

# Utopia FAQ/Strategy Guide

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Updated to v0.80 on Jan 7, 2010

## Utopia: The Creation of a Nation - Strategy Guide

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Note: This guide is focused on starting strategies and understanding game mechanics, and it assumes a basic understanding of the user interface. If you are looking for basic game info, Dan Simpson wrote a FAQ/Strategy guide available on GameFAQs.com that gives a lot of specific info on the user interface, starting structures, menu options, and defense strategy. I'm not going to repeat that info, since he did a great job and obviously put a lot of time into it. My motivation in writing this is that I want to give my opinion on the best starting strategy and point out caveats that may be hindering players from progressing in the game.

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### A.) BUILD ORDER / STARTING STRATEGY:

1.) HOSPITAL - As soon as you start a new game, build a hospital. When the hospital completes, set the birth rate to high. Your population is a major limitation at the start of the game, so this is an important first step. See BIRTH RATE below for the equations used to decide birth rate. Note: If you manage to place this building by January 3rd (which is tough to do unless you are using a mouse), you can change the birth rate on February 28th, which essentially puts you ahead one month in population. This really isn't necessary, but for those perfectionists out there, it is possible.

2.) SCENARIO URGENT NEED - This depend on the scenario, but if you only start with 1 hydroponics, you need to build another hydroponics right away. With a starting population of 100, you will need 2 hydroponics. If you start with your population density at 100%, build 1 living quarters. At this point, you should not have started building workshops, etc., so don't build more than one building to meet your urgent needs. You need your available colonists to get your other buildings started.

3.) POWER - I like to build a Power Station right away. In one of the scenarios there is a solar eclipse after only 3 months, and Power stations need 70 days to build. The downside is that it uses up most of your workforce, and the upside is that it can save you from a power shortage. You could switch this step with step 4 if you want.

4.) ECONOMY - You make money by selling excess goods each month, so ramping up your production quickly is key. As soon as you have enough available colonists, you should build 1 workshop, 1 arms laboratory, and if you can find an ore deposit, 1 mine. Each of these buildings slowly recruits workers over several months, so you need to get them started right away. Building several of the same building type at once does not make them recruit workers or produce goods any faster, so build only 1 of each type to start (The other walkthroughs I have read give bad advice on this point!). See RECRUITMENT RATE below for more info. When each building type has only 5 or so empty slots for workers, build another building. Check how full

your buildings are in the Council screen. Try to always have a few empty slots in your workshops, arms laboratories, and mines for the first year or so. You should eventually have 30+ workshops, 25+ weapons labs and 10+ mines if possible, so plan your building placement accordingly. I haven't mentioned chemical plants yet for 2 reasons: 1) You need a fuel tank before you can store fuel and 2) you only need fuel when you have ships. Once you find a chemical deposit, slowly build chemical plants until you have ~3. Once you have ships you should have 5+ chemical plants and several fuel tanks, but that isn't a high priority at the start.

5.) MORE HYDROPONICS - Now you should build hydroponics until you have 200 - 400 food per month in excess (or even more). The reason we delayed doing this at first was because you have a limited number of builders, and hydroponics fill with workers immediately, so there is no harm in waiting a month to build extra. Note: If you have too many hydroponics, food will dominate your storage capacity, and you won't have room for all your other goods. Keep tabs on your food supply to make sure it grows as your population grows.

6.) LIVING QUARTERS - You can plan on eventually having a population over 2000 people (that means ~45+ living quarters). Anticipate your population growth and build these as needed. Try to keep a population density below 90. If your population density surpasses 100, the morale of the people will go down. You should build roughly 1 security building for every 2-3 living quarters (so you will need a security building within the first several months). If you skimp on security, you will start having money stolen, murders, and terrorism. Security buildings recruit workers slowly like workshops, so it's hard to catch up if you fall behind. Note: I'm not sure what the ideal ratio of security buildings to living quarters is. When your population is only 200, it doesn't seem important. After I pass the 1000 population mark, though, I try to keep 10% of my population working in security. When I dip below that, I start seeing theft reports.

