

Below is a summary of the core Twilight Imperium rules not otherwise covered by text available in play, on cards and otherwise. Text in *Italics* represent optional rules that we use in play.

Game Setup

1. Randomly allocate a Race for each player (eg. by shuffling the Home Systems and dealing them out).
2. Each player:
 - a. Takes, for their Race, the Race Sheet, Control Markers, Trade Cards, Command Counters, Home System tile and Home Planet cards. Command counters go in 'reinforcements'.
 - b. Chooses a colour and takes appropriate units and the Technology deck. Units go in 'reinforcements'.
 - c. Is dealt a Secret Objective. Unused Secret Objectives are removed from play, unseen by anyone.
 - d. *Each player draws to Political Cards if using the SE Strategy Cards*
3. Shuffle and place in the play area:
 - a. The Action Card and Political Card decks.
 - b. The 8 Strategy Cards in numerical order, active side up.
 - c. The Victory Point Track. Each player puts a Control Marker at zero.
4. Create the Objective Deck:
 - a. Remove the Game Over card and shuffle remaining Stage II Objectives. Draw 3 Stage II Objectives (*4 if playing with the SE Strategy Cards*). Shuffle these with the Game Over card and place face down. Remove other Stage II Objectives from play, unseen.
 - b. Shuffle the Stage I Objectives. Draw 6 and place on top of the Stage II Objectives. Remove the others from play, unseen.
 - c. *If playing with the SE Strategy Cards, reveal and put into play the top card from the Strategy Deck immediately.*
5. Randomly determine the "first player" and give them the Speaker Token.
6. Create the game board:
 - a. Mecatol Rex goes in the centre. Players should estimate the positions of their Home Systems and place theirs roughly where it will be.
 - b. Remove systems based on the number of players, unseen by anyone.
 - c. The first player shuffles the remaining systems and deals them out to all players.
 - d. Starting with the first player, players may place a system. Placement begins clockwise, but switches each time a round is complete. The last player in each round starts the next round.
 - i. Placement must be complete each ring around Mecatol Rex before starting the next ring.
 - ii. Home Systems are placed automatically in the right place without using up a player's 'turn'.
 - iii. Special Systems may not go adjacent to each other, unless there is no other option.
 - iv. If your last placement did not include a planet, your next must, unless you have no option.
7. Each player places their "setup units" on their Home System.
8. Home Planet cards and Starting Technology cards are placed face up in front of each player.
9. Each player takes Command Counters from reinforcements and place on Race Sheets: 2 in Strategy Allocation, 3 in Command Pool, 3 in Fleet Supply (fleet side up).

Game Rounds

Strategy Phase

Starting with the Speaker and proceeding clockwise, each player takes a Strategy Card. For each Bonus Counter on the card, the player receives a Trade Good or a Command Counter (to go in any pool). All Bonus Counters are removed from that card.

A Bonus Counter is placed on any Strategy Card not selected at the end of the phase.

Action Phase

The Action Phase allows players to take their choice of an action in the order defined by the Strategy Cards taken – this is the 'order of play'. Players continue to take actions in turn until they Pass, at which point they may not take any further actions (exception secondary actions). The Action Phase continues until all players have Passed.

Strategic Action

The active player reads and resolves the Primary Action on his Strategy Card.

Then, in clockwise order from the active player, each player may choose to execute the secondary action of the active player's Strategy Card if it has one. The active player does **not** get to do this.

The active player turns his Strategy Card face down. Each Strategy Card may be used only once in any given game round.

Tactical Action

The active player follows these steps in order. Only the first step is required; others resolve if desired/certain conditions are true.

1. **Activate a System:** The Command Counter comes from the active player's Command Pool. Without any, a player may not take a Tactical Action.
2. **Move Ships into System:** Any of the active player's ships that are within range may move from any number of systems into the activated system, with the following notes:
 - a. Ships may not move out of systems already activated by the active player.
 - b. Ships may not pass through a system containing enemy ships, except Fighters.
 - c. Carriers and War Suns may pick up Ground Forces and PDS at any stage in the movement – before, during or at the end of movement. Units may not be picked up from a system that contains enemy ships or that has been previously activated by the active player. If a planet is emptied, the active player places a Control Marker on it to indicate it's still controlled.
3. **PDS Fire:** Enemy PDS may fire first at ships controlled by the active player, and casualties are removed. Then friendly PDS may fire at enemy ships. All targets must be in the activated system.

