

*We come in peace,  
shoot to kill, shoot to kill, shoot to kill, shoot to kill;  
We come in peace,  
Shoot to kill, shoot to kill men!  
-Ancient starfarer s drinking song*

## Make It So

Bridge Crew is an ensemble cast game where each player takes on the role of an officer on the bridge of a starship exploring space, finding new planets and dealing with enigmatic aliens often by either seducing them or blowing them to hell! Play is fast & furious as players alternate between being the ship s Captain, a crew member and the alien menaces they must face.

To start with, you will need a large number of different types of dice: to avoid arguments about whose dice are whose at the end of the game, its best if one player provides all the dice, where possible the onus is on the sucker who brought this game along yes buddy, I mean you! No paper or pencils are required, but you do need to prepare a set of Crew cards and Personality cards in advance.

To prepare the game, you need to fill the two challenge pools, these being the Commission pool and the Encounter pool: each pool needs one die of each type per player in the game, therefore in a 5 player game, the Commission pool needs 5d4, 5d6, 5d8, 5d10, and 5d12, and the Encounter pool needs the same; the dice in each pool need to be of a single colour, but each pool needs its own colour, e.g. the Commission pool is blue and the Encounter pool is green. Next, each player needs a Crew card and a Personality card: you can either deal these out randomly or use Reverse Flow Selection.

Reverse Flow Selection: Pick one player to be first and hand them the Crew cards, then give the Personality cards to the last player in order; both players select a card and put it face down in front of them, then pass the cards on, the Crew going to the left and the Personalities to the right, so the last player is the last one to choose their Crew and the first player is the last one to choose their Personality.

Once all players have their Crew and Personality, its time to auction the Captain and the Alien, the Captain being first to be auctioned; starting with the first player, they may bid 1 die of any type from the Commission pool or simply say No Bid , in which case they are out of the auction. Each subsequent player in order may then raise that bid by naming a higher die type, e.g. going from d4 to d6, etc. Identical bids are not allowed in this auction, you must either go higher or you are out of the auction; whoever makes the final bid takes the Captain card, but all other players then take one die of the named type out of the Commission pool and put it in their Officer pool; repeat this process with the Alien card, this time starting with the last player and going around in the opposite direction to the previous auction. When the Alien card is auctioned, every player except the Alien takes one die of the named type from the Encounter pool.

You are almost ready to play now, but before you dive in, make sure you have read & understood all the cards you now have in front of you: if you have doubts about any of them, come back & check these rule before continuing.

## That s an Order!

The game begins with the Captain giving an Order (there is a brief précis of the orders the Captain may give on his card, but there is more detail on them in the next section) and narrating the circumstances around it: the player who has the Captain card in the first round gets to determine a lot about the foundation of the story that will follow but gets to do little to determine its outcome to begin with. Once the order is given, then the other players may bid to carry out that order by stating the Commission they will roll for that challenge: start with the player to the Captain s left and continue clockwise, noting that the player with the Alien card may not bid. This auction runs from high to low, so each bid must be lower than the previous one in order to be valid.

The player who takes the Order now faces off against the Alien in an encounter based on the Captain s narration of the circumstances: each side may act out their part in the confrontation until they are both ready to move on to resolving it. The Crew must use the die they bid as their Conflict die in this encounter; the Alien chooses any die from the Encounter pool as their Conflict die. Both sides roll their Conflict dice and whoever gets the highest result on one of their dice is the

winner! The winner gets to narrate the outcome of the encounter: Crew generally narrate a victory for their ship, the Alien mostly wants to narrate a setback, problem or loss for them. After the encounter is resolved, the Captain and Alien cards move round, dice are swapped about between pools and then the new Captain gives the next Order. Well, that's the game in a nutshell, but now let's see what really happens

## Onboard the U.S.S. Cliché

At the start of the game, 2 players will not be playing the Crew cards they were dealt but will instead be filling the roles of the Captain and the Alien

**Who is the Captain?** : The Captain embodies order, discipline, and certainty: their mission is to venture out into the Unknown and define it, making it conform to their way of seeing things. The Captain stands for strength, unity, safety repression, stagnation and control. What is the Alien? : The Alien is all that is doubtful, wonderful and terrible in the universe: it is waiting to be discovered and changes the discoverer in the process. The Alien stands for freedom, opportunity, growth danger, discord and mistrust.

The Captain initiates an encounter at the start of every round of play, so they get to determine the broad nature of the Alien, whether it is singular or plural, sentient or unaware, living being or machine, on a planet or in space and so on. This encounter is narrated as part of an Order, a command the Captain gives for his Crew to carry out: there are 7 standard types of Order that the Captain may give, which are outlined below.