7.) TANK YARD - Build 1 tank yard fairly early to start recruiting workers, and build additional tank yards when the first has ~7 workers inside. Tanks are really good for defense, so if you find the aliens are killing you before the end of year 2, start your tank yard earlier next time. For harder scenarios, you should ramp up your tank industry just like the other industries. I like to place tank yards in various locations around my colony to help maintain a perimeter of tanks. I usually build 4 or 5 tank yards, but more or less may be needed for a given scenario. I should note that you need ore (and I think weapons too) to build tanks, so build mines and arms labs before the tank yard. You may do this step after step 8 if it works out that way.

8.) FLUX PODS and RADAR- You need flux pods early for two reasons: 1) extra power storage in case of an eclipse (each flux pod stores 20 power) and 2) to let you build radars away from your base. You should have extra startup funds while all the building mentioned above are slowly recruiting workers. Use these funds for 4-6 flux pods. You should count 12 squares outward from your starting flux pod to build the additional flux pods. One additional advantage is that you may stumble upon ore or chemical deposits; they will show up on the map screen if any are near your buildings. Start building radars in year 2, depending on the scenario. The idea is to spot enemy attackers, so you want ~6 additional radars around your base right before you get the attack warning.

9.) STORAGE - Keep an eye on how much storage space you have by using the ? cursor on one of your Stores. You will need to build 3 or 4 stores over the first year to make sure you don't run out of space. They are cheap, so

build one as soon as you get your economy going and have available colonists to build. Trade volumes grow proportional to your population, so you will need 10+ stores for a colony of 2000 people (that is what I need anyway). If you find that you're running out of space all the time, check what your monthly food surplus is. It is easy to end up with too much food. If food production is too high, either wait for your population to grow and diminish the excess, or demolish one hydroponics.

10.) DEFENSE - You will probably find yourself waiting for the days to tick by during the first year, use that time to adjust your markers to good defensive positions. I always put one on top of either my command center or power stations, and the rest spread around my base at choke points. Once you have tanks, start sending them to each of the markers. Don't forget that leaving a couple of tanks by your tank yard will help to defend it from attack. I usually try to place tank yard in the places not covered by my markers. Your other main line of defense are missiles. I try to have atleast 4 before the first attack comes. Spread them out a little to cover different areas. Finally, turrets are helpful, but they are painfully unreliable (especially before they are upgraded to plasma guns) and painfully expensive. I slowly build turrets next to my expensive buildings or near hotspots as I have extra cash (which is probably after 2 or 3 years). Once you can build plasma guns, you will have the money to use them more. I usually have ~15 - 30 turrets/plasma guns in the late game. By then I don't want to mess with micromanaging tanks, and I have enough money to be liberal in my turret placement. Oh, and build turrets in pairs. They frequently get destroyed by lucky (or unlucky) shots, so building them in pairs gives you a backup.

11.) RESEARCH - I'm not sure of the best strategy for building laboratories, but you definitely should not neglect them. I usually build one after about 6 months. They require monthly funding, and before that point, I figure I don't have the spare cash to fund them. They recruit scientists slowly, so they gradually start using more and more funding each month. I usually have 7 or 8 labs by the end of the game, and I have always funded military and civilian research equally. The military research helps with defense and attack, but the civilian side has lots of useful discoveries too, like the space moss converter, ore and chemical detectors, and a ton of stuff that boosts QoL. If you can only afford to fund one research area, I would recommend military research.

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## B.) PLANET SPECIFIC ADVICE

### Planet 6 - Antares III

The alien race on this planet has units that roll over your buildings, and they attacked me around September-December of 2091 (So you have less than 2 years to prepare). They cannot move over mountains or the shiny green lakes on the map, but since they can pass over everything else, there aren't very many chokepoints in the middle of the map. They also attack from every direction. After trying a few times, I found that turrets work well on this map. Since the enemy attacks by crushing you rather than firing, the turrets out-range them and don't get destroyed as often. I also clumped my buildings together in one solid block around the starting position (except for flux pods, radar, tank yards, and mines/chemical plants). That way I could place my markers close together around my city. I had about 7-10 tanks when they started attacking, so I had to check the radar on the map screen often and move my tanks to intercept. I had my tax rate at 19% for the first several years.

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C.) OTHER TIPS:

1.) Go to the financial screen on the second month (February). Put ~\$3000 in your Spying Grant so you don't miss any messages, and go to the Trade screen. Often the prices for everything are only a few credits, and if that is the case, buy some extra food (to avoid a shortage) and all the ore, gems, weapons, and tