track **16**.
- Place the Boost tokens **17**, Damage dice **18** and spare gems **19** near the main board so all players can reach them.
- Randomly determine the first player and give them the first player card tray **20**.
- Starting with the first player and working clockwise around the table, each player chooses a space on the main board's Player Row **21** to place their Starfighter. More than one Starfighter may occupy the same space.
- Prepare and place the Main deck **22** and Innovation decks **23** as described on page 4.
- Optional: Place four Alien Bounties cards **24** face-up next to the main board.



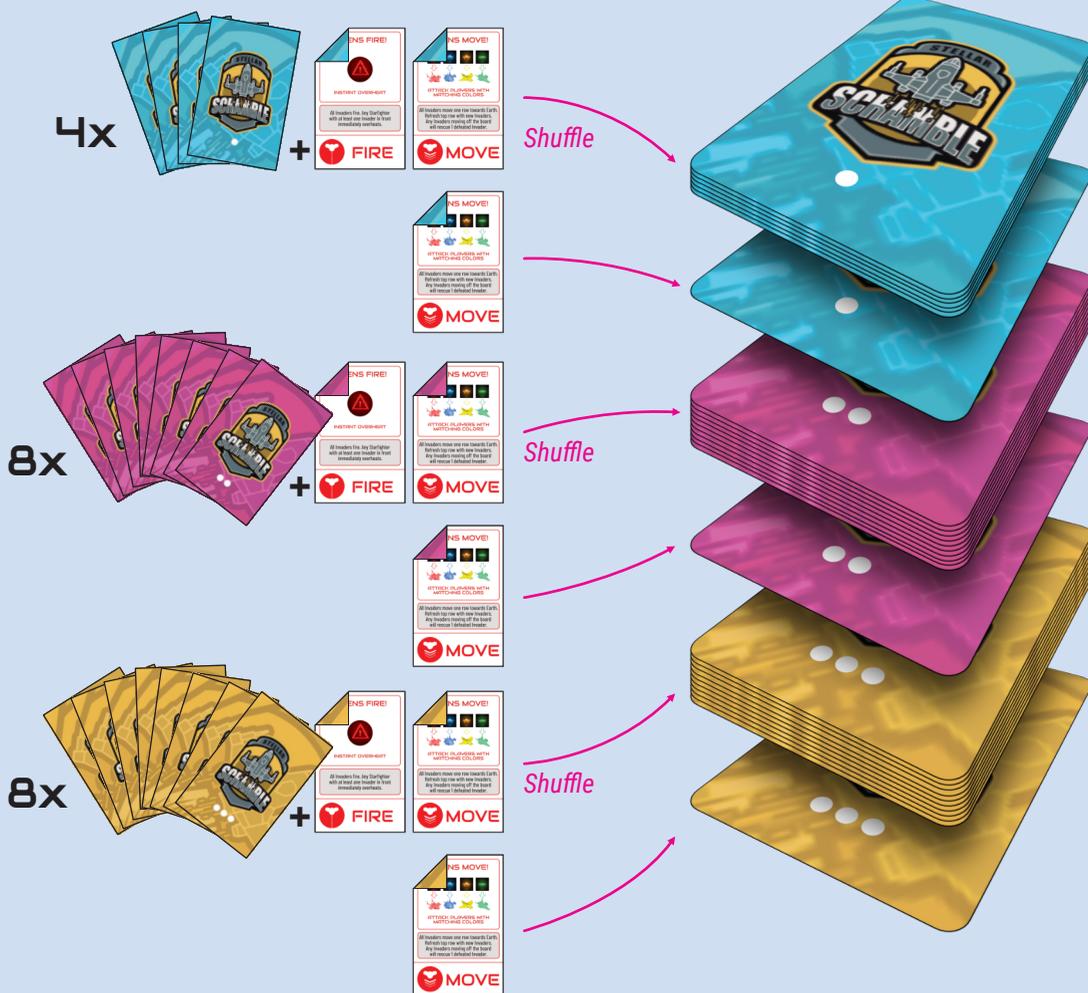
Setup the Main Deck

During the game cards will be drawn from both a Main deck, which contains cards of three levels, and from three separate Innovation decks, one of each level. Follow this process to set up these decks:

