

# neak Peek: **Star Trek: 25th Anniversary**

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NOTE: Screen shots and information presented in this article are based on a pre-release version of Star Trek: 25th Anniversary and are subject to change before final release. Screen shots have been adapted to a system palette and then dithered, and thus may not represent the precise look of the game. This article is not a review.

Star Trek: 25th Anniversary is really two games in one. It features an adventure game coupled with a realistic 3-D space flight simulator, and both parts of the game are intertwined. The adventure aspect of the game involves completing eight exciting episodes. Each episode requires the player to solve mysteries and puzzles in order to progress to the next episode. Like other adventure games, using clues, weapons, and — dare I say it — logic, is fundamental to solving each episode.

The arcade side of the game involves combat against Captain Kirk's good ol' buddies, the Klingons, Romulans, and other bad space dudes. You navigate the Enterprise via mouse controls, firing your photon torpedoes and phasers at Klingon Battle Cruisers and Romulan Warbirds. As in most flight simulators, "leading" your target is an important aspect of space combat maneuvering.

**On Board the Enterprise.** From the bridge of the Starship Enterprise, Captain Kirk, aka you, oversee each mission. From here you issue commands to Spock, Scotty, Uhura, Sulu, and Chekov by clicking. You can also ask Spock for advice, or for a computer analysis on enemy starships during combat, or even direct him to use the ship's library computer. Other commands to the various officers can include asking Scotty to concentrate repairs on a particular system, asking Uhura for hailing frequencies to try to establish contact, and telling Sulu to take the ship into standard orbit.

The Enterprise is well equipped with main deflector shields to protect your ship from damage. The bridge is also heavily armored and shielded; however, as it accumulates damage, the Enterprise will start to handle sluggishly as the shields become weaker. Your vessel's (or is it a "nuclear wessel"?) main screen is your window to the outside. As it becomes damaged, greater and greater interference patterns start obscuring your view. But don't worry, during combat you can ask Scotty to concentrate his damage control on the main view screen.

The Enterprise is one fast mother-ship! It is powered by two Warp drives that provide the power required for warping space to travel at faster-than-light velocities. The impulse engines are used to cruise around in battle or when orbiting a planet.

**Chekov, Fire Photon Torpedoes!** Ah, what would a starship be without weapons? The Enterprise also comes equipped with phasers, a later cousin to the laser cannon. After firing, they take a few seconds to recharge. Also on board are photon torpedoes, which are energy charges of matter and anti-matter (you know, the stuff Spam is made out of) separated in magnophoton force fields that detonate on contact. Photon torpedoes take a little longer to reload than phasers, but they pack a big punch.

During your journey, you'll engage in a few mock battles with other Federation starships. These practice runs will gear you up for combat against your enemies, such as the Klingons, Romulans, and Elasi Pirates.

The Klingons are known to be aggressive, so keeping a watchful eye on them is crucial. Their Battle Cruiser is adequately equipped with disruptors and photon torpedoes. Although similar in speed and maneuverability to your ship, a Battle Cruiser can only fire one photon torpedo at a time. But don't underestimate the Klingons. A recent alliance with the Romulans has resulted in Battle Cruisers being retro-fitted with Romulan cloaking devices.

The Romulans fought a war against the Federation a century ago. Now a neutral zone has been set up to maintain peace, but violations have led to altercations. The Romulan Warbird is slow and maneuvers poorly, but it has powerful plasma torpedoes and a cloaking device that makes it invisible.

Elasi pirates are a loose confederation of pirate captains that prey on ships. Their vessels are small and quick. They are especially dangerous when cornered by two or more ships.

**Speech! Speech!** MacPlay is currently developing a version of Star Trek that will use speech recognition in conjunction with the PlainTalk system found in the new AV series Macs. You'll be able to talk directly to the computer and issue commands to your officers.

Expect to see Star Trek on the shelves this month, followed by a special CD-ROM version of Star Trek featuring speech recognition, and actual voices from the original actors sometime in the fourth quarter.