

Imperium - Introduction

Imperium is a game of intergalactic exploration, warfare, and economics. Imperium has no set goal, and fairly flexible rules about what you can do, thus, while a single player could run their own game just for the fun of exploration, they would be missing out on most of the aspects of the game with no one to compete against. Imperium is a "true" multiplayer game supporting as many simultaneous players as will fit in memory at one time, as opposed to other systems which allow only one player to be active at a time.

Imperium does not require your computer to have or support graphics, but an 80 column (or more) display is recommended, and the ability to display and send both upper and lower case letters is required. Graphics and sound for Imperium are provided through "front ends" which are optimized for a particular type of computer system. Ask the deity about the availability of a "front end" for your computer type.

The general layout of the Imperium "universe" is a rectangular array of "galactic" sectors. Each galactic sector contains a 10x10 array of "sub" sectors. A galactic sector can be "normal", a black hole, or a supernova. A supernova will immediately destroy anything that moves into it. A black hole may do this, but you will have to find out for yourself. Within a galactic sector are found planets and stars. Moving a ship through a star will also destroy it. The universe is "flat", that is, the edges do not wrap around and you can not move past the edges.

In order to try and maintain some degree of realism for the amount of time it takes to accomplish certain things in the "real" world, and to prevent an experienced player from being able to attack another player all day, Imperium has several types of "counters". Each player has a "BTU" (Bureaucracy Time Unit) counter of their own, which is replenished at the same rate as every other player. This assures that you can only execute certain commands a certain number of times in a given period of time, and allows more powerful commands to be weighted against commands that do little or nothing. Planets also have their own BTU counters, and certain other commands (such as load, unload, etc.) require a certain amount of both player BTU's and planetary BTU's (PBTUs). These help to assure that one particular planet does not do more than would really be possible in a given period of time. Planets can only have half the BTUs that a player may have.

The main Imperium prompt looks like this:

[96;60] Command:

where:

96 = number of player BTU's

60 = play time left for today

Your play time will be reset at midnight to the amount the deity has decided to allow, normally 60 minutes. Note that if you access Imperium through a BBS as a door, the sysop may have Imperium set up to use the time from the BBS as the amount of time per day instead.

You will need to earn money to build ships, items on the planet, buy goods from other players, and to pay for military payroll and utility and planet improvements. You can earn money from interest on gold bars, by keeping part of a planets production allocated to "cash", selling goods to other players, or from interest on loans you make to other players.

Each planet (and race) has a technology level, which affects many things such as what types of items you can build, the range and speed of the ships they build, chances of getting the plague, etc. You can increase a planets technology level by allocating part of a planets production to "technology". A races technology level can be increased by donating part of a planets technology production to the race.

Each planet and race also have a research level, which affects your chances of catching the plague, and slowing down the pollution process. You can increase the research level in the same manner as the technology level.

Both research and technology levels (on a planet) decay away at 1% per day, so you must continuously create research or technology production to avoid your level dropping.

While the game may at first seem very complicated, it is actually quite possible to play an entire game without using the more powerful or esoteric commands. The most frequently used commands are:

- bye - exit the game
- scan - do a sensor scan from a planet or ship
- load - load items from a planet onto a ship
- unload - unload items from a ship onto a planet
- land - land a ship or fleet on the surface of a planet
- liftoff - put a ship or fleet into orbit
- navigate - move a ship or fleet of ships

telegram - send a telegram to another player
read - read your telegrams
census - get a detailed report of planets you own
players - get a list of other Imperium players
newspaper - see what other players did today
power - get a report of the computed "power" of other players

A Imperium player usually goes through several phases during the game:

exploration - the player moves out from their home planet to explore nearby planets and possibly start new colonies.

contact - the player finds another player or planets owned by another player. The players may fight, but not on a large scale just yet, as neither player has the ships this requires.

development - the player begins to set up his own little area of space, possibly taking over several planets in a subsector and creating supply lines between the planets. Usually during this phase the player will start to "dig in" and harden their planets from attack.

LR exploration - the player now has ships to spare and sends them on long range exploration missions, possibly programming a ship to act as a "probe" to map out the universe.

endgame - players start to horde up items and form alliances to attack other players or races, and hunting down planets owned by certain races is common. In many games most of the gameplay is spent in LR exploration and battles.

victory - As Imperium has no "victory" conditions, the deity will have to decide when the game is over, possibly by setting some power level to achieve, planets to own, etc. by a certain date, or by using 2 races as "teams" and establishing the destruction of the opposing race as the goal.

Normally Imperium runs with an ITU (Imperium Time Unit) of 30 minutes. This gives you 48 "update" periods per day, and in a moderately sized universe (32x32 or so) should last 3-6 months of real-time. This can be changed either at the time the universe is created, or the deity can edit the ITU inside Imperium itself. If this time is shortened to 30 secs or so you can probably get a game completed in 3 or 4 days, and if the hosting machine has

more than one serial port and the players can all be on at the same time, the action can get quite fast! Having an update time that fast will almost certainly require a faster CPU and hard disk to be playable.

