

Sins of a Solar Empire II - Player Guide

Welcome to Sins of a Solar Empire II!

This guide is meant to help returning Sins of a Solar Empire players learn the changes we've made to the sequel. There are a lot of differences to consider, so be warned that your previous play style *will not work*.

If you're a new Sins player - welcome! While this guide is written primarily to get existing players up-to-speed, it should serve you as well.

What to Expect in Early Access

Firstly, **the game is not feature complete**. If you're reading this, you probably know that already - but just accept the fact that a bunch of folks will assume that this is it. Please be gentle in correcting them. 😊 Very little is set in stone at this point.

Included Features for Public Technical Preview

(aka what you're playing right now, at a high level)

- TEC (Loyalist) faction only
- 2 Capital Ships: Kol and Akkan
- Core Systems: exploration, expansion, combat, minor factions, pirates, planet improvements, victory/loss conditions, some research topics, various planet types, exotics.
- Some new music and audio
- Lots of new ship models
- Single gameplay map

Features that are NOT in this build

- All the other factions
- Culture
- Starbases
- Titans
- Dunov, Marza and Sova capital ships; and Neruda
- Diplomacy with AI players - you can do it, but don't expect a response
- Random and custom maps
- Multi-unit selection and context window
- New VO, ship models, shaders, particle effects, etc. (basically, if it doesn't look or sound new, we're still working on it)
- Modding and lots more - you get the idea.

Providing Feedback

To provide feedback, please post on our forums at: <https://forums.sinsofasurempire2.com/forum/1232>

Quick Start (Just the Facts)

High Level Changes & Helpful Tips

For those who just want to jump into things, here's the quick high-level synopsis of some of the gameplay changes from Sins of a Solar Empire. It's been 35 years since the start of the War and a lot has changed:

TEC Loyalists

- For this first build players are constrained to the TEC Loyalist faction with a limited subset of unique technologies: Hardened Defenses, War Measures Act, Counter-Deployment, Heavy Garrison, and Garrison Augmentation. As a loyalist player, your home planet starts with a Garrison Command that gives you extra fleet supply, military, and civilian slots. Additionally, the Garrison Command will automatically produce garrison ships when your factories are otherwise idle.
 - Garrisons: These are units that are automatically controlled by the computer to defend your nearby planets. They will attack enemies within 1 phase jump of their home planet; though you can give them specific orders within that radius also. Garrison forces do not count against your fleet supply or consume resources to produce.

Upkeep

- New planets require upkeep (same as before) until you've invested in them enough to offset the cost (generally level 3 or 4). Why do I mention this? *Don't expand too quickly!* You will crater your economy if you go all-out on initial expansion. Only take new planets after you've got the previous one in the black.

Resources

- Resources are no longer generated automatically when you colonize a new planet. Furthermore, resources are not minable via resource asteroids without significant investment. Increase metal and crystal income on a planet by investing in its Mining infrastructure track.
 - Investing in mining generates the same base amount of metal/crystal income that building asteroid extractors used to but does so for the resource types in the current gravity well. Example: If a planet has both metal and crystal resource asteroids present, investing in mining will result in resource income for both.
 - At investment level 3 in mining, you can construct resource extractors on resource asteroids for bonus production (this is a late game thing). Extractors require civilian slots (aka logistics) to construct.
 - Keep in mind that until you invest in mining improvements, a gravity well will *produce no resources*.
 - Exotics are a new resource type required to construct capital ships and other powerful structures/units. There are many types - check the tooltip for what you want to build for details.
 - In this build, exotics can be discovered by excavating on planets, through minor faction auctions, via derelicts, and made via exotic factories (in late game).

Derelicts

- Some gravity wells may contain wrecks of ships or structures which we refer to as derelicts. These carcasses contain valuable resources and so are constantly under guard by interested factions. If you can uproot them (aka destroy), you can then capture the derelict by placing a capital ship within its radius to secure the rich loot!