4. **Space Battles:** If the active player has moved ships into a system containing ships controlled by an opponent, a Space Battle must take place and continue until only one player remains. See Space Battles section.
5. **Planetary Landings:** The active player may land any Ground Force or PDS units on planets (or move onto other friendly ships) within the activated system.
 - a. Friendly Landing: The active player may just add units to a planet he already controls.
 - b. Neutral Landing: If no player controls a planet, landing with a single Ground Force allows the player to take control. They receive the Planet Card for the planet, exhausted.
 - c. Hostile Landing: If a planet is controlled, but contains no enemy Ground Forces, treat as a Neutral Landing. Otherwise, land any troops and resolve in the Invasion Combat step.
6. **Invasion Combat:** War Suns may bombard planets even if no troops are being landed. Otherwise, this step only proceeds if Group Forces are involved in a Hostile Landing. See Invasion Combat section.
7. **Production:** The active player may produce units at one or more friendly Space Docks in the activated system. A new Space Dock may be built.

Transfer Action

The active player follows these steps in order. Only the first step is required; others resolve if desired/certain conditions are true.

1. **Activate two systems:** Systems must be adjacent. One Command Counter comes from your reinforcements, the other from your Command Pool as normal. Without Command Counters in the Command Pool, a player may not take a Transfer Action.
2. **Movement between systems:** Ships may move in either direction between the systems. Units that rely on a ship to transport them must move with a Carrier/War Sun as normal, and will remain in the ships at this stage.
3. **PDS fire:** Any enemy PDS in range of fleets in activated systems may fire. If a PDS is in range of fleets in both systems, it may only fire at one. Friendly PDS do not fire.
4. **Planetary Landings:** Ground Forces and PDS may be deployed only on friendly planets – not neutral or controlled by an enemy, even if empty.
5. **Production:** The active player may produce units at a Space Dock in one of the activated systems (not both). A new Space Dock may be built (in the same system, if units are being produced as well).

Pass

A player may only pass if he has completed executed Strategic Action (assuming he has one), and therefore allowed other players to execute any secondary actions from his Strategy Card.

Once a player has passed, he may take no further actions as part of this round, except executing secondary actions of other players' Strategy Cards.

Status Phase

During this phase (and only this phase) players may scuttle (destroy) their own units return them to reinforcements.

1. **Qualify for Objectives:** In order of play, players may claim one Public Objective and/or his Secret Objective, assuming he can prove his claim is valid and he controls all planets in his Home System.
 - a. Public Objectives are claimed by placing a player's Control Marker on the Objective Card
 - b. Secret Objectives are claimed by revealing the card.
 - c. For each Objective claimed, that player's Control Marker on the Victory Track is advanced as needed.
 - d. If a player reaches 10 Victory Points, play ends immediately with that player as the winner. *If playing with the SE Bureaucracy Strategy Card, consider playing to 9 Victory Points.*
2. **Repair Damaged Ships:** All Dreadnoughts and War Suns are no longer considered damaged.
3. **Remove Command Counters:** Each players return all of his Command Counters from the game board to his reinforcements.
4. **Refresh Planet Cards:** Each player turns exhausted Planet Cards face up.
5. **Action Cards & Command Counters:** Each player receives 1 Action Card and 2 Command Counters (to place where he chooses).
6. **Redistribute Command Areas:** In order of play (if necessary), each player may move his Command Counters between the three areas on his Race Sheet as he wishes. If this reduces his Fleet Supply, check ships on the board are still legal and remove excess ships if required.
7. **Return Strategy Cards:** Put the 8 Strategy Cards back in order in the play area ready for the next round.

Combat

Space Combat

The player that just entered a system (usually the active player) is considered the attacker, and the other is the defender.

Throughout combat, ships roll to hit by rolling the appropriate number of dice (one for most, three for a War Sun). Results equal to or higher than their combat value counts as a hit.

Before combat, if there are Fighters and Destroyers on opposite sides of the battle, roll 2 dice for each Destroyer. Each hit destroys an enemy Fighter immediately before the Space Battle commences. This only happens once for a Space Combat.

