

The Beginner's Guide to Turbo Trek

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1 Things to Know Before You Start

1.1 Read the Instructions!

Please read through the help file that comes with the game. It is located in the 'read.bat' file. It will introduce you to the basics of the game. In many ways, this guide merely fleshes out the points made in the help file.

1.2 Program Limitations

This game was programmed back in the days when MS-DOS was still prevalent, and to have a fast computer was to have a 166 MHz processor and 32 MB of RAM. As to be expected the data processing capabilities of those machines and their software dictated many of the design elements of the program. The influence of the hardware can be felt primarily in two places.

1.2.1 Program Speed

If you try to run Turbo Trek on anything above an old '386' machine, you'll find that the game runs insanely fast. Granted, it is not so much a bad thing when it comes to the firing of weapons. The annoyance comes with the pressing of buttons with the mouse. One will find that even the slightest touch of the mouse buttons will cause data inputs in the game. This causes much distress when it comes to power allocation, weapons targeting, etc.. It is highly recommended that you download some form of 'slowdown' utility ('MOSLO', 'CPUKiller', 'Turbo', 'Dosbox') in order to return the game to a manageable speed.

1.2.2 The 16-bit Nature of Turbo Trek

1.2.2.1 Integer Values

The game was built using 'Turbo Pascal' (hence the name, Turbo Trek). Apparently, one of the limitations is the maximum value for integer variables. As such, one will find that the maximum value of any statistic in Turbo Trek (whether it be shield values, weapon's damage indices, etc.) is 32767, and the minimum value is -32768. Therefore, be wary when 'overcharging' certain systems, for this may result in strange outcomes if values exceed the valid range. (For example, if the resulting shield strength is above 32767 as a result of overcharging, the shields will fail to activate!)

1.2.2.2 Runtime Error 200

Another result of Turbo Pascal, this error is caused by an overflow of a 16-bit variable, and is a direct result of faster computers. As it is, Turbo Trek is not the only program to fall victim to this error. Generally, using a 'slowdown' utility should prevent this error from occurring. However, should this not be so, or if you are not using such a utility, then a fix to the problem (and a more detailed description of the error) maybe found here: <http://www.brain.uni-freiburg.de/~klaus/pascal/runerr200/>

1.2.3 Starting the Game

The standard way to start the game is to use the executable, 'tt.exe'. There is also a way to start the game with sound disabled. This maybe accomplished by using the command 'tt s' at the DOS command prompt. Using a batch file with the necessary command is also possible.

2 Getting Started

2.1 The Scenario Selection Screen

At this point, you have successfully loaded up Turbo Trek, and have now been confronted with a screen that features a chart in the centre. If you have any pre-existing scenarios, they should be displayed in this chart. Saved games will also appear here. Along the bottom of the screen will be a number of options.

2.1.1 The Scenario List

The chart in the centre displays the scenarios currently available to be played. The name of the file that the scenario is stored in is displayed on the left. A description of the scenario is displayed in the middle. Finally, the number of objects (ships, planets, other terrain objects) in the scenario is displayed on the right. Use the keyboard arrow keys to select which scenario you wish to play, or use the editor to modify.

It should be noted that saved games also appear in the list, and that their descriptions are identical to their parent scenario. The only way to distinguish 'base' scenarios from saved games

is through the scenario file name. Luckily, when you save a game, you are required to input the name of the save game file.

2.1.2 Options

There are six options to choose from. Note that all buttons in Turbo Trek can be activated using the keyboard. The key to press is usually the letter that is capitalized on the button. For example, to activate the button labelled 'Create', press 'C'. To activate the button labelled 'trAn', press 'A'.

2.1.2.1 Create

Opens the scenario editor and allows the user to make a scenario from scratch. This aspect will be discussed in Section 5.0.

2.1.2.2 Edit

This opens the scenario editor and allows the user to modify the currently selected scenario.

2.1.2.3 Delete

Deletes the currently selected scenario from the list.

