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Thank You, Computerware®

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## STAR TRADER

--By Steve Hartford--

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Welcome to Star Trader™! In this world, you become the captain of a merchant starship far in the future. From the safety of your Color Computer, you control your ship - traveling between distant solar systems, trading cargo, battling pirate ships, and best of all, making money.

Your goal in Star Trader is to collect 1000 credits so that you can retire from the fast paced, and often dangerous life of a starship captain.

### SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

In order to play Star Trader, you must have a 32K Color Computer (or TDP-100) with Extended BASIC, a cassette player and a joystick or mouse connected to the right joystick connector. Disk users must have 64K memory.

### LOADING THE GAME

To load Star Trader from cassette, put the tape in the player and press the PLAY button. Then type CLOADM and press the ENTER key. To load from disk, put your Star Trader diskette in drive #0 and type LOADM"TRADER. Once the game has finished loading, it will automatically EXECute and you will see the title screen. After a short time, the title screen will be replaced by the play screen. At this time you are asked to choose a skill level. Move the joystick left or right until the level you want is enclosed in the box and press the fire button.

### THE SCREEN LAYOUT

The top half of the screen is your viewscreen to the outside world. At the very top of the viewscreen is an indicator line that tells you which world you are in and your location within that world. Later in the game, it will display other important information as well.

The middle section of the screen displays the status of various parts of the ship. You will see your current account balance in credits, the destination and due date of any cargo you have on board, your fuel and laser levels, current damage and the current date. In the middle of the status section is a short range scanner that indicates any nearby pirate ships. The damage is indicated by a "L" for laser, a "F" for fuel cells, or a "D" for your warp drives. If your drives are damaged, you cannot jump until they are repaired. If either the laser banks or the fuel cells are damaged, you can use them, but cannot refill them until they are repaired.

The bottom portion of the screen represents your computer control panel. Any options that may have will be displayed there. To select an option, move the joystick (or mouse) until the option you want is enclosed in the box and press the fire button.



## MAIN MENU OPTIONS

**JUMP** - is used to warp through hyperspace from one world to another. Each world consists of a planet and possibly a starport and gas giant. After you select JUMP, a map of the known universe is displayed. Move the joystick until the world you want to go to is boxed and press the button. If you have cargo on board, the bottom of the screen will display it's destination (in case you forgot). Upon selecting your destination, you will be given the option of using normal or double drive speed. Double drive speed will get you there quicker, but costs more fuel and also is slightly more dangerous. Keep in mind that the farther away your destination is, the more time and fuel it will take to get there.

**THRUST** - is used to move under impulse power between orbit, the starport, and the gas giant. Select your destination with the joystick and press the button. At the Gas Giant, you can get free fuel for your warp engines. Since the fuel is unrefined, it contaminates the fuel tanks until you have them cleaned at the starport. You will know if your fuel tanks are dirty because a diamond will be displayed next to the fuel indicator. This fuel also increases the chances of engine failure which may cause a mis-jump.

**STARPORT ACTIVITY** - is only displayed when you are at a starport. By selecting this option, you can purchase fuel, recharge your lasers, contract to have any damage repaired, or clean the fuel cells. These activities all cost money, so use them conservatively. Also, in order to clean the fuel tanks, they have to be emptied. Make sure you have enough money to refuel.

**BATTLE** - is only displayed if there are pirates ships in the area. By selecting this option, you place the ship's computer in battle mode. By moving the joystick, you move your laser guide (the small white box). Position the laser guide over the pirate ship and press the fire button. It may take two hits to destroy particularly tough pirates. Be careful - since the ship's shields must be lowered in order for the laser to escape, you are vulnerable only while aiming directly at the pirate ship. If you decide to retreat, you can move the joystick down and select the THRUST AWAY option. This will move you into orbit.

If you hit the pirate ship, it will explode and disappear from your viewscreen. If the pirate ship hits your ship, the screen will flash and you will likely sustain some damage. If you are hit while heavily damaged (L,F,D on the damage report), your ship will be destroyed and the game ends. Some especially nasty pirate ships may openfire on your ship without any provocation. In this case, the ship's computers will automatically switch to battle mode.

**SAVE, LOAD, END** - This option will allow you to re-start the game, and if your are using a disk system, to save the current game or load a saved game. Re-start the game if you get into an impossible situation (like if you run out of fuel in the middle of space). The program supports up to 10 saved games. Due to the copy protection on your Star Trader disk, you will have to save and load games on one of your own formatted diskettes. Saving a game on your program disk will DESTROY it, so be careful.

CARGO - is where you can get rich! By selecting this option, you will see another group of actions you can take.

REQUEST CARGO - This is used to work out a deal with local businesses for delivery of their cargo. Any offers are displayed on the screen. You can either accept the offer, refuse it, or use the computer to calculate if you have enough fuel and time to deliver the cargo. Until you get used to fuel consumption, you are better off using the computer. Remember, it is possible to run out of fuel in the middle of a jump and be lost in space! Also note that your ship doesn't carry enough fuel for a double-speed jump across the entire universe. The use of the computer costs 10 credits.

STEAL CARGO - You can actually go into another unsuspecting starship and steal it's cargo. Be careful, if you get caught there is a large fine!

If you already have cargo in the ship's holds, you will be given the following options:

DUMP CARGO INTO SPACE - does just that. If your cargo is way overdue, you may be better off to dump it than to get the local businesses mad at your sloppy service.

SELL CARGO ON THE STREET - This is a quick way to turn a profit - if you don't get caught! This is illegal, and the fine is heavy if you are caught.

DELIVER CARGO - If you are on the planet that the cargo was for, you can deliver it and collect the fee you worked out earlier. There is usually a bonus for early delivery.

#### SOME INTERESTING NOTES

As you play the game, you will get a reputation at each of the planets depending on whether you deliver on time, if you attack pirate ships without being fired upon first, etc. This reputation will make it easier or harder to get good cargo offers and will control how often the pirates attack you.

Star Trader runs in real-time. Therefore, your fuel is slowly used even while you are in port. The date will change also. The game may be paused any time except during battle with a pirate ship by pressing SHIFT @. Any other key will resume the game. The only way to exit the program is to press the RESET button on the back of the computer.

We have purposely not described every detail of the game here. Part of the fun is figuring out a strategy to make 1000 credits. But, beware - your favorite strategy just might not work the next time you play!

If this manual makes the program sound a little complicated, don't worry. Every option you can take is always presented to you on the screen. Just practice on difficulty level 1 until you get the hang of it.