1. **Announce Withdrawal/Retreat:** The attacker first gets the choice to declare a withdrawal. If the attacker chooses not to withdraw, the defender may declare a retreat. If the attacker chooses to withdraw, the defender may not declare a retreat. Withdrawal and retreat occurs at the end of a Battle Round; at least one round of combat will take place.
2. **Roll Combat Dice:** Each side rolls simultaneously for each ship they control in the battle and notes how many hits are scored.

3. **Remove Casualties:** For each hit taken, each side must remove a ship or damage an undamaged Dreadnought/War Sun. The controller of each side decides where to take hits scored against him.
4. **Execute Withdrawal/Retreat:** If a player that declared a withdrawal/retreat has eliminated his enemy, the withdrawal/retreat is cancelled and they must remain in the system. Otherwise, he must move his entire fleet to an adjacent system that he has activated. If no valid system exists, he may not withdraw/retreat and combat continues. If his fleet moves into a system with other ships he controls, he should check his Fleet Supply and Fighter capacity and remove any excess ships.

Invasion Combat

The player that landed on a planet (usually the active player) is considered the attacker, and the other is the defender.

Throughout combat, units roll to hit by rolling one die each. Results equal to or higher than their combat value counts as a hit.

Before combat, the following steps take place once:

1. **Bombardment:** If no PDS are present on the planet, the attacker's Dreadnoughts and War Suns may bombard it. If a PDS is present, only War Suns may bombard it. Roll to hit as normal for each ship, and destroys a Ground Force unit for each hit. Ships may only bombard once during an Action, and so attacks must be split between planets if multiple are being invaded.
2. **PDS Fire:** The defender may roll one die for each PDS he controls on the planet. Each hit destroys an attacking Ground Force.

If Ground Forces remain on both sides, Invasion Combat proceeds with these steps and repeats until all Ground Forces from one side have been destroyed. There is no option for withdrawal or retreat.

1. **Roll Combat Dice:** Each side rolls simultaneously for each Ground Force they control in the battle and notes how many hits are scored.
2. **Remove Casualties:** For each hit taken, each side must remove a Ground Force unit.

If all defending Ground Forces are destroyed and the attacker still has Ground Forces on the planet, any PDS or Space Docks controlled by the defender are destroyed and they gain control of the planet and receive the Planet Card, exhausted.

If all Ground Forces are destroyed on both sides, the defending player retains control of the planet and should place a Control Marker on it. In this instance, if the attacker sent PDS to the planet they are destroyed. PDS and Space Docks controlled by the planet are not destroyed.

Unit Notes

Space Docks

- They may only be built at a planet that has been controlled since the start of the current entire round, and that does not contain a Space Dock already.
- Space Docks may not be built if there are enemy ships in the system.
- A Space Dock may only build a number of units equal to the resource value of its planet plus two during an action.
- Ships built are placed in space and count towards Fleet Supply limits. Ground Forces and PDS are built on the planet and must be picked up by a Carrier or War Sun.
- Ground Forces and Fighters must be purchased separately.
- Space Docks may not produce ships if there are enemy ships in the system (they are blockaded). They may still produce PDS and Ground Forces.
- *Saar Space Docks are in space rather than on planets, but do not count towards Fleet Supply limits. They cannot be blockaded and are destroyed if in a system with only enemy ships. Ground Forces and PDS built may only be built if there is a planet or Carrier/War Sun the player controls in the system.*

PDS

A player may only have 2 PDS units on any given planet.

If at any time there are PDS on an enemy or neutral planet without friendly Ground Forces, the PDS are destroyed.

Fighters

If, outside of a Space Battle, a system contains more Fighters than capacity allows (from Space Docks, Carriers and War Suns), excess Fighters are destroyed.

Glossary and Notes

Exhaust a Planet: Turn it face down or otherwise indicate its status. Usually grants resources or influence to spend.

Refresh a Planet: Return it to a state from which it can be exhausted again.

Activate a System: Put a command counter on a system that doesn't already have one of your command counters on it. The Counter comes from your Command Pool unless otherwise stated.

Wormholes: When at least 2 wormholes of the same type are present, systems containing those wormholes are considered adjacent. *If the Wormhole Nexus is present, it may act as a third system that is considered adjacent.*

Unit Limitations: Except Ground Forces and Fighters, players may not construct more units of a given type than they have models. Fighters and Ground Forces may be represented by one model plus counters – but one model at least must be present in any given location (systems for Fighters, planets/with a Carrier/War Sun for Ground Forces).