2.1.2.4 Map

Displays the game map as it appears at the beginning of the scenario. Each object is identified by a three letter, based on the object's type. The map does not identify which of the ships (if any) are player controlled.

2.1.2.5 Play

Begins the designated scenario.

2.1.2.6 Quit

Exits the program.

2.2 Energy Allocation Screen

Once you have pressed the 'Play' button, you will be taken to the energy allocation screen. For each player-controlled vessel, you will need to distribute power amongst the various systems. If there is more than one human player, than be sure to keep track of which ship you are handling.

This screen will reappear at the beginning of every turn. (The concept of 'turns' and 'subturns' will be described later in Section 3.1.) The only time this screen will not appear is when there are no player-controllable ships.

Below is a description of the functions of the energy allocation screen.

2.2.1 Total Power Available, the Done button, and the Destruct Function

On the right side of the screen, there is a small table that displays how much power is currently being generated by primary and auxiliary sources. This amount can change if the power systems are damaged, but initially, both should be 100% operational. There is no difference between a unit of power generated by either source, as power units maybe distributed to any system regardless of source. However, while the main power system can be completely destroyed, the auxiliary power system will always be at least 20% operational (i.e. the auxiliary power system cannot be

destroyed.)

Below the table described, there should be a button labelled 'Done'. Press this button to either allocate power to another ship, or if there are no more ships, to begin the scenario.

The final function on the right side of the screen is the Destruct button, helpfully labelled in red. Press this button to self-destruct the ship at the beginning of the next turn. Obviously, you do not wish to select this option unless you are faced with a dire situation such as:

Your vessel is heavily damaged and there is little you can do now to inflict further damage upon the enemy. The explosion of your vessel maybe enough to severely damage nearby enemy vessels (and thus allow remaining friendly ships to finish them off), or it maybe enough to actually destroy enemy ships (and perhaps start off a chain reaction.)

Although your ship is still relatively intact, your shields will not last long against enemy fire (whether due to insufficient power to charge the shields, or damage to the shield system itself.) The possibility of the enemy using transporters to board and capture your ship is, therefore, high. It may then be preferable to deny the enemy the use of your ship.

2.2.2 Allocating Power to Subsystems

On the left side of the screen is a chart of subsystems this vessel is equipped with, the current 'health' of the subsystem, the maximum number of 'charges' the subsystem can have, and the energy cost per 'charge'. It is a simple matter of pressing the '-' and '+' symbols on each row to allocate power. Depending on the design of the ship, be wary of allocating too much power for deflector shields (see Section 1.2.2.1), although to make a precise calculation of how much each charge of the shields is worth you will need to use the ship editor. (The ship editor will be discussed in Section 4.0.)

Special consideration should be given in regards to using the cloaking device. See Section 3.4.1.1 for further details.

At the top left of the table is the name of the ship you are 'powering up.' To the top right is the two-letter designation of the ship class. There is no indication of which team the vessel is currently on.

Once you are satisfied with the allocation scheme, press 'Done.'

3 Playing the Game

3.1 Turns and Subturns

As mentioned before, energy allocation occurs at the beginning of every turn. Each turn is divided into ten additional 'subturns'. During each subturn, vessels will take turns carrying out their operational phase. The order in which ships 'move' is vaguely based on the reverse order that they were added to the scenario. Therefore, ships with a higher ID number (press F2 to switch between vessel identification modes) will move before ships with lower ID numbers.

To emphasize the point: Ships do not all move at once. Should a vessel be destroyed before it has had a chance to move during a subturn, that vessel will not be given the chance to move that one last time for that subturn.

Once all ten subturns are completed, the next turn begins.

3.2 The F1, F2, F3, F4, and F5 Buttons

The five function keys found on your keyboard each perform a distinct 'task'. They shall be described below.

3.2.1 F1

This button allows the user to interrupt the current subturn. When the key is pressed, the computer will finish executing the subturn for the currently moving ship, then give the player the option to quit or resume the scenario. Should the user decide to quit, the option to save the scenario will be given as well.

