

OBERTH-CLASS

Entered Service: 2271 *Oberth*-class starships were retired from service after 2370.

Overview: The *Oberth*-class of science vessels were designed for the study of astronomical phenomena: gathering information on stars, planets, comets, and myriad spatial anomalies. *Oberth* starships were not designed for long term exploration assignments, instead performing detailed examinations of previously discovered stellar objects. After the launch of the class, captains of several *Constitution* vessels teasingly named *Oberth* the "pilot fish class", as the ships followed behind them collecting their scraps. However, the design of the *Oberth*-class had two crucial advantages: the ships were easy to build and easy to operate. The smaller size allowed an *Oberth*-class vessel to be constructed for an eighth the resources of a *Constitution*-class starship while required a fifth of the crew. The design was also highly customizable, allowing varied specialization between vessels, permitting its loadout to perfectly fit the requirements of their mission. As *Constitution* ships were phased out in favour of *Excelsior* and *Ambassador*-class ships, the strengths of the *Oberth*-class became more apparent. It became common practice for the larger and more generalized exploratory vessels to quickly chart and scan entire sectors, leaving *Oberth* vessels to fully investigate entire systems. While not designed for exploration missions, these expanded scientific assignments meant *Oberth* ships frequently encountered new species of alien life. However, the *Oberth*'s small size and crew limited their diplomatic capabilities. As such, they seldom initiated first contact, instead making an initial assessment before reporting back to Starfleet, who would dispatch diplomatic vessels.

Capabilities: The *Oberth*-class design was atypical among Federation starships of the late 23rd Century, incorporating a unique split-hull design that featured an upper primary hull comprised of the saucer section positioned atop a large rectangular section running between the warp nacelles. At the very rear of this aft subsection was the ship's impulse drive. An oblong secondary hull was connected to the primary hull via the nacelles' reinforced pylons. The secondary hull housed the engineering section, which was almost wholly automated and unmanned during normal operation. The entire engineering crew assigned to an *Oberth*-class ship consisted of one officer and four enlisted personnel, a tenth the number normal for a vessel of its size. In total, an *Oberth*-class had a standard crew complement of eighty, but was capable of operating with a minimum crew of two-dozen. The small nacelles and reactor limited the *Oberth*'s speed, and it had a maximum warp speed of 5. Designed for science rather than combat, the *Oberth*-class had minimal defensive systems, and were tactically inferior to enemy vessels, even small ones such as a Klingon scout vessels. The weapon systems of the *Oberth*-class consisted of a single forward phaser bank, but it was equipped with specialized shields that allow them to push through gravitational wavefronts, intense radiation, and other celestial hazards. Owing to their small size, powerful sensors, and easy customization, Starfleet also employed several *Oberth* ships as scout vessels. *Oberth* scouts were typically given improved warp and impulse engines. Additionally, many of these were employed by Starfleet Intelligence, as foreign powers paid little attention to the virtually unarmed scientific vessels. Over their decades of their service, *Oberth*'s were upgraded and refit over a dozen times. Early changes were limited to improving its sensors and laboratory resources, but the later models increased automation throughout the ship, halving the required number of crew and allowing for significantly larger quarters. The class' modularity also made them useful in field testing new components, and several *Oberth* vessels were used as experimental test ships. Two examples are the *USS Pegasus*, which was regularly outfitted with experimental weapons and engine systems, and the *USS Trospen*, which was assigned to the Starfleet Corps of Engineers. In the 2350s, the *Galaxy*-class was initially planned to replace *Oberth* vessels, but the diplomatic requirements placed on *Galaxy*-class ships delayed the retirement of the class until the *Nova*-class could be launched. With reduced scientific needs, the numerous *Oberth* vessels remaining in service were assigned alternate assignments, serving as transports and supply ships.

SYSTEMS

COMMS 09

ENGINES 07

STRUCTURE 06

COMPUTERS 09

SENSORS 08

WEAPONS 07

DEPARTMENTS

COMMAND -

SECURITY -

SCIENCE +2

CONN -

ENGINEERING -

MEDICINE +1

SCALE: 3

WEAPONRY:

- Phaser Banks
- Tractor Beam (Strength 2)

TALENTS

Oberth-class starships have the following Talents:

- Advanced Research Facilities
- High Resolution Sensors

