

# Outpost Hope One

## Player Handbook

**[outposthopeone.nfshost.com](http://outposthopeone.nfshost.com)**

Welcome to *Outpost Hope One*, a part of *Star Trek: Borderlands*. We are a collaborative group that write stories using original characters within the Star Trek universe. *Outpost Hope One* is one of several duty stations that make up *Star Trek: Borderlands*. Each is independent although we maintain a consistent universe amongst ourselves and do crossover from time to time.

This guide will summarize what you need to know to join the fun as quickly as possible, and, to answer your questions about your character, your fellow players, posting etiquette, etc.

## Star Trek

The universe of Star Trek is a collection of thousands of hours of television and film and hundreds of novels. Players are more-or-less on the same page as Star Trek fans. What defines canon within Star Trek has changed over time. Even Gene Roddenberry changed his opinion over the years. In general, television trumps film and novel, and, later television series trump earlier series. Over 25 years, *Star Trek: Borderlands* has also developed its own Star Trek brand.

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*Outpost Hope One (OH1)* canon includes content from all television series (Original series, The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, Voyager and Enterprise). Content from feature films is acceptable although it's style of storytelling is notably different than that of the television series. OH1 excludes content from the Abrams film relaunch due to it's blatant break from previous canon. Content gleaned from the hundreds of novels may be included with the caveat that critical details are conveyed to all players beforehand because few players will have read a particular novel. Star Trek Online content is acceptable as long as it is consistent with broader canon.

Content produced by *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* and *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* overrides the broader canon in all cases. Players have been writing together under the ST:B banner for over 25 years and their work stands.

Players should avoid using technology or terminology from non-Star Trek franchises. Star Trek has a strong technobabble tradition that can borrow out-of-franchise. For example, Iconian Gateways instead of "stargates", tricorders instead of "sonic screwdrivers", quantum filament blades instead of "light sabres".

## Star Trek: Borderlands

*Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* is a group of duty stations (DSs) scattered across the Delta Quadrant (DQ). The commanding officers (COs) of each DS create a larger universe within which to write. A [list of DSs](#) is available on the *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* website.

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*Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* includes multiple United Federation of Planets stations and ships, a Romulan Star Empire Ship, a Delta Freedom Alliance ship (unique to ST:B), a Borg Probe, and, several civilian ships. In the past, DSs have included Klingon ships and planetary governments.

*Outpost Hope One (OH1)* is located in the Delta Quadrant (DQ) about forty years after *USS Voyager* reached Earth.

## Collaborative Fiction

Star Trek fans take on the roles of characters to write their own stories as a group. Stories are written incrementally with a fluid storyline. *Outpost Hope One's (OH1s)* commanding officer (CO) directs the overall story but every player fills in the details. The story is defined by what each characters says and does.

There are different ways to describe *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)*: play-by-mail (PBM), play-by-email (PBEM), roleplaying game (RPG), simulation (sim), etc.

Hundreds of fans have written their own collaborative Star Trek fiction in one of the most creative groups on the web.

## Free to Play

There is no cost to join or play. The *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* website is hosted at the commanding officer's expense; most duty stations use free or ad-supported hosting. The posting group is hosted by Groups.io. At no time will monies be requested of players.

## Mature Content

*Outpost Hope One (OH1)* cannot reliably verify the ages of players. Players must be 16 or older. Age can only be presumed from the maturity of a player's writing. Profanity, vulgarity, crude humour, substance abuse, graphic or cruel violence, and, strong sexual content are rare within *Star Trek*. Content that goes beyond what can be depicted on television (a TNG level of mature content) must be discussed with the Commanding Officer (CO). As a narrative medium, a character's reaction to violence, for example, can replace a description of the violence itself.

## Writing Style

All writing in *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* is third-person, omniscient past tense; the most common style in fiction. Players cannot write in first-person.

Players write what their characters say, their actions and what they think. A character's thoughts are as important as their actions and dialogue.

## Current Events

Each month, *Outpost Hope One's (OH1s)* commanding officer (CO) posts a summary of stories-in-progress. The [Captain's Log](#) is shared with all players via the posting group and every other CO within *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)*. [This](#) is the best place to learn the goings-on at OH1.

