

Every Adventure Begins and Ends at a Starport

Starports are the means by which the citizens of every modern society begin their individual journeys to the stars. These complex constructions provide all of the facilities and services necessary to support, repair, maintain, and service the starships that carry interstellar passengers and freight. They are the central crossroads that all interstellar traffic must pass through. It stands to reason, then, that interstellar travellers naturally gravitate to starports... to meet starships and crew, to buy and sell cargoes, and to begin and end their adventures.

Starports offer **two** opportunities for adventure. Travellers can board a ship and travel to the next world, or they can follow the concourse to the main gate and move out to explore the world they are on. In both cases, there is an infinity of opportunities for adventure.

Beginning Adventures. An adventure can start anywhere, but for convenience and for continuity, a starting point must be assigned. That assignment says that an adventure begins at a starport. When characters enter a starport, their intent is to find adventure. The details of that adventure may not become clear until later, but the adventure clearly begins at the starport.

Ending Adventures. Likewise, the details, the climax and even the payoff for adventures may take place anywhere, but every adventurer knows in his or her heart that its not over until they reach the starport.

The Endless Cycle. So, at the very moment that an adventure ends, a new one begins. The endless cycle in **Traveller** is the end of an old adventure and the beginning of a new one; each builds on the previous, and the cycle never ends until the characters stop going to the starport.

THE SITUATION IN SYSTEM

A star system is composed of a primary star and one or more stellar companions. Orbiting these stars are a variety of planets, planetoid belts, and gas giants. Orbiting planets and gas giants are a variety of satellites. But the focus is one world... the mainworld... which is the overall best planet or satellite in the system.

The mainworld has a Starport which, for all practical purposes, is the destination of interstellar traffic entering the system. Starports vary in their capabilities and facilities, depending on the details of the world itself.

CLASSIFICATION OF STARPORTS

Starports are classified by their location and by their capabilities.

Location

A starport may be located on a world surface, or it may be in orbit above the world.

Down. A starport may be located on a world surface. If so, the starport is most frequently referred to by the world name followed by the word **Down**. Thus, Sylea Down is the main world surface starport for the world of Sylea.

Why a surface port? Landing close to the market is convenient for all concerned. If the environment is at all tolerable, then life support and labor costs are minimized.

Highport. A starport may be located in orbit above a world. If so, it is most frequently referred to by the world name followed by **Highport**. Thus, Sylea Highport is the main orbital starport for Sylea. A highport maintains scheduled links by shuttle with the world surface (if there is no surface starport, then with an air transport hub).

Why a highport? Many very large ships never land on a world surface; the cargo they carry is off-loaded in orbit and shuttled down. Some worlds are naturally inhospitable (bad surface weather, a water world, fluid oceans, or perhaps government type D or E) and ship owners prefer not to risk **their** equipment venturing down to the surface.

Class A and B starports for worlds with Atmosphere 2+ generally have a Highport. Class A, B, or C starports at worlds with Atmosphere B+, or Hydrographics A, or Government D or E can be expected to have a Highport.

Spaceports. There is typically one major starport in a star system. Other facilities, especially those on smaller, less important worlds in a system, are called **spaceports**. They are established primarily to foster in-system travel.

Good spaceports are often established in support of farming projects, mining projects, or small colonies.

Starport Type

Starport type is based on a simple letter classification system (ranging from A to E) which details their basic facilities.

A. Excellent quality facility with refined and unrefined fuel available on site. Facilities include capability to perform annual overhaul and new starship construction (TNAS certified designs). A naval base may be present. A scout base is usually not present. A surface installation is present. A highport may be present (generally if the world atmosphere is 2+).

B. Good quality starport with refined and unrefined fuel available on site. Facilities include capability to perform annual overhaul and new spacecraft construction (TNAS certified designs). A naval base may be present. A scout base may be present. A surface installation is present. A highport may be present (generally if the world atmosphere is 2+).

C. Routine quality starport with unrefined fuel available on site. Facilities include some capability for repair (primarily replacement of TNAS-certified parts). A naval base is usually not present. A scout base may be present. A surface installation is present. A highport is usually not present.

