

Stardate Chronology of the *Enterprise*

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any *Star Trek* fans have noted that the stardate system used in the series appears to be, to coin a phrase, illogical. It seems to follow a random order, with dates given just to have something before the log entries to make them sound official. Though this observation may be correct, it is still possible to organize a future history of the *Star Trek* universe around the stardates. What develops is a variation of the history put forward in FASA's *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual*, a supplement to *Star Trek: The Role Playing Game*.

STARDATES

The stardates organized by FASA follow a popular system involving the day, month, and year. The dates are given as *yy**mm*.*dd*, where *yy* indicates the year, *mm* the month, and *dd* the day. A century denotation is given as a digit followed by a slash before the date. So May 2, 2234 would be 2/3405.02. Unfortunately, stardates vary widely in the series. If the popular system were used as the stardate system in *Star Trek*, the *Enterprise* would have gone through about 50 years in the original series, not five. So the popular system cannot be considered valid when applied to the show.

To construct a *Star Trek* chronology of the *Enterprise*, two given properties of stardates are used:

- One stardate is one day (24 hours) on Earth.
- Stardate 41986 is in the year AD 2364.

The source of the first property is the *Star Trek* writer's guide, and the second is the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode "The Neutral Zone." A cross-reference could be *Star Trek IV*, where Kirk mentioned that he was from the

latter part of the 23rd century, putting *The Next Generation* around the late-middle of the 24th century by the first property. Counting backward from 41986, we find that stardate 0000 is in the year 2250. Taking Kirk's first adventure to be SD 1313 (from "Where No Man Has Gone Before"), this puts Kirk commanding the *Enterprise* in the year 2153. Other events can be correlated similarly.

What is presented in this article is a variation of the FASA chronology, based almost entirely on given stardates. The events in the majority of independent sources are given precedence, with those in the written sources adjusted to fit the shows.

HISTORY OF THE STARSHIPS ENTERPRISE

AD 2243: The USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701 is built and tested by the United Earth Space Probe Agency (UESPA). The ship, the most advanced built by a Federation world, becomes Starfleet's new flagship. The ship's first commander is Capt. Robert T. April.

AD 2243: Capt. April resigns as a conscientious objector with the outbreak of the Four Years War with the Klingon Empire. Capt. Christopher Pike is given command of the *Enterprise*.

AD 2245: "The Cage" (first pilot).

AD 2250: Stardates become a standard reference for the Federation. January 1, 2250 is named Stardate 0000.

1310 (2253): After a refit, Capt. James T. Kirk is given the *Enterprise*. Kirk is the youngest and most famous captain ever to command the *Enterprise*. His executive is Lieutenant Commander Spock.

1310-5948: *Star Trek* (original series)—2253-2266.

1313: Beginning of the first season ("Where No Man Has Gone Before").

2534: Beginning of the second season ("Patterns of Force").

3417: End of the first season ("This Side of Paradise").

4372: Beginning of the third season ("Elaan of Troius").

4768: End of the second season ("Return to Tomorrow").

5948: End of the third season ("Turnabout Intruder").

6860 (2268): Capt. Willard Decker is given the command of the *Enterprise*, and the ship undergoes a drastic refit.

7412 (2270): *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. The refitted USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701 is launched. Rear Admiral James T. Kirk is commander during the Vejur Incident, and he keeps command with the loss of Capt. Decker. Commander Spock replaces the late Commander Sonak as science officer and executive.

7860 (2271): The *Enterprise* is given to Starfleet Academy (Earth) as a training vessel, with Admiral Kirk as the commandant of the starship command school there. Capt. Spock is the commander and Commander Scott the executive of the vessel.

8130: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

8210 (2272): *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*.

The *Enterprise* is decommissioned due to age and the planned introduction of the *Excelsior*-class cruiser. Admiral Kirk steals the *Enterprise*, and it is later destroyed after a battle with a Klingon scout over the planet Genesis.

8390: *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*.

Admiral Kirk is demoted for his actions of 8210.

8430 (2273): USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701A is launched. The ship is an improved version of the earlier *Enterprise* class. Capt. Kirk and Capt. Spock serve as commander and executive.

8454: *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*.

14520 (2289): USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701B is launched. The new battle-cruiser is an improved version of the *Excelsior*-class ships, very capable of

The 14 *Enterprises*

The list below is an outline of previous ships that were christened the *Enterprise*.

The last five of the ships listed here are starships, and a more detailed account of their careers can be reconstructed using stardates.

