The Game of Planetary Assault

Read This First:
The rules to WorldKiller are organized by major topics arranged in the order in which they occur in the play of the game. Each such major topic is given a number and a name below which is given (usually) a General Rule or Description which summarizes the rules in that section. This is usually followed by numbered paragraphs called Cases, which give the specifics of the rules. Note that the numbering of the Cases is a decimal form of the Major Section number. Players should examine the map and counters and then quickly read the rules (without trying to memorize them). Then the game should be set up to play and a “trial run” made. Note that it isn’t even necessary to have an opponent — the game can be played solitaire without any special rules, simply by assuming the roles of the opponents in proper turn. Because simulation games are richer and more complex than the typical board game, this style of play can be quite enjoyable (and is certainly one of the best ways to learn the rules).

Inventory of Game Parts
Each game of WorldKiller should contain the following parts:
- One 11” x 16” mapsheet
- One sheet of die-cut counters (100 pieces)
- One rules folder (bound into Ares version)
- One die (not in Ares version)
- One game box (not in Ares version)

If any of these parts are missing or damaged, notify SPI’s Customer Service Department.

Rules Questions
Should you have any difficulty interpreting the rules, please write to SPI, phrasing your questions so that they can be answered by a simple sentence, word, or number. You must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. We cannot guarantee a proper answer should you choose to phone in your question (the right person is not always available — and since SPI has published hundreds of games, no one individual is capable of answering all questions). Write to:

SPI Rules Questions Editor for
WorldKiller
257 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10010

[1.0] Basic Description of Play and Equipment

GENERAL COMMENT: WorldKiller is a simulation of the classic science fiction theme of planetary assault. In the standard scenario, one Player commands the ships and orbital fortresses of the defending human forces; and the other Player commands the ships of the marauding alien force. Beyond the standard scenario there are provided additional rules and types of ships in order that play might be varied and scenarios of the Players’ own devising be gamed.

BASIC PROCEDURE OF PLAY:
The Planetary Player’s fortresses and ships are set up first, and then the forces of the Intruder Player, according to the Standard Scenario instructions (2.0). Taking alternating turns, each Player moves or fires the weapons of one of his ships. Movement takes place on the 11” x 16” map that shows the position of a planet in a rectangular volume of space. The basic object of the game for the Intruder is to destroy the planet and its defending forces.

CASES:
[1.1] The WorldKiller map represents a rectangular volume of three dimensional space, measuring eight by twelve by seven Cubes.
The basic unit of distance by which all range and movement is measured is the Cube (each cube is a scale 10,000 kilometers across). The two dimensional surface on which the map is printed also includes the third dimension as a series of positive (to +3) or negative (to -3) positions within each two dimensional grid box. Note that each grid box is numbered with a three digit number. Since each grid box is actually seven Cubes deep, this number should be followed by a zero or a positive or negative number to indicate an exact Cube. For example 101 +3 is the “highest” Cube in the upper left space. Zero coordinates use “@”, e.g., 101@0.

[1.2] The playing pieces represent the ships and orbital fortresses involved in the battle.
Carefully punch out the cardboard counters and examine them. Each ship counter has a series of numbers printed on its front side which represent the capabilities of that particular ship.

SAMPLE SHIP

Defense Strength: The basic defensive capability of a ship or fortress.
Jump Range: The maximum number of Cubes a ship may move in a single game-turn.

[1.3] A single six-sided die is necessary to play WorldKiller.
This is provided in the boxed edition of the game but not in the subscription version. This die is used to generate a random number for use in the combat procedure. It has nothing to do with movement.