Pirates

- Pirates are now a minor faction and no longer go on timed raids against enemies. Once you discover the Pirate base, they will auction their services from time-to-time to the highest bidder.
- Pirate raids can now be saved in your 'inventory'. You can now use and target them however you wish. Pirate auction winners and who deploys them is totally anonymous. 😊

Bounty

- Speaking of pirates... the bounty system has been updated. Players can now place a bounty on specific planets by selecting the desired target and clicking the bounty button on the UI (more on this later on in the guide). The bounty system is totally anonymous. 😊

Trade

- You may now manually set trade end points if you desire; and trade now can include metal or crystal (instead of only credits). See later on in this guide for more information.

Markets

- Metal and crystal markets are no longer accessible at the start of the game; you must first discover the minor faction planets that control them (via scouting). Each resource has its own 'market player' and the prices still fluctuate based on market supply/demand. Be aware that it's possible to declare war on these minor factions and destroy them - which will impact everyone. *Of course, if you do this, there's no going back - ever.*

Planet Upgrades

- As referred to above, planets now have several infrastructure projects available to them:
 - Commerce - to generate credit income.
 - Mining - to generate metal/crystal income.
 - Defense - to increase max. military slots, military structure builders and max. planet HP.
 - Logistics - to increase max. civilian slots, civilian structure builders and max. surface slots.
 - *For more information on these, see later in the guide.*

Ships

- Your first capital ship is still free - choose wisely!
- Capital ships now require exotic resources to construct. **These are not easy to obtain in the early game.** Do not let your capital ship die.
 - **Hint:** Take out enemy Javelis cruisers quickly! Their heavy missiles will shred your capital ships apart if left alone.
- Capital ship special abilities have changed - be sure to check their tooltip for details.
- **Other Ships**
 - Scouts are now unarmed corvettes.
 - Javelis missile ships are now cruisers.
 - Support ships (like colony ships) are no longer armed.
 - Krosov siege frigates no longer have any ship-to-ship weapons.

Factories

- Frigate factories are now light factories; capital ship factories are now heavy factories. Light factories build corvettes and frigate class ships; heavy factories construct cruisers and capital class ships.

Research

- Research now only requires 1 type of research station, but many more of them. You can also build surface-based research facilities once you've invested in logistics improvements.

Fleet Supply

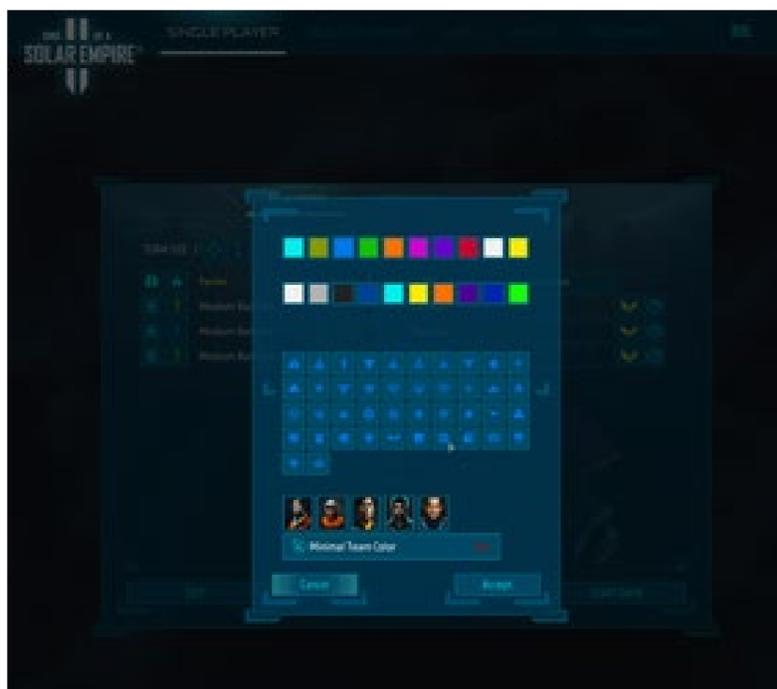
- Fleet supply no longer carries an ongoing upkeep cost and capital ship crews have been deprecated for exotics.

