

BSG: Express

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For 3-5 players

45 – 60 minutes

BSG: Express is inspired by the Sci Fi television series *Battlestar Galactica*, which in turn was a remake of the 1978 television series of the same name. It is an 'express' version of the popular *Battlestar Galactica* game published by Fantasy Flight Games.

The human race is facing extinction. A robotic civilization called the Cylons has destroyed the human's home planet and is chasing the survivors through space. External threats, however, aren't the only dangers facing the humans: any one of them might be a Cylon in disguise, attempting to destroy humanity from within.

Components Provided in This File

- Main game board (3 sections)
- 5 character cards
- 8 'not a Cylon' loyalty cards
- 4 'Cylon' loyalty cards
- 1 admiral card
- 10 strong skill dice labels (with a blue border)
- 10 weak skill dice labels (with a red border)
- 4 crisis dice labels (two for 3 & 5 player games; two for the 4 player game, signified by a dot in the upper right hand corner of each die face)
- 14 DRADIS markers
- 5 demoralized markers
- 6 Galactica damage markers
- 1 FTL jump prep marker
- 1 distance marker

Components Not Provided

- 24 indented dice
- 5 cups or screens for players to privately roll their dice

Printing the File

You will need to print out the game board ([BSG_Express_GameBoard.pdf](#)), cards ([BSG_Express_Cards.pdf](#)), dice labels, and markers ([BSG_Express_DiceMarkers.pdf](#)). For the cards, DRADIS markers, and demoralized markers, you will need to fold on the line, glue, and line up the fronts and backs evenly before cutting. Print the dice labels on a full page label sheet, cut, and affix them to the indented dice.

Objective

BSG: Express is a semi-cooperative game in which the players do not immediately know who is human and who is Cylon.

Human Victory: If the human fleet, after travelling a distance of 6, can jump one final time, the humans outrun the Cylons and win the game.

Cylon Victory: The Cylons must accomplish one of three goals before the humans make their final jump: 1) overwhelm the fleet by placing six raiders on the board, 2) place six damage markers on Galactica, or 3) demoralize the entire human race (by turning over all five demoralized markers). The Cylons are victorious the instant any one of these three conditions is met.

Setup

1. Place the game board in the center of the table and place the FTL jump prep and distance track markers at the beginning of their respective tracks. Place two Raiders on the DRADIS display. Place the rest of the DRADIS markers in a pile displaying their UNKNOWN side next to the board. Finally, place both the demoralized markers and the Galactica damage markers facedown next to the board.
2. Shuffle the character cards and randomly deal one to each player (alternatively, players may each choose their characters if this is agreed on beforehand). Each player takes their character card and places it in front of themselves on the table, making sure that the BRIGGED side is facedown. The player whose character is highest up in the chain of command takes the Admiral card.

Chain of Command

- William Adama
- Lee Adama
- Kara “Starbuck” Thrace
- Laura Roslin
- Gaius Baltar

3. Each player takes two strong skill dice and two weak skill dice.
4. Depending on how many players you have, consult the chart below to determine how many ‘Cylon’ loyalty cards and ‘not a Cylon’ loyalty cards you’ll need in the loyalty deck, as well as which crisis dice will be used.

3-player game: 1 ‘Cylon’ loyalty card
 5 ‘not a Cylon’ loyalty cards
 2 crisis dice for the 3-5 player game

4-player game: 1 ‘Cylon’ loyalty card
 7 ‘not a Cylon’ loyalty cards
 2 crisis dice for the 4 player game (the dice with the dot in the upper right hand corner of the die faces)

5-player game: 2 'Cylon' loyalty cards
 8 'not a Cylon' loyalty cards
 2 crisis dice for the 3-5 player game

First, shuffle the four 'Cylon' loyalty cards and randomly choose the appropriate number, placing the remaining cards facedown in the box. Second, thoroughly shuffle the chosen 'Cylon' loyalty card(s) with the appropriate number of 'not a Cylon' loyalty cards, and deal one to each player. Carefully set the rest of the loyalty deck to the side of the board, as you will need it later. Finally, select the appropriate crisis dice and set them to the side of the board.

