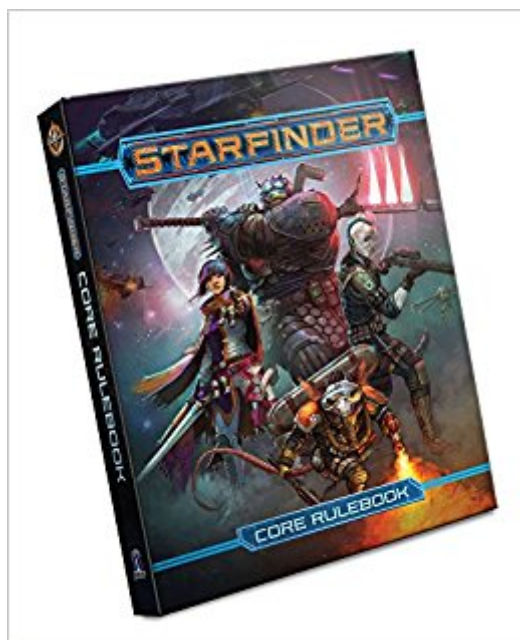


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# Starfinder Roleplaying Game: Starfinder Core Rulebook



## Synopsis

Strap in and blast off! The Starfinder Roleplaying Game puts you in the role of a bold science-fantasy explorer, investigating the mysteries of a weird and magical universe as part of a starship crew. Will you delve for lost artifacts in the ruins of alien temples? Strap on rune-enhanced armor and a laser rifle to battle undead empires in fleets of bone ships, or defend colonists from a swarm of ravenous monsters? Maybe you'll hack into the mainframe of a god-run corporation, or search the stars for clues to the secret history of the universe or brand new planets to explore. Whether you're making first contact with new cultures on uncharted worlds or fighting to survive in the neon-lit back alleys of Absalom Station, you and your team will need all your wits, combat skill, and magic to make it through. But most of all, you'll need each other. This massive 528-page hardcover rulebook is the essential centerpiece of the Starfinder Roleplaying Game, with rules for character creation, magic, gear, and more everything you need to play Starfinder as either a player or Game Master! The next great adventure in science-fantasy roleplaying takes off here, and the Starfinder Core Rulebook is your ticket to a lifetime of adventure amid the stars! The Starfinder Core Rulebook includes:

- All player and Game Master rules in a single volume.
- Complete rules for science-fantasy races like logical androids, telepathic lashunta, ysoki ratfolk, and more plus all of the classic fantasy races of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game!
- 7 new science-fantasy classes, from the spellhacking technomancer to the starship mechanic with a remote-controlled robot. Will you be a heavily armored soldier, a charismatic envoy, a stealthy operative, an occult mystic, or the cosmically attuned solarian, who calls forth strange powers and shapes energy weapons from stars and black holes?
- A detailed overview of Starfinder's core setting, including the planets of the Pact Worlds, their gods, major factions and threats, and more.
- Complete rules for starship combat, as well as for building and customizing your starship.
- Hundreds of science-fantasy weapons, armors, and items, both magical and technological, from plasma cannons and holy power armor to enchanted swords and cybernetic implants.
- Hundreds of spells to let your mystic or technomancer tap into esoteric energies and rewrite the laws of physics.
- Rules for alien environments, deadly traps, bizarre diseases and poisons, and everything else you need to craft exciting adventures.
- Advice on converting Pathfinder RPG content to Starfinder, and vice-versa.
- And much, much more!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not quite through all the rules sections, but so far it is a good solid game with a lot of player choice for crafting the character they want without any particular thing being over or under powered. The addition of the Theme system is useful and the separation of Hit Points and Stamina points hearkens back to the old d20 Star Wars system.

Game content and art are fantastic, binding quality is terrible. I've received two books so far with serious quality issues. My first book split the very first day between pages 32 and 33, so I returned it for another copy. The replacement book is even worse quality than the first. The full binding on the second book was unattached out of the box. Really frustrating when returning the item can't fix the problem. I really want to like this product but sadly, I cannot recommend you spend \$60 on this book. Stick to the PDF if you don't want to be disappointed. Paizo needs to work with someone else for binding, the poor quality craftsmanship is hurting the experience of purchasing their games.

The Starfinder Core Rulebook is one big 528 page beautiful book full of science fantasy roleplaying goodness. I have been waiting for this since it was announced. It was a big challenge, how do you bring all that fantasy with its magic and monsters into a science setting and blend it with all that technology, make it playable and most importantly make it fun? Now here I am cracking the book open and flipping through the pages and I find that the Starfinder team have exceeded my expectations. Wow, I'm impressed! Firstly, it's beautiful, yeah, I mentioned that before, but it's worth saying again. In beautiful I don't just mean the art, which is, well, beautiful. It's also the layout. This is a rulebook. Foremost it needs to provide the rules in an easy to read and access

manner. Well Starfinder does it. Some of those pages have lots of words on them, but they are easy to read. The clear headings, the nice to read font on the white background, the well laid out tables and the simple modern feeling page borders with their red chapter captions do the job nicely. Worthy of mention are the tabs on the right side of most pages. Yeah, they look good, but I found since these tabs list all the chapters, and the current chapter is highlighted in red, you can open the book and then locate the chapter you are after in the tabs and then look on the side of the book to quickly find the chapter you are after and simply open it to those pages. A nice useful touch.