Slow Start

You've probably played a bit and are like ... I need more. Maybe I shouldn't have just jumped in and left that awesome player guide languishing alone. That's okay, I don't hold a grudge... mostly.

Game Setup

There's not much new here yet so I'm going to skip it in large part. The one new feature that we're releasing in Technical Preview is player color: there is now a primary and a secondary. Primary player color is the top row in the screenshot below; secondary color is the row under that.



Your choices here will be shown on all your ships, structures, and elements of the UI, so find one you like. If you prefer more minimal player color (closer to Sins 1 style), set Minimal Team Color to Yes. Eventually, your logo will also show up on your units. At present, your choices here are not saved between sessions. This will be changed in a future update.

The Main Window

In the shot below we see a typical new game start focused at your home planet. See the table notes below for more details.



FIGURE 1 - MAIN GAME UI - CLICK TO ENLARGE

Button Number	What is it?
1	Diplomacy screen - interact with other major factions here, including trade.
2	Minor Faction / Auction Screen - here you can see the minor factions you've discovered, bid on auctions and use auctions you've won. By default, all players are friendly with minor factions. Be warned that if you choose to break that alliance, there's no going back.
3	Markets - once you've discovered them, you can buy/sell metal/crystal and exotics here.
4	Research screen - opens the research screen, which we'll look at more later. The number indicates how many research stations you own.
5	Fleet Points - the number of fleet points left in your pool.
6	Colonized planets screen - opens the colonized planets screen, which we'll look at more later. The number indicates how many colonized planets you control.
7	Total credits/metal/crystal.
8	Exotics screen - lists all the exotics you own and their amounts.
9	Play time clock
10	Settings menu (F10)
11	The Bookmark bar - you can now bookmark practically anything here for quick control. Just select the item's picture when it's selected (see #12 for the general area) and click the left-mouse button for a moment. Hold and drag it up to your bookmark bar and release over the + icon that appears.
12	Selected item portrait
13	Make Capital Planet
14	Abandon Planet
15	Excavate planet (1 level per click, max 3)
16	Ship Construction menu - displays ship construction options above the interface. Disabled if there are no factories present.
17	Squadrons menu (active only if you have strikecraft from a hangar in the gravity well)
18	Orbital Structures menu - displays civilian and military orbital structures that can be placed in the gravity well.
19	Set Rally Point - by default, set's the rally point for all factories in the gravity well. Can also be set per factory (just select it first).
20	Set Trade Partner - by default, the game will automatically trade for whatever you seem to need most. However, you can now manually set a trade partner by clicking this button and selecting the end point desired. The interface to help you make the best choice will be forthcoming.
21	Commerce Infrastructure - invest here to increase credit income at this planet. Max level varies by planet type and research.
22	Mining Infrastructure - invest here to start mining metal/crystal in the gravity well (based on planet type). Max level varies by planet type.
23	Military Infrastructure - invest here to increase the planet's total military slots, the number of military constructors and the planet's maximum HP. Military slots are consumed by defense structures. Max level varies by planet type/conditions.
24	Civilian Infrastructure (Logistics) - invest here to increase the planet's total civilian infrastructure slots, the number of civilian constructors and max surface slots. Max level varies by planet type/conditions.
25	Planet Income Rates - shows the rate of income for credits, metal and crystal; and the total number of research labs present.
26	Planet Slots - allows you to construct specialized surface structures.
27	Tooltip Window - shows detailed information on the item currently being hovered over with your mouse.

Gravity Well Types

Let's delve into a bit more detail with planets and how to manage them. If you've played Sins of a Solar Empire: Rebellion with its DLCs, this won't seem too different on the surface, but the devil's in the details.

Note that the values indicated may/will change during development.