INTRUDER SHIPS AND MISSILES

PLANETARY SHIPS AND ORBITAL FORTRESSES

OPENING THE RULES FROM THIS ISSUE:
Open the magazine to the center, bend the staples with a penknife or screwdriver; lift out the rules and close staples.
[2.0] Standard Scenario
How to Start the Game and How to Win

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
In 3021, the fragile peace that existed between the human race and the e’kenn was shattered by e’kenn attacks on the frontiers of humankind. E’kenn strategy and operations consisted of subtle frontal attacks aimed at nothing short of annihilation of the target planets. The populations of two frontier worlds were totally destroyed before the others had had sufficient time to develop defense fleets to respond to the alien threat. The game presents the attack on Greendream in 3022.039, at 1755 hours Sector Three Standard Time. In the actual battle, the defense forces from Greendream inflicted heavy losses on the e’kenn assault group, while losing most of their own reserve forces. Because the weakened alien fleet was subsequently annihilated in the Battle of Margrett, Greendream is looked upon as the turning point that led to the Truce of Ikena in 3023.019.

PROCEDURE:
The Planetary Player sets his forces up first, in any of the Cubes not in the Intruder set-up zone marked on the map. He also places his orbital fortresses on the Cubes indicated on the map. The Intruder then sets up his forces in any of the Cubes within the Intruder set-up zone. Play then proceeds according to the Sequence of Play (see Section 3.0) until one side or the other wins or resigns the game.

CASES:
[2.1] The Planetary Player’s starting forces are as pictured:

- 4 Outrider Orbital Fortresses (one each in Cubes 308@0; 310@0; 508@0; 510@0)

- 5 V-Duster Patrol Frigates

- 4 Spacetrain Reserve Cruisers

- 2 K-Wagon Light Cruisers

These forces deploy in any Cubes not in the Intruder Set-up Zone.

[2.2] The Intruder Player’s starting forces are as pictured:

- 386-3 5 WorldKiller Assault Ships

- 444-2 2 Dominator Assault Ships

These forces deploy in any Cubes in the Intruder Set-up Zone.

[2.3] The Intruder Player wins if he destroys the planet and has at least one surviving ship upon doing so; otherwise, the Planetary Player wins.

Note that, if after twenty Game-Turns of play, the Intruder has been so weakened as to be incapable of destroying the planet and yet still capable of avoiding the Planetary Player’s attempts to eliminate him completely, the Planetary Player can claim victory by having twice as many total Attack Strength Points in play as the Intruder has total Defense Strength Points in play at the end of any Game-Turn. This provision is only meant to prevent the weakened and losing Intruder from dragging out the game by dodging around the map avoiding combat.

[3.0] Sequence of Play

GENERAL RULE:
WorldKiller is played in consecutive turns called Game-Turns. Each Game-Turn consists of a number of alternating Player events called acts. Basically, each Player can perform one act per Game-Turn with every ship or fortress he has. The game can continue for an indefinite number of Game-Turns, until one or the other Player satisfies the victory conditions.

Outline of the Sequence of Play of a Game-Turn

Step 1. Intruder performs an act with one of his eligible ships (or passes). Upon acting, he turns the ship face down.

Step 2. Defender performs an act with one of his eligible ships or fortresses (or passes). Upon acting, he turns the ship or fortress face down.

Step 3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 until both Players have passed consecutively. If both pass consecutively (regardless of order) — or all possible actions have been performed — then the Game-Turn ends, and all ships and fortresses are turned face-up and a new Game-Turn begins.

CASES:
[3.1] There are any one of five possible actions a ship can take: Jump, Attack, Pop, Stretch, and Repair

[3.2] There are only two possible actions a fortress can take: Attack and Repair

[3.3] No ship or fortress may ever perform more than one act per Game-Turn.

[3.4] A ship or fortress is eligible to act if it is face-up on the map (i.e., it hasn’t yet acted in that Game-Turn).

Note also that a ship or fortress may be ineligible to fire if it currently sustains a number of Damage Points at least equal to its Attack Strength (see 6.2).

[4.0] Jumping
The Act of Moving

GENERAL RULE:
When it is a Player’s turn to act, any one of his eligible ships may Jump a distance equal to or less than its Jump Range. The Jump Range is expressed in Cubes of distance. Damage does not affect Jumping.