D. Poor quality starport with unrefined fuel available on site or close by. It has no repair or construction facilities. A naval base is not present. A scout base may be present. A surface installation is present. A highport is not present.

E. Frontier starport. With no facilities, the installation is little more than a flat expanse of bedrock and a sign. This designation effectively means there is **no** starport, but there have been previous landings and that location is indicated in records.

Y. No spaceport or starport. The world has no indigenous space access capability.

Spaceports

Worlds other than the mainworld in a system may also have spaceports.

F. Routine quality spaceport with unrefined fuel available on site and minor repair facilities. A system defense field may be present. A military base may be present. A surface installation is present. There is no highport. This designation is a poor cousin to starport type B.

STARPORT DETAILS

Type	Quality	Yards	Repairs	Fuel	Down	Highport
A	Excel	Starships	Overhaul	Both	yes	note 1
B	Good	Spacecraft	Overhaul	Both	yes	note 1
C	Routine	--	Major Damage	Unrefined	yes	note 1
D	Poor	-	Minor Damage	Unrefined	yes	--
E	Frontier	-	-	-	Beacon	--
Y	None	-	-	-	no	--

SPACEPORT DETAILS

F	Good	-	Minor Damage	Unrefined	yes	--
G	Poor	-	Superficial	Unrefined	yes	--
H	Primitive	-	-	-	Beacon	--
Y	None	-	-	-	no	--

Beacons. In some cases, a beacon for a long-established frontier starport may no longer be operational.

Type Y. Indicates the world has no designated starport or spaceport.

Class A and B starports for worlds with Atmosphere 2+ generally have a Highport. Class A, B, or C starports at worlds with Atmosphere B+, or Hydrographics A, or Government D or E can be expected to have a Highport.

G. Poor quality installation with unrefined fuel available nearby. No repair facilities are available. A system defense field may be present. A military base may be present. A surface installation is present. There is no highport. This designation is a poor cousin to starport type C.

H. Primitive quality installation with no facilities beyond a beacon identifying the location. Unrefined fuel may be available nearby. This is a surface installation; there is no highport. A system defense field may be present. A military base may be present. This designation is a poor cousin to starport type D.

Y. No spaceport or starport. The world has no indigenous space access capability.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE STARPORT

A starport at its simplest is a bare spot of bedrock capable of supporting a ship which wants to land. The remaining elements of a starport are added later to support and maintain the traffic that passes through the port.

The Basic Elements

Each starport is characterized by a few basic elements. Without them, the starport is not really a starport.

The Beacon. The location of the starport is broadcast throughout the system from a central beacon. At its simplest, the beacon puts out a continuous tone which allows ships to home on its position. In more complex systems, the beacon provides range and position information for ships in the system, traffic control information on sister frequencies.

The Landing Pad. Starships approach from beyond the atmosphere. When starships set down, most make use of their lifters in order to make a smooth, relatively slow approach along designated approach corridors. To deal with ships with disabled lifters, or for ships which use lifting surfaces, the landing pad includes long, broad runways.

For highports, this a designated holding area.

Traffic Control Facility. Space traffic controllers provide basic information to ships within the system, vectoring them safely in their approaches or departures. The traffic control facilities are located at the starport. In some systems, an auxiliary control facility is located in an outer orbit.

The Terminal

The starport terminal houses the basic services for passengers and freight.

The Concourse. Passenger services are handled at the concourse. Ticketing, baggage check, and final boarding all take place at this facility.

Freight Docks. Freight (materials carried by ships for a fee) is loaded and unloaded at the freight docks. Speculative cargoes are held until sold at the exchange.

Customs and Immigration. Applicable laws concerning the people and goods moving to the world are enforced by Customs and Immigration.

The Exchange. Speculative cargo is bought and sold at the Exchange. A variety of brokers handle the transactions and make the process

Accommodations. Passengers passing through the starport can stay overnight at the starport hotel, buy meals at a variety of restaurants, purchase basic goods and souvenirs at the shops, and pass time at theaters or entertainment complexes. The level of accommodation available varies widely.