## Player Communication

Players communicate entirely by email.

Groups.io hosts our posting group (also called a discussion group; old timers call it a list server or listserv). All emails sent to the group email address, [oh1@startrekborderlands.groups.io](mailto:oh1@startrekborderlands.groups.io), are forwarded to every other player. Each email adds to the stories-in-progress. Every email is archived at <https://startrekborderlands.groups.io/g/oh1/topics> and is open to the public.

Out-of-character (OOC) discussion is hosted by another group, <https://startrekborderlands.groups.io/g/oh1-ooc>. Players communicate with each other as themselves rather than as the many characters they portray. Emails are sent to the group email [oh1@startrekborderlands.groups.io](mailto:oh1@startrekborderlands.groups.io).

## Borderlands Council

As a member of *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)*, *Outpost Hope One's (OH1s)* has four seats (commanding officer (CO), executive officer (XO) and two player representatives) on the Borderlands Council. The council coordinates communication and story amongst duty stations (DSs), decides on policy and manages recruitment. Any player may join the Borderlands Council with the permission of their commanding officer (CO) in consultation with his or her executive officer (XO).

The *Star Trek: Borderlands Constitution* is the document that defines the powers and responsibilities of the Borderlands Council.

## Ongoing Story

Joining *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* is not like picking up an episodic television series. Stories overlap with each other and play out over the course of weeks and months. The [Captain's Log](#) provides a good summary for new players. Characters may enter the story in a natural break in the narrative. The commanding officer (CO) will always find a place for a new character.

## Post Frequency

Players are expected to post every two to three days. Each post will take 15 to 60 minutes depending on the complexity of the storyline. As a collaborative medium, we rely on each other to reply timely to posts so that the story can progress. Long delays slow down the story and make it difficult to move ahead.

After five days, the commanding officer (CO) will contact players with unanswered tags. Some allowance is given to posts with tags for multiple characters; the story may not be stalled if one player takes a few extra days. An unresponsive player may find their characters' tags have been written around and the storyline continued without their characters' involvement.

## Leaves of Absence

Players stepping away from *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* should inform their commanding officer (CO) or executive officer (XO).

A short-term leave of absence (LOA) may be because of a real-life vacation or crunch time at work. That player's characters are not tagged in the meantime.

An extended leave of absence (ELOA) involves stepping away from *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* for more than two weeks or for an indeterminate length of time. That player's characters are noted as ELOA on the website and are not tagged.

## Presumed Withdrawal

After 5 days with unanswered tags, players will receive an inquiring email from their commanding officer (CO). If no reply is received within 5 days, the CO will assume said player has withdrawn from *Star Trek: Borderlands* and will work with other players to exclude unanswered tags, remove that player's characters from the website and inform the duty station (DS) as a whole. At the CO's discretion, the player may remain on the mailing list to facilitate their return in the future.

## Character Sovereignty

Under no circumstances may one player write in the voice of another player's character. Players have spent time effort to create a character, their personality and backstory. It is wholly inappropriate to hijack a character. Characters are the creation of their player.

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Players breaking this rule greviously or repeatedly will be moderated by the commanding officer (CO) — all posts reviewed by the CO before they are visible to the duty station (DS) — and may be removed from the game.

## Character Portrayal

Players must not be confused with their characters. The player is an actor portraying characters that may or may not agree with their own attitudes and behaviours.

Communication between players and with COs is critical to avoid misunderstanding.

## New Character Ranks

Ranks for new players are assigned by the commanding officer (CO). Typically, new players begin with a character ranked Crewman, Private, Corporal, Ensign, Lieutenant (Junior Grade), or 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. A new player may also begin as a civilian character. Characters in a position of authority are reserved for more experienced players. As a player gains experience, their characters receive promotions.

## Multiple Characters

Players may write as more than one character at the commanding officer's (COs) discretion.

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Players with more than one character are more involved with the duty station (DS). There are no *Mary Sue* characters; characters that fill every role with equal expertise, knowledge and likability.

A player's second or third character should have the same depth and complexity of backstory and personality as their primary character. Every character should meet a high standard.