I. Supply sloop, war prize (1775-1777). Participated in the War of the American Revolution. Destroyed in battle.

II. Schooner, war purchase (1776-1777). Participated in the War of the American Revolution. Sold.

III. Schooner (1799-1823). Fought in the Tripolitan War and the War of 1812. Destroyed at sea.

IV. Schooner (1831-1845). Scrapped.

V. Sloop-of-war (1874-1909). Training vessel. Scrapped.

VI. Aircraft carrier, *Yorktown* class (1938-1947). Fought in World War II. Scrapped.

VII. Aircraft carrier, *Forrestal* class (1961-2016). First nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. Fought in the Eugenian Wars. Scrapped.

VIII. Prototype space shuttle (1978-1986). Mothballed as a museum piece.

IX. Spaceliner, *Declaration* line (2183-2225). Was the largest, fastest spaceliner of the time. Scrapped.

X. Heavy cruiser, *Constitution* class (2243-2272). Fought in the Four Years War and the War of Organia. Destroyed in battle.

XI. Heavy cruiser, *Enterprise* class (2273-2285). Possibly destroyed in battle.

XII. Battlecruiser, *Excelsior* class (2289-2339). Witnessed forming of the Klingon-Federation Alliance. Destroyed in battle.

XIII. Battlecruiser, *Alaska* class (2353-2361). Lost on patrol.

XIV. Cruiser, *Galaxy* class (2362-).

supporting itself through the new 10-year missions.

23576 (2314): The Tolman Incident. Last known Federation contact with the Romulan Star Empire until stardate 41986.

29105 (2329): The Romulans violently sever ties to the Klingon Empire, destroying several Klingon colonies near the Romulan border.

32200 (2338): The Klingon-Federation Alliance is begun with the first treaty of mutual defense and economic cooperation on Organia. The *Enterprise* witnesses the event as the Federation's flagship.

32630 (2339): The *Enterprise* is destroyed in a battle with a patrol of the Imperial Klingon States, an independent Klingon force. The patrol is also destroyed in the battle.

37630 (2353): USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701C is launched. The *Alaska*-class battlecruiser is considered well prepared for her 10-year exploratory missions.

40724 (2361): The 13th *Enterprise* is lost and presumed destroyed on patrol only seven years into her first 10-year mission.

41150 (2362): The USS *Enterprise* NCC-1701D is launched. Besides being Starfleet's new flagship, the *Galaxy*-class exploration cruiser has 200 civilians on board. These civilians are the families of some of the other 800 crewmembers, accompanying their relatives on the new 15-year missions. Its first captain is the distinguished Capt. Jean-Luc Picard, with Commander William Riker as the executive.

41153-: *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (2362+).

41153: Beginning of the first season ("Encounter at Farpoint").

41986: End of the first season ("The Neutral Zone").

42010: Beginning of the second season ("The Child").

DIFFERENCES FROM FASA'S CHRONOLOGY

The difference in this chronology appears to be just a shift of 59 years. From the dates that are given in *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual*, the launching of the original *Enterprise* NCC-1701 occurred in 2188, NCC-1701A in 2222, NCC-1701B in 2239, NCC-1701C in 2293, and NCC-

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1701D in 2303. In *The Next Generation* episode "The Neutral Zone," it is found that the last ship (NCC-1701D) was launched in 2362, 59 years later. From the original series episode, "The Menagerie," the launching of NCC-1701 was set at 2243, a 55-year difference from FASA.

The date of the launching of the second ship was found to be in the year 2273 (using stardates), only 50 years different from FASA.

The third ship was scaled to a 50-year difference from the given dates, and the fourth to 59 years, to give some balance to the chronology.

The big difference between this chronology and FASA's is the length of time that Kirk had the *Enterprise*. According to the stardates, Kirk had the ship for 15 years.

Nearly all sources that deal with *Star Trek* chronologies say that Kirk had command five years, based on the original series opening narrative ("its five year mission...").

An explanation for the discrepancy may be to say a tour of command is five years, and Kirk had the *Enterprise* for three tours. According to FASA, this would not be so out of the ordinary, especially for a larger-than-life character like Kirk. FASA has said that Capt. Jean-Luc Picard had command of the *Stargazer* for 22 years!

The discrepancy could also be due to a difference in the meaning of a "year." It is mentioned in *Star Trek II* that 1000 stardates are a year, giving Kirk five years in command. It is also mentioned in that movie that 5000 stardates are about 15 years, which would be expected for 365 stardates per year. Perhaps the term "year" has two different applications, an Earth year (SD 365) and a Starfleet year (SD 1000), each used in different situations.