Playing the Game

Players complete actions, hold votes, and resolve crises during the game by rolling dice and submitting them. Unless otherwise stated, these rules apply to all dice rolls.

- Dice rolls are always private (unless only a single die is rolled, in which case there is nothing to hide), and a player may never reveal what they rolled to another player. The only dice that are seen publicly are the ones that a player chooses to submit.
- If a player chooses to roll their dice, they must roll all the active dice available to them.
- If everyone can take part in a skill check, each player must choose to either pass or participate. Players make their decisions in clockwise order starting with the player to the left of the active player.
- If a player is forced to pass because they have no active skill dice left, they may retrieve two of their spent dice, their choice.
- If a player voluntarily passes but has at least one active die, they may retrieve only one of their spent dice, their choice.
- Each player participating in a vote or crisis, starting with the player to the left of the active player, rolls and submits their dice before any other player rolls. Players are not allowed to roll their dice and see the results until it is their turn to submit dice.
- Every time a player rolls their dice they must submit at least one. They may, if they wish, submit more than one. This holds even if the outcome of the crisis or vote is inevitable; if dice were rolled, at least one must be submitted.
- After submitting at least one die, players may choose to re-roll their remaining dice. However, every time they re-roll their dice they must submit one. This may be repeated (roll and submit, roll and submit) until a player has no more active dice.
- Submitted dice are placed in the player's metallic gold section of the Galactica seal.
- After an action, vote, or crisis has been resolved, any dice that were submitted are moved to the appropriate player's spent dice box (their black leather section of the Galactica seal).

Turn Order

1. Retrieve spent dice
2. Perform an action
3. Roll the crisis dice and choose one
4. Resolve crisis
5. (Conditional) Prepare to jump
6. (Conditional) Jump the fleet
7. (Conditional) Deal new loyalty cards.

1. Retrieve Spent Dice

The active player retrieves all of their spent dice from the board.

Exception: if the player is demoralized at the beginning of their turn, or if they are brigged, they may only retrieve one of their spent dice, their choice.

2. Perform an Action

The player may perform one action.

- Character Specific Action
The player may perform an action specific to their character.
- Destroy Raiders or Rescue Colonial Ships
If there are ships on the DRADIS display (either Raiders or Colonial ships), a player may choose to shoot them down / rescue them. To do so, the player must roll all of their active dice, submitting at least one die, but up to four if they wish. Additional rolls are not allowed. For each positive die the player submits, remove one Raider and/or Colonial ship marker from the DRADIS display, returning them facedown to the pile of DRADIS markers and mixing them up. Negative dice have no effect. *This action may not be performed while brigged.*
- Repair Galactica
The player may attempt to repair a damaged section of Galactica. To do so, the player must roll all of their active dice and submit only one. Additional rolls are not allowed. If the die they submit is positive, they may remove one damage marker from the Galactica display. Return the marker to the unused pile of damage markers. If the die the player submits is negative, the repair attempt is a failure and nothing happens. *This action may not be performed while brigged.*
- Boost Morale
The player may attempt to improve morale by giving an inspirational speech. To do so, the player must roll all of their active dice and submit only one. Additional rolls are not allowed. If the die they submit is positive, the speech

is successful; they may remove a demoralized marker from either themselves or another player. Return the marker facedown to the pile of unused markers, being sure to mix them up. *This action may not be performed while brigged.*

- Prepare For Jump

The player may attempt to ensure that the next crisis die is treated as if it had a “prepare for jump” icon on it. To do so, the player must roll all of their active dice and submit two. If the sum of the two numbers is positive, the action is successful and the next crisis die will be treated as if it had a “prepare for jump” icon on it. *This action may not be performed while brigged.*

NOTE: If the next crisis die chosen already has a “prepare for jump” symbol on it, DO NOT treat it as if it had two “prepare for jump” symbols. This action is only good for ensuring a crisis die WITHOUT a “prepare for jump” symbol is treated as if it had one.

- Call a Vote

The player may either 1) call a vote to throw a specific player into the brig or 2) call a vote to release a player from the brig (including themselves). In both cases, the difficulty is 4. If the vote is successful, the accused player must flip their character card to its BRIGGED side (or they may flip the card back over to its non-BRIGGED side if the vote was to release them from the brig). If the Admiral is brigged, the Admiral card passes to the next player in the chain of command.