**Hail** : communication with the Alien, the exchange of known facts & opinions, this Order may relate to distress signals, diplomatic negotiations, friendly greetings to passing ships and so on.

**Scan** : gathering data through scientific instrumentation, including various types of energy signature, visual and radar scans or more exotic types of measurement, this Order may relate to finding crashed ships, mineral supplies, tracking the enemy and so on.

**Course** : moving the ship, either at great speed or with great accuracy, this Order may relate to giving chase, performing evasive manoeuvres, shifting orbit and so on.

**Beam** : transferring subjects between locations by the means of matter transmission, this Order may relate to going down to (or escaping quickly from!) a planet, boarding a ship, taking on cargo, and so on.

**Shields** : raising a defensive energy barrier around the entire ship, this Order may relate to deflecting weapons, preventing beaming, surviving in a dangerous environment and so on.

**Phasers** : doing a low to moderate amount of damage to a target, this Order may relate to crippling the engines or weapons on another ship, burning through a surface obstruction, destroying minor hazards and so on.

**Torpedoes** : doing a high amount of damage to a target, this Order may relate to destroying another ship, igniting a gas cloud, bombarding the surface of a planet and so on.

After giving his Order, the Captain then offers a Commission, in the form of one die from that pool: the Captain may select any die remaining in the Commission pool, but not one of his Officer dice, if he has any. Then an auction begins, starting with the player to the Captain's left: each bid must be lower than the one before it in order to be valid, but the first bid made may be simply Yes Sir! meaning that the player will use the Commission die offered and this is the highest bid possible; at the opposite end of the scale, a player may go maverick and make a bid of With respect, sir.. meaning that they reject any and all dice in the Commission pool and will use one of their Officer dice instead, and this is the lowest bid possible. A player who says No Bid is out of the auction entirely and cannot carry out this Order.

Once the ultimate bid is made, the player who made it prepares to carry out the Captain's order: if the winning bid was anything other than With respect sir they receive a die of the agreed type from the Commission pool: that will be their Conflict die in this challenge.

## He Who Battles Monsters

The Crew who won the Captain's auction is now ready to carry out their Order; if they won by saying With respect sir , then they may select any die from their Officer pool for this Order, but they may also ignore the Order to a certain extent: they must still deal with the issue described, but they can deal with it in a different way, e.g. if the Captain's Order was along the lines of Target their weapons with all Phasers , they could say Belay that order; Hail them and tell them we come in peace . If the Crew took the Commission, then they must try to carry out the Captain's order as worded.

Next, the Alien chooses any one die from the Encounter pool; there is no limit on what they may choose from the pool, but read on for reasons why you might not always want to choose the highest die in there. With both sides having their Conflict dice for this challenge, they are almost ready to roll them but wait! There is something else to consider: what attitude do the opponents take to each other? Each side in the challenge can choose to be Neutral, Hostile or Friendly; Neutral is the default attitude and it is always presumed that both sides adopt this stance unless they specifically state otherwise, clearly enough for all other players to acknowledge it, before rolling any dice.

**Friendly:** We Come In Peace If a Friendly attitude is adopted, then the player automatically wins if their die result is an odd number; if their opponent also gets an automatic win condition, then use the highest result as normal.

**Hostile:** Shoot To Kill If a Hostile attitude is adopted, then the player automatically wins if their die result is an even number; if their opponent also gets an automatic win condition, then use the highest result as normal.

With attitudes established, now both sides can roll their Conflict dice: whoever rolls the highest number wins the challenge (see the Personality card descriptions to see how to resolve ties)

## Maverick Officers

If a Crew member decides to go maverick by making a bid of With respect, sir then they have 2 additional options which they may take instead of carrying out a normal order; these 2 options override all other rules for resolving conflicts, including attitudes, and in both cases, the Alien uses no dice from the Encounter pool.

**Option 1:** Technobabble: If a maverick takes a Commission die from their Officer pool, then they may make a Technobabble roll; instead of carrying out an Order, they may narrate a technological solution to the problem or challenge stated by the Captain. The player has to provide the pseudo-scientific lingo to back this manoeuvre up but this allows them to alter fundamental aspects of the story so far; this type of solution usually only works upon non-sentient challenges.

**Option 2:** Alien Love: If a maverick takes an Encounter die from their Officer pool, then they may make an Alien Love roll; instead of carrying out an Order, they may narrate an intriguing relationship between themselves and the Alien described by the Captain in the current problem or challenge. The player has to describe what sort of relationship develops between themselves and the Alien and explain how it circumvents the current problem, as well as its effect on the story so far; this type of solution usually only works upon sentient challenges.

