

# abillionsuns

## Solo Play Rules (Beta)

This is a set of rules for playing *A Billion Suns* solo. These solitaire rules introduce some game-controlled ships to keep the pressure on you, and invite you to achieve a certain level of success to prove to management that you did a good job. These rules are still in beta, and feedback is gratefully received. v1.4 – Feb-2021. ©2021 Mike Hutchinson.

### Additional Rules

When playing solo, set up a game of *A Billion Suns* exactly as normal, with the following additional rules:

#### System Setup

Set up each required objective on a randomly determined table. Each objective must be placed at least 12- $\text{\textcircled{S}}$  (twelve inches minus the scale of the game) from all other objects on that table.

#### Objectives

A number of rules below make reference to ‘objectives’. An ‘objective’ within these rules is one of the interstellar objects used by a contract. This can be an object, such as a facility, an independent ship, such as a lifeboat, or a token, such as a Kraken Heart. Carried tokens don’t count as objectives for this.

#### Revenue

When scoring contracts, calculate the revenue as if there were two CEOs playing the game.

#### Jump Points

When deploying a second or subsequent jump point on a table in a solo game, you may place that jump point anywhere in play.

### Independent Contractors

As you commit forces to each system, the bloodhounds are close behind, and there is a chance that Independent Contractors (IC) follow you into the system, smelling profits.

IC ships are controlled by the game, and will attempt to deny you revenue from contracts unless you deal with them. This IC “AI player” does not count as a CEO for the purpose of scoring contracts.

#### Competitor Activity

In solo play, **each time you jump in a battlegroup** roll a D6 and add the  $\text{\textcircled{M}}$  of the class of that battlegroup and check the table below.

Additionally, at the **start of each round** after the first, for each in play jump point: roll a D6, add the round number and check the table below.

D6 + $\text{\textcircled{M}}$	Result
1-2	Deploy a battlegroup of D3 x IC Light Utility Ships
3-4	Deploy a battlegroup of $1+\text{\textcircled{M}}$ x IC Fighters
5-6	Deploy a battlegroup of $1+\text{\textcircled{M}}$ x IC Gunships
7-8	Deploy a battlegroup of $\text{\textcircled{M}}$ x IC Frigates
9+	Deploy a battlegroup of 1 x IC Cruiser

Where the size of the IC battlegroup contains  $\text{\textcircled{M}}$ , it is equal to the  $\text{\textcircled{M}}$  of the battlegroup that trigger the IC’s arrival, or the round number, in the case of IC generated from jump points at the start of the round.

## Deploying ICs

To deploy a battlegroup of IC:

1. Randomly select an objective on the same table as the jump point that triggered the IC's deployment
2. Deploy the IC battlegroup as close as possible to the player-controlled ship closest to the selected objective, but not more than their jump range from the selected objective.
3. Set up the ICs so that each is facing the player-controlled ship nearest to them.

## Overlapping ICs

When deploying or moving ICs, if the action would result in a ship being required to be placed in exactly the same location as another ship, scatter the new ship by 3", using the point of a rolled D8 as the direction of scatter. This can result in a ship being placed further than its jump range from the selected jump point. If this scatter would place the ship in exactly the same location as another ship, or off the board, re-roll the scatter dice.

## Tactical Phase

In solo play, the Tactical Phase is slightly modified, to introduce a step for the ICs to activate, and to reframe the Seize Initiative order, as winning the initiative has no effect when there is only one CEO.

1. Seize Initiative
2. Activate ICs
3. Remaining Activations

## Seize Initiative

At the start of the tactical phase, you may spend CMD tokens from 'Seize Initiative'. For each CMD token spent, you may activate one of your battlegroups before any IC activates.

## Activate ICs

When the player is done spending CMD tokens from "Seize Initiative", each IC activates, in an order of your choice (or "left to right" if you prefer).

