

MERIDIAN

Version 4.0

TOURISM GUIDE & GAMEPLAY MANUAL

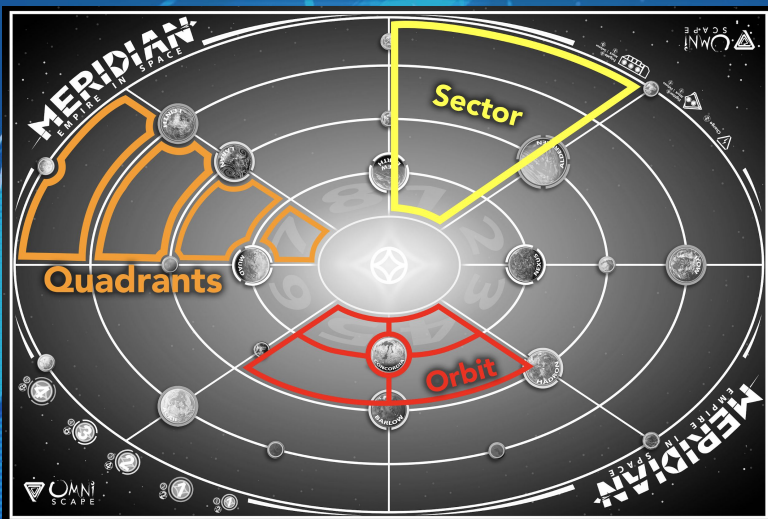
EXPLORE A MULTITUDE OF PLANETS

Check out the How-to-Play Video
from Meeple University



KEY TERMS

- **Cells:** Circular tokens worth 1 Energy each that renews at the beginning of a player's turn
- **Renew:** Flip a Cell from used to unused.
- **Charges:** Triangular tokens worth 1 Energy each that doesn't renew but can be held and traded.
- **Quadrant:** One space on the board.
- **Sector:** Eight sections of the board, each separated into four quadrants
- **Orbit:** 2-4 quadrants surrounding to a planet or moon
- **Abandoned Ship:** A starship with no colonies on it, may be claimed for free by any player's starship in the same quadrant
- **Presence:** Sectors with a player's colonies in it.

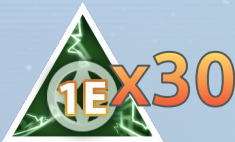


COMPONENTS

Cell Tokens



Charge Tokens



Waypoints

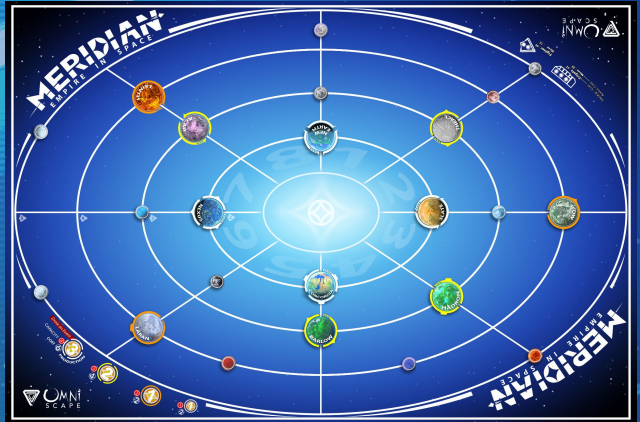


Reference Cards



x4

Board x1



Frigate Pieces



Fighter Pieces



Colony Pieces

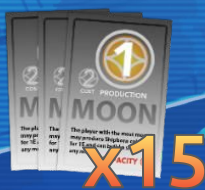


Planet Cards



x11

Moon Cards



x15

Equity Cards



x2

Event Cards



x15

SETUP

1. Mix all of the planet tokens. Place one on each area of the board face-down (so that the Undiscovered side is up) where color (Orange, Yellow, or White) matches with its ring on the board.



- There will be only 4 white, 4 yellow, and 3 white planets on the board, the rest of the tokens may be placed back in the box.

2. Shuffle the **Waypoint** cards and draw one, place it face-up in the middle of the board.

3. Players choose their color and collect the matching **colony** pieces. The player who most recently finished a science-fiction book goes first; turns proceed clockwise.

4. Each player places one **fighter** holding two of their colony pieces on any of the 4 **quadrants**, or individual spaces, around one of the yellow-ringed planets.



