

GURPS

Fourth Edition

SPACESHIPS 2

TRADERS, LINERS, AND TRANSPORTS™



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INTRODUCTION

The lifeblood of a spacefaring civilization is the commercial ships that carry freight and passengers between worlds and the intrepid captains and crews who operate them.

This *GURPS Spaceships* supplement is a nuts-and-bolts tool kit intended to give *GURPS Space* Game Masters the ships and game mechanics for such campaigns. It presents a range of commercial freighters, passenger liners, and specialized transport ships such as ferries and yachts. Rules detail the expenses incurred in acquiring and operating a private spaceship for profit, and provide simple systems for interstellar commerce.



PUBLICATION HISTORY

Some of the rules on buying and financing ships, and the description of spaceports, include material from *GURPS Space* (Third Edition by William A. Barton, Steve Jackson,

About the Series

This is the second installment in the *GURPS Spaceships* series, which is designed to support *GURPS Space* campaigns by providing ready-to-use spacecraft descriptions and rules for space travel, combat, and operations. Each supplement provides vessel descriptions and supplementary rules. You'll need the core volume, *GURPS Spaceships*, to use this product.

and David Pulver; Fourth Edition by Jon F. Zeigler and James L. Cambias).

The economics and trade systems include concepts derived from rules in *GURPS Traveller: Interstellar Wars* by Paul Drye, Loren Wiseman, and Jon. F. Zeigler, with additional material by Christopher Thrash, which in turn were inspired by the more complex system of *GURPS Traveller: Far Trader*. GMs seeking a model for more detailed economics will find much of value in these books.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David L. Pulver is a freelance writer and game designer based in Victoria, British Columbia. He is co-author of the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition* and author of *Transhuman Space*, *GURPS Spaceships*, *GURPS Ultra-Tech*, and many other games.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

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Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. To discuss *GURPS* with SJ Games staff and fellow gamers, come to our forums at forums.sjgames.com. The *GURPS Spaceships 2 – Traders, Liners, and Transports* web page is www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/spaceships2.

Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the books that interest you! Go to the book's web page and look for the "Bibliography" link.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

REGULUS-CLASS FRONTIER TRANSPORT (TL11[^])

This is a medium-sized freight liner built to serve major star systems located off the main trade routes, but which still generate more commerce than a tramp freighter could handle. Frontier transports are also employed for interstellar trading expeditions far beyond settled regions. It's a superscience design with a streamlined hull that masses 10,000 tons (SM +10) and is 300 feet long. It's intended for settings where multiple stardrive engines improve interstellar speed or range. In concert with its relatively heavy defensive armament, its high FTL rating makes it suitable as a naval auxiliary, carrying vital wartime cargoes. *Regulus*-class transports are named after large, bright stars.

Front Hull	System
[1]	Steel Armor (dDR 7).
[2]	Habitat (two luxury cabins, 12 cabins, four-bed automed sickbay, 200 tons cargo).*
[3-5]	Cargo Holds (500 tons capacity each).
[6]	Hangar Bay (300 tons capacity).*

Front Hull	System
[core]	Control Room (C10 computers, comm/sensor 10, 10 control stations).*
Central Hull	System
[1]	Steel Armor (dDR 7).
[2-5]	Cargo Holds (500 tons capacity each).
[6!]	Secondary Battery (four turrets with 300 MJ ultraviolet lasers; 200 tons cargo).*
Rear Hull	System
[1]	Steel Armor (dDR 7).
[2-5!]	Stardrive Engines (FTL-1 each).*
[6!]	Hot Reactionless Engine (50G acceleration).*
[core]	Super Fusion Reactor (four Power Points).*

* One technician mans each system.

The *Regulus* has artificial gravity and gravitic compensators.

Its usual complement is 10 bridge crew (pilot, captain, navigator, sensor operator, chief engineer, comm officer, and four gunners), a small craft pilot, and seven technicians. It also carries a cargo master and his assistant, and long-range trading missions into alien space may have specialists trained in making "first contact."

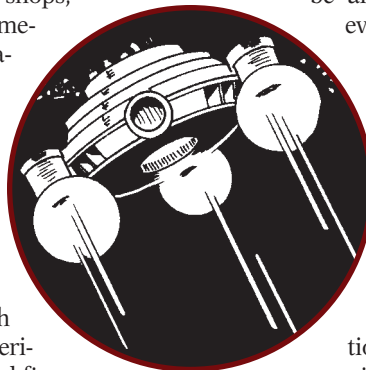
TL	Spacecraft	dST/HP	Hnd/SR	HT	Move	LWt.	Load	SM	Occ	dDR	Range	Cost
11 [^]	<i>Regulus</i> -Class	150	-2/5	13	50G/c	10,000	3,142.8	+10	28ASV	7/7/7	4x	\$889.4M

Top air speed is 18,000 mph.