A player in the brig may only retrieve one skill die at the beginning of their turn and when they pass, even if it is a forced pass. A brigged player also does not roll the crisis dice on their turn.

Revealed Cylon players cannot be thrown into the brig.

Exception: if a player passes and chooses not to participate in a vote, even if they were forced to pass because they have no active dice, they DO NOT retrieve any of their spent skill dice.

- Issue an Executive Order

A player may select another player to either perform an action or retrieve some of their skill dice. In order to do so, the active player must submit one die (the die is not rolled) and choose which player to receive the order. The active player may suggest what the chosen player should do, but once the order is given the chosen player may do whatever they wish. They may take an action normally, or they may retrieve up to 2 of their spent skill dice.

- Reveal as a Cylon

Cylon players may choose to reveal themselves as their action.

- Reveal your 'Cylon' loyalty card to everyone. If you are not in the brig when you reveal, immediately execute the consequence listed on the card. Otherwise the consequence does not occur.
- If you were in the brig when you revealed, flip your character card back over to its non-brigged side.
- Place one strong skill die and one weak skill die back in the box. You will only have two skill dice to use from now on.
- *In a 4-player game only:* Draw a second 'Cylon' loyalty card from the box and immediately execute the consequence, even if you were in the brig when you revealed.
- *In a 5-player game only:* Pass your second loyalty card facedown to another player. The player looks at it but does not show it to anyone else. If the card passed was the second 'Cylon' loyalty card, that player is now a Cylon.
- Play immediately passes to the next player.

3. Roll the crisis dice and choose one

The player takes the two crisis dice, rolls them privately, and selects one to be resolved. Place the die in the center of the game board.

The icon in the center of the die indicates what kind of crisis it is (raised fist for Unrest, basestar icon for basestar attack on Galactica, and the DRADIS icon for Galactica which represents an unknown DRADIS contact).

The number in the top left of the die is the difficulty number of the skill check.

The number in the bottom left of the die is the consequence if the skill check is failed.

If there is a target icon in the bottom right of the die, it means that the FTL jump prep marker will be advanced after the crisis has been resolved.

A dot in the upper right hand corner indicates that the crisis die is only to be used in a 4-player game.

4. Resolve crisis

Each player, starting with the player to the left of the active player, may choose to pass or participate in the crisis skill check. Each positive die submitted counts towards passing the skill check; each negative die submitted counts against it. If the final result is equal to or higher than the difficulty number, the crisis is successfully passed without incident. If the result is lower than the difficulty number, the consequence listed on the die occurs.

If the crisis was a basestar attack, the consequence is damage to Galactica. Place a number of damage markers on the Galactica display equal to the number on the crisis die. If the sixth and final damage marker is placed, Galactica is destroyed and

the Cylons win. Each damage marker has a specific consequence for the players if it is drawn. These consequences remain in effect until that specific location is repaired.

- Weapons Control – the players may not use the action “Destroy Raiders or Rescue Colonial Ships.”
- Press Room – the players may not use the action “Boost Morale.”
- Admiral’s Quarters – the players may not use the action “Call a Vote.”
- Com Center – the players may not use the action “Issue an Executive Order.”
- Engine Room – the players may not use the action “Prepare For Jump.”
- Armory – the players retrieve one fewer die when passing. Note that this may mean a player retrieves no dice when passing.

If the crisis was unrest, the consequence is that the humans are demoralized. If the demoralized marker drawn is the fifth and final one, the human race has succumbed to defeat and the Cylons win. Otherwise, place the marker on the appropriate player’s golden metallic section of the Galactica seal. If the character on the marker is not currently in the game (either in a 3 or 4 player game), place the demoralized marker on one of the unused spots around the Galactica seal. If a character is demoralized, they may only retrieve one spent skill die at the beginning of their turn and when they pass, even if it is a forced pass. If the character is a revealed Cylon player, the marker is still placed on their section of the seal, but it has no effect on them.