5. Each player takes 3 **Cell** tokens and 2 **Charge** tokens to start the game.





OBJECTIVE

Players struggle for control of the Meridian star system. The game ends when all planets and moons are claimed or a single player has **presence** across the entire board.

Players will then battle to demonstrate the most presence in all eight **sectors** of the board.

See Winning the Game (pg 15) for more details.

TAKING A TURN

At the start of their turn, a player will renew all of their cells by flipping spent cells back over so that they are ready for use.

During their turn, a player uses Energy (E) from Cells and Charges to perform actions. The number of actions a player can take during their turn is only limited by the amount of Energy a player has available and is willing to spend.

Once a player has taken all desired actions or run out of available Energy their turn ends. A round is complete after all players have finished one turn.

ENERGY - CELLS

Each Energy Cells is worth 1E. The face-up (colored) side represents an unspent Cell. When a Cell is used, the tile is flipped face-down to signify it has been spent, and is no longer worth Energy until they are renewed at the start of the player's next turn.

Face-Up



Face-Down



The number of Cells each player possesses is based on which moons or planets they have settled.

When a planet is settled the player gains the number of Cells that planet produces. These new tiles are received as face down and cannot be used until their next turn. When a planet is lost the player immediately loses the cell production.

Energy Equity: The player with the fewest Cells immediately receives the Energy Equity card and may settle planets/moons and create charges for 1E less than the Energy cost listed.
If multiple players are tied for the least number of Cells this bonus does not apply.

ENERGY - COSTS

ACTION		COST	SUMMARY
MOVE	Fighter	1E	Move a Fighter up to 2 quadrants.
	Frigate	2E	Move a Frigate up to 2 quadrants.
DISCOVER	Planet	Free	Flip token to reveal a planet
SETTLE	Planet or Moon	2E/4E/6E	Take control of a planet to gain its Cells and special abilities.
CREATE	Colony on a Planet	1E	A colony that is produced on an already settled planet.
	Colony on a starship	2E	A colony that is produced on a friendly Starship.
	Charge	2E	Stored Energy that is depleted once used.
	Fighter	4E	A small starship best for fast movement..
	Frigate	6E	A larger starship better for defense and direct attacks.
	Waypoint	4E	Objects that give you special abilities, control 4 to win!
ATTACK	Starship attacks	1E	Attacking and defending ship loses a colony in a show of force.

Saving Energy can be a good way to maintain defenses while it's not your turn but is not always necessary, see Starships - Combat (page 16).

ENERGY - CHARGES

A Charge is also worth 1E and is created by spending two Cells. Charges can be carried over from turn to turn but are discarded after use.



Charges may also be traded between players at any time for non-binding protection or treaties.

COLONIES

When a planet or moon is first **settled**, at least one colony must be transferred to that planet or moon.



During a player's turn their colonies may be moved between starships or planets they have settled in the same quadrant for no cost.

- New colonies cost 1E to create on a planet or ship that already is settled by the player; a player cannot build or place new colonies on moons or planets settled by other players.

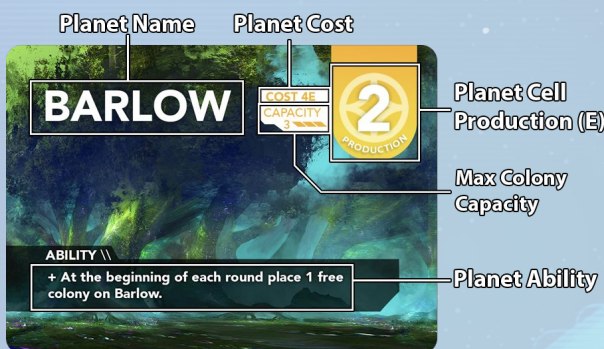
DISCOVERING PLANETS

Once per turn, while orbiting a planet, a player may flip the planet token over, revealing the planet name, this planet may then be Settled by any player.

PLANETS

To settle a planet, a player must do all of the following:

1. Control a starship in one of the four quadrants adjacent to the planet also known as the orbit.
2. Spend Energy equal to the Planet Cost. If the planet is Undiscovered, flip the planet over, revealing its name.
3. Place one colony from their orbiting starship onto the planet.
4. Take the Planet card and number of Cells equals to the Planet Production, face down.



Ex. Barlow requires 4E to settle (Cost) and gains the player 2 Cells (Production). It may hold up to 3 colonies (Capacity).