- Set the nine Alien Event cards to one side.
- Divide the remaining cards into three decks based on their level (indicated on the back of each card).
- Shuffle the Level 1 deck and deal four cards face up from it to the first four spaces of the Progress Track.
- Deal four Level 1 cards and eight each of the Level 2 and 3 cards, face down, to create three Main decks, one of each level. The remaining cards form the three Innovation

decks, one of each level, which should be set at the side of the Main Board.

- Add the Level 1 'Aliens Fire!' and one 'Aliens Move!' card to the Level 1 Main deck, and shuffle it. Then repeat this step for the Level 2 and Level 3 decks.
- Finally, create the full Main deck as follows from bottom to top:
 - One Level 3 'Aliens Move!' card
 - The Level 3 deck
 - One Level 2 'Aliens Move!' card
 - The Level 2 deck
 - One Level 1 'Aliens Move!' card
 - The Level 1 deck.
- Place the Main deck in the First Player card tray.



Key Components

Player Board

Gem Track

Place any drawn gem on the left-most empty column.

Victory Track

Invaders that the player destroys during the game are placed here, one per space. The first player to fill their Victory Track with Invaders is the winner!

Overheat Meter

A tracker token is placed on the green 'safe' space at the start of the game, and moved up or down the meter as various events occur. If the player's overheat meter ever moves to the red 'Meltdown' space, they are in trouble!



Weapons

Four colored weapons, each containing Move, Power and Special icons. Upgrade cards of matching colors are stacked here when purchased.

Systems

Three grey System spaces. One System card can be placed in each space.

Credit Meter

A tracker token is placed on the 0 space at the start of the game, and moved up and down as credits are gained and spent. A player can never have more than 12 credits.

Main Board

Invader spaces

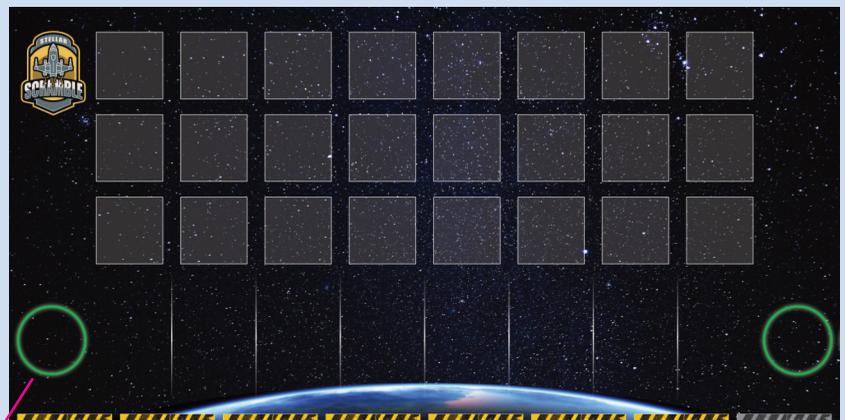
Three rows of Invader spaces, aligned with the Starfighter spaces below. Only one Invader will ever occupy any Invader space. If an Invader is in the same column as another but further away from the Starfighter spaces, it is considered to be behind it.

The Player Row

The players' Starfighters will occupy one of these spaces at all times during the game, and more than one Starfighter can occupy a single space.

Two Wormhole spaces

Only a single Starfighter can ever occupy a Wormhole space.



The Progress Track

Seven spaces. Cards from the Main deck and Innovation decks are placed here during the game, and will slide one space to the right at the end of each round.

Key Components - Continued

Weapon Cards

Weapon upgrades are bought by players during the game, and make weapons more effective and versatile.