3.2.2 F2

This button changes the label that is displayed beside each ship on the map. The default is the number denoting the order in which the ships were placed in the scenario editor. Another option is to display the ship class. Yet another option is to not display any labels. The last option is useful if you wish to make 'cloaked' ships truly invisible all the time.

3.2.3 F3

This button places a grid over the map.

3.2.4 F4

This button brings up two charts. The one on the left displays the current status of your ship. The one on the right displays the names of all the remaining ships in the scenario and the score that each ship has accumulated. It is difficult to say how the score is calculated, seeing that do to the 16-bit nature of Turbo Trek, it is possible that the score may become a negative number.

3.2.5 F5

This button brings up the Turbo Trek debug screen. A useful piece of information on each ship can be garnered from the chart on the left side. Each row in the chart represents an object currently in the scenario. There can be a maximum of thirty objects in a scenario at any one time. (Note that each mine, EW pod, plasma torpedo, and drone, count as one object each.) The last item in each row should be a number. That number represents the current shield strength of the object represented by that row.

3.3 Using Ship Systems

When it comes time for your ship to take its subturn, a number of buttons will appear at the bottom of the map screen. The exact number of buttons that appear will depend on what systems your ship is equipped with. Below is a description of each button and the systems or functions that they activate.

3.3.1 Warp Drive

The primary method of movement for most ships. When you select this option, a red circle will appear around your ship. Use the mouse to select a spot within the circle. The ship will move to the designated spot. The radius of the circle will be decreased if the warp drive is damaged.

3.3.2 Impulse Engines

This system of movement works like warp drive. The only difference is that the radius of the circle decreases with every subsequent use, regardless of damage. Luckily, the radius is restored every turn.

3.3.3 Pulsars

This is a basic weapon system. Although guaranteed to hit the target, the damage inflicted is drastically reduced by range. It is best used against nearby targets, and is useful for shooting down drones and plasma torpedoes.

Usage of all weapons follows the same method. When you select a weapon, a panel will display how many 'shots' the weapon has left for this turn. Use the mouse to click on target vessels. Each click on a target vessel will have the weapon fire another round at the target. Be aware that it is possible to fire at friendly vessels, so be careful about your targeting.

3.3.4 Disruptors

The disruptor is slightly more advanced than the pulsar. The disruptor fires a bolt that has a chance to miss the target. Disruptors do not lose damage potential as quickly as pulsars over long range. Also, vessels that are very close to the disruptor's target will suffer a small amount of splash damage, whether the disruptor hits or not.

3.3.5 Photon Torpedoes

Photon torpedoes are like a more advanced form of the disruptor, at least in terms of game dynamics. Like the disruptor, the photon torpedo may miss a target at long range, but there is no degradation of damage potential. The splash damage effect of the photon torpedo is also much greater than that of the disruptor. This weapon can be useful for taking out concentrations of drones, or damaging many ships at once.

3.3.6 Sensors

This allows you to see the status of other ships, friendly and hostile. The amount and depth of information you see concerning the targeted ship depends on the sophistication of the system (based on statistics set in the ship editor). Unlike other systems, sensors may be used an infinite number of times during a turn when they are charged.

3.3.7 Plasma Torpedoes

Plasma torpedoes act like drones (Section 3.3.9) in that when launched they move like ships, having the equivalent of a warp drive system and being able to move every subturn. Plasma torpedoes have a preset maximum range, and the torpedo will home in on the target until it reaches the end of that range. Thankfully, these torpedoes can also be destroyed before impact via weapons fire, and their damage drops off drastically over distance.

If the system suffers critical failure due to damage while you have more than one torpedo remaining to be fired, you will lose all but one of the torpedoes.

3.3.8 Damage Control

During combat, your ship will undoubtedly sustain some damage. This system allows you to repair the various systems on your ship back to optimal condition. Repairs are in terms of 'damage control point', with each point being able to repair any system by 1%. The method for allocating damage control points is identical to that of distributing energy points in the energy allocation screen.