If the crisis was a DRADIS contact, reveal a number of DRADIS markers equal to the consequence number and place them on the DRADIS display. If a sixth Raider marker is placed on the DRADIS display, the human fleet has been overrun and the Cylons win. If the revealed marker is a Colonial ship, check to see if there is more than one Raider currently present on the DRADIS display. For every two Raiders present on the DRADIS display, remove one Raider and one Colonial ship. When a Colonial ship is destroyed, the active player must choose whether to damage Galactica once or draw a demoralized marker as a penalty. After the player has chosen, place the Raider back into the pile of unused DRADIS markers and mix the pile up, but remove the Colonial ship marker from the game.

Example: The players fail a DRADIS contact crisis. The consequence number is two, so two DRADIS markers are revealed from the facedown pile. They are both Colonial ships. However, there are already two Raiders present on the DRADIS display. One of the Colonial ships is instantly destroyed. The player chooses to damage Galactica as a penalty. That marker is then removed from the game, and one of the Raider markers is placed back into the pile of unused DRADIS markers. Now there is one Raider marker and one Colonial ship marker left on the DRADIS display. The second Colonial ship marker survives as there are not at least two Raiders to destroy it. However, if a second Raider marker is drawn on a subsequent turn, the Colonial ship will automatically be destroyed.

5. (Conditional) Prepare to jump

If the crisis die chosen has a jump symbol on it, advance the jump track forward by the number of jump symbols shown on the die regardless of whether or not the crisis was successfully passed.

6. (Conditional) Jump the fleet

If the jump track marker reaches three, the fleet immediately jumps.

- Reset the jump prep marker to zero.
- All players retrieve their spent skill dice (unless they are demoralized or brigged, in which case they may only retrieve one spent skill die, their choice).
- The current Admiral then takes one strong skill die and one weak skill die, rolls them, and submits one.
- If the die is positive, move the distance marker forward that number of spaces.
- If the die is negative, move the distance marker forward the absolute value of the die. However, a penalty occurs. The Admiral must choose to damage Galactica, draw a demoralized marker, or a combination of both by the number on the die.
- The Admiral then retrieves the skill die he submitted for distance.

Example: The Admiral submits a die showing -2. He moves the jump track forward two spaces, but he must then choose to damage Galactica and/or draw a demoralized marker. He decides to damage Galactica once and draw one demoralized marker.

7. (Conditional) Deal new loyalty cards

If the distance marker reaches four or higher, deal each player a new loyalty card from the loyalty deck. Players who were previously human may now become Cylons. The 'Cylon' loyalty card takes precedence over the 'not a Cylon' card. If you have one of them, congratulations: you're a frakkin' toaster.

Playing as a Cylon

When a Cylon player has revealed themselves, the following changes occur:

- If a Cylon player is demoralized when they reveal, their demoralized marker stays on the board but it has no affect on the player. Human players may attempt to boost morale and remove this marker as normal.
- Cylon players only have two skill dice to use for the remainder of the game: one strong and one weak.
- They may only submit a single skill die to skill checks (including votes), even if they start with two active dice.
- Any actions or abilities specific to their character no longer apply and may not be used.

- If a Cylon player passes, either voluntarily or when forced to, they retrieve all of their spent skill dice.
- On their turn they roll the crisis dice as normal, selecting one to resolve. Difficulty numbers, consequences, and jump icons all still apply.
- Revealed Cylons have an additional action they may perform on their turn. Instead of rolling the crisis dice (and thereby risking a jump symbol), the Cylon player may choose which crisis the humans will face. In this case, the difficulty is a 4, the consequence is a 1, and there is no jump symbol.

Morale Variant

Is the game a little too easy for the humans? Are they regularly trouncing their Cylon opponents? Then try this little variant on for size.

When a player attempts to boost morale, if they submit a negative die, then the inspirational speech has the opposite effect: draw ANOTHER demoralized marker and place it on the appropriate character. Cylon players can easily use this option to their advantage to quickly demoralize the humans.

Exception: if there is only one unused demoralized marker and a player submits a negative die, failing to boost morale, the last demoralized marker is NOT drawn, i.e. it is not possible to destroy the human race by giving a demoralizing pep talk.