PROCEDURE:
The Player takes the ship from its current position and places it in its new position, being careful to place it on the exact line within the grid box that indicates the specific Positive or Negative Cube that it occupies. This is done by placing the edge of the counter abutting the appropriate line.

Ship in sample illustration is positioned in the “+2” Cube.

CASES:
[4.1] A ship measures the distance of its jump by reference to the True Distance Table (see page 22).

The Players should note that there are some legal jumps, particularly in diagonal directions, that are not readily recognized as such. The True Distance Table is a simple expression of the three-dimensional geometry of Jumping. See last page of rules.

[4.2] Ships may jump through any Cube on the way to their destination Cube.

Jumping is considered to be a kind of hyperspace travel (moving from one point to another without having to traverse the intervening space), and as such, nothing can block or get in the way of a jump.

[4.3] Ships may jump into or from Cubes containing other Friendly ships or fortresses.

[4.4] Ships may not enter Cubes containing Enemy ships or fortresses, nor may they ever enter the Cube containing the planet (408@0).
[4.5] Intruder ships may not enter the Cubes near the planet which are marked with stars.

These Cubes are prohibited (to Intruder ships only) due to the presence of powerful, short-ranged planet-based defenses.

[5.0] Stretching
A Special Kind of Intruder Jump

GENERAL RULE:
Any Intruder ship may increase the range of a given jump by inactive waiting (Stretching) a number of Game-Turns before performing the Jump. An Intruder that remains inactive for two Game-Turns may jump a distance of six Cubes (regardless of its normal range). An Intruder that waits for three Game-Turns may Jump on the following Game-Turn to any Cube on the map (except the Prohibited Cubes, the one containing the Planet, and Enemy occupied Cubes).

PROCEDURE:
Each Game-Turn in which Intruders have been Stretching should be recorded on a piece of paper (using the I.D. number on the counter).

CASES:
[5.1] An Intruder is not required to execute a Stretch Jump simply because it is eligible to do so.

The ship may continue to stretch or it may attack, pop, repair, or move normally thereby making itself ineligible to Stretch Jump. It may reintroduce the procedure simply by starting to wait inactively again.

[5.2] Damage does not interfere with Stretching.

[5.0] Attacking and Popping
How Combat is Resolved

GENERAL RULE:
Each ship and fortress has an Attack Strength and Weapon Range. When eligible, a ship or fortress may attack any single Enemy within its range.

PROCEDURE:
Subtract the Attack Strength of the acting ship or fortress from the final Defense Strength of the target. Take the resulting number* and subtract it from the number determined by the roll of one die. The result is the number of Damage Points inflicted on the ship or fortress. Place a Damage marker under the affected ship.

*If less than zero, treat as zero.

For example, a WorldKiller (Attack Strength of “3”) fires at an undamaged V-Duster (Defense Strength of “4”). The die-roll obtained (for the sake of the example) is “4.” This is reduced to “4” (Defense Strength minus Attack Strength yields a subtractor of “1”). The V-Duster sustains four Damage Points and now has an effective Defense Strength of “2.”

CASES:
[6.1] When a ship or fortress sustains a number of Damage Points double (or more than double) its printed Defense Strength, then that ship or fortress is destroyed.

Remove the piece from the game immediately. For example, if a WorldKiller assault ship currently has 12 Damage Points scored on it, it is destroyed.

[6.2] When a ship or fortress sustains a number of Damage Points equal to or greater than its Attack Strength, then that ship or fortress can no longer attack.

Should it repair itself, reducing the current Damage Points sustained below its Attack Strength, it may resume its ability to attack.

[6.3] The effective Defense Strength of a ship or fortress is equal to its printed strength minus half of the damage Points it is currently sustaining.

Round down when halving Damage Points for calculation of effective Defense Strength.

Example: A ship with a printed Defense Strength of “3” that has three points of damage on it has an effective Defense Strength of “2.”

[6.4] The Planetary Player’s ships (not fortresses) may have their Final Defense Strength increased by as much as two Points due to the adjacancy of Friendly ships or fortresses.