Gravity Well Types

In the first Technical Preview build you may see the following gravity well types (note that we'll switch between planet and gravity well but are referring to the same thing):

- Terran
- Desert
- Ice
- Volcanic
- Ferrous
- Oceanic
- Gas Giant
- Asteroid
- Moon
- Pirate Base
- Star

Terran

Players begin on a terran planet as their homeworld. These are lush worlds full of planet and animal life and feature large populations. Terran planets also feature both metal and crystal resource types which makes them very versatile.

- Maximum Credit Income: Extremely High
- Maximum Resource Income: Below Average
- Maximum Military Slots: Extremely High
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Surface Slots: Average

Desert

Desert worlds are arid and inhospitable due to the lack of water resources. Due to the scarcity of water, populations tend to center around oasis with additional water pulled out of the atmosphere via moisture collectors or from ice asteroids. Desert planets can contain both metal and crystal resources, plus allow for more orbital facilities but are best known for lucrative excavations

- Maximum Credit Income: Below Average
- Maximum Resource Income: Extremely Low
- Maximum Military Slots: Extremely High
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Extremely High
- Maximum Surface Slots: Extremely Low

Ice

What desert planets lack in liquid water ice worlds make up for in solid form. Ice planets feature rich crystal resources, making them extremely valuable for empires to obtain. Colonization of these planets requires specialized research and the initial investment required for them to break even is quite high.

- Maximum Credit Income: Below Average
- Maximum Resource Income: High
- Maximum Military Slots: Extremely High
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Surface Slots: Extremely Low

Volcanic

These hot, hostile worlds are rich in metal ores but little else. Special research is required to allow settlers to control volcanic planets since their surfaces are several thousand degrees with molten lava coursing over them.

- Maximum Credit Income: Below Average
- Maximum Resource Income: High
- Maximum Military Slots: Extremely High
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Below Average
- Maximum Surface Slots: Extremely Low

Ferrous

Ferrous planets are thought to come about either when a volcanic world finally solidifies, or when a gas giant's atmosphere is ripped away by some event. Whatever their origin, they are extremely rich in metal but lack any kind of surface life. What's more is that they rarely have any kind of atmosphere, so special research is needed to facilitate colonization.

- Maximum Credit Income: Below Average
- Maximum Resource Income: Extremely High
- Maximum Military Slots: High
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Low
- Maximum Surface Slots: Extremely Low

Oceanic

Oceanic worlds tend to be 95%-99% water, with deep oceans and very little land mass. With so little land available to build upon, special research is needed in order to establish oceanic bases for living space.

- Maximum Credit Income: High
- Maximum Resource Income: Extremely Low
- Maximum Military Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Surface Slots: Average

Gas Giant

The ability to colonize gas giants is a recent development and is accomplished by a series of low-orbit space stations. This requires special technology to construct, but the short-term investment pays off due to the huge surface area of the giant world.

- Maximum Credit Income: Extremely Low
- Maximum Resource Income: Extremely Low
- Maximum Military Slots: Below Average
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Extremely Low
- Maximum Surface Slots: High

Asteroid

Little more than large hunks of rock and ice, these planetoids typically serve as waystations or mining colonies. Asteroids are one of the most common gravity well types.

- Maximum Credit Income: Low
- Maximum Resource Income: Average
- Maximum Military Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Extremely Low
- Maximum Surface Slots: Minimal

Moon

Moons are small bodies that orbit other gravity wells (which is to say a moon may orbit a planet or a pirate base, etc.). These create interesting phase lane choke points since outside lanes will typically connect to the moon before its parent world.

- Maximum Credit Income: Low
- Maximum Resource Income: Average
- Maximum Military Slots: Above Average
- Maximum Civilian Slots: Extremely Low
- Maximum Surface Slots: Minimal

Pirate Base

The home base of the perfidious pirate faction! This small asteroid base is heavily defended by structures and a plethora of enemy ships.

Star

A lovely, massive ball of hot gas, magnetic fields and explosions.