

Table of Contents

Running Starfinder Society games is similar to running a home campaign with a few house rules established by campaign leadership. In addition to GM Basics, be sure to familiarize yourself with the contents of [Welcome to Starfinder Society](#), [Community Standards and Expectations](#), and [Player Basics](#). You need to know what players know, what their expectations are, and how their characters are created, played, and advanced.

What Is A GM?

A Game Master (GM) is the person who presents the story, adjudicates the rules, and establishes the parameters of the player's exploration. A GM's duty is to provide a fair and fun game for all involved, including themselves. In the Starfinder Society, a GM has a few other duties, listed in Your Duties as a Game Master below.

Who Can Be A Game Master?

Anyone with a valid Organized Play ID can run Starfinder Society adventures. As local Starfinder Society groups and the campaign as a whole benefit as the pool of Game Masters increases, the venture-officer network provides support and guidance for any who want to GM.

Your Duties As Game Master

As a Starfinder Society GM, you have the following duties:

- Communicate with your local event coordinator.
- Prepare an adventure to offer to players, including gathering the necessary supplies such as maps, miniatures, and reference materials.
- Provide a welcoming environment for players.
- Deliver session results to the player via established recording mechanisms.
- Report the results of the game.

Where Can I Buy Adventures?

Paizo produces two categories of adventures, available for purchase at paizo.com.

Starfinder Society adventures, including scenarios and quests, generally release during the last week of each month. Current production rates include one or two new scenarios each month, with additional Society content released periodically throughout the year. These adventures are written expressly for use in the Starfinder Society campaign.

Starfinder Adventures, including Adventure Paths, Standalone Adventures, One-Shots, and Bounties, are produced monthly. These adventures are often sanctioned for use in the Starfinder Society campaign. Information on how to incorporate them into your Society experience is found on each product's description page at paizo.com. (See [Additional Adventures](#) for more about these products.)

Before the Adventure

Reviewing Chronicles

If time permits, GMs and Event Coordinators can spend a few minutes reviewing players' Chronicles at the start of an event slot. These reviews can happen for a variety of reasons. For example, GMs might need to check the Adventure Summary section to learn what a character did in a previous adventure, and GMs and Coordinators can review Chronicles to ensure that they are filled out correctly. These reviews can help ensure that players understand the rules of Starfinder and the Starfinder Society Campaign, as well as address any errors that naturally crop up in the course of play. (See [Dealing with Chronicle Errors](#) for more on this.)

Average Party Level

In a typical home game, the PCs are all the same level and face challenges tailored to their level. In an organized play environment, there needs to be more

flexibility so characters of different levels can participate smoothly in the same adventure.

Each adventure lists the character levels that are eligible to play it, as well one or more level ranges within the adventure. If an adventure has more than 2 level ranges each table must choose 2 adjacent level ranges for that adventure. Only Characters of a level that falls within those two level ranges can play in that adventure at that table.

GMs adjust the scenario using the following steps:

Determining Average Party Level

In order to determine which level range a mixed-level group of PCs must play in, calculate the group's Average Party Level (APL).

$$\text{APL} = (\text{sum of character levels}) / (\text{number of characters})$$

Divide the total number of character levels by the number of characters in the party, rounding to the nearest whole number (this is an exception to the usual 'round down' rule). If the result of the Average Party Level calculation ends with 0.5, the players decide whether to round up or down.

Adjusting the Adventure

Level Range: Nearly all encounters list two different sets of creature statistics, one for each of the two level ranges the adventure is designed for. The adventure often also refers to important skill checks and saving throws in room descriptions or during events, listing one DC for the lower level range and one for the higher level range. In each of these cases, use the numbers, creatures, and other information listed for the selected level range.

Scaling: Within a level range, the scenario will also contain instructions for adjusting the difficulty of the scenario based on the number of PCs. These scaling instructions are generally found in "scaling sidebars" but might also be in the text of the room description or encounter.

During the Adventure

Table Variation

A goal of the Starfinder Society program is to provide a fun, engaging, consistent experience at all tables. GMs must run Starfinder Society adventures as written, which means:

- No change to major plot points and interactions
- No addition or subtraction to the number of monsters other than scaling directed by the scenario
- No changes to armor, feats, items, skills, spells, statistics, traits, or weapons.
- No alteration of mechanics of player characters,
- No banning of legal character options

Beyond the above, GMs are encouraged to make choices which would result in the most enjoyable play experience for everyone at the table and that emphasize PCs are the heroes of the story. Some examples of GM discretion include the following.