Another explanation could be that the "five-year mission" is five years on the vessel and more time in the rest of the galaxy due to the space warp used. According to Gene Roddenberry, his standard answer to the discrepancies

in stardates is, "This time system [stardates] adjusts for shifts in relative time which occur due to the vessel's speed and space warp capability." Thus, it could be said that while the ship's velocity is proportional to the cube of the warp factor to the crew, Earth may see it as being proportional to the square of the warp factor, or some similar function. Since this shift is not seen in *The Next Generation*, it could be assumed that the effect is either not as pronounced or is eliminated by this time.

Since the chronology was written assuming one stardate was one day on Earth, any of these explanations are valid.

Until any more information is learned through the shows or movies, readers are left to clear the discrepancy for themselves. This is an area where gamemasters have free reign without worrying much about consistency.

USING THIS SYSTEM IN A CAMPAIGN

To fit a stardate system in the *Star Trek: The Role Playing Game*, no real change to the campaign is needed except a conversion of the dates.

It is obvious that a direct conversion is not possible if the definition of one stardate per day is adhered to scrupulously. A feasible way is needed to incorporate stardates into the campaign. To this end, time spans of Starfleet history as given in the role-playing game will be set up as being a separate time period from the actual. Then stardates can be determined for that period. Since the most distinguishing characteristic of Starfleet is its uniforms, their changes will guide the different time spans. The time spans will be set as being 1/8801-1/9201 (pre-stardate), 1/9201-2/1601 (original uniforms), 2/1601-2/5501 (movie uniforms), 2/5501-2/7201 ("New

Parisian" uniforms), 2/7201-2/9001 ("Lerithan" uniforms), 2/9001+ (new series uniforms).

Now on to the actual calculation of the stardate. A simple hand calculator may be needed.

Since all stardates in the RPG material are in reference stardates, the year, month, and day can be derived with little effort. First, find the year in the form of the Gregorian Calendar (i.e., 2210 for 2/1008.21). Ignore the month and day for now.

The next step is to add on the necessary years, then subtract that year from 2150. The net results of these operations are given for your convenience in the Adjustments in Various Time Spans Table.

Find the net adjustments for the campaign's active time span and subtract this value from the Gregorian year you obtained from the reference stardate.

Now you have the time passed from stardate 0000 in years. Convert this to days by multiplying by 365.2422 days/year. Take the month that you initially ignored and convert the previous months to days.

To do this, subtract one from the month and multiply by 30.44 days/month. Add the result to the days passed. Finally, take the day and add that on also. You now have the stardate of your campaign.

There is a special case for this conversion. The dates before 1/9201 do not have a stardate. In that case, add 55 years to the date and use the Gregorian calendar.

For further clarification, find the stardate for 2/7412, the launching date of the *Stargazer*, Capt Picard's old ship. From the first step, we find this is the year 2274.

Next, look on the Adjustments in Vari-

ous Time Spans Table and subtract 2194 years, giving you 80 years from stardate 0000. Converting, you get 29219 days. Now take the previous months (11) and convert them to days (335). Adding this to 29219, you get an answer of 29554.

Since there is no day given in the reference date, the answer is the stardate of the *Stargazer's* launch accurate to the month. You may wish to round to 29560 for the final answer.

RESULTS OF A UNIFIED CHRONOLOGY

The main reason for this work is to tie another aspect of *Star Trek* into the role-playing game. By taking the stardates and years of different events, it was possible to construct a history of the starships *Enterprise*.

The result is a history with slight differences from the one given by FASA in *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual*. Either FASA's chronology or this chronology may be used with the game, since the game is mostly role playing.

By using the actual stardates of the movies and shows, this chronology attempts to bring the game closer to Gene Roddenberry's universe, and may bring more of a *Star Trek* flavor to the *Star Trek* role-playing campaign.

REFERENCES

Historical background of the *Enterprise* is from the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*.

The *Declaration* class from the *Star Trek Spaceflight Chronology*, by Stan and Fred Goldstein. New York: Pocket Books, 1980. The dates were adjusted to fit the chronology presented in this article.

FASA chronology from *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual*, by FASA Corporation. Chicago: FASA, 1988.

The original series stardates from *The Star Trek Compendium*, by Alan Asherman. New York: Pocket Books, 1986. Typographical errors in the work with respect to stardates were corrected to conform to the aired stardates.

Gene Roddenberry's quote from page 198 in *The Making of Star Trek*, by Stephen E. Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry. New York: Ballantine Books, 1968. Ω

Adjustments in Time Spans

Time Span (in Reference Stardates)	Adjustments	
	Chronological	Net
1/8801-1/9201	55 yrs	N/A
1/9201-2/1601	53 yrs	-2197 yrs
2/1601-2/5501	50 yrs	-2200 yrs
2/5501-2/7201	53 yrs	-2197 yrs
2/7201-2/9001	56 yrs	-2194 yrs
2/9001+	59 yrs	-2191 yrs