The best way to learn how to play Imperium is to just jump in and get started. If you don't understand something, refer to these documentation files and the shorter "help" files, both of which are available inside Imperium itself, unless the deity has removed them to save disk space. If you are just confused about some of the terms used in the files, you can type "help syntax" for a better explanation.

The other documentation files available are:

- communication - how to talk to other players, edit messages, etc.
- economics - how to earn money and operate in the black.
- society - misc. topics related to playing Imperium
- planets - details on the various planet types
- ships - details relating to ships
- war - planetary, stellar, defensive techniques
- update - details the planet and ship updating algorithms
- deity - tips on being a deity
- hosting - tips on running a game
- impcrc - instructions for running the universe builder
- conimp - instructions for running the console client
- impserv - instructions for running the server

Just to give you an idea of what Imperium is like, here is a dump of a player just starting out. User input can usually be identified by appearing after a "Command:" prompt or something similar. Commentary is indented from commands and output.

```
Enter player name: NewGuy
Player 'NewGuy' does not exist, create it (Y/N): yes
    This deity does not require players to enter the creation password
Enter your player password: xxxxxxxx
Enter it again just to be sure: xxxxxxxx
```

You only have to enter the password twice the first time, when you are a new player, to prevent accidental mistakes.
This player's name will be "NewGuy".

Stats of each race as of: Wed Jun 12 20:31:01 1994:

##	Race Name	Tech Lev	# Planets	Status
----	-----------	----------	-----------	--------

	Home Planet Name	Res Lev	# Players	
0	Xyphos	0	1	INACT
	Xyphon	0	0	
1	Nakasumi	0	1	INACT
	Fujiri	0	0	
2	Aeleiusa	0	1	INACT
	Raeleon	0	0	
3	Voltar	0	1	INACT
	Trafalmadoria	0	0	
4	Human	0	1	INACT
	Terra	0	0	
5	Merove	0	1	INACT
	Languedoc	0	0	
6	Poussin	0	1	INACT
	Arcadia	0	0	

Please select a race: Nakasumi

Note the section for number of planets and players already of this race. A race with many members may be safer from attack, but will probably have less planets near it's home planet that are not already taken by other players. You might also consider the tech and research levels listed for each race before making a choice.

Creating your starting ship on your home planet:

(info about the ship number, items numbers on board, etc.)

[96:60] Command: ship status 0

Ship #	T	Row,Col	F	Eff	TF	Energ	Fuel	Armor	Price	Planet	Name
0	a	274,236	*	50%	15	75	75	0	0	415	Fujiri

[96:59] Command: census pop 415

PC	civl	scien	mil	offic	BTU	Pop%	PF	Race	Pl#	Name
H	1012	0	250	75	96	5	0	3	415	Trafalmadoria

This lets me take a detail look at my race's home planet.

Now we are curious about what other people have been doing, so we look at the newspaper:

[96:58] Command: news

```
      ==[ IMPERIUM NEWS LINK ]==
:.....:
!      "All the news thats fit, we print."      !
:.....:
      Wed Jun 12 20:31:18 1994
```

Relative calm prevails.

The details of Imperium news since Wed Jun 12 00:00:00 1994

```
=== section 1 ===
=== section 2 ===
=== section 3 ===
=== section 4 ===
```

Since there is no news we must be one of the early players. This might give us an advantage.

[96:58] Command: power

*** power report not available ***

There is no initial power report. Also, a deity can control whether or not non-deities can 'force' a new power report (it can take quite a long time on large worlds), so one is not automatically built.

[96:58] Command: power force

Please wait, recomputing power...

Power report updated

Imperium power report as of Wed Jun 12 20:31:25 1994:

plan	civ	mil	sh	gun	pl	bar	% ship	\$	pow	player
0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	5000	120 NewGuy

We're the only ones playing so far, apparently.

[96:58] Command: players

Current time Wed Jun 12 20:32:01 1994, world created Wed Jun 12 16:13:02 1994

#	last access	time	BTU's status	race	player name
---	-------------	------	--------------	------	-------------

```
-----
0   Wed Jun 12 17:59:49   [9999] [ 96] DEITY      NONE   god
1   *Wed Jun 12 20:20:40   [ 57] [ 96] Active      Nakasu NewGuy
```

We are the only player right now. The "*" beside our number indicates that we are currently logged in.

```
[96:58] Command: status
Status of NewGuy, of the Nakasumi race, on Wed Jun 12 20:32:15 1994:
```

```
Number of planets: 0
Home planet: 415
Cash on hand: 5000
```

```
Notify via: message
Compressed mode is ON
You are not using a front-end
```

```
You have the following actions defined:
```

```
You have the following realms defined:
```

