

Soil – ship design guidelines

General

What to avoid:

- hexagons (at least overuse). Seriously, I've seen enough hexagons in games and movies for life...
- too many greebles. Whole ship shouldn't be covered in random stuff, there need to be some greeble-free places for contrast
- too many glowing parts. This includes glowing strips running across ship, glowing areas and large walls of windows. Few lines or clusters of windows or few glowing spots are fine, just not all over the place
- "fat" designs. This feeling for me usually comes from ships ratio of length to width. I would describe it like a toy or cartoon look; that is not desired here

Turrets:

- avoid many turrets for game's performance reasons, to avoid visual clutter when many ships open fire, and for game's balancing. Turrets shouldn't be numerous, but powerful. 6-8 main turrets should be more than enough for destroyer/cruiser.

Ship types:

- Corvette – smallest, fastest. Recon and mostly anti-fighter.
- Frigate – small, fast escort for bigger ships and for flanking attacks, etc.
- Destroyer – "average" ship
- Cruiser – powerful, ships with big guns, slow, mainly against other cruisers and destroyers
- Battlecruiser/Battleship – biggest, meanest, rarest ships.
- Carrier – dedicated ships for carrying and servicing fighters/bombers. Only stations and some battlecruisers/battleships should be able to carry fighters.
- Harvesters – asteroid mining ships, with lots of cargo space and ability to dock to stations/carriers
- Station/shipyard

As for ship sizes, destroyer should be around 300-400m long while biggest ships shouldn't be over 1km (except for stations). This is just to have some sense of scale when designing. Fighters/bombers should be sized as real-world aircraft

Also, different ship designs shouldn't share many features/shape with others, to make them distinguishable in game.

Remember that ship's shape determines how hard is ship to hit, so thin and small ships will have advantage in this regard.

Note: provided images are just examples, to give general idea and illustrate contrast between styles

Factions

Viridian

This faction is by the start of the game new to space travel/combat, which at the beginning of main story encounters "hostile alien race". Its designs should be utilitarian (focusing on function before beauty), flat surfaces, sharp edges, exposed systems (pipes, boxes, stuff (just greebles)), girders in early ships, etc. Primary colour should be light grey.

In general, Viridian ships should be taller than wider. There shouldn't be very prominent slanted/sloped surfaces running from front to back or back to front in profile view. Slopes from side to side are okay.

Style 1 – looks

Early style is more industrial looking, (in universe) designed in a hurry in response to immediate threat.

Style 1 – armament

Mostly turreted guns (think about WW2 era battleships); gun and flak anti-fighter turrets; less common heavy missile launchers.



Rough, bit extreme example of Style 1, only this has too many round features (HMS Belfast by radojavor @ deviantart)



Example of Style 1 harvester/support ship (q-ship by mikedoscher @ deviantart)

Style 2 – looks

Later in campaign is more advanced, less greebled, more armour plates and more design oriented, but still flat surfaces and sharp edges.

Style 2 – armament

Turreted guns; hull-mounted guns (something like powerful railguns); hull-mounted beam weapons (reverse engineered from enemy); heavy missile launchers; anti-fighter guns, flak and missiles (hull-mounted weapons should probably be exposed, not fully inside hull)



Example of Style 2 (ship by duster132 @ deviantart)



Example of Style 2 (avenger by leonovichdmitriy @ deviantart)

Xanthous

This faction is game's primary antagonist encountered by Viridian faction. They are more advanced faction, already long in space travel/combat. Their design should be less greebled, smooth elegant curved surfaces. This faction's primary colour is light brown/gold/sand/yellow mix:

In terms of general shape, Xanthous ships should have more width-oriented features, as opposed to taller-than-wider Viridian designs.

Style 1 – looks

Encountered as “easy enemies” are armed civilian ships, like mining, cargo, passenger ships, etc.

Style 1 – armament

Mostly turreted guns (sci-fi plasma something type); turreted beams;

Style 2 – looks

Dedicated military ships.