In both cases, the Crew member rolls the die selected from their Officer pool and succeeds if the result is 3 or greater but fails if they roll 2 or less; if they succeed, then they narrate the outcome, as usual, and keep the die rolled in their officer pool, but if they fail, then the Alien player narrates the outcome and the die used is returned to its original pool, i.e. a Commission die used for Technobabble is returned to the Commission pool.

## Swap Meet

This is the tricky part of the game, so pay attention; after any challenge, the first thing that happens is that the winner of it gets to narrate the outcome. A successful Crew should not spare their imagination in their tale of heroism and victory over impossible odds; a successful Alien should be remorseless in crushing & humiliating their vanquished foes!

OK, that tricky part: what to do with the Conflict dice and the Captain and Alien cards after each challenge, so first, the dice. In a normal challenge, where both sides are Neutral, the winner gets to keep whichever die they took from the challenge pool they used and the loser must put their die into that same pool, e.g. if the Alien wins, they keep their die, adding it to their Officer pool, and the Crew they were facing has to add their die to the Encounter pool. Things are

different if the winner was Friendly or Hostile though.

**Friendly:** Trade Agreement The players swap their Conflict dice with each other and add them to their Officer pools.

**Hostile:** Declaration of War The loser gives their Conflict die directly to the winner, who puts it in their Officer pool along with their own Conflict die.

Next, the Captain and Alien cards move around; if the Crew player won, then they take the Captain card, becoming the new Captain, and the old Captain takes the Alien card. If the Crew player lost however, they take the Alien card and the old Alien becomes the new Captain. Whoever the new Captain is, they now get to give the next Order and the game continues in this way until a Breakthrough is made.

## Officer's Mess

The Crew cards provide players with a certain advantage when carrying out Orders; each one is trained in a certain type of Order and when carrying that out, they get to roll their Conflict die twice, taking the higher result of the two rolls.

Communications Officer: Hail

Science Officer: Scan

Helmsman: Course

Chief Engineer: Beam

First Officer: Shields

Security Chief: Phasers

Weapons Officer: Torpedoes

## Space Opera

The Personality cards are used as tie-breakers in the auction for an Order and in a challenge; if an Order conforms to the player's Personality type, then they are Keen when carrying out that Order. During an auction, this means that they may make an identical bid to the previous one and still count it as being lower, but the next bid must be lower to continue the auction, it cannot be the same bid again, even if that player's Personality also conforms to the order. During a challenge, if both players are tied (and no automatic wins occur) then the tie is broken in the Crew's favour if their Personality conforms to the order; if it runs counter to it, then the tie is broken in the Alien's favour.

**Logical:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with science, logic and objectivity, a mathematical weighing up of the pros & cons; passion and emotion run counter to your personality.

**Passionate:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with emotional appeals, sensuality and intimacy; science and logic run counter to your personality.

**Aggressive:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with violence, action and danger; talking and thinking run counter to your personality.

**Defensive:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with negotiation, thought and caution; action and violence run counter to your personality.

**Inquisitive:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with making discoveries, getting answers and having totally new experiences; routine and caution run counter to your personality.

**Acquisitive:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with making a profit, claiming new territory and upgrading with higher technology; generosity and low-tech solutions run counter to your personality.

**Philanthropic:** You are Keen on Orders that deal with helping others, repairing damage and sharing your technology; destruction and selfishness run counter to your personality.

# The Captain Saves the Day!

The climax of the game & the story comes when any player wants to try Save the Day: they may only do this while they are Captain however. Instead of giving an order, they may narrate a piece of daring heroism on the part of the Captain, a direct challenge to the Alien which will overcome any problems the crew is faced with. Once the challenge is stated, the Captain rolls all the dice in their Officer pool (not the Commission pool) and the Alien rolls all the dice in the Encounter pool (not their Officer pool). If the Captain's total on all their dice is higher than the Alien's, then they succeed! They get to narrate the final scene of the story (it is obligatory, no matter what traumas the crew has been through or how many deaths there have been, for the Captain to end the story on a joke) and that's it, game over. If, on the other hand, the Alien gets the higher total, then tough cookies: the story doesn't end yet and the Alien player gets to narrate some further humiliation.

In addition, the Alien player and the Captain both pick one die each from the Captain's Officer pool and return them to their original pools, i.e. an Encounter die in the Captain's Officer pool is returned to the Encounter pool. After this, the next players in clockwise order from the Captain and the Alien become the new Captain and Alien, respectively, i.e. the player to the Captain's left becomes the new Captain and the player to the Alien's left becomes the new Alien.