

# The USS Enterprise



The noble Enterprise...long may she fly!

The U.S.S. Enterprise is the largest spaceship that Starfleet (the Federation's inter-galactic navy) has. To a degree, it is a small world unto itself, with 430 regular inhabitants. It is 947 feet long, and 417 feet wide, overall. It is comprised of 3 main sections: the saucer-shaped primary hull (which was designed to operate separately from the rest of the ship), the engineering hull, and the twin engine pods. Like all ships of its kind, it was not designed to land on a planet. Instead, it enters a standard orbit around any planetary body (usually ranging from 1,000-7,000 miles) while crew members "go ashore."

The massive engines are each 504 feet long. They operate through a combination of carefully controlled matter and anti-matter fusion. The ship is capable of "warp-drive," which enables it to travel many times faster than the speed of light (186,000 miles per second). The maximum safe cruising speed of a starship is 216 times the speed of light (Warp Factor 6). While such a vessel is capable of attaining greater speeds, this could lead to complete destruction. The ship is also capable of "impulse speed," which is considerably less than the speed of light. It is also able to travel through time due to a recent phenomenon.

Crew members leave the ship by 2 methods: the transporter rooms and the hanger deck. Each of the former contains half a dozen 2-way teleportation devices with a range of up to 16,000 miles. There are 11 personnel and cargo transporter stations on board the Enterprise. Although no receiving device is required, the portable communicators serve as rapid transporter-locator mechanisms. While these teleporters are reasonably safe, weird things can happen if they malfunction (see "The Enemy Within" and "Mirror, Mirror"). The second method of exit is from the hanger deck, by way of a shuttlecraft. There are 6 of these small, short-range space vehicles on board the Enterprise. The seven-man ships are used on exploratory patrols, and they have the ability to land on a planet's surface. Movement within the starship is carried out either through corridors or by way of turbo-elevator shafts. The high-speed turbo-elevators run in both vertical and horizontal directions.

The Bridge, which is located in the primary hull, is the command center of the Enterprise.

This is where the Captain and most of his key personnel remain. Kirk's command station has the main controls of the ship's computer complex tied into it. When emergencies occur, the computer system is able to control the entire operation of the vessel. It is capable of responding verbally to spoken orders, and it automatically prevents any function that appears dangerous to the ship (unless a recognized senior officer temporarily overrides this programming). There is also an emergency back-up computer system, programmed with identical memory banks, in the event that anything happens to the main system. The main duty of the Science Officer is to handle all of the ship's sensor systems and computer relays. These are capable of detecting emergencies and life-forms within and outside the spacecraft. He can report on or override any condition within the ship. Mr. Spock

also controls the ship's vast Library Computer, which contains a correlated mass of information.

For defense purposes, the starship is equipped with several types of powerful Deflector Shields. The strongest of these is used to protect the ship from enemy attack. While this is operating, the transporters cannot function. The other screens are employed to constantly keep the ship from being harmed by space debris. They are all invisible. The main weapons of the Enterprise are multiple units of massive, ship-mounted Phasers. These are incredibly powerful, long-range matter-disruptors that are powered by the ship's engines. A secondary weapon is the supply of potent matter/anti-matter Photon Torpedoes, which can be used as either torpedoes or space depth charges. There is also the Tractor Beam, which can reach out like a magnet and grab and/or pull an object in space. Its range is 100,000 miles, which enables it to be used to pull small objects to a distance within transporter range, whereupon they are able to be "beamed aboard."

The food galley is fully automated. The range of different foods is quite extensive, coming from various planets within the Federation. There is a Mess Officer, but his purpose is to select various dishes and program the computers to prepare them. The food is available at the touch of a button, and these buttons are located in many areas of the ship. Small turbo-lifts quickly transport the desired items to the designated areas from the central food preparation center.

Of course, there are many more things worth mentioning about the Enterprise, such as the Engineering Section. However, space does not permit this. Perhaps in a future issue we'll cover the starship in more detail, with diagrams and photographs. Until then, though, we'll close with one wish for the valiant ship: "Long may she fly!"



The U.S.S. Enterprise as seen on the AMT model box.