Credit cost

The price a player must pay in credits to add the card to their Player Board

Gems

Players must add an Overheat gem to their bag as soon as they purchase a red card

Color

The color of weapon that the card is added to when it is purchased



Move

The amount the card adds to the weapon's move value

Fire

The amount the card adds to the weapon's power, or potentially a special firing effect

Special

Any special bonuses the card grants

Gems

There are three types of gems in the game: Energy gems, Overheat gems, and Mega Overheat gems. Energy gems come in four different colours, corresponding to the four weapons on the Player Boards. Overheat gems are black. Mega Overheat gems are purple. They can both be used to Activate any weapon, but at the cost of increasing the player's Overheat meter.



System Cards

System cards are also bought by players during the game, and provide useful bonuses that are triggered when certain conditions are met.

Credit cost

The price a player must pay in credits to add the card to their Player Board



Ongoing Effect

The ongoing bonus that can be triggered during the player's turn if certain conditions are met

Overview

Stellar Scramble is played in rounds. During a round, starting with the first player, each player will take one turn, choosing either to draw a gem from their bag (used to gain bonuses and Activate weapons), or to allow their Starfighter to cooldown and avoid a dangerous overheat. At the end of the round the Progress Track is advanced by one space, and any Alien Events are resolved. At that point, if any player has achieved a full victory track of 10 destroyed Invaders, they are the winner.

Player Turn

Players take their turns in clockwise order around the table. On their turn a player must start by choosing to either:

- **Draw**

or

- **Cooldown**

Draw

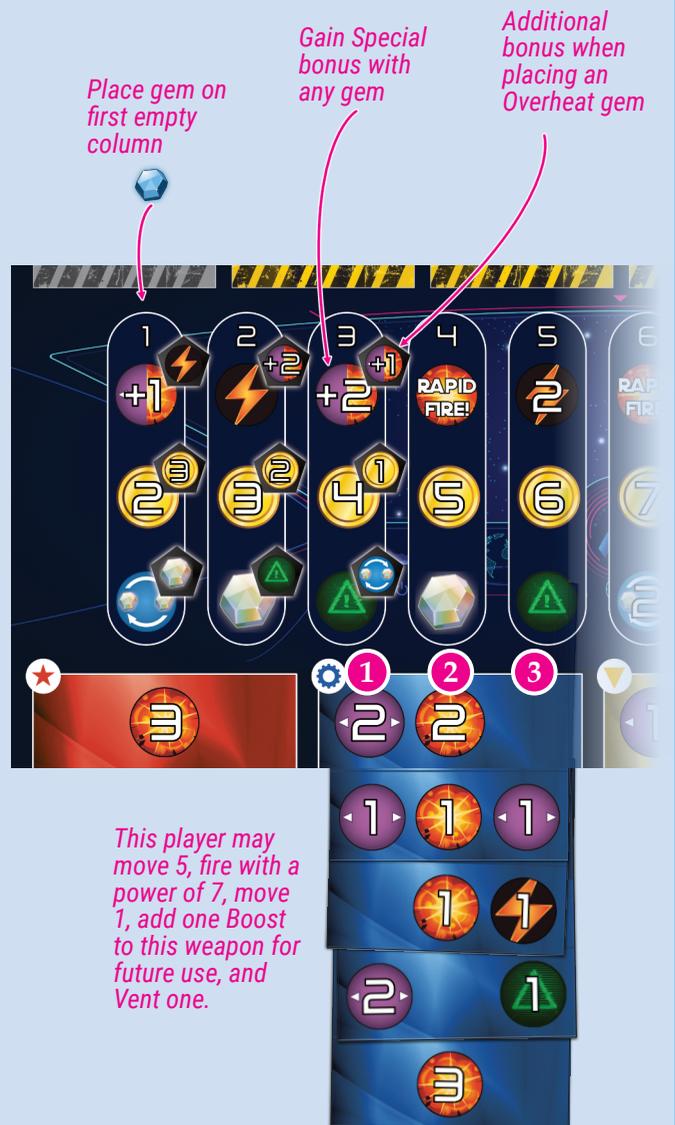
If a player chooses to draw, they take one random gem from their bag. If this gem does not cause an Overheat (see page 11) then it must be placed on the player's **Gem Track**. The player will then use it to **Activate** one of their starfighter's four weapons (colored red, blue, yellow, and green).