3.3.9 Drones

The last conventional weapon in at the player's disposal, drones are exactly like plasma torpedoes except that their damage does not degrade over range. However, the damage potential of drones is usually much smaller than that of plasma torpedoes.

3.3.10 Transporters

Usage of transporters does not require your shields to be down, but if you are transporting to another ship, the target ship's shield must be down. When you select this option, a small window will appear with four options. Once you select one of those options, the game will return to the map and a red circle will appear around your ship. Depending on which option was chosen, you would then use your mouse to select the destination of your transport, whether it be another ship or out in empty space. Right clicking on the mouse will, like for many other Turbo Trek functions, cancel the operation. A description of the possible transporter operations is given below.

3.3.10.1 Drop Mine

Creates an explosive device at the desired location. The device will detonate when a hostile vessel moves to a point close by. Upon detonation, all vessels in the vicinity will sustain damage from the explosion. Mines may be destroyed by weapons fire.

3.3.10.2 Drop EW Pod

These devices act to scramble enemy electronics. When placed, nearby hostile vessels may suffer damage to their sensor subsystems. In addition to this, hostile vessels will be unable to fire pulsars at any target if an EW pod is in the line of fire. Consequently, EW pods cannot be targeted by pulsars, and so must be destroyed by either disruptors or photon torpedoes.

It should be noted that each ship comes with a limited number of 'shells' in which to create mines and EW pods. Once the store of shells is depleted, no more mines or EW pods may be deployed.

3.3.10.3 Damage Control Team

This function is used to transfer damage control points from your vessel to another. You will be able to specify how many points you wish to transfer.

3.3.10.4 Sabotage Team

When beamed aboard another vessel, these teams will try to do one of two things. The first is to completely destroy one of the subsystems on the target ship. The second is even more daring: they will attempt to capture the hostile vessel. You do not have control over which mission the team will carry out. The computer randomly decides the mission type.

3.3.11 Tractor Beam

This system allows you to move another ship to another location. When you select this function, you will be prompted to select a target vessel. The target vessel must not have its shields active. Once you have made your selection, a red circle will appear around the chosen ship. The vessel will move to wherever you click in the circle.

3.3.12 Relinquish Control

By pressing this button, you signal that your ship has finished its subturn, and is now ready to allow another ship to take their subturn.

3.3.13 Skip Turn

By pressing this button, you signal that this ship will not be conducting any further operations this turn, and so this ship will skip any remaining subturns for this turn.

3.3.14 Quit

This button will give you the same options as if you had pressed F1.

3.4 Other Systems

Not all systems are accessible during play, such as passive systems. Below is a description of these systems.

3.4.1 Deflector Shields

When your ship falls under fire, the deflector shields provide the first line of defence. The amount of damage the shield can absorb will be dependent upon the statistics of the shield system (see Section 4.0) as well as the amount of power fed into the system during the power allocation phase.

Also according to the system's settings (see Section 4.4.3) the shield will most likely not be a perfect damage absorber. Damage will 'leak' through the shield to affect other internal systems, so keep that the ship's damage control system ready.

As is pointed out in the Turbo Trek help file, it is advised that a commander 'overcharge' the shield in order to maximize protection and prevent total system failure due to damage. If a shield system has only been minimally charged and suffers a critical failure due to damage, the shield will deactivate. However, if the shield had been overcharged, then a failure will only return the shield to a minimal charge, not shut it down completely. A second failure will be needed to shut down the shield.

3.4.2 Cloak

The cloaking device provides a ship with a powerful form of protection. Pulsars are unable to lock onto cloaked vessels whatsoever, while disruptors and photon torpedoes are much less likely to hit the target. Transporters, tractor beams, and sensors may also not be used against a cloaked vessel. Certain operations should be kept when using the cloaking device.