The Final Defense Strength increases by one for each of any two adjacent ships or fortresses. There is no increase beyond two, nor may any ship ever have a Final Defense Strength greater than six.

Example: There is a V-Duster Frigate each in 801 + 1; 802 + 1; 801 + 2, and 802 + 2. All are mutually adjacent to each other and therefore can add as much as two to each other’s Defense Strength.

[6.5] Any eligible ship may make a Pop attack by moving and firing (or firing and moving) in the same Game-Turn.

Immediately after making a Pop attack, the acting ship suffers two points of Damage (for straining its capacities). Note that a Pop attack is only considered to be one act.

[6.6] When a ship or fortress is destroyed, all other ships (but not fortresses) in the same Cube are immediately destroyed as well.

[6.7] The Planet has three passive ground based shields, each with a Defense Strength of “5.”

These shields must all be destroyed before the Planet is considered destroyed. They may be attacked individually and they may not repair themselves. Players keep track of the status of the shields on a piece of scratch paper. Alternatively, Players may use the Shield Markers provided to record which Shields remain and which one is under attack.

[7.0] Repair
The Ability of Ships and Fortresses to Recover from Damage

GENERAL RULE:
When eligible to act, a ship or fortress may choose to repair itself. The number of Damage Points removed is equal to the effective Defense Strength of that ship or fortress considered alone (i.e., without any possible adjacency benefit).

Example: If a ship with a printed Defense Strength of “4” had four points of damage on it, its effective Defense Strength would be “2,” and it could remove two Damage Points in an act of repair, making its current effective Defense Strength “3.”

[8.0] The Reinforcement Scenario

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
As an alternative line of the history of the battle, it is presumed that the long range engagement which preceded the main battle did not result in the mutual destruction that actually occurred. Rather, some of the forces involved recover and return to assist in the defense of the planet, pursued by the remnants of the second enemy fleet.

PROCEDURE:
On Game-Turn thirteen, the Planetary Player rolls the die, and as a result, may possibly bring on an additional force of seven ships. These new vessels enter the map from a randomly determined map edge. When the Planetary Player brings on his ships, the Intruder Player follows on a subsequent Game-Turn with a group of six of his own.

CASES:
[8.1] The Planetary reinforcement group consists of the following seven ships:
Two V-Duster Patrol Frigates
Two Spacetrain Reserve Cruisers
Two Sentry IX Regular Cruisers
One K-Wagon Light Cruiser

[8.2] The Intruder reinforcement group consists of the following six ships:
Three WorldKiller Assault Ships
Three Dominator Assault Ships

[8.3] Starting with Game-Turn 13, the Planetary Player throws a die to determine whether the reinforcement group will arrive; the chance for reinforcement improves on every subsequent Game-Turn.
On Game-Turn 13, a roll of “1” means the reinforcements arrive. On Game-Turn 14, a roll of “1” or “2” means the reinforcements arrive. A roll of “3” or less on Game-Turn 15, a roll of “4” or less on Game-Turn 16, and a roll of “5” or less on Game-Turn 17 will bring on the reinforcements. The reinforcement force automatically enters on Game-Turn 18, if it has not been activated before.

[8.4] The edge on which the Planetary reinforcement group enters is determined by the throw of the die.

1 = any Cube with a number ending in 01.
2 = any Cube with a number ending in 12.
3 = any Cube with a number starting in 1.
4 = any Cube with a number starting in 4.
5,6 = any Cube with a number starting in 5.

The whole group is placed in the entry Cubes and is eligible to act individually as of the Game-Turn of entry.

[8.5] The Intruder reinforcement group may enter in any Cube(s) not occupied by Enemy forces and not closer than three Cubes to the planet.

The Intruder reinforcement group arrives on the Game-Turn following the arrival of the Planetary Defense reinforcements.