Max Colony Capacity: Colonies up to maximum colony capacity may be created directly on the planet. More colonies on a planet does not affect it's production but can be used as defense or to resupply starships

Bonus Ability: Each planet has a bonus ability listed underneath the Planet Description. Each ability is unique and may immediately affect the player's attack, defense, movement, or production around the planet.

PRODUCTION SUMMARY



LOSING A PLANET

Planets have no natural defenses and can only be defended by an orbiting starship. If a planet is attacked and is not defended by a starship, the attacking player may spend 1E for each colony they remove.

If there are no colonies left on the planet:

- The previous owner must discard all Cells produced by the planet.
- The previous owner receives the number of Charges equal to the planet's Production.

Example - Barlow produces 2 Cells. When lost, the previous owner discards 2 Cells and gains 2 Charges.

Note: Planets that are lost do not go back to being Undiscovered.

MOONS

Moons are represented by grey rings on the board, cost 2E to claim, and produce only one Cell. Moons are small and have a Max Capacity of only 1 Colony.



Moon Equity:

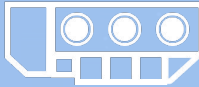
The player with the most moons immediately gains the Moon Equity Card. This player may build ships around settled moons and create colonies directly onto it for 1E. *If there is a tie for the greatest number of moons settled, this bonus does not apply.*

STARSHIPS



Starships are divided into two categories: fighters, which cost 4E to build and can carry two colonies, and frigates, which cost 6E to build and can carry three colonies. Starships must be built and placed into orbit around any planet settled by the player.

Once a starship has been created, the player must remove at least one colony from the planet and place it on the starship. During a player's turn, any number of colonies can be transferred between a settled planet and starship for no cost.



Starship - Cost —→ **Frigate: 6E**
 Action: Cost —→ **Move : 2E**



Fighter: 4E
Move : 1E

Starships can perform three types of actions:

- Moving
- Attacking
- Defending

Abandoned Ships

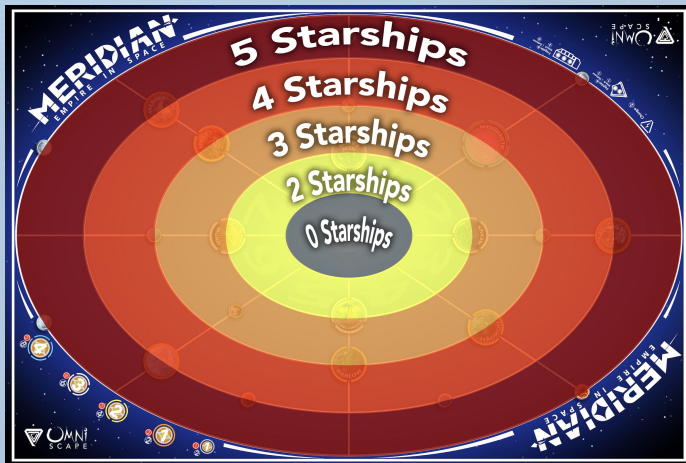
Any ships that have no colonies onboard are abandoned, the player not longer can move or control that ship. If a ship or planet within the same quadrant can move a colony onto the empty ship it becomes theirs to use.

STARSHIPS - MOVEMENT

During their turn, a player can choose to move fighters or frigates under their control.

Each time a player pays a ship's movement cost, it allows a starship to move up to 2 quadrants.

- Fighter Movement Cost: 1E
- Frigate Movement Cost: 2E



Each quadrant can hold a max number of starships as seen above. There may never be more than the max allowable starships in each quadrant, even just passing through. Starships are not able to move through the center of the board. Movement cannot be interrupted by an action.

For example, if a player wished to move a frigate 1 quadrant, attack, and then move once more: they would pay 2E for the first movement, pay the cost for the attack, and then pay an additional 2E for the second movement.

STARSHIPS - COMBAT

Throughout the course of the game players may choose to attack another player's ships or planets.

Starships may attack or defend a single planet or moon they are orbiting during each combat encounter, which involves all three of the following steps.

Reminder: Players may not engage in combat during the first 2 rounds to allow for the gathering of resources before an Attack.

1. Declare Target and involved Ships.

During combat, only colonies on a starship count towards its defense.