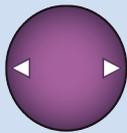
Gem Track

The drawn gem must be placed on one of the three spots in the leftmost empty column on the player's gem track. The player then receives the Special bonuses depicted on that spot (see page 9). If the placed gem is an Overheat gem, and the selected spot has an additional bonus icon, then the player receives those additional bonuses as well.

Activate

After gaining Gem Track bonuses, the drawn gem is used to Activate the weapon matching its color. The player's Starfighter may Move **1**, then Fire **2**, and finally gain Special bonuses **3**, always in that order. These actions are represented by three columns of symbols found on each weapon. All actions are optional. The symbols in each column are added together to determine the total value for moving, firing and each special bonus. Overheat gems represent powerful energy surges, and can be used to Activate a weapon of any color, but at the penalty of increasing the player's overheat meter.





1. Move

Starfighters will move left and right along the Player Row, seeking their next target.

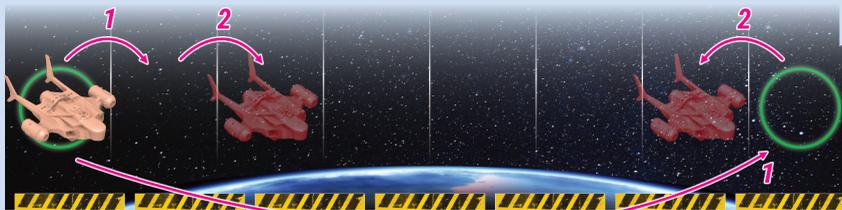
A Starfighter may move any number of spaces, up to the total Move value of the Activated weapon. Movement can only be to the left or right in a single turn, not both. Starfighters may move through and occupy the same space as other Starfighters.

Wormholes

The Wormhole spaces at the ends of the Player Row may only be occupied by **one** Starfighter at a time. Starfighters in these spaces will never be hit by 'Aliens Fire!' events (see page 13).

A Starfighter can move from one Wormhole to the other, as long as both spaces are otherwise unoccupied. This counts as one space of movement.

A move of 2 would allow this player to move like this:



... or like this - but only if the opposite wormhole is not occupied.

2. Fire



Starfighters will fire at the Invaders during the game, damaging their shields and eventually destroying them, in a bid to secure victory.

A Starfighter may fire at the Invader directly in front of it on the Main board, using the total power of the Activated weapon.

If this value is equal to or greater than the Invader's shield value, the Invader is destroyed and is placed on the leftmost empty slot of the player's Victory Track. If not, the invader is damaged - use a Damage die to show how many shields the Invader has left, and place one of the player's assist tokens on the Invader.

In addition to numeric values, systems may gain enhanced abilities to enable them to hit more than one Invader at once - these are called Scatter, Beam and Blast. Any additional Invaders hit by these systems will always be hit with the system's full power value.

Assists

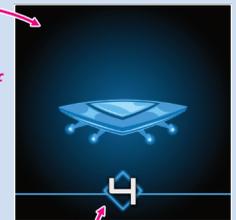
If a player damages an Invader, they place one of their Assist tokens on it. If that Invader is later destroyed by a different player, the Assist token is returned to them and they gain 2 credits per Level of the destroyed Invader. Each player can have a maximum of three Assist tokens on the Main board at a time.



Place a Damage die to indicate remaining shields if the Invader is not defeated



Place an Assist token under the die if Invader is only damaged.



Starting shield value

Place defeated Invaders on the Victory Track



When an Invader is hit by a system with...



Scatter, also hit the Invaders on its left and right.



Beam, also hit all of the Invaders behind it.



Blast, also hit the Invader immediately behind it, and the two diagonally behind it.

3. Special

After moving and firing, a weapon may generate special bonuses, depending on what icons it displays. There are five special icons: Boost, Convert, Energize, Scavenge and Vent.