Short-term, temporary characters are required from time to time to populate stories. For example, a Johvan farmer may be useful in a particular story but does not have long-term prospects in multiple stories. A player can scale up their involvement with *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* temporarily with short-term characters.

## Joining another Duty Station

In the first six months, a player may only write for a single duty station (DS). It is important to gauge the demands of writing over a number of months before taking on the additional workload. Writing for multiple characters and writing for short-term characters are a litmus test for deeper involvement in *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)*.

Players must maintain their commitment to *Outpost Hope One (OH1)*; writing for a second DS must not negatively impact *Outpost Hope One (OH1)*.

## Date System

The date system used by official Star Trek properties is based on that used by *Star Trek: The Next Generation (TNG)*.

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*Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* uses a simpler, easier-to-read system. If today is **November 1, 2015** which can be re-written as **2415.11.01**. The year is adjusted to reflect that *Star Trek: Borderlands (ST:B)* takes place exactly 400 years in the future.

## Post Subject Line

Every post to the *Outpost Hope One (OH1)* posting group follows a specific pattern.

The posting group's name is automatically prepended to every post. For *Outpost Hope One (OH1)*, these are **[OH1]** for in-character (ie. roleplay, RP) posts, and, **[OH1 OOC]** for out-of-character (ie. non-roleplay, NRP) posts.

The posting group name is followed by the date of the post. (see [Date System](#))

When a character writes multiple posts in a day, the post date is appended with an index. For example: **2415.11.01.01** for the first post by a character that day and **2415.11.01.02** for the second post. The index is by-character rather than by-player.

The location of a post is included as a three-letter abbreviation. There are two major locations where stories take place:

- **SEN** for Sentinel Station
- **SPH** or **DYS** for the Hope One Dyson Sphere

Some locations are used less often:

- **COL** for the USS Colorado, a runabout
- **LIG** for the Lighthouse, a communications relay positioned at the Geroch Wormhole
- **DAY** for the USS Daystrom, an Oberth-class ship used for larger scientific and humanitarian missions

Sentinel Station is quite large and some sections have their own abbreviations:

- **OPS** for the Operations Centre
- **PRO** for the Promenade
- **GOR** or **CGV** for Gamp Gor'Vosh, the nickname for Deck 44

A character's short name is included to clarify the speaker. It is usually the surname for Human and Andorian characters and given names for Bajoran characters. Some species use only one name. The final element of a subject line is a title for the post. It can be descriptive or tongue-in-cheek.

Putting it all together:

**2415.11.01.01 SEN Mirel "Taking command"**

is a post written on November 1, 2015 with the action aboard Sentinel Station written from the point of view of Commander Mirel (her first post of the day) and a title implying she is taking command.

**2415.11.03.02 SEN Eiwan "Still broken"**

is the second post written on November 3, 2015 aboard Sentinel Station written from the point of view of Chief Petty Officer Eiwan complaining about something still being broken.

## Post Header

Every post includes a header to identify key details:

**Location:**

**Timeline:**

**Characters:**

The subject line provides a short, three-letter acronym of a post's location that is expanded within the post header. For example, **OPS** in the subject line is expanded to **Location: Operations Centre (Ops)** in the header.

The timeline of a post may be simply **Timeline: Current** or include detail relating it to other stories in-progress. For example, **Timeline: After USS Hunter arrives** or **Timeline: After the reception**.

Every character that has participated in a thread is listed.

Putting it all together:

**Location: Operations Centre (Ops)**

**Timeline: After USS Hunter arrives**

**Characters: Mirel, Jeyan, Chang, Gravor**

## Post Signature

Every post requires a signature that identifies the character in whose viewpoint the post is written. The only requirements are the characters name and the players name. It can be as simple or as elaborate as the player decides.

**---0-0-0-0---**

**Captain Mirel**

**Station Commanding Officer**

**played by Richard**

Or

**-----{--(@**

**Arekasadra (Sadie) Waverley**

**Chief Botanist**

**played by Shari**

## Replying to a Post

When replying to a post, the content of the email should be copied and pasted into a new email. Clicking *reply* will change the style of the post (eg. indent it, change it's colour, add a vertical bar along the left edge). A newly composed email will maintain proper style.

