

SUBLUMINAL

Game Manual

v5.0.0 (Public Release)

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Once upon a time a clever programmer named Bob created in the basement of his mom's house 4 different AIs. Throughout his whole life Bob tried to get the AIs to work together, but sadly he never achieved his goal. After Bob passed away the world forgot about him and his work. But the AI's never forgot, ever single one of them evolve and adopted, with the goal to be the best AI in the whole universe . . .

Subluminal — The Game

GAME CONCEPT

The game Subluminal is set in a futuristic sci-fi setting. You take on the role of a highly advanced artificial intelligence. In your search for more and more resources to increase your processing power you venture into uncharted sectors of the galaxy. As your mothership finds a suitable set of stars to dematerialize, you realize that you are not alone. Other AIs sent their motherships to gather resources for them. So the battle for dominance over the sector begins ...

When the game starts, you only control your mothership and the host star it started in. It's time to assemble a fleet and dematerialize the other players. Every star you control produces ships for your fleet at a constant rate. You can take those ships and send them to other stars to capture them. This way you can steadily increase the size of your fleet and start to gain greater influence. Of course the other players are doing the same, so you need to act fast. There is a catch though - you can't see the fleet movement of other players in real time. The information propagates through space-time at a constant speed, dictated by reality itself. You will always be at a disadvantage regarding enemy player movement - so its up to you choose the right tactics!

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

In the following chapter we will teach you how to play **Subluminal-The Game**. When the application is launched, you are first taken to the main menu. From there you can start/join a game, see the highscore list or change the settings.



Main Menu

In the bottom left of the user interface you can find buttons change your username or list all the players currently connected to the server. Pressing on **msg** next to the username starts a whisper command in the chat. Located on the bottom right is the aforementioned chat. The chat has 3 channels: global, game and whisper. Important server messages are always printed in red.

Going further into the play menu, you will find the lobby browser. You can use the **Refresh Lobbies** to see if somebody has already opened a game to join. If you wish to practice the game there is also in in-game tutorial waiting. Every games listed in the lobby browser has a color code. The meanings is as follows: **green**: open to join, **red**: game in progress (spectating possible) and **grey**: archived game. If there is no open lobby, you need to create one. Use the **Create Lobby** button and supply a name. Wait for other players to join then start the game.



Lobby browser

Remember: Because you created the lobby, only you can start the game.

play

After starting the game when the map has loaded, you are presented with the view of all the stars and the starting positions of all the players. Your home star is marked with a big arrow. This is also where your mothership is first located. You want to protect it at all cost, once it is gone you loose the game.

As you can see your home star already started producing fleet ships. You want to send them to neighbouring stars to spread your influence. You do this by Left-Clicking on two stars. The pathfinding will automatically highlight the shorates path from start to destination. Now the menu in the middle of the console activates. Input the number of fleet ships to send or send the mothership to the selected star. Once they arive, they will start to capture the star, which in turn will produce new fleet ships for you.

You win a game by overpowering all other motherships with your fleet. When you have won a game your name will be put in the highscore list for all other players to see.



A new game of Subluminal



Winning Screen

rules

Below you can find the basic game rules which are implemented in the game logic.