- Creatures tactics that have been invalidated by the player actions.
- Unclear rules, or situations or player actions not covered by the rules.
- Terrain or environmental conditions described by the scenario, but not given mechanics. (If the mechanics are included, however, they cannot be altered.)
- Reactions of NPCs to good roleplaying, and the effect that has on the outcome of the encounter.
- Alternate or creative skills used to bypass or overcome traps, haunts, and skill checks. (Note that DCs and results of the check are part of the mechanics and cannot be changed.)
- Aspects of the scenario's description and story as appropriate for the players at the table as described in the section [Running the Game](#) (*Core Rulebook* page 392).
- Changes required to comply with the

Acceptable Content provision of Community Standards.

- Creative solutions presented by players in overcoming obstacles.
- Moving plot points missed by players to encounterable areas (this does not include moving missed treasure).

More details on each of these can be found under [Table Variation](#).

If a particular issue comes up repeatedly or causes a significant problem in one of your games, please raise any questions or concerns on the Starfinder Society forums where Venture-Officers, members of Paizo’s organized play team, or fellow GMs can help you resolve it.

Ethical Infractions and Infamy

Players are responsible for their characters’ choices and are subject to consequences resulting from those choices actions. In game actions earn characters Infamy, while code of conduct violations earn players table sanctions.

Below we list some common issues, which are covered more under [Table Variation](#):

- A player’s perception of what their character would do versus the experience of other players at the table.
- Deity or class anathemas and edicts as they interact with Starfinder Society missions.
- Class opposition such as a paladin and a necromancer on the same mission team.
- Characters perform evil or criminal acts.

After the Adventure

After every adventure, the GM issues each player a chronicle. A chronicle documents the rewards earned by a PC during a particular adventure. GMs are

encouraged to add notes to chronicles about interesting events that occur during the adventure.

GMs must use the chronicles included in the adventure or the adventure's sanctioning documents. GMs cannot create their own custom chronicles. Changes made to increase accessibility for the GM or players, such as enlarging the text to improve readability, are permitted and encouraged and do not invalidate chronicles.

Filling Out a Chronicle

FILLING OUT A CHRONICLE SHEET

The sections of a Chronicle are detailed below. Sections marked with an asterisk (*) include some element that GMs must address before players leave the table, either by filling it in themselves or asking the players to fill in the appropriate information. Players can fill out other sections between sessions.

(A.) **Adventure Name/Number:** Preprinted on the form.

(B.) **Character Name:** Name of the hero who took part in this adventure.

(C.) **Character Number:*** Unique Identifier for the

character who took part in the adventure, including players Organized Play ID and the Character number.
(D.) **Partner Code:** A unique code that identifies the Chronicle. May be used by third-parties to reference the Chronicle.

(E.) **Adv Summary:** This might contain checkboxes to help remind you which choices you made during the adventure.

(F.) **Pointer to AcP:** Where to find AcP totals on the Paizo Web Page.

(G.) **Treasure Access:** Uncommon or high level items found during the adventure.

(H.) **Variable quantities:*** Quantities that depend on character's level or successes during the adventure, such as credits earned, reputation, etc.

(I.) **Event Name*:** Name given to the event on Paizo.com. This is used to resolve issues that can occur when an event number is incorrect or illegible.

(J.) **Event Number*:** Unique identifier provided by the event organizer indicating what event the game occurred at.

(K.) **Date*:** Date the adventure completed

(L.) **GM Number*:** The GM's Organized Play ID

Experience Points (XP)

Each scenario awards 1 XP. Each quest typically awards 0.25 XP. Sanctioned Adventures list the XP awarded in their sanctioning document.

Reputation

Each adventure lists how much reputation to award. Scenarios typically award 1 Reputation for accomplishing the mission you were sent on and 1 more for going above and beyond expectations (for a total of 2 Reputation gained.) Scenarios with the Faction tag will often reward an additional 1 Reputation with the highlighted Faction(s) for completing their goals.

Sanctioned Adventures have variable Reputation rewards called out in the sanctioning documentation.

Treasure