Data Terminals. Information is available about the world, its products and services, and recreation at a variety of data terminals. On some worlds, the data terminal may be a computer; on others, they may be staff people with prodigious memories; on yet others, they may be librarians).

Message Center. Access to communications, including physical mail, electronic mail, telephone, and video is generally available at the message center.

Emergency Medical. Suitable facilities are provided for emergency medical treatment. The medical staff has the training and experience to deal with a wide variety of medical emergencies.

Peripheral Facilities

Situated around the edges of the starport are a variety of associated activities and facilities.

Starport Defense Establishment (SDE). In addition to security personnel (who function as police), a starport may have an SDE (with a military function). The SDE is established to defend the starport against organized assault, and its equipment may include troops, fighter craft, missile defenses, and artillery. The SDE, to maintain its independence from the local world, is often a mercenary force specifically created for the job.

Since an SDE is rarely larger than absolutely necessary, it is possible to gauge the local perceived threats to a starport by observing the size and equipment of the LDE.

Scout Base. The scout service (whether of the Imperium or of some other interstellar community) may maintain a port facility for the support and maintenance of its vessels (including those vessels which it may have out on loan to detached duty scouts). It is possible that the world on which

a scout base is located is not a member of the interstellar community which the scout service serves.

Many scout bases make the information they have accumulated available outside of their service (including maps, charts, and world surveys).

Naval Base. The Navy (whether of the Imperium or of some other interstellar community) may maintain a port facility for the support and maintenance of its vessels. The base includes administration sections, warehouse for provisions and resupply, and some security personnel.

The continuing interest of naval personnel in their career area makes naval bases favorite stopovers for veterans (even of other navies).

Sometimes a specific naval base may be considerably more extensive than the typical installation. Their facilities and equipment come to dominate the starport rather than complement it.

System Defense Field. The interplanetary defense forces of a system may maintain a facility for the support of their vessels (system defense boats) as they rotate off station from the outer reaches of the systems. The field has a minimum of facilities (provisions are trucked in when needed; repair trucks call as required).

Shipyards. Ships are built at shipyards. For ships of moderate size which will be streamlined and capable of landing on worlds, construction often takes place on world surfaces at starport shipyards.

Most shipyards specialize in the construction of a specific assembly (which local industry has shown itself capable of producing) such as jump drives, avionics, detectors, or even stateroom modules. Other components are purchased from other shipyards and imported as part of the TNAS-certified parts system.

Warehouses on-site store components until they are ready for assembly. Ships themselves are constructed in open-air bays (or in enclosed assembly structures if the local environment requires).

Repair Facility. Minor repairs to ships are often accomplished on the landing pad. More complex or extensive repairs require that the ships be moved to the repair bays at the edge of the starport. Support installations near the bays house the instrumentation and equipment necessary for repairs.

Transport Hub. The starport is usually integrated into the global transportation net, and arriving passengers transfer from the terminal to the transport hubs. Depending on the world, the hubs may support sea or undersea transport, air transport, or ground rail transport. In addition, personal vehicle rental may be available.

Industry. Many industrial processes are best carried out in zero-G and/or vacuum. What better place for such operations than adjacent to a major orbital transportation center? Industrial modules attached to the Highport create products or commodities which benefit from immediate access to the ships calling at the port. Some factories have long-term supply contracts with the highport itself.

Organization

A starport has an organizational structure which includes a leader and a mission; the details of each starport are different, although they are generally variations on a basic theme.

The Port Authority. Regardless of the local government in power at the starport, the governing authority for the facility is the Port Authority. Financed by a variety of charges and levies on passengers, cargo, and ships, the Authority uses its money to build and maintain its facilities, and to provide variety of services. Like starports, Port Authorities vary

widely in structure and approach to their responsibilities. Some are strong corporate organizations devoted to the pursuit of profit; others are non-profit organizations which view their responsibilities more as services to the citizenry; yet others consider themselves a quasi-official arm of local government.