3.4.2.1 Activating the Cloaking Device

The cloaking device may only be activated during the energy allocation phase by allocating sufficient energy to it. You may not charge shields if you choose to charge the cloaking device. So saying, the device may not be activated and deactivated at will during the turn. Should your ship be de-cloaked for whatever reason, the ship will not only be without the benefits of the cloak, but without shields as well for the remainder of the turn. Hence, usage of the cloaking device for offensive operations requires a certain amount of timing, less one be caught out in the open with no protection aside from your ship's hull.

3.4.2.2 Ways to De-cloak

De-cloaking during a turn will happen in one of two ways. The first is through the usage of certain ship systems. Firing weapons, scanning another vessel with your sensors, and using the tractor beam will automatically deactivate the cloak. Hence, using the cloak offensively can be a risky affair, although not impossible. You may still use propulsion systems and the transporters without penalty.

The second way to de-cloak is more involuntary, and that is through damage to the cloaking

system itself. While cloaked, you may still sustain battle damage, whether through a foe's lucky hit, passing too close to a mine (causing it to detonate), or by being close to an exploding ship. Should your cloaking device sustain damage, it is possible that you will lose the benefits of the cloak. If you sustain enough damage while cloaked, you may even be destroyed.

3.4.2.3 Cloaks and Sensors

Depending on the sophistication of hostile sensors, enemy ships may or may not be able to detect your presence. If they can 'see' you, they will be able to fire at you with disruptors and photon torpedoes, and maybe lay mines if they are close enough. On the other hand, should their sensors be primitive, they will be unable to detect you at all, rendering your ship completely invisible.

3.4.2.4 Cloaks, Drones, and Plasma Torpedoes

Should a vessel cloak while being tracked by seeking weapons, those weapons will continue to track the cloaked ship, and upon reaching the ship, damage the ship as if it were not cloaked. In other words, cloaking will not aid in evading tracking weapons. However, once cloaked, no further seeking weapons can be launched against you.

3.4.3 Hull

Obviously, the hull of a ship provides the last line of defence against enemy weapons fire. Generally, the higher the ship's hull rating, the more damage it can take before being destroyed.

3.4.4 Critical

It is unknown what effect this system has upon vessel operations.

4 The Ship Editor

4.1 Introduction

Turbo Trek comes equipped with a functional editor that allows the user to create new ships and modify existing ones. This section will outline briefly some of the more nebulous functions of the ship editor.

4.2 Getting Started

The editor may be accessed from your Turbo Trek directory by selecting the Makeship.exe file.

The first screen that should appear should contain a list of the available ship types, and a inquiry along the bottom stating if you wish to create a ship. If you accept, the next question will ask the name of the ship you would like to create. If you wish to edit an existing ship, type in the designation of that ship from the list. If you type in a string not in the list, the editor will assume you wish to create a new ship instead.

The string you input here will be used to name the file the ship will be stored in. (So if you input 'Test' the ship file will be named 'Test.shp'.)

4.3 Vessel Designation

4.3.1 Nationality

Once you have selected a file name, you will be asked to select a nationality, designated by a letter. You may only choose the letters 'B' (Borg), 'C' (Civilian), 'F' (Federation), 'K' (Klingon), 'O' (Orion), 'R' (Romulan), 'Z' (Kzinti), 'X' (neutral).

The nationality determines the colour of the ship image and the team any vessel of this ship type is on in a scenario. Certain nationalities are allied with each other and allied ships will not fire upon each other in scenarios. The 'alliances' are as follows:

- a) Borg
- b) Civilian, Federation, Kzinti
- c) Klingon, Romulan
- d) Orion
- e) neutral

Note that team 'X' (neutral) will neither attack nor be attacked.

4.3.2 Configuration

It is best to keep the 'configuration' string to two characters. The nationality and the configuration will help to identify a ship type in a scenario. Therefore, if the ship's nationality is 'F' and the configuration is 'FF', then the ship will be listed as designated as being of type 'F FF' in a scenario. Note that multiple ship types can have the same designation, as Turbo Trek loads ships according to their storage file name, not the ship type name.