Boost

When you Boost X, add X Boost tokens to any weapon. Each token increases the weapon's fire power by 1. Remove all Boost tokens when you Cooldown or Overheat.



Energize

When you Energize X, add X gems of your choice to your bag.



Scavenge

When you Scavenge X, gain X Credits.



Convert

When you activate a card with Convert X, you may choose X colored gems on your Gem Track and swap each for one of another color.



Vent

When you Vent X, reduce your Overheat level by X.

Additional bonuses

These bonuses can be achieved on the Gem Track or by collecting Bounties.



Move or Fire

Adds either Move or Fire to your weapon.



Upgrade

When you Upgrade X, take X cards from the Progress Track for free.



Advance

When you Advance X, add X neutral invaders to your renown track. These count as wild for fulfilling bounties.



Safeguard

When you Safeguard X, discard X Overheat gems from your bag. You may not discard the Mega-Overheat gem.



Rapid Fire

When you activate a weapon with Rapid Fire, it fires twice.

Upgrade

After a weapon Activation, a player may buy one or more Upgrade cards from the Progress Track, paying the credit value shown in the top left of the card, and placing the card in the appropriate slot on their player board.

Weapon cards tuck underneath each other in stacks of matching color, and provide cumulative benefits. There is no limit to the number of Weapon cards that can be added to a weapon. Red weapon cards also depict a black Overheat gem next to their credit value. This must be added to the player's bag when the card is purchased.

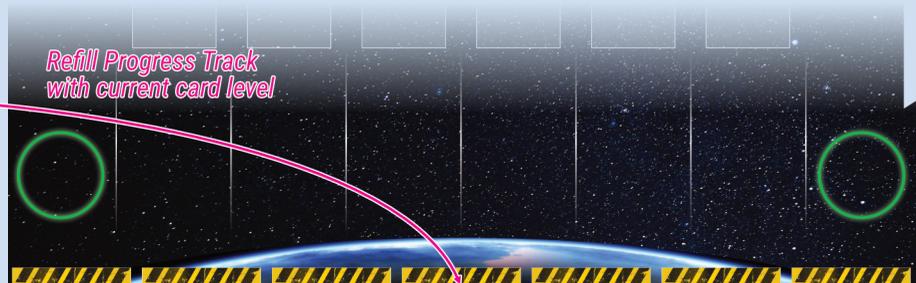
System cards must each have their own slot on the right-hand side of the player board. If a player buys a System card and has no free system slots, they must discard an existing System card before placing the new one.

Refill Progress Track

After a player has finished buying upgrades, any gaps in the Progress Track are filled with fresh cards from the current Innovation deck. The Innovation deck that is drawn from should match the level of the top undrawn card on the Main deck. If there are no Innovation cards of this level remaining, draw from the Innovation deck of the next level.



Innovation decks



Main deck



Add an Overheat gem to you bag when purchasing a red weapon



Reduce credits when buying upgrades



Tuck Weapon cards under player board here.

Tuck System cards under player board here. Only one card per slot.

Overheat

Overheat gems are powerful, but drawing them increases the player's Overheat level. Each time a player draws an Overheat gem, they must increase their Overheat meter by one for each Overheat gem on their player board (including the one just drawn). Therefore the first Overheat gem drawn will increase the Overheat by 1, the second by 2, the third by 3, and so on.

The Mega-Overheat gem counts as an Overheat gem in all regards, except it boosts the player's overheat meter by twice the normal amount.

If a player ever draws an Overheat gem that causes them to exceed the limit of their Overheat meter, they have Overheated.

When this happens, they must:

- Reduce their Credit level to 0.
- Remove the last two Invaders placed on their Renown Track.
- Remove a black Overheat gem from their bag.
- Reduce their Overheat level to 0.
- Return all Boost tokens.
- Return all gems on their player board to their bag.

Play then passes to the next player.



Cooldown

If a player chooses to use their turn to cooldown, they follow these steps:

- Reduce their overheat level to 0.
- Return all Boost tokens.
- Return all gems on their player board to their bag.