PASSENGER LINERS

These commercial space liners are built to make a profit by transporting passengers on interplanetary or interstellar voyages. Their advent opens space travel to the ordinary person, as they affordably carry tourists, immigrants, and businessmen between worlds. Liners follow a regular route between two or more high-population planets, although they may visit less densely inhabited destinations if they lie astride the busier routes. To attract passengers willing to pay premium prices, larger vessels feature restaurants or bars, gift shops, promenades, ballrooms, swimming pools (sometimes with zero or variable gravity), observation decks, and other facilities.

Cruise ships are luxury liners built to provide an unforgettable vacation experience to travelers who want to get away from it all. Depending on a vessel's range and capabilities, voyages may take visitors past dramatic lunar mountains, gas-giant ring systems, or nebulas, or to exotic planetary destinations. Early cruise ships may be austere, with passengers paying high prices merely to experience space travel, but by TL10, vessels can rival five-star hotels in both opulent fittings and the attention paid to guests. On luxury cruise ships, the number of entertainers, activity leaders, and stewards can match that of the passengers. Trips may also be marketed to particular types of guest –



e.g., honeymooners, gamblers (with onboard casinos), popular-science enthusiasts (with guest lecturers), or elderly retirees (with extra medical care).

Those cruise ships or liners that regularly ply particularly exotic routes (such as a cross-border voyage between rival interstellar powers or different races) may become famous institutions in their own right, much like the Orient Express railway line on Earth. Merely to travel on such a craft may be an experience. Some wealthy eccentrics could even choose to take up permanent residence, while real or imagined meetings between spies and diplomats can add an aura of intrigue.

Space liners are normally owned by corporations rather than individuals, since they rely on regularly scheduled runs from major high-population worlds to attract passengers and make a profit. However, governments may subsidize larger liners in exchange for their use as naval auxiliaries (e.g., as troop transports or for refugee evacuation) in time of war. If so, it may be equipped with provision for defensive armaments, although under ordinary circumstances the only weaponry likely to be aboard is those sidearms issued to security teams. (On most passenger ships, a couple of stewards are also cross-trained as security officers.)

CHAPTER TWO

FINANCES AND EXPENSES

The purchase, registration, and financing of private and commercial spacecraft, and the costs entailed in operating such vessels, are serious business.

SPACEPORTS

The majority of commercial space flight involves travel from one spaceport to another. Depending on the campaign's technologies and the local TL, spaceports may be located in orbit, on the ground, or both. Ground ports service shuttles and those larger vessels that can take off or land. An orbital port, or one located on a tiny moon, asteroid, or space colony, allows non-landing ships to dock and provides shuttle service to any planet below. Some ports may also incorporate (or be adjacent to) star gates or jump points, if these are needed for star flight.

The size of a world's spaceport facilities is rated from Class 0 to Class V:

Class 0 – No Facilities: There's no orbital port, and there isn't even a designated landing site. No fuel is available. Ships planning to land must look for suitable terrain. If the world's TL is high enough, this might be an airport, paved road, or parking lot.

Class I – Emergency Facilities: This isn't a real spaceport, just a designated landing area. This could be a section of airport, a salt flat or crater, a region of ocean marked with landing buoys, a small orbital docking station, or even a military base. It may be nearly or completely unmanned, or part of a busy port facility devoted to air or sea traffic. There may be no facilities for repairing starships. Only a few reaction-mass or fuel types (water, and possibly hydrogen and jet fuel) may be available. It has adequate service facilities for vessels up to 300 tons (SM +7).

Class II – Frontier Facilities: These are intended for worlds that see an annual volume of space trade worth \$2 billion or more. Facilities are optimized for interplanetary ships and shuttlecraft. Only emergency repairs are likely to be available for large vessels. Ordinary rocket fuel and reaction mass is for sale, but the expensive materials used by antimatter, nuclear salt water, or pulse-drive engines are rarely available. There may be no facilities for repairing stardrive engines. Class II ports have adequate service facilities for vessels up to 3,000 tons (SM +9).

Class III – Local Facilities: A world with an annual space trade of \$50 billion or more needs Class III or better facilities. It includes basic repair facilities. Repairs for any system the GM deems uncommon, even for standard spaceships, may require off-planet parts, technicians, or facilities, or a special order from local industries. Class III ports have adequate service facilities for vessels up to 10,000 tons (SM +10).

Class IV – Standard Facilities: Worlds that see an annual space-trade volume of \$1 trillion or more need a Class IV or better spaceport. This includes construction facilities and ordinary repair yards. Class IV ports have adequate service facilities for vessels up to 30,000 tons (SM +11).