When an IC battlegroup activates, follow these steps:

1. Select a random objective that is on the same table as the IC and from a non-exhausted contract.
2. If no ship from IC battlegroup is within 3" of the selected objective, each ship in the IC battlegroup pivots to face the selected objective, and then moves up to twice its Thrust value, attempting to end as close as possible to being exactly 3" away from that objective.
3. Pivot each IC ship so that it is facing the player-controlled battlegroup nearest to it.
4. The IC battlegroup discards D3 damage tokens.
5. The IC battlegroup suffers any passive attacks.
6. If the IC battlegroup has one of your battlegroups within range and arc of fire of any of its weapon systems, each weapon system must attack the closest CEO-controlled battlegroup that it is able to target. The IC battlegroup must attack with all available attack dice. IC ships do not suffer the effects of High-G.

## Remaining Activations

After all IC battlegroups have activated, you may activate any battlegroup that wasn't activated via "Seize Initiative". *Note: IC must passive fire if able.*

## End Phase

**Claim Jump:** At the start of the end phase, before earning revenue, and once for each contract: if there is a greater combined Ⓜ of IC than friendly ships within 3" of any objective for that contract, then discard the top card from that contract deck.

## Margin

At the end of the game, grab a smartphone or a pocket calculator and calculate the percentage of the available revenue that you ended the game with. This is referred to as your Margin for the game.

Your Margin is found by dividing your final Credits score by the “Max Revenue available to two players” (found on p46 of *A Billion Suns*), then multiplying it by 100. Check which result on the table below you scored equal to or higher than. The gaining of capital is explained in “Playing Solo Campaigns” below.

Alternatively, visit <http://abillionsuns.space/margin>

Margin	Result
Negative.	<b>Unmitigated failure.</b> You have been fired.
0%	<b>Questionable.</b> You are close to being put on a performance review. Gain ☹️-1 Capital.
20%	<b>Acceptable.</b> You are doing your job. Gain ☹️ Capital.
35%	<b>Resounding success.</b> You are up for a promotion. Gain ☹️+5 Capital.
50%	<b>Outstanding.</b> You are immediately promoted and receive an astronomical performance bonus. Gain 2☹️ Capital.

For example, if you played a Scale 5 game, and ended the game with (positive) 17 Credits, your Margin is  $(17 / 45 * 100)$  38%, a resounding success. If you are playing a solo campaign, you gain 10 Capital to spend on new competitive advantages and unlock new ship classes.

## Playing Solo Campaigns

If you want to explore the advanced rules, build your own corporation and watch it grow over multiple games, playing a Solo Campaign is an awesome way to do that.

To play a solo campaign, use the Campaign rules from the *A Billion Suns* rulebook, with the following changes:

- **Reputation:** Ignore Reputation, it is not used in solo campaigns
- **Gaining Capital:** You do start with 10 Capital (useful for unlocking ship classes), but you do not gain ☹️ Capital after each game. You gain only the Capital indicated by your margin.
- **The Greasy Pole:** If you are ‘fired’, due to an *Unmitigated Failure* result, your campaign is over, and you must start a new one. Free feel to use the same corp name, or imagine the sort of nefarious or illicit venture your disgraced executive is setting out on now, and what they might call that new company.

## Contract Notes

Right now, these contracts don’t work brilliantly in solo mode, or are a bit easier than the others, so feel free to redraw if you generate them:

- **Patrol Contract**, as the suspicious ships scoot away from the IC before Claim Jump triggers.
- **Evacuation Contract**, as the lifeboats scoot away from the IC before Claim Jump triggers.

## FAQs

### May IC be deployed within a planetoid’s Gravity Well?

Yes. For simplicity, (and because the IC aren’t really using the normal jump rules), IC ignore the Gravity Well rule.

### May a single IC battlegroup fire its primary weapon systems at two different battlegroups?

No. Battlegroups may not split their primary weapon system attacks across multiple targets, and the IC are not exempt from this rule.

### Do IC gain “Easy Target” tokens?

Yes, if they move less than half their Thrust.

### If ICs end out of coherence for any reason, do they receive a damage token?

Yes.