The "status" command shows some information about our alter-ego. We don't control any planets (home planets don't count), we haven't spent any money, and the other flags are in their default state.

```
[96:57] Command: info
Last game won by: Those great Rialtan's.
World created on Wed Jun 12 05:15:49 1994.
World size: 32 rows by 32 columns.
There are currently 2 players out of a maximum of 16.
Maximum daily connect time is 60 minutes.
An ITU (Imperium Time Unit) is 1800 seconds.
The world has seen 0 loans, 0 offers, 0 ships and 0 fleets,
    ### planets, and ### big items.
```

This displays some general information about the world.

```
[96:56] Command: scan lr 45
```

```
  0 1 2
  5 5 5

22 ? : ? 22
32 : : : 32
42 ? : ? 42

  0 1 2
```

5 5 5

We do a long-range scan to see what the nearby galactic sectors look like. The ":" indicate a 'normal' sector, that is, our sensors are able to detect at least one planet or star in the sector, and the sectors are not black holes or supernovas. The "?" sectors in the corners indicate that our (currently) limited sensors are not able to give us a certain picture of the sector, but most likely the sector is not supernova, since they can be seen farther away and would probably show up at this range. Also note that the row and column numbers increment by 10. We would see the same thing if our ship was at locations from a row of 30 to 39, and a column from 10 to 19.

```
[94:54] Command: scan sr 45
NewGuy Class A #45 at 32,15
  0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2
  9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1

26 ? ? ?           ? ? ? 26
27 ? ? *           ? ? 27
28 ?               ? 28
29                 29
30                 30
31                 31
32                 h 32
33                 33
34                 34
35                 35
36 ?               0 ? 36
37 ? ?           ? ? 37
38 ? ? ?         ? ? ? 38

  0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2
  9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1
```

This gives us a more detailed short-range scan of the area around our home planet (which shows up as "h" in the center). The "?" in the corner indicate that this area was not detectable by our sensors. We can also see a star at 27,13 and a planet at 36,17.

This is enough for now, and we can't really do much until our ship is a little more efficient, so we hang up and call back later....

Ok. It's the next day so lets see if there are any new players:

```
[96:60] Command: play
```


Current time Thu Jun 13 14:21:05 1994, world created Wed Jun 12 16:13:02 1994

#	last access	time	BTU's	status	race	player name
0	Thu Jun 13 22:59:49	[9999]	[96]	DEITY	NONE	god
2	*Thu Jun 13 14:18:34	[57]	[80]	Active	Voltar	Klaus Friedrich
1	*Thu Jun 13 14:19:55	[60]	[96]	Active	Nakasu	NewGuy

There is a new player called "Klaus Friedrich", and he must have logged out just a few minutes ago. Note that our PBTU count has gone up, and that our time left has been reset to 60 minutes.

[96:59] Command: power

Imperium power report as of Thu Jun 13 14:05:25 1994:

plan	civ	mil	sh	gun	pl	bar	% ship	\$	pow	player	
0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	5000	703	Klaus Friedrich
0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	4100	540	NewGuy

Klaus is about as powerful as we are. Now we can see if our ship is efficient enough to move.

[96:57] Command: shi sta

Ship #	T	Row,Col	F	Eff	TF Energy	Fuel	Armor	Price	Planet	Name
0	a	32,15	*	100%	15	150	0	0	0	415 Fujiri

Our ship is now efficient enough to navigate, and our energy banks also have enough of a charge to move us at least a few sectors.

[96:56] Command: liftof 0

Class A #0 is now in orbit above planet 415

[94:56] Command: nav 0 3232.

Now our ship is above the new planet, but before we land we should look and see what type of planet it is, and if it will support life.

[92:55] Command: scan planet 0 0

Results of sensor scan of planet 416:

Is a class D planet, and is not under the control of any player

Size	Polut	Eff	Minr	Gold	Gas	Wat	Ore		Bars		Civil		Milit		TF
3	0	100	48	0	52	37	0		0		0		0		15

We can see that the planet is class D (the average), has enough land masses and an atmosphere that should support life, and does not appear to be owned by another player. Lets land and take a look around. Also note that we used planet number 0 when doing the scan. You can usually indicate

planet 0 to indicate "the planet the ship is currently orbiting".

```
[90:55] Command: land 0  
Class A #0 landed on the surface of planet 416 safely
```

Our ship is now on the surface, and we can try unloading some people.

```
[88:54] Command: unl small 0  
!<insert list of items being unloaded here>  
You now own planet 416!
```

Now that we own the planet we can get a more accurate look at the planets stats:

```
[86:53] Command: cen geo 416  
PC S eff min gld pol gas wat mob ore bar TF ResLv Planet Position  
-----  
D 3 100 53 0 0 53 6 95 0 0 15 0 416 36,17
```