Style 2 – armament

Hull-mounted beams (can be fully embedded into hull); turreted beams; less turreted guns; “missiles” (sci-fi guided something)



Example of Xanthous style (ship by blueraincz @ deviantart)

Skyfolk

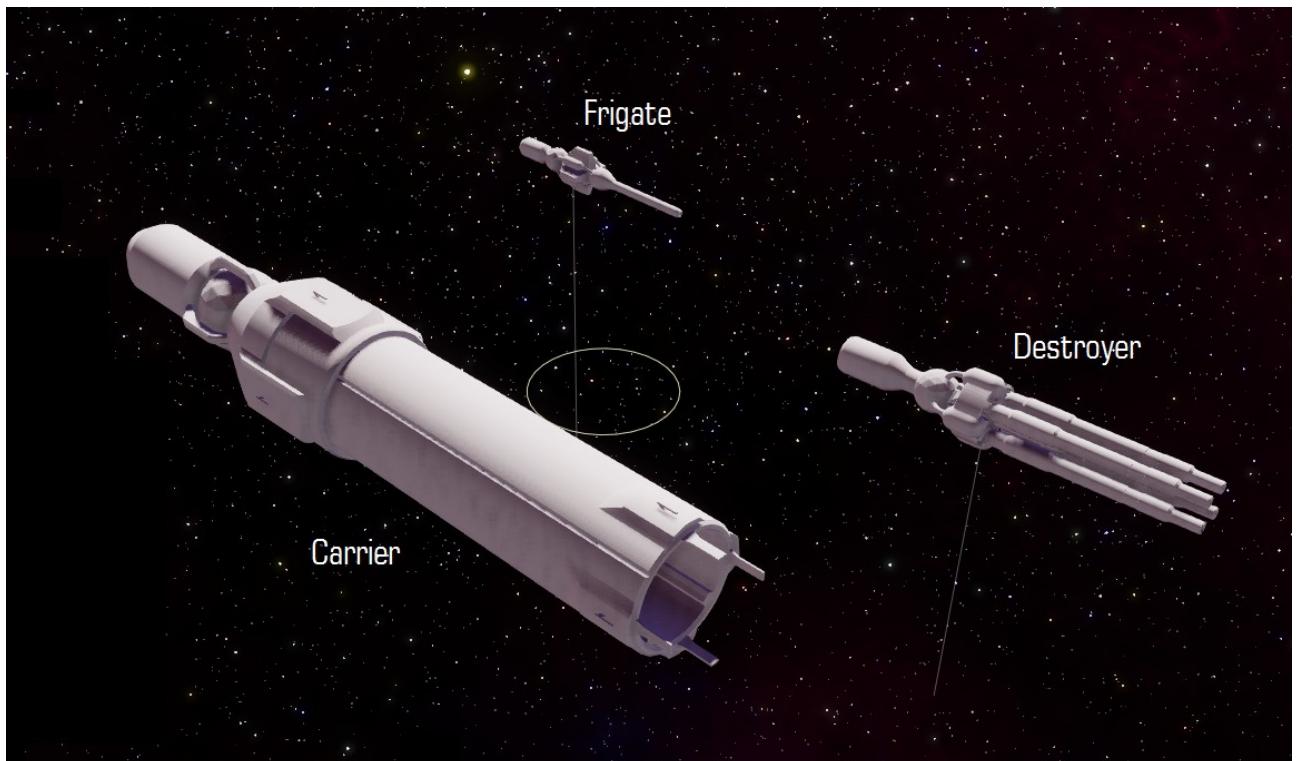
This is very minor faction – 600-700 years before events of game, these were ships of what is now Xanthous faction.

Looks

Circular cross sections. These should be brass coloured, with a lot of rust and dirt around, as they were unused and unmaintained for a long time.

Armament of this faction:

Hull-mounted beams; turreted beams



Preliminary designs/models by me. These are all types that will be needed for campaign mode.

Overlord

This is very minor faction – something like end boss battle – no need to design right now, probably no more than 3 types of combat ships

Armament of this faction:

All kind of nasty firepower