Note that credit level is not reduced.



Bounties

After a player has completed their weapon activation, they should check to see if they have completed any of the available Bounties. If they have a sequence of Invaders on their Renown Track that matches one of the visible Bounty cards (both color and order), then they may claim that Bounty, by flipping over the matching Invaders on their Renown Track. They then receive any bonuses depicted on the card.

Any Invader on a player's track can only be used to fulfil a single Bounty.

Once a bounty has been claimed, draw a new Bounty card to replace it.



Match color and order.
Flip to claim bounty.

Instant reward



End of Round: Advance Progress Track

Once all players have taken a turn, the round ends and the Alien Aggression Token is moved right on the Progress Track.

Slide the Alien Aggression Token on the track one space to the right. The upgrade card is put straight onto the discard pile. If the marked space also has an attached Alien Event (see page 13), resolve that now, before discarding. Fill the empty space with a fresh card from the Main deck.



Innovation decks



Main deck



Fill empty space with a new card from the Main deck



Discard the marked upgrade card and resolve any Alien Events

Loop back to start

Alien Event Cards

In addition to Upgrade cards, the main deck contains two kinds of Alien Event card: 'Aliens Move!' and 'Aliens Fire!'

When an Alien Event card is revealed, it is not added to the Progress Track like a regular Upgrade card. Instead, it is slid under the Upgrade card in the slot on the Progress Track two spaces to the right of the Alien Aggression token. If that slot already has an Alien Event card, place it in the first free slot to the right. The Alien

Event will stay here until the Alien Aggression Token reaches this slot.

If the Upgrade card on top is bought, the Alien Event card stays and a replacement from the Innovation deck will be placed on top of the Alien Event card.

Alien Event cards are triggered when the Alien Aggression token reaches the Alien Event card's slot (in two rounds).

Place an Alien Event card two slots to the right of the Alien Aggression token



Aliens Move!

When an 'Aliens Move' card is triggered, all Invaders on the main board are moved one row down, towards Earth. Any that move off the bottom row will attack the player matching their color (if that player is in the game). If a player is attacked in this way, they **lose one Invader from their Renown Track**.

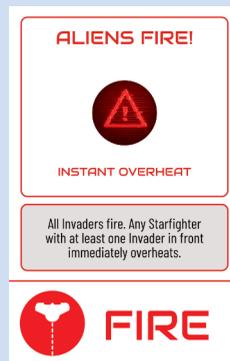
If they have no Invaders left on their victory track, the attack does not affect them. A new row of Invaders are added to the back row, taken from the lowest available level.

Aliens Fire!

When an 'Aliens Fire' card is triggered, all players whose Starfighter has one or more Invaders in the row in front of it are fired at by the aliens. Any Starfighter that is hit in this way will **immediately overheat**.



Do not let any Invaders of your color move past the bottom row on the main board!



Do not let your Starfighter stand in the way of the alien firepower!

Victory

After resolving End or Round, if any player has 10 or more Invaders on their victory track, they are the winner! If two or more players achieve this, then tie breakers are most credits, followed by lowest overheat level.

End of Game - No Main Cards Remaining

If the final "Aliens Move!" card is resolved and no player has 10 Invaders on their Victory Track, then the winner is the player with the most Invaders, and tie breakers are applied as above.



First to 10 wins!



Experienced Pilots

After a few games of Stellar Scramble, players may like to try a more challenging mission.

To do this, at the start of the game:

- Place Alien Event cards only one space from the Alien Aggression token.
- Put 1 more Overheat gem in each player's bag.

Advice For Rookies

It may seem tempting to focus on one color of weapon and only buy those upgrades during the game. However, this may leave you short on options later on. It is often better to diversify your upgrades so you can respond to different challenges as the game progresses.

Playtesters

A stellar thank you to:

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Kyle Jarratt and so many more...



Play on Tabletop Simulator

<https://steamcommunity.com/sharedfiles/filedetails/?id=2842910267>



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