The Port Warden. The person in complete charge of the starport is the Port Warden. Appointed by the Port Authority, the Warden is the chief executive officer for the facility, and wields great, but not unlimited power.

The Mission of the Starport. The starport, as an organization, is committed to a mission (although that mission may not be clearly or publicly stated). Typical missions are:

To efficiently provide facilities and services necessary to accommodate interplanetary and interstellar traffic for this world.

To produce a maximum of income for the organization which operates this starport.

To insulate this world, to the maximum extent possible, from outside influences.

To meet the minimum requirements for maintaining interstellar trade.

Regulation Enforcement. The police and security arm of the Port Authority has the responsibility of protecting the orderly operation of the starport and of enforcing its regulations. It consists of enforcers and emergency technicians.

The typical enforcer carries out the role of helpful police officer, often assisting passengers in mundane tasks. Behind the scenes, however, a stronger, better armed force stands ready to back them up if necessary.

Emergency technicians provide basic services such as paramedical response, rescue operations, and fire fighting. Emergency tech stations are situated throughout the starport, providing the ability to make a quick response anywhere within the starport's boundaries.

Each Starport Is Unique

Starports vary widely due to the circumstances and environment in which they exist. When the differences in world size, atmosphere, and hydrographics are coupled with population and technological levels, government, and trade classifications, it becomes clear that each starport is an individual facility.

UNOFFICIAL FACILITIES

Not all facilities at a starport come under the jurisdiction of the Port Authority.

The Scout Lounge. Those who conduct surveys of star systems and who continually venture out into unexplored or under-explored space are a special type of people. After long periods of time alone or with their fellow crew, they naturally gravitate to others of their kind... to share stories and experiences which may help them survive. The typical starport has a Scout Lounge for this type of people.

The Scout Lounge is usually operates as a semi-private club; theoretically anyone can use its services, but in practice it is only patronized comfortably by scouts (and those with an affinity for scouts).

The Hiring Hall. Crew members looking for work gather at the hiring hall. Ships calling at the starport look first to the hiring hall when they need new or replacement crew. Because of ship schedules which must be met, it is possible for a crew person to be hired and off world within a few hours notice.

The Lone Star. Many starports have a recreation facility which welcomes and serves all comers. At its tables, people

meet and enjoy light music or video, conversation, and meals. To many the Lone Star is an opportunity to meet others on a casual basis, to develop acquaintances, and even grow them into friendships.

The Traveller's Aid Society. Some individuals make travel their primary vocation. If they are able, they join the Traveller's Aid Society, which provides facilities to its members. The Traveller's Aid Society is a joint operation of several large hotel chains, which provide the facilities within or adjacent to their own hotels and restaurants.

Members join by depositing a large sum of money as annuity, with the proceeds paying for the benefits they receive.

Startown. Although starports are often established near large cities, the community which springs up at the gates to the starport has come to be called (generically) Startown. This community is the home of many of the starport employees and houses many stores, restaurants, and meeting places that serve those who want to wander outside of the starport's boundaries.

EXTERNAL CONTROLS

Starports and spaceports exist to participate in interplanetary or interstellar trade. They belong to a network of similar installations, and each depends on the other to provide the traffic that gives meaning and purpose to the installation.

Starports and spaceports must be responsive to three distinct external controls or powers.

Local World or System Government. Local government exercises considerable power over a starport (or spaceport). Through taxation and law, the starport is dependent on the goodwill of local government. This influence is primarily felt in the statement of the mission of the starport.

Interstellar Government. Interstellar government has a vested interest in creating and maintaining viable starports on worlds where trade produces economic benefits. Interstellar Government influences starports through pressure on local government, and by establishing bases (naval or scout) which increase the viability of the local starport.

The Ship Owners and Operators. Ship owners and operators serve starports which allow them to make profits. Even high service fees, taxes, and assessments do not deter them if there are profits to be made.

The Passengers and Freight Shippers. Passengers and Freight Shippers are rarely organized, but their power is felt if they do not patronize a starport. The organization representing the passengers is the Travellers' Aid Society, which works with starports to improve facilities and services as is economically feasible.