- To attack a planet or moon, you must control starship(s) in an orbiting quadrant.
- To attack a starship directly, you must have frigate(s) in adjacent quadrants. Only frigates may engage in direct starship combat.

Once the attacking player has declared a target, the defending player may choose to defend a planet or moon with ships they have in range.

Defense of a planet or moon is never necessary. The defending player can choose to take the damage and not waste any energy or colonies in the encounter. Strikes will succeed by default towards a planet with no defensive ships orbiting it.



STARSHIPS – COMBAT CONTINUE

1. Declare Target and involved Ships cont.

Ships orbiting the same planet may attack or defend as part of a single combat encounter.

This may include ships of a third player who, while not directly involved in the encounter, may lend ships to aid either player. The cost to Strike or Counter must still be paid by the party directly involved.

2. Attacker Strikes

Players may spend Energy to Strike, once for each colony on Attacking ships. 1E = 1 Strike

3. Defender Takes Damage

- **Strike Damage:** Each Strike will remove one colony from the defending player.
- **Shield Damage:** Colonies onboard ships (not planets) can take damage in the form of losing 1 Energy instead of 1 colony.
- Players can choose how the damage may be split between any of their involved ships or planet/moon that is targeted in the encounter.

If all colonies on a planet are lost see Losing a Planet (page 9).

If all colonies on a ship are lost, the player taking damage may choose whether the ship remains on the board or self destructs, see Abandoned Ships (page 15).

4. Defender Counter-Strikes

Defending ships may counter strike once for each remaining colony onboard. Defenders counter-strike for free (OE).

5. Attacker Takes Damage

Attacker takes damage following the same rules in 2b.

Ex: A ship with 2 colonies may only up to two times per encounter and Shield two damage while being attacked. Regardless of the player's remaining Energy.

STARSHIPS - COMBAT

EXAMPLE

Step 1. Declare Target

Red declares an attack of Nexus with their frigate. Green chooses to defend with their fighter.



Step 2. Attacker Strikes

Red will spend 3 Energy to Strike 3 times

Scenario A: Green has no Energy
Green will spend no Energy for 2 Strikes (free).



Step 3. Defender Takes Damage

Green takes 3 strike damage losing 3 colonies.

Step 4. Defender Strikes

Green loses their ship and cannot strike back.
OR Green loses their planet and can strike back once.

Scenario B: Green has max Energy
Green can only spend up to 2 Energy for 2 Shields (1E each).



Step 3. Defender Takes Damage

Green's ship can take 2 Shield damage (losing 2E) and 1 strike damage (losing 1 colony).

Step 4. Defender Strikes

Green may strike back twice, dealing 2 damage to Red.

Step 5. Attacker Takes Damage

STARSHIPS - COMBAT

EXAMPLE

Step 1. Declare Target

Red declares an attack of Nexus with their frigate. Green chooses to defend with their frigate.



Step 2. Attacker Strikes

Red will spend 3 Energy to Strike 3 times

Scenario A: Green has no Energy



Green will spend no Energy for 2 Strikes (free).

Step 3. Defender Takes Damage

Green takes 3 strike damage losing 3 colonies.

Step 4. Defender Strikes

Green loses their ship and cannot strike back.
OR Green loses their planet and can strike back once.

Scenario B: Green has max Energy



Green can only spend up to 2 Energy for 2 Shields (1E each).

Step 3. Defender Takes Damage

Green's ship can take 2 Shield damage (losing 2E) and 1 strike damage (losing 1 colony).

Step 4. Defender Strikes

Green may strike back twice, dealing 2 damage to Red.

Step 5. Attacker Takes Damage

Attacker will take strike or shield damage based on the number of Defender strikes.

SECTOR PRESENCE

Sector presence is established by having at least one settled planet, moon, or frigate in it. Multiple players can have presence in a sector at the same time.

Planets and moons have presence in one or both of the sectors they border. Frigates have presence the single sector they occupy.