If the configuration string is in lower case, then assigning such a vessel to computer control will result in the ship not doing anything as if it were neutral. The only difference is that it will still be attacked by any hostile alliance.

4.4 Basic System Settings

Note that by pressing 'enter' for any of the system options the user is stating satisfaction with the current settings. For example, when the displays the line 'Strength ?' and the current value is 5, then by inputting another number at the prompt the user declares a wish to change the value. By pressing enter without entering another value the user is declaring a wish to retain the current value of '5'.

Inputting invalid values (such as letters when numbers are required) will set the saved value to the default. For numeric values the default is 0.

4.4.1 Adding a New System

A new ship type starts off with no systems. To add new systems, simply enter 'y' at the prompt when the program asks 'Does the ship have this system (Y/N) ?' The current status is denoted by either a 'No' or a 'Yes' above the question.

4.4.2 Energy Consumption/Production Rating

Only energy production systems should be given a positive rating. All systems that use power should be given a negative rating. Some systems do not seem to use energy at all, like 'Critical' and 'Hull', and in those cases it is appropriate to leave this value at zero.

4.4.3 Strength Rating

This rating means different things depending on the system type.

Strength has no effect on the power generation systems.

For systems such as transporters and tractors, 'strength' is actually the number of times the system can be used per turn.

Sensor 'strength' is actually the sensor's range in pixels. (Note that the play screen for Turbo Trek is somewhere on the order of 640 by 480 pixels.)

For damage control, the strength rating determines the number of damcon points a ship can use per turn. If you square the strength rating, you can determine the number of damcon points a ship receives per turn. Therefore, if the damage control strength is '9', then fully powered the damage control system on the ship will generate 81 damcon points per turn.

Weapon 'strength' is the maximum damage that the weapon will inflict per shot.

4.4.4 Reliability Rating

The author is only certain of this rating's effects on shield systems, although is willing to give the benefit of the doubt that the name is actually generally descriptive of its function.

The reliability of a shield determines how much of the directed damage is absorbed by the shield. If a shield's reliability is 90, 90 percent of the damage will be absorbed (assuming that the shield has enough strength to absorb it) and the remaining 10 percent will pass through to hit internal systems. Beware of setting a high-strength shield's reliability to 100. It could make a ship effectively invincible.

4.4.5 Accuracy Rating

The author is only certain of this rating's effects on sensor and cloak systems, although is willing to give the benefit of the doubt that the name is actually generally descriptive of its function.

If a sensor system has an accuracy of less than 80, then the ship will only be able to detect the online/offline status and health of a target's system. Greater than 80 allows for the detection of energy distribution within a target vessel.

A sensor system will be able to detect the presence of a cloaked ship if the cloaked ship's cloaking device has an accuracy rating greater than that of the detecting ship's sensor system.

4.4.6 Maximum Number of Shots Before Reloading

To the author's knowledge, once the maximum number of shots has been discharged, a vessel is unable to use the weapon for the remainder of the scenario.

4.5 Preparing Ship Types for Use in the Scenario Editor

Once a ship design has been finalized and saved, it is still not ready to be placed in a scenario. To have the ship show up in the scenario editor's ship type list you must use the 'convert' function. (See the relevant section in the game readme for details on using the 'convert' function.)

If you have modified an existing ship that had been 'converted' before the changes, you will need to 'convert' the ship again. Otherwise, the scenario editor will continue to use the old ship specifications.

Use a batch file to avoid converting at the command prompt. The batch file method is far more convenient especially when one is frequently converting large number of new and modified ships.

5 The Scenario Editor

5.1 Introduction

In addition to a ship editor, Turbo Trek comes equipped with a scenario creator/editor as well. You may edit existing scenarios and saved games, in addition to creating new ones. Like the ship editor it is pretty straight forward, and so the following is nothing more than notes on the 'unobvious.'

5.2 Nature of Scenario Composition

Scenarios (and their associated files) are completely self-contained units and do not depend on any ship types in the same Turbo Trek directory, either currently converted or not. Therefore, it is possible to move a scenario to a Turbo Trek directory on another computer and play the scenario there, all without the need to transfer any ship files.

