

## Appendix: Spacecraft

The different types, styles, and models of spacecraft used within the Galactic Alliance are far too numerous to describe without it turning into a novel in and of itself; but all such craft are generally divided into several broad classes.

### Shuttles

These craft are generally designed for transport of small cargo or small amounts of people. Usually of very small size (as small as thirty meters from end to end), yet are not particularly nimble or maneuverable. They tend to be rather plain in design as well. Not fancy or remarkable in any discernible way, yet are vital for the movement of goods cheaply and efficiently.

They usually carry very little armament (and sometimes none at all), using the space saved to install larger quantum generators that allow for much longer travel than would normally be reserved for craft of that size; able to go from one end of the galaxy to the other several times before needing to be refueled.

Smaller business interests would have very little chance of surviving the larger galactic economy without these inexpensive to purchase and maintain vehicles.

### Liners

Serve much the same purpose as shuttles, but considerably larger, the increased space used for shipping more or larger cargo, large amounts of people, or for expansive luxury options for passengers in flight. While not nearly as numerous as shuttles, these tend to be the most frequently noticed spacecraft in the civilian sector.

And just like the shuttle, liners tend to be lightly armed, and when added with the tendency to be luxurious in design, content, and occupants, tends to make them the most common target for pirates looking for goods or wealth. Liners on the edges of the Galactic Rim often have fighter escorts, occasionally cruisers if the cargo is deemed of significant importance, either hired from mercenaries (or rival pirate groups) and occasionally military escort.

Because of this, bold pirates have started to take quick strikes or infiltration of liners deep within Alliance space, where such escorts are considerably less if at all.

### Fighters

The most common form of combat spacecraft in terms of sheer numbers, these light, maneuverable vehicles are the hands of military fleets. Capable of striking quickly and hard to target with larger weapons, a small cadre of fighters can take down a cruiser in a very short time.

A typical fighter will carry anywhere from two to four cannons and a small array of small ordinance bombs or seeking missiles depending on the mission. Depending on the model, they may not even possess a quantum generator, and even if they do, it is extremely short ranged and only suited for emergency jumps, for example if separated from the cruiser or frigate it was dispatched from.

Fighters are generally not available for civilian purchase, although pared down and disarmed versions of the class are frequently adapted for races and sport. Pirate clans usually have small bays for fighters that they acquire through capture or salvage, but not nearly to the degree of a military vessel, as a pirate clan seeks to avoid such combat by nature.

### Frigates

A balance between the speedy short range fighters and the heavier, bulky cruisers, frigates have become less popular over time for precisely the non-specialized nature that made them so versatile in the early days of interstellar travel.

On average, a frigate has an armament of ten to fifteen cannons, two missile bays and a bombing bay that can carry a full payload of smaller ordinance or a handful of large orbital ordinance. They also will usually possess a fighter bay, generally able to house up to five to ten fighting craft.

While being steadily phased out of military use, they still have limited use for beginning colonies that can't justify a larger defense presence. The largest use of frigates by the time of The Second Gate are by pirate clans, who due to their small organizations need their vessels to have some teeth yet also quick to move from their attack sites back to their hideouts.

### Cruisers

These large capital ships have come to represent the bulk of a military's large craft, and are the backbone of any military fleet. Their armament can range anywhere from thirty to seventy cannons, multiple missile bays, several large ordinance bombing bays that can carry full compliments of the largest ordinance, as well as multiple fighter bays that allow for fighters to be deployed in waves. More sophisticated cruisers also have full servicing and manufacturing sections that allow for quick repairs to smaller spacecraft.

But more than the actual firepower a cruiser provides, is the appearance of strength. To possess a cruiser is a sign that your military is either one to be reckoned with, or well on its way. Some major pirate clans go out of their way to acquire such a craft, even though its size is counter-intuitive to the quick strike nature these clans prefer, simply for the stature and intimidation factor a cruiser gives.

### Dreadnaughts

These are by far the largest of spacecraft that exist within the Galactic Alliance. Their size, expense, and requirements in terms of materials and manpower are so great that nearly every race in the galaxy finds them to simply not be worth the trouble. The Arcadians constructed three that initially were given that classification about one hundred staryears ago, but once decommissioned were never replaced. Among the political bodies within the galaxy, only one has an active program to design, construct, and utilize dreadnaughts.

Due to the Solarian's physical place in the galaxy, they are the only race that has the means and will to construct these massive ships, and in fairness, these daunting craft are hardly for show and present a significant advantage if brought into battle.

The current standard for a dreadnaught class spacecraft is at minimum two hundred kilometers in size, the latest class have been pushing close to five hundred. They frequently carry an armament of over one thousand cannons, with weapons bays that would rival an entire fleet of cruisers. In fact, a dreadnaught often has cruiser bays in the same fashion that cruisers carry fighters.

Dreadnaughts carry advantages in more than just size and firepower. They are literally mobile bases and shipyards, able to perform large scale repairs of cruisers while maintaining position on the field. Anything short of an all out assault would have little effect to damage or incapacitate craft of this class.

A dreadnaught in orbit is a sign of massive military presence of the Solarians, often placed at hotspots far from the center of their influence, giving the Solarian military a fully functional base outside of easy attack from a resisting foe that planet-side bases would present.