Now onto rules. I was worried that this would be a severely streamlined Pathfinder ruleset. The concern came from the fact that Paizo needed to fit all those science rules in somewhere and the current trend in roleplaying is to make things simpler by just having less rules. I like my rules with a bit of crunch. I find too many rules makes a game unplayable, too little and then many rule decisions need to be made at the game table which makes it difficult to keep the rules consistent and fair. Well, I can happily say Starfinder hits the sweet point for me.

At its core is the Pathfinder ruleset. What the Starfinder team have done is a bit of streamlining and some tweaking that has had a profound impact on how the game plays. A nice example of streamlining is attacks of opportunity. Yes, they are still there, I was worried they would be removed. Instead they have been tweaked and only three conditions now trigger them. Iterative attacks are gone, they are those extra attacks a character gets when their base attack bonus gets high. Nice in concept, but it severely slows down game play at higher levels. In Starfinder, instead of iterative attacks, a character just does more damage per attack as they go up in level. So, in the end they deal the same amount of damage per turn, but with way less dice rolls, speeding up game play.

A massive change is that we now have stamina and resolve points. Massive not in how many new rules we need, but massive in the effect it will have on gameplay. A character takes damage against their stamina points first. Once they run out, it goes against hit points. The thing with stamina points is that you can recover all of them by simply taking a 10-minute rest and using up 1 resolve point. This changes the way the game will play. No longer do you need someone in the party dedicated to healing everyone after every fight. Everyone can just heal themselves and keep going. That is of course if they have resolve points left. That brings its own charm, since you can use resolve points not just for restoring stamina points, but for enhancing some of your actions, and they also play an important part in your characters survival once your character reaches 0 hit points. Decisions, decisions, a simple mechanical addition to the game brings so many choices to the players. A big plus in my opinion.

One thing that I wasn't too keen on was item levels. At first glance, it seems wrong. Why should a level 1 character be restricted to just level 1 to 3 items? Yes,

it's only a guide and nothing in the rules stops a character from using a high-level item, but game balance will be profoundly changed if your level 1 starts toting around a Blue Star plasma cannon dealing 8d10 damage per attack and starts wearing Aegis Series heavy armor. Then I started re-reading the Item Level section on page 167. The last paragraph then clicked and some other ideas began to spawn in my mind. That last paragraph basically says that a character's level abstracts away the need to have licenses and the need to find contacts to purchase items that are of the appropriate level for that character. I asked myself, "Do I want to track all these licenses in Starfinder?" and the answer was no, especially if many worlds would have their own licensing requirements. So, in the end, I have come around and believe that the item level abstraction does play an important part in the game. It brings simplicity as well as an expected power level for a character, the later important when creating adventures. A quick diversion back to that earlier idea I had as it helped me accept item levels. Since items are restricted, then that could lead to having repossession professionals that collect bounties for retrieving misplayed items. All easy to do since many expensive items in the future will be trackable, not just by imbedded security tags, but just by their composition. So, your level 1 character may be toting around that Blue Star plasma cannon around, but as soon as he visits an establishment that does security sweeps, well they will soon find themselves with a large fine, no plasma cannon and possibly worse. Ever since I first saw Star Wars back in 1977, I have always had a sweet spot for starships. In Starfinder, it all starts on page 288 and finishes on page 327. In-between those pages are rules covering travel, building a starship, some example starships, combat and finished off with an example of play. Traditionally d20 uses squares for combat, and while working well for personal combat, they would prove awkward when trying to manoeuvre a starship which I feel is all about turning circles. Instead hexes are used for starship combat, which I am happy with. It is also all 2D. A good choice, as in my gaming life I have succumbed from time to time to the idea of 3D combat and on every attempt, have found it rather lacking and less fun than just using simple 2D hexes. These are not simply just starship rules. They are roleplaying starship rules. By that I mean the rules have gone a long way in making sure that all characters in the party have something to do during starship combat. Starship combat uses five roles, captain, engineer, gunner, pilot and science officer. When the characters board a starship they choose their role, which determines what actions they can perform. The nice twist to all this is that the roles do not rely on some special skills, but on the normal skills the characters already have. For example, a science officer can perform a scan action that consists of a computer check. When it comes to the starships themselves, well they are awesome! The Omenbringer on page 306 is a good example of