Travel Zones

A Travel Zone is a notification that a specific world may be dangerous to travellers.

Amber Travel Zones. An Amber Travel Zone label is cautionary: the location may present some level of hazard to travellers. That hazard may be natural (disease, local predators or parasites), sociological (uncommon or strange social practices), or governmental (repressive, intolerant, or xenophobic policies). Travellers are warned to be aware of these hazards and guard against them. The Amber Travel Zone label is applied by the Travellers' Aid Society.

Red Travel Zones. A Red Travel Zone label is interdictive: the location presents such a level of danger that travel to the location is prohibited. The Red Travel Zone label may be applied by the Travellers' Aid Society, or by an interstellar

government (for the worlds within a system), or by local government (for a world within a system).

UNDERSTANDING STARPORTS

The key to understanding a starport is a continuing awareness of its purpose. Starports exist to foster traffic, and thus trade, between the stars. Governments may attempt to control or suppress the activities of starports, but when they do, they naturally suppress the benefits of trade and commerce for their worlds. The natural state of starports is to flourish; if the starport's world has resource which can be profitably marketed to other worlds, the starport generate economic benefit.

Extra-Territoriality. In order to foster interstellar traffic, starports are extra-territorial. Just as embassies are treated as if they are the territory of their owning nations, starports are treated like they are off-world space. Passengers and crew alike are allowed to leave their starships and wander freely (subject to security and safety restrictions) throughout a starport. Goods are not subject to customs or taxes until they leave a starport. The laws of the world do not apply to until a traveller leaves the starport.

Law and Order. There must be some law and order within a starport, and the means of achieving that order is the local Starport Regulations. Established by the Port Authority, these regulations define in detail what behaviors are permitted and prohibited. For most people, ordinary behavior is sufficient to stay within the regulations. Strange requirements are typically posted clearly.

Ship Construction and Repair. Starships and spacecraft require an extensive system of construction and repair sites, and the overhead of designing and maintaining the many parts which go into ships can be overwhelming. Consequently, many starports subscribe to the TNAS (Quality Ship Design Scheme): a set of standard component specifications which are manufactured on worlds with the appropriate tech level and industrial capacity, but which can be assembled and maintained at any starport of the appropriate type, regardless of local tech level or industrial capacity.

Money. Ultimately, every starport must make money if it is to remain in operation. Starports cannot give their services away, but most find a way to hide those charges away from the consuming public. Restaurant charges include a surcharge; starship lines pay a portion of their ticket price and freight charges to the starport. Since all of this is concealed from the typical passenger, the impression is that the starport is a free facility.

STARPORT AMBIENCE

The ambience of the starport is of prime importance. When travellers arrive at a starport the atmosphere and the condition of the facilities create an impression that will stay with them for a long time. This impression (and the elaboration of this impression) develops over time.

The appearance of a starport may range from modern or new to old and decayed.

The staff of a starport may be respectful and attentive, or rude and obnoxious.

Officials may be straightforward and honest, or they may be corrupt and self-serving.

MANY DIFFERENT STARPORTS

Starports vary in the way they provide their services. Major influences on them include the world trade classifications, the elements of the UWP, and other less clear factors.

Water World. With land at a premium, starships land in the water (perhaps sheltered by natural or artificial islands) and are serviced by boats.

Asteroid Belt. Ships dock in the microgravity of an asteroid.

Storms. If a world has an exceptionally turbulent atmosphere, most traffic may choose to call at the highport and shuttle down on craft specifically engineered for local conditions.

THE STARPORT VISIT

A ship entering a star system leaves jump space approximately 100 stellar diameters out (typically at interplanetary range). The approach to the starport takes perhaps a day, during which the appropriate radio contact and identification procedure completed.

At the world, the ship completes a landing maneuver while in voice and data contact with the local space traffic controller.

Once at the surface, the ship settles into its assigned landing bay. Cargo and freight are offloaded and passengers disembark.

