How to Play Teaching Guides:
#39 Eclipse

This guide is intended for use by owners of the game looking for a quick outline with a recommended order and structure with which to teach the game. To hear a sample explanation or to learn the game yourself listen to episode #39 of The How to Play Podcast available at www.howtoplaypodcast.com

① The Hook - What the Game is About

" Welcome to Eclipse. The six terran factions have lived in peace for many years. The six factions that had emerged from the migration from the barren earth had reached out to each other and formed an alliance through the galactic council. But peace makes for a lousy board game, so out of sheer boredom these six groups of humans have decided to battle it out in a spectacular sci-fi battle of superiority to see which group is the most awesome.

We will start on our home worlds taking turns choosing one of six available actions. The most common actions being; to explore an adjacent hex, to spend science points to research technologies, to upgrade your ships with these awesome new technologies, to build more ships or to move your ships on the board. With each action costing money and with each successive action you take on a turn becoming more expensive. Eventually a player will pass and when all players pass the action phase will be over and we will resolve the rest of the round.

The game is played over nine rounds and at the end of nine rounds whoever has the most points will win the game. The largest and most common sources for points in the game are;
• Bonuses for exploring tiles
• Territory you control at the end of game,
• Technology tiles you have researched
• Reputation tiles earned for participating in battles

So these represent your four major goals in the game and correlate directly to what us fancy gamers like to refer to as "The 4 X's." This is known as a "4X game" and knowledge of these 4Xs will help focus you on your goals and score the most victory points. Here are the 4 X's in the recommended order for galactic domination;
• EXPLORE - you start on one hex and you will first need more territory
• EXPAND - build settlements on newly discovered territories to get more resources
• EXPLOIT - use those resources to get more actions, more technology & more improved ships
• EXTERMINATE - use your awesome ships to decimate your opponent's or neutral ships and take their territory or simply use your ships to protect your holdings

The player who accomplishes these goals the best will score the most points and win the game.

Getting resources and taking actions

1. Gathering Resources
   1.1 Cubes are population, 1 cube of each type starts on home world
   1.2 The more population you settle the more resources you will get
   1.3 First available empty square in cube rows are income
   1.4 Octagonal Markers are storage markers for resources
   1.5 Money is Orange for More Actions
   1.6 Science is Pink for Researching Technologies
   1.7 Materials is Brown for Building Ships
   1.8 Grey Planets are Wild, Starred planets require a tech
   1.9 Resources can always be exchanged 2 for 1!

2. The Influence Disk Row;
   2.1 Used for taking actions and for controlling a hex on the board
   2.2 Need to balance upkeep to current money income

3. Action Phase - place an influence disk to take an action
   3.1 Can do same action multiple times
   3.2 Other players cant really block you from doing an action

4. Pass by flipping over card
   4.1 First to pass gets start player for next round
   4.2 If all players pass action phase is over
   4.3 If it comes back to you, you are able to do "Mini" Reaction actions

The Six Actions

1. Explore - Look at an Adjacent Tile
   1.1 Choose a Direction - Sector I-III Characteristics
   1.2 Claim or Discard - Discarding ends turn
   1.3 Orient based on Wormholes
   1.4 Skulls - Ancients you cannot claim, may fight later
   1.5 Empty may claim with disk and take reward (2 VPs or bonus)
   1.6 Colonizing Planets - Use 3 Colonies Ships to increase income

2. <u>Research - Purchase a technology with PINK science</u>
    2.1 Techs give special abilities, most improve ship battle strength
    2.2 Random set available at start, more each round
    2.3 Go over abilities of available techs at end of explanation
    2.4 Cost in PINK science is on tiles (first number)
    2.5 Cost reduced by tech category discount to minimum price
    2.6 Reaching end of a tech line earns victory points
3. <u>Upgrade - Load up ship with missiles, lasers, shields and engines</u>
    3.1 Get two tiles - freebie techs or researched techs
    3.2 Tiles are free; cost was the research
    3.3 Place tiles on your ship blueprints to upgrade all ships of that type
        3.3.1 Ship must have a drive and requisite energy
        3.3.2 May cover blank or existing parts
4. <u>Build - Build up to two ships,</u>
    4.1 Pay cost in BROWN materials,
    4.2 Place in hex with influence disk
    4.3 Limited by ship count
    4.4 Starbases, Orbitals, Monoliths builds with tech
5. <u>Move - Make three ship movements to attack or defend</u>
    5.1 Can move one ship three times or three ships once
    5.2 Movement based on engine and MUST use full wormholes!
    5.3 Combat occurs after the action phase
    5.4 Pinning - each ship stops one ship from moving past
6. <u>Influence - Take/Give up Control of up to two Hexes</u>
    6.1 Why? To get more Actions or claim territory
    6.2 Taking off Influence removes population (back to correct color)
    6.3 ALSO unflip two colony ships - may do action just for this!
7. <u>Review of Six Actions - Just look at those awesome Icons!</u>
    7.1 Icons tell you what and how many, (Aliens change up actions)
8. <u>Reaction Actions - may build, upgrade or move once</u>
    8.1 Very useful when a player launches a surprise attack or to go first