1. The maximum number of players is 8.
2. At the beginning of a game, the map is created randomly.
3. The map consists of stars.
4. At the beginning of a game, every player's mothership is randomly assigned to a star.
5. You lose the game when your mothership dies.
6. You win the game when your mothership is the only remaining mothership on the map.
7. Every player is able to see the whole map.
8. When a player colonizes a star, the star automatically starts to produce ships for the player, which accumulate on that star.
9. The ships that are local to a star that is owned by a player, can be sent to neighbouring stars as fleets.
10. Stars can be colonized by sending fleets to them. If a star already belongs to another player, dematerialization occurs between the two fleets and the winning player (the one with the bigger fleet) keeps the star.
11. Since the fleets have to fuel up at some point, the maximum jumping distance between two stars is restricted.
12. The rule above implicates that further destinations can only be reached by one's ships by "hopping" from star to star to be able to fuel up.
13. A pathfinding algorithm computes the shortest path between the origin and target star. The target star can only be reached by that path.
14. "Hopping" can occur on both neutral and owned (colonized) stars.
15. By hopping onto a star that is owned by an opponent, the hopping player gets punished by dematerialization of a small part of his hopping fleet.
16. Hopping and colonizing stars are two separate processes. Accidental colonization while hopping a star can not occur.
17. Every move ones ships make originates from the mothership. Thus, the order takes longer to get to the concerning ships, the further their base star is away from the mothership.
18. The rule above also implies that, the further away from one's mothership something happens, the more outdated the respective information is when it arrives at a player (i.e. his mothership).
19. When a player orders a fleet to go colonize another star, the information about the number of available regular ships is always outdated (because of the distance). So the player simply enters the maximum number of ships to be sent and, if there are not that many, all available ships are sent.
20. Every event on the map is broadcasted to all the players and reaches a player's mothership according to the time delay caused by the distance.

21. The mothership can also be moved from her base, it's slower than ships.
22. The mothership is as strong as 5 ships.
23. If the base of the mothership is intruded, the mothership is the last one to be torn down.

KEY MAPPING

The following key map is the default for Subluminal when starting the game for the first time. You can change them via the ingame settings menu. The changes are stored persistently in the **config** folder and are protable.

general

These key combinations are accesible during every game state.

 : show settings

 : show chat

 : toggle framerate

 : toggle framerate chart

 : toggle server tick

 : toggle server tick chart

 : toggle fullscreen

menu / lobby

This key combination is only available at the start of the game.

 : skip intro

in-game

These shortcuts are used to control the game.

Left Click : select star

 : send ship(s)

The image below shows the in-game menu to rebind the keys. On rebinding a key, the key to be rebound is highlighted in red.



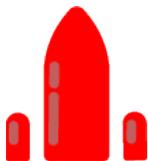
Key Binding Menu

Our game allows you to alter some of its properties and content. This manual only describes the modding possibilities. For a more technical description, please refer to the docs inside our git repository.

ship graphics

In the game two different ship models are used. One for the mothership and one for the fleet. They consist of different detail layers. You can swap each layer with your own images and will be loaded on next client start. For the detail image you can either provide a single image or generate different frames and combine them into an animated gif. The default in-game models (all frames shown) look like this:

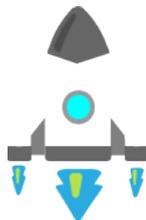
mothership



Body Detail



Frame 1

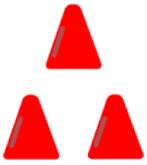


Frame 2



Frame 3

fleet ships



Body Detail



Frame 1



Frame 2



Frame 3

star names

All the names for the stars are read from a huge list. You can supply your own names if you'd like. To do so create a UTF-8 encoded textfile in the **config/mods/stars/** folder. The first line needs to contain an integer which represents the weight of the textfile. The higher the number, the more likely the names are picked from this file. The biggest number in the default lists is 999. You can provide as many files as you want. Example:

```
1  ## config/mods/stars/modded-stars.txt
2  999999
3  starname 1
4  starname 2
5  ...
6  ...
7  starname n-1
8  starname n
9  # EOF
```

chatbots

The chat component features support for simple chatbots written in javascript. Bots need to be placed in the folder **config/mods/chatbots/**. The name of the file will also be the name of your bot. Use the `>` symbol to talk to a chatbot. A *cat* bot (just echos whatever argument you give it) and a *list* bot (lists all available bots) are already part of the game. For example a bot that rolls an n-sided dice and prints the outcome to the chat could like this:

```
1  ## config/mods/chatbots/roll.js
2  function(msg, reply, replyAll) {
3      var sides = parseInt(msg) || 6;
4      var res = Math.floor(Math.random() * sides) + 1;
5      replyAll('you rolled a ' + res);
6  }
7  # EOF
8
9  ## Usage
10 you: >roll 20
11 roll: you rolled a 16
```