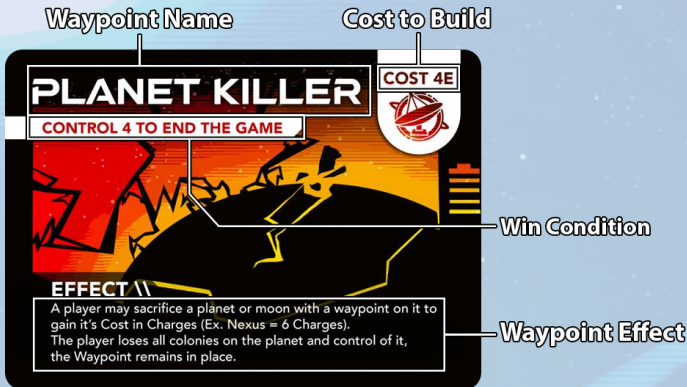
Example: Red shows presence in 6 of the 8 sectors: having settled two planets, one moon, and one frigate shown below, outlined in red.

Once Red gets presence in Sector 1 and 5 as well they will be in a position to trigger the end of the game.



WAYPOINTS

Waypoints cost 4E to create and can be placed on any ship or planet a player controls. Waypoints offer unique abilities which are listed in the Waypoint Effect area on the card.



Building

Waypoints may only be built in a sectors that the player has no other waypoints in.

For example, if the player controls a Waypoint on a planet occupying both sectors 4 and 5, they may not build any more Waypoints in either of those sectors.

Stealing

If all colonies on a territory with a waypoint are destroyed, the attacking player may take the Waypoint. If they are able, they can take it onto their ship, or they can take over the planet and keep it there.

Storing

Waypoints on ships move along with the ship, however they may not be moved into the same sector as more of that player's waypoints. Each planet or ship can only hold one waypoint unless otherwise stated.

WINNING THE GAME

When one of the following conditions is met the Final Round of the game is triggered, even if the trigger is unintentional or changes in the course of the final round:

- One player has 4 Waypoints.
- All Planets and moons are settled
- One player loses all of their colonies
- You're running out of time and someone needs to go home
...it happens



Once an end condition is triggered, the Final Round begins, and only one player can be victorious.

ENDING

The Final Round

Once an ending condition is triggered all players have one more round to try to win by claiming the most Waypoints.

When the final round begins all players renew their cells and turns proceed from the player with the most cells to the player with the least cells (most Charges break a tie).

To steal a Waypoint, a player must destroy all colonies on a planet, moon, or starship holding a Waypoint. Once a player steals it, they must be able to reassign it to one of their planets or moons, otherwise it will remain under no player's control.

At the end of the round the player who controls the most Waypoints wins the game!

TIE BREAKER

If at the end of the final round players are tied, the tied player with the most remaining Energy, Cells and Charges, will win the game.

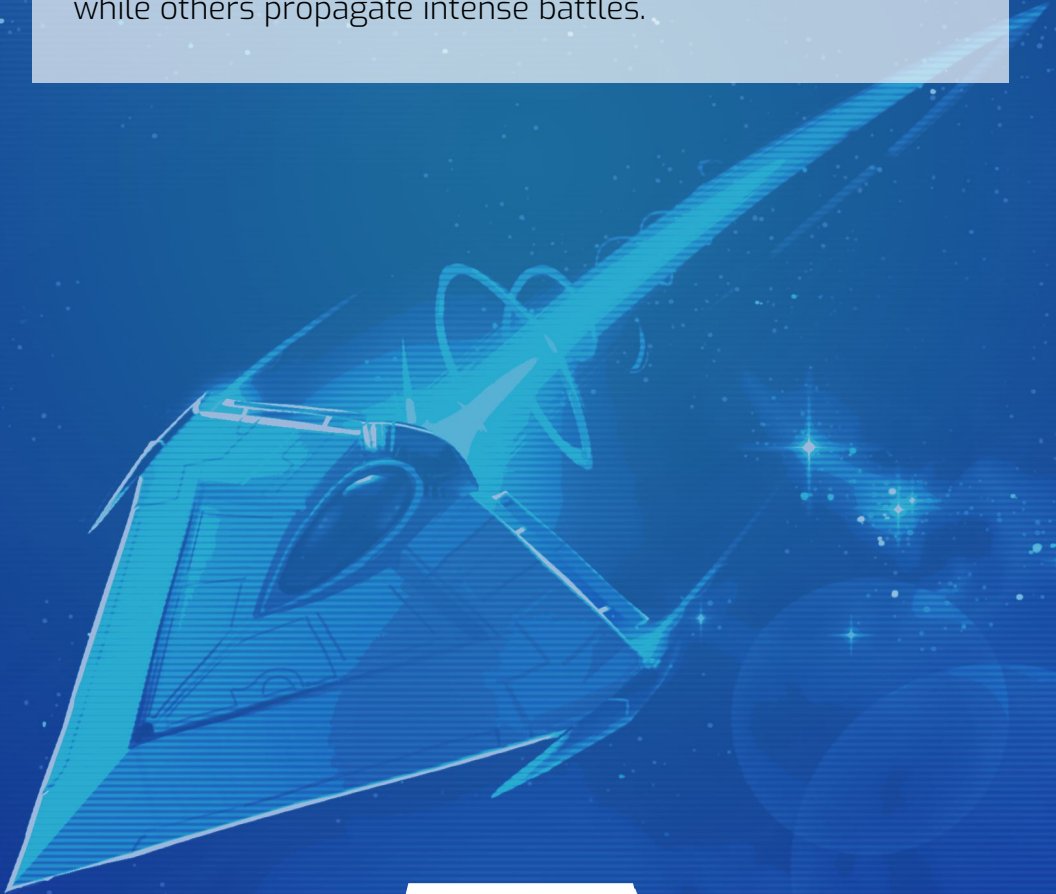
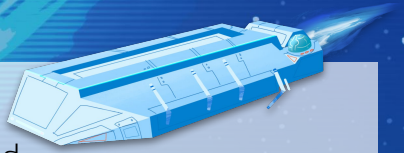