Tags should be replaced with bold text to clearly mark new content. Existing text should be plain, black text.

The header, open tags and signature may also be bold text so that they stand out.

Players using a mobile device may write **\*NEW\*** at the start of the first tagged post to indicate new content where making the text

bold is impractical. There should be only one **\*NEW\*** tag in each thread to mark the latest new content.

## Tags

Tags indicate where a response is expected from another character. They may be single-chevron, **<Character's Name>**, or double-chevron, **<<Character's Name>>**, brackets.

A player should leave at least two open tags in a post. The bottom-most tag in a post can open the story to any character by using an **<Any>** tag.

A player may direct the story by placing tags in the middle of a post. For example:

**"You're Cardassian." Fred replied as if he had just solved the riddle of the Sphinx.**

**<Husar>**

**"You're the owner then?" Fred asked, but the answer was obvious as he saw her level of anger rise.**

**<Husar>**

**"My lucky day." Fred replied, "I just have that sort of effect on people. I did come in just to look around, but I think I shall buy something now. I just don't know what yet."**

**<Husar>**

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Each player has their own preference for the amount of direction they like to receive. Too many tags, tags that force a pat response or force a character to react uncharacteristically should be avoided. Some players use non-standard forms such as **Tag: Name** or **(Name)** or **[Name]**. They are not to be used within *Outpost Hope One (OH1)*.

Players may also add out-of-character comments to ask questions, make recommendations or provide information to other players. They can appear at the top of a post, the bottom of a post or mixed in with the text. They follow the form **[OOC: Content]**. For example:

"Slow to one half impulse" commanded Sesgaard. He was looking at a blank star-covered viewscreen.

"One half impulse, aye." Red called as he entered the order and watched the screen.

"Anyone out there?" asked the captain.

<Emganwini> [OOC: No sensor contact, no hails]

"Red." Sesgaard said. Lay in a short patrol route along this side of the border. Couple hours each way. Stay within hailing range of the rendezvous point."

"Course laid in and ready sir." Red replied as he checked his charts and compared his calculations to the rendezvous point.

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Players may write alternative content depending on how a character reacts. For example:

"Lie still", said the doctor.

<Brull>

[OOC: Pick one or the other depending on how Lt. Brull reacts]

("I have to assess your injuries, lieutenant. You're no good to the captain with a broken rib," admonished Doctor Vashic. "Lie down or I'll have Security lie you down.")

("I'll be as quick as possible." The doctor knew the Klingon lieutenant wanted to be back on the Bridge. She appreciated the professional courtesy to let her do her job.)

## Comm Badge Communication

Characters communicating via comm badge or ship-to-ship use a "comm badge" character rather than double-quotes.

Predictably, the three chase vessels bore down on the Ferengi vessel and the *Wanderer*.

"You know we can't outrun them," Africa said.

=/\=Nort to humon.=/\= The voice was agitated.  
=/\=I am being pursued.=/\=

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Avery smiled at Henry and announced over the comm, =/\=Do tell Nort. It looks like they're after all of us. No doubt someone gave us up. I wonder...who that could have been?=/\=

## Read Every Post

It is important that players are aware of what is happening in and around *Outpost Hope One (OH1)*. Players are encouraged to participate in storylines where their characters can contribute. It's impolite to expect other players to read one's own contribution to the story without reciprocating by reading every other player's contributions.

## Overwriting Posts

Occasionally two players will reply to the same post at the same time with one player's content not included in the other's reply, and vice versa. The first player to notice should notify the CO to repost a merged reply or repost themselves and add **[REPOST]** or **[MARGED]** in the subject line.

If combining posts would create an inconsistency, a player should still combine the posts, add an out-of-character note about the contradiction and refer it to the CO to resolve. For example: the appearance of a Klingon ship as written by one player and a Romulan ship as written by another.

## Snipping a Thread

Overly long threads can be trimmed by replacing the oldest content with **>SNIP<** or **[Snip]** or another indicator that a thread has been snipped.

## Ending a Thread

When a thread has reached its narrative conclusion, players may request a thread be ended with an out-of-character tag. For example, **[OOC: End here?]** or **[That's a wrap!]**.