The ship spends several days at the starport loading cargo and freight and booking passengers. During the time, the crew splits its efforts about evenly on maintenance and recreation.

When leaving the starport, the ship coordinates with traffic control and leaves the starport for orbit. From orbit, it maneuvers to 100 planetary diameters out. When it reaches this safe jump point, it then enters jump space en route to its destination.

(more)

ENCOUNTERS

Where.

Who.

Why.

Events.

PATRON ENCOUNTERS

D+D	Patron Identity
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
31	
32	
33	
34	
35	
36	
41	
42	
43	
44	
45	
46	
51	
52	
53	
54	
55	
56	
61	
62	
63	
64	
65	
66	

Patron encounters provide the adventurers with an individual who needs their services.

REACTIONS

Die	Initial	Later
1	Friendship (-4)	-2 levels
2	Total Co-operation (-3)	-2 levels
3	Active Co-op (-2)	-1 level
4	Active Co-op (-2)	-1 level
5	Passive Co-op (-1)	-1 level
6	Passive Co-op (-1)	-1 level
7	Neutral	no change
8	Passive Unco-op (+1)	+1 level
9	Passive Unco-op (+1)	+1 level
10	Active Unco-op (+2)	+1 level
11	Active Unco-op (+2)	+1 level
12	Violent Unco-op (+3)	+2 levels
13	Enmity (+4)	+2 levels

Throw on this table (initial) when first encountering an NPC. Throw on the later column once (but no earlier than the next week).

DM (Initial): -2 if a veteran of the same service. -1 attendees of the same school.

DM (Later): Apply the DM from the initial reaction.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

D+D	Qty	Type
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
31		
32		
33		
34		
35		
36		
41		
42		
43		
44		
45		
46		
51		
52		
53		
54		
55		
56		
61		
62		
63		
64		
65		
66		

Random encounters provide the adventurers with individual or group encounters in the course of their activities.

Legal Encounters: Throw Law Level (or less) on 2D once per day on world surfaces for a law enforcement encounter.

CERTAINTY LEVELS

Die	Information	Dependability
2	Complete Truth	(objective).
3	Complete Truth	(objective).
4	Partial Truth	(opinion).
5	Partial Truth	(opinion).
6	Partial Truth	(opinion).
7	Partial Truth	(opinion).
8	Partial Truth	(opinion).
9	No Truth	(exaggerated).
10	No Truth	(exaggerated).
11	No Truth	(exaggerated).
12	Lies	(deliberate mistruth).
13	Lies	(deliberate mistruth).

Roll on this table for the level of certainty for information (including rumors).

DM: NPC reaction.

RUMORS

D+D	Rumor
11	Historical Clue
12	Historical Fact
13	Historical Data
14	Historical Reference
15	Historical Terminology
16	Historical Opinion
21	Biographical Clue
22	Biographical Fact
23	Biographical Data
24	Biographical Reference
25	Biographical Terminology
26	Biographical Opinion
31	Map Clue
32	Map Fact
33	Map Data
34	Map Reference
35	Map Terminology
36	Map Opinion
41	Library Clue
42	Library Fact
43	Library Data
44	Library Reference
45	Library Terminology
46	Library Opinion
51	Technological Clue
52	Technological Fact
53	Technological Data
54	Technological Reference
55	Technological Terminology
56	Technological Opinion
61	Random Clue
62	Random Fact
63	Random Data
64	Random Reference
65	Random Terminology
66	Random Opinion

Rumors provide the adventures with additional information about their current area of interest.

Clue. Information which points to an answer which is being sought.

Fact. Information.

Data. Information of a statistical or numerical nature.

Reference: Citation indicating where information may be found.

Terminology: Information about what words themselves mean.

Opinion: Subjective information shaped by the source's experience.

Historical: Pertaining to the history of people, organizations, or governments.

Biographical. Pertaining to the experiences and actions of a person.

Map. Pertaining to maps of worlds or space.

Library. Pertaining to information repositories.

Technological: Pertaining to science and its applications.

Random: Pertaining to any area of information.