GUILDS

Guild Abilities

More advanced players may find added replayability and unique gameplay combinations in the included Guild references.

At the start of the game, players may take the Guild reference card that matches their colony colors. Each one has a special ability that the player may use throughout the game. Some of these encouragement peaceful coexistence while others propagate intense battles.



ALTERNATE RULES

2-Player Mode

Meridian: Empire in Space is best experienced with 3-4 players, but two player mode is a strategic alternative. There are few rules that can be changed to make a more engaging experience for two people:

- Energy Equity is not used.
- Moons can't be settled.
- Each player starts with an additional fighter containing two colonies in the sector directly across from their starting quadrant.
- Each player draws 2 Event Cards at the start of the game: each one can be played at any time during the player's turn, lasts 1 round and ends at the beginning of their next turn. The Event may also be discarded to renew 3 cells.

Infection Mode

For **co-op or single player games** you can set an automatic enemy team, the Scelrotia. The player(s) must claim all four inner planets (New Earth, Slate, Concordia, and Nexus) before the Scelrotia.

Once the starting planet has been drawn, draw two random planet cards, place 1 Scelrotia colony (any non-player color) on each planet.

To start, take 4 Victory Tokens; each may be played at any time during the player's turn to skip the Scelrotia's turn or to renew 4 Cells. The number the player can hold onto by the end of the game will represent their success.

ALTERNATE RULES CONTINUED

Scelrotia

Each planet or ship infected by the Scelrotia start by making a grow action every round.

If it cannot grow then the make a Infect action instead. Passive Actions are triggered by certain conditions on the Scelrotia's turn.

Grow - Action

To grow, add one Scelrotia colony to the planet.

If the planet or ship is at full capacity then that planet will Infect instead.

Infect - Action

To infect, place one Scelrotia colony onto the closest moon or planet.

If the planet/ship is controlled by a player then one of their colonies is replaced with a Scelrotia.

If a ship is infecting it will move closer to the nearest planet/ ship not controlled by the Scelrotia then Infect the planet if it is in orbit.

Build Starship - Passive

If an inner planet is infected, place one Fighter with 2 Scelrotia colonies in orbit around it.

Infect Starship - Passive

If a player starship is orbiting a Scelrotia moon, the moon may infect the ship. Otherwise moons do not take actions.

Attacking the Scelrotia

The Scelrotia always counter-attacks for each of their colonies colony, even when not defended by a ship. Attacks can't be made until the player settles an inner planet

ALTERNATE RULES 1188-1199 CONTINUED

Scelrotia - Example

During their turn, the Scelrotia takes one action for each planet it has settled..

1. Thrace: Scelrotia grows, adding one colony.
2. Moji: Can't grow due to full capacity. Instead, Moji infects the nearby moon, replacing the blue colony.
3. Hadron: Can't grow due to full capacity. Instead, Hadron infects Slate.
4. Slate: After colonizing an inner planet creates a new Scelrotia ship.
5. Moon: The moon infects the nearby Blue ship, replacing one of its colonies.

Before



After



CREDITS

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