The advantage of scenario autonomy is mirrored by a rather distinct disadvantage. If one changes the stats to a ship type found in a scenario, the changes are not automatically reflected in the scenario. The only way to include the changes is to use the scenario editor and replace the 'old' variant with the 'new' variant. If the ship type were used in multiple scenarios, one would have to conduct a major 'upgrading' operation by going through each affected scenario manually.

Therefore, it is imperative to test ships before wide scale use lest one be forced to extensively 'patch' later on.

5.3 Placement of Vessels

If a vessel believes that there are no more hostiles to be fought, it will attempt to move to the upper left corner of the screen. This causes the game to crash for reasons known only to the programmers. As such, it would be wise to ensure that at the beginning of each scenario ships do not have any reason to set this fatal course by placing them reasonably close to the enemy to begin with.

5.4 Maximum Object Quantity

The scenario may only contain 30 objects (ships, planets, drones, etc.) at any time. If you have ships which are use drones or plasma torpedoes, it maybe wise not to max out the number of ships on the screen as it will prevent the drone and plasma ships from using those weapons, placing them at a distinct disadvantage.

6 Miscellaneous Thoughts

6.1 Notes Concerning Computer-Controlled Vessel Behaviour

6.1.1 Power Allocation

A major weakness of 'robot' ships is that the reinforcement of shields tends to be neglected in favour of activating non-essentials such as transporters and tractors. This is especially true if the ship is damaged and power output is less than 100%. Therefore computer shield strength is never as high as it could be.

Also, the computer never charges up the damage control system on the first turn. This puts computer vessels at a disadvantage since they enter the second turn damaged. This makes defeating computer opponents much easier.

6.1.2 Weapons Fire Algorithm

Pulsars are completely discharged on the first subturn of every turn by computer vessels, assuming there is a vessel in range. Other weapons such as photon torpedoes and disruptors are discharged in doses throughout the turn.

6.1.3 Targeting

When a ship fires, each weapon is fired upon (usually) the closest target. Each weapon will only be used against one target per subturn. Thus, even if it takes one disruptor bolt to kill a target, the computer will stop using disruptors for the remainder of that subturn.

The only exception is if there is a target further away which is heavily damaged, in which case a weapon may be directed at the further target as well as the closest target during the subturn.

Since computer vessels target the closest enemy allow other friendly ships to 'go first' so they take enemy fire, unless your allies are too damaged, or you are confident you can take the damage.

Use EW pods and other decoys to divert enemy weapon systems from friendly ships.

6.1.4 Phases of Action

Each computer vessel will fire first, then use auxiliary systems (like transporters), and then move. The disadvantage of this is that the computer does not minimize the range between it and its target before firing and so it is always possible to add a little more distance between you and a computer attacker.

The computer is 'smart' enough to use tractors to move hostile drones and plasma torpedoes further away from their targets, and transporters to transfer damage control points and board enemy vessels.

6.1.5 Use of the Cloaking Device

The computer ship will only cloak if any hostile vessels are 'too far away' at the beginning of a turn, or if it is heavily damaged at the beginning of a turn.

6.1.6 The Hero Mentality

Computer vessels will always attempt to close the distance between themselves and the nearest enemy to point-blank. Be careful when using weapons with area effect when the battle degenerates into a melee and friendly ships are right beside hostile ones. Beware of chain reactions caused by destroyed vessels.

6.1.7 Computer Controlled Blue Team Vessels

Blue team ships (or civilians) will not power up weapons or shields until the turn after the one when they have been attacked. Also, blue team ships tend to run away from battles if they can.

6.2 Other Thoughts

6.2.1 Targeting

It is possible to fire upon friendly vessels. Generally this is a bad thing to do, so be careful when selecting your victims with your mouse.

7 Guide Credits

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Except for Sections 4 and 5, most of the guide was written from memory in one session.