◉ Combat

1. After Action phase all combats resolved in tile # order (outside in)
2. Combat is between two sides
   2.1 If 2 players and neutral, players fight than winner fights neutral
   2.2 Multiple players in, last two in fight first, winner continues
3. Combat happens in rounds, each ship group fires once
   3.1 Firing order is determined by initiative (arrows)
   3.2 Ties in initiative are broken in favor of the defender
   3.3 Defender is owner of tile or person who entered first
4. On a ship group's turn roll dice equal to colored dice icons
   4.1 6's are hits, if you hit you assign where the damage goes
   4.2 Interceptors - die at 1 damage, Cruisers - 2, Dreadnoughts - 3
   4.3 Ships you kill die immediately and will not fire back (yea initiative!)
5. If ships of more than 1 player remain, begin another round
6. On a ship group's turn that group may declare a retreat
   6.1 Must retreat to hex with your influence disk free of enemies
   6.2 Move to edge of where you are retreating and take fire for one turn
7. Continue until only one players ships remain in the hex
8. Attack Population - Each ship fires once at population - go to graves
9. Draw Reputation Tiles up to 5 based on kills and keep 1 (4 max)
10. Ships may take over influence in hexes without opposing ships or cubes
11. Repair - All damage cubes go away

◉ Impact of technologies on combat

1. Go first - Initiative Arrows: Drives and Computers
2. More Dice/More Damage: Dice Symbols and Colors: Cannons
3. Hit More Often: White Box + : Computers
4. Get hit less Often: Black Box - : Shields
5. Withstand more damage: Starred Circle: Hull
6. Get the first shot: Two dice at start of battle: Plasma Missiles
7. Finish 'em off: Automatically wipes out population: Neutron Bombs

🎯 Diplomacy

1. When you have influence hexes adjacent you may ally with that player
2. Trade ambassador tiles for a point and a production cube
3. Ambassador slots are limited to two based on icons
4. Allied with that player until end of game
5. You are free to attack your ally but then are labeled as the traitor
6. A broken alliance returns ambassadors and cubes
7. The traitor gets -2 VP card and may not ally, until another turns traitor

🎯 Full Phases of a Round

1. Action Phase - Take actions until all pass
2. Combat Phase - Resolve combats outside to in by tile number
3. Upkeep Phase
   3.1 Use Colony Ships (Especially if you have conquered Territory)
   3.2 Check ORANGE money upkeep
   3.3 Bankrupt? If you are short trade or give up influence
   3.4 Produce PINK Science and BROWN Materials
4. Cleanup Phase
   4.1 Draw new techs
   4.2 Reset Influence Disks, Colony Ships, Action Card, Dead Cubes
   4.3 Move round marker

🎯 End of Game Scoring

1. Hexes with an Influence Disc (1–4 VP per hex)
2. Progress on the Technology Tracks
3. Reputation Tiles (1–4 VP per tile)
4. Discovery Tiles (2 VP per tile that was kept VP side up)
5. Ambassador Tiles (1 VP per tile)
6. Traitor Card (-2 VP!)
7. Monoliths on own hexes (3 VP per Monolith)

③ The Hamster - How to Win the Game

1. <u>Expand First - get your engine running</u>
   1.1 First priority is to get more population out on the board
   1.2 More resources, more money for more actions
   1.3 Beware of overextending yourself by running low of disks
   1.4 Don't claim hexes just to claim them, make sure they are worth it
   1.5 Consider using influence to abandon after discovering

2. <u>Safety Second - be prepared</u>
   2.1 Don't get too greedy, stay prepared for invasion
   2.2 If you do not get ship techs and build ships you will be attacked
   2.3 Ship focus, go heavy on one ship type or across two types
   2.4 If your opponents do not develop military attack them

3. <u>Winning Third - many ways to win</u>
   3.1 The Conqueror - Reputation and Territory
   3.2 The Scientist - Techs and Monoliths
   3.3 The Discoverer - Territory and Discoveries
   3.4 Though any path requires a strong defense
   3.5 Attack the leader or protect your lead!

4. <u>Good Luck and Have Fun</u>