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Get ready for some action!

OK, here's the "thin" plot:

It's the late 22nd century, and you are a Mercenary for the Star Trust. Your job is to protect shipping lanes, and outposts throughout your assigned sectors of space.

Destroy as many enemy ships as you can, without running out of fuel, or shields.

Click below to learn how to play.

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SOME IMPORTANT STUFF FIRST...

Due to the nature of the animation in the game, a powerful PC is recommended for full enjoyment of the game.

If your video card does not support image stretching, you will be notified, and the game will not be playable. We apologize, but there are too many video card manufacturers who claim their cards are Windows compatible, but aren't.

A Small Font video driver must be used in order for the game to start. Consult your video card documentation for information on Small Font drivers. A 256 color or higher video driver is also a requirement (if everything looks grey, then a 16 color driver is probably loaded).

The game will perform best with a 256 color driver installed.

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Game Play

Interface

Star Merc utilizes a very simple gaming interface. Everything you need is just a click away.

- Click the 'Right' mouse button to toggle control of your ship. The mouse cursor will vanish when you are steering the ship, and reappear when you want to click on objects in the cockpit.
- Click the 'Left' mouse button to select objects in the cockpit, or to fire your weapons (when you are controlling your ship).

There are 2 screens in Star Merc, the Cockpit, and the NavTrack.

- The cockpit is your view of the surrounding game world. From here, you control your ship and its' weapons.
- The NavTrack is used to navigate from sector to sector with your ship.

Game Play

Select "Start New Game" from the title screen.

Star Merc starts you out in a sector of space, free from enemy ships. The only thing in this sector is an Station.

Click the Right Mouse Button to toggle Auto-Pilot, allowing you to use the mouse cursor to select objects in the cockpit.



Click on "Plot", or the Nav-Track screen.

The Nav Track screen will appear allowing you to select a sector to travel to.

Enemy ships are display with Green Triangles on the display, and their number. Your ship is located with a Yellow Square. Stations (Outposts), are denoted with the letters STA.

Select a destination sector with the cursor. The required fuel will be displayed, and if it is less then the quantity you have on board, you can jump to that sector.

Power OFF the Nav-Track, and return to the cockpit.

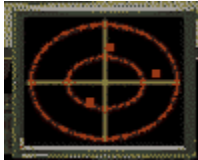
In the cockpit, click the "Jump" button, and your ship will enter a "Wormhole" allowing

you to hyperspace to the selected sector.

Steer your craft into the wormhole. If your Targeting Box drifts outside the Wormhole, you will not reach your intended destination, ending up in a different sector.

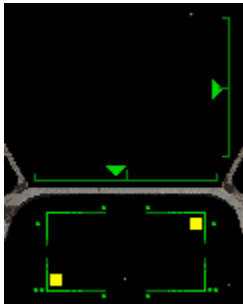
Blowing Things Up...

Once you have reached your destination, it's time to waste a few Bad Guys.



Below the View Window is the Tactical Scanner. Enemy ships are displayed as Blips on this scanner. The center of the scanner is straight ahead, the edges of the outside circle are behind you.

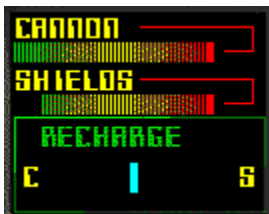
Use the mouse to steer the ship, to bring the Target Blips to the Center of the Scanner. Once they are there, they should be visible in the View Window and the TARGET indicator will light up.



Using the Head-Up Display (HUD), you can aim precisely at Enemy Ships. The Horizontal and Vertical Velocity Vectors display which direction you are steering, and how quickly. Watch them to gain an understanding of how they work.

The rectangular display in the center of the View Window is the Target Reticle. When an Enemy Ship is centered within the Target Reticle, the LOCKED indicator will light up. Firing at the ship now will almost certainly hit it.

The Yellow Target Direction Indicators show the general direction toward an Enemy Ship. Use these in conjunction with the Tactical Scanner to locate Enemy Ships.



To the bottom left of the cockpit you will find your Weapon and Shield Status Indicator.

Keep a careful eye on your shield status. When your shields reach zero, so do you.

Your Laser Cannon recharges at a fixed rate. If at any time you fire, and nothing happens, wait a few seconds for the Lasers to recharge a bit.

You can recharge your shields by traveling to any Station.

Nav Track



The NavTrack displays information about the surrounding sectors.

Your ship's location is displayed with a Yellow Marker.

Enemy Ships are shown with Green Markers.

Stations are marked with STA.

When you click on a destination, the number, and skill of the enemy craft will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. The fuel required to reach the destination will also be displayed.



Make sure you will have enough fuel to reach a Station after the jump, otherwise, you will become stranded, and the game will end.

Click the Left Mouse Button to select a Sector. If you wish to select another Sector, click the Right Mouse Button to clear the previous selection, and try again.

When you are finished, click the Power Button in the lower right hand corner. This will transfer the Sector coordinates to the Nav Computer.

Once back in the Cockpit, click the Jump Button to enter the Wormhole.

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Game Options

From the title screen, click on "Options"

Inverted Mouse

The mouse will normally track your movement inverted through the Y-Axis. Pushing forward will cause your ship to move downward, pulling back will cause it move upward. Toggle this setting to reverse the Y-Axis.

Animated Stars

You can turn on, or off Animated Stars. On slower machines, the animated stars will degrade performance. On fast machines, they will look cool.

Toggle this to suit your systems performance.

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System Requirements

Star Merc recommendations.

Star Merc minimum requirement:

486/66 DX2 Processor
MS Windows 3.1.
4MB RAM
256 color 640x480 VGA

I recommend the following for best performance:

Pentium processor (right... what else is new..) 90 mHz or faster
MS Windows 3.11, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 or Windows 95
Enhanced Mode
8+ MB RAM
256 color 640x480 Accelerated Graphics Card
MS Windows compatible sound card (turned way up!)

Keyboard Commands for Star Merc

S - Will toggle Animated Stars On and Off

F - Will turn on the frame rate indicator, giving an approximation of the speed the game is running. The Pentium 90 with a Stealth VRAM in 256 color mode, that Star Merc was developed on registered 38 frames per second. If this value drops below 15 fps, gameplay will be difficult, time to upgrade.

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(Registered version only)
<ordering>

Diversions Software

A small US software company dedicated to producing only the highest quality games, at decent prices...

Enemy Ships

Flown by employees of Apogee...

few extra keys
<Keyboard>

Prairie Dogs

Prairie Dogs from our award winning 'Prairie Dog Hunt' series of software. Visit <http://www.divsoft.com> to find out more.

Small Font

A video driver that has a logical screen DPI of 96 or less.

Stations

Stations allow refueling of your ship, and re-charging of your Shields