Class V – Full Facilities: Worlds with an annual space-trade volume of \$20 trillion or more need Class V ports. This class includes full spacecraft construction and repair facilities (within the limits of the world's TL). There are berths for hundreds or even thousands of vessels, multiple landing and launch facilities, surface-to-orbit shuttles, and every amenity imaginable, from crew union halls to high-tech training facilities. Class V ports have adequate service facilities for vessels up to 100,000 tons (SM +12).



On any roll except a critical failure, repeated attempts are possible by spending another two days looking. There's no penalty if the ship has so far failed in the search for that category (freight or passengers) but each attempt made after the first *success* has a cumulative -2 penalty. The captain may also give up and announce a different destination, unless already committed to taking passengers or freight.

TRAMP FREIGHT

For each freight shipment available, roll two dice, one at a time, to generate a number from 11 to 66, applying the same modifiers used to determine the nature of a speculative cargo (pp. 35-39), and then referring to the *Cargo Table* (p. 37). This indicates the type of commodity the exporter wants the freighter to ship. These goods may be native to the port's world, or something that's being transshipped through that port from another world.

Refer to the "Lot (tons)" column on the table and roll to determine the actual tonnage of freight shipped. If this exceeds the freighter's capacity, the load is too big to fit. However, meeting with the shipper in person and gaining a favorable reaction roll or succeeding with an Influence roll may convince him to split the load.

The shipper pays a fee equal to the standard rate for the voyage per ton of freight, in advance (see *Basic Shipping and Passenger Rates*, pp. 39-41). The price is not dependent on the cost per ton of the commodity unless using the following optional rule:



Optional Rule: Realistically, cheap commodities aren't shipped if it costs more to transport them than they're worth! Refer to the *Cargo Table* to find the freight's price per ton. (For extra detail, if any price modifiers apply to either this port's world or the destination, adjust the price per ton by 10% × the sum of the *difference* between the exporting world and destination world's price modifiers.) Assume that even the most desperate shipper doesn't pay more in freight fees than half the price of the goods. Thus, 50% of the price per ton is an effective ceiling on the freight rate per ton.

Some commodities have special conditions attached. If these can be met, there may be a bonus (see *Special Conditions*, p. 39).

Shipments are expected to be delivered in a timely fashion, although most ordinary freight is not urgent. Since spaceship speeds and distances vary immensely depending on the setting and technology, details are up to the GM. A ship that fails to deliver freight without good reason may gain a negative Reputation or suffer legal sanctions.

Special-Delivery Options

These may apply to both freight (in addition to any special conditions) and passengers. On a critical success, the GM should roll 1d *secretly* for one of the freight shipments or passenger groups.

- 1 – **Roll twice.** Roll *twice* on this table, re-rolling if the same result comes up.
- 2 – **Express.** They need to get there fast! The GM should work out how long a typical merchant vessel takes to reach the destination, assuming it leaves in two days. If the PCs can get there faster, by either leaving immediately or having a faster ship, there's a 20% bonus per 10% they can shave off the usual time.
- 3 – **Accompanied.** A freight shipper wants to send his own team of 1d people (guards, specialists, etc.) to accompany the freight (as first-class passengers). A passenger insists on carrying 2d tons of baggage (at usual freight rates).
- 4 – **Out-Port.** Passengers or freight are to be delivered to a Class 0 or Class I port (relatively) near the planned destination, but not on the route (e.g., instead of going to the main world in a system, the stop may be at the world's moon). If the ship agrees to this diversion, it nets the additional rates plus 50%.
- 5 – **Surge.** The freight lot or passenger group is unusually large. Double the numbers involved.
- 6 – **Illegal.** There's something fishy going on. Passengers are not what they seem; they may be disguised fugitives, or be smuggling small valuable items (such as drugs). Freight may be black-market or stolen goods, or might conceal contraband (e.g., heavy weapons hidden inside containers marked "Farm Machinery"). The GM may allow a Detect Lies, Electronics Operation (Security), or other roll by a crewmember to notice something is wrong. If the PCs choose to confront the shipper or passenger rather than contact the authorities, make a reaction roll. A favorable reaction may net a bribe of 1d times the usual rate or ticket price for the crew's cooperation and silence; if the crew gets an unfavorable reaction or doesn't accept a bribe, they may be threatened! Regardless of whether the PCs realize what's going on, carrying illegal goods or fugitives can be trouble; roll 3d against the destination port's CR+3 to see if authorities are tipped off or some other problem (such as rival gangs) arises. If the crew agreed to cooperate, the criminals may be able to help them get past such a roadblock (using Smuggling skill or otherwise hiding the goods or people). Otherwise, this hiccup may come as a nasty surprise . . . and authorities might not believe the crew is innocent of collusion!

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