something with that wow factor. Its art resembles that of a giant whale skeleton, glowing red on its centre line. Then you read its description and find it is crewed by undead pilots that are able to stay ready at their stations indefinitely, all without life support. I find this well thought out and imaginative. On a final note, the starships are not just there for combat, they also take you from planet to planet using the Drift, basically Starfinder's version of hyperspace. Starships that can travel using the Drift have a Drift rating. The higher the rating, the less time it takes the starship to travel. The Basic engine has a Drift rating of 1, while the Ultra has a rating of 5. Since you divide the time to travel by this Drift rating, that rating of 5 makes a huge difference. Nice. Now onto the setting. It all starts on page 422 and finishes on page 497. Take the Pathfinder setting, add a few thousand years, extrapolate technology to take technological advancement into account and you have Starfinder. Gods are still there, some aren't as prominent as they once were and there are some new ones. Most notable is Triune, the All-Code, and let's just say Triune had something to do with the Drift. The setting has a bit of a mystery that is called the Gap. A fairly recent period of time where everything was forgotten and Golarion, the Pathfinder setting's main world, just disappeared. The setting tends to focus on the Pact Worlds, which was Golarion's solar system, and describes each of those planets in the solar system with a 2-page spread. This includes Absalom Station, which now orbits the sun in what used to be Golarion's orbit. The settings chapter also covers some planets that are outside the Pact Worlds solar system in less detail and they each get around a half page write-up. There is a 2-page spread on the Great Beyond, the multiverse that Starfinder is set in. There are also write-ups on several factions and organizations with Abadarcorp and the Hellknights ringing bells of familiarity for anyone acquainted with Pathfinder. I find that the Starfinder setting feels rich and well thought out and I am certainly going to use it and add my own little touches here and there. The beauty of having a science fantasy setting is that since the galaxy is such a large place, I am free to create solar systems and planets with minimal impact on the published Starfinder setting. Starfinder is a big book, packed with rules and information, and even though my review is longer than I expected I have only touched on some of the contents. I haven't talked about races, classes, skills, feats, magic, vehicles, or even the legacy chapter that helps bring Pathfinder to Starfinder and also includes the dwarf and elf races. I highly recommend Starfinder if you want to tell stories about heroes larger than life. Heroes that exist purely in movies and other fiction, ones that escapes our mundane life, travel on starships and get to see dragons. To me, Starfinder is heroic roleplaying at its best. I firmly believe it takes d20 roleplaying to new heights and look forward too many years of playing it.

So far I like it but check your copy. But at page 281 the next two pages are 210-211, then its page 284-285 and back to 214-215 and then back to 288.

As an RPG, Starfinder takes much of what made Pathfinder successful and quantum leaped it into a futuristic science-fantasy setting. Between space magic, a plane-like take on hyperspace, and healthy variety of ships and equipment, there's a lot of potential. That potential of a fully fleshed out setting isn't quite realized in this core book, however, with just a handful of core races, which is odd since the stated goal of Starfinder was to create a space-cantina eclectic mix of aliens. And yet that flare is very much missing here. As far as the system behind the game goes, most of it is a translation of Pathfinder with some helpful streamlining. The character power/progression curve is still steep, especially compared to RPGs like D&D 5th edition and the Star Wars RPG, but some changes like no more base multi-attacks for fighters and spells capping at sixth rather than ninth level flatten the curve slightly from Pathfinder. The rules begin to breakdown with ship combat, where the game tries to keep power creep down by introducing checks relative to party level (which determines your ship's level, or "tier"). There's plenty of discussion on this topic among the forums, and it's hard to judge right now if the ship system is broken, but it's obvious that as written it's a poor solution that will put players on a treadmill, feeling like they need to improve their skills just to be able to accomplish the same ship activities with roughly equivalent success as they level. It's a system that is neither realistic nor adds to the fun that should come with gaining levels, and therefore it's a wonder that Paizo created this design in the first place. Then there's the quality of the book. Paizo's print and production work generally wavers between average and shoddy. While I've had multiple adventure path books fall apart, their core books are usually a bit below the quality of books from Wizards of the Coast or Fantasy Flight. My Starfinder core book, however, arrived in pretty miserable condition. Upon opening it, the binding immediately split between pages 32 and 33. The binding looks thin with questionable integrity in other areas as well. There are multiple reports online of people missing pages, or pages assembled out of order. I'll be returning my copy and might buy the PDF instead. As a whole, the Starfinder Core Rulebook contains a decent RPG and fills a niche for those looking for a science-fantasy setting that isn't Star Wars. If you plan to buy this, I recommend grabbing the digital PDF. Regardless, based on my experience I can't recommend purchasing a hard copy of this book.

Thoroughly disappointed in the quality. The hardcover was nice and the game itself is amazing.

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