[9.0] Missile Cruisers
An Optional Intruder Ship Type

GENERAL RULE:
If the Players desire, they may allow an Intruder Player to use two Smasher Missile Cruisers, either as starting forces or as reinforcements. These ships could have been present in the actual battle had the e’kenn stripped their home system defenses. The cruisers fire missiles which act independently after being launched.

PROCEDURE:
Missile Cruisers may each fire one missile as an act.

CASES:
[9.1] Missile Cruisers have a missile carrying capacity of six missiles.

There is no need to move the onboard missiles with the ships; rather they should appear only when launched.

[9.2] Missiles act independently on every Game-Turn, including the Game-Turn of launch.

They move just as ships do.

[9.3] When a missile enters an Enemy occupied Cube, it immediately explodes and attacks the Enemy with its Attack Strength.

Once a missile explodes it is removed and recycled for use as a new launch (presuming the ships have not used up their six missile load). Note that the missile (or a BlitzRider acting as a missile) is the only piece allowed to enter an Enemy occupied Cube. Missiles may be used against the planet. Note that the explosion of a missile or BlitzRider acting as a missile does not automatically destroy ships or forts as described in Case 6.6.

[9.4] Although missiles don’t repair themselves, damage never affects their Attack Strength.

Notice that the Attack Strength has no Weapon Range and can only come into use when the missile explodes.

[10.0] BlitzRider Scout Vessels
An Optional Planetary Ship Type

GENERAL RULE:
If both Players agree, the Planetary Player may be assigned as many as four BlitzRiders, one to each orbital fortress. Although this type was not then found in the histories of frontier worlds, a change of central fleet policy could have made them available.

PROCEDURE:
In any Game-Turn an orbital fortress may launch its BlitzRider which then acts independently after being launched.

CASES:
[10.1] BlitzRiders may execute a Pop without suffering the usual mandatory damage, if they move no more than half their Jump Range.

[10.2] BlitzRiders may always attack regardless of the damage they might be sustaining.

[10.3] A BlitzRider may act as a missile, i.e., crashing itself into an Enemy and immediately attacking.

If it performs this suicidal maneuver, it executes its final attack with an Attack Strength of “3.” This maneuver is treated as a Pop; i.e., the BlitzRider may move and then explode in the same act.

[11.0] Variable Strength of Forces

GENERAL RULE:
If the Players agree, they may vary the starting forces and reinforcements in any manner they wish. Even switching positions is allowed, i.e., the Intruder ships defend the planet and the normal Planetary forces attack. Note that an extra Worldkiller ship has been included in the mix to make the Intruder even stronger if so desired.

PROCEDURE:
After gaining some experience with the qualities of the various ships, the Players may construct any reasonable scenario. It is advisable to record variations and track the results so that successful variants can be played again. None of the conventions of the game should be considered sacrosanct — Players should feel free to change starting forces, set-ups, positions of fortresses, etc.

The entire frontier war can be simulated by playing a series of games. Start the Intruders with all of their ships (including optional counters). Planetary forces can start with only fortresses and four V-Dusters for the first two games. The third game is the standard scenario (except that the Intruder only has what survives the first two games). Players may elaborate this suggested format in any way they deem reasonable.

TRUE DISTANCE TABLE

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How to Use the True Distance Table:

When a ship displace from Cube to Cube, the Player should think of the move as a shift in three separate dimensions. If we call the two directions on the flat map surface X and Y, we can use the conventions of geometry and call the third (up and down) dimension Z. So, for example, a move from 801@0 to 604+2 is expressed as X3, Y2, and Z2. Looking on the Table we find that this is a true distance of 4 Cubes.

Design Credits:
Game Design, Graphic Design and Rules: Redmond A. Simonsen
Game Development: Anthony Buccini, Eric Goldberg
Graphic Production: Dave Engel, Rosalind Fruchman, Ted Keller, Manfred F. Milkuhn, Mike Moore, Bob Ryer
**WorldKiller Counter Section Nr. 1 (100 pieces): Front.**

Quantity of Sections of this identical type: 1. Total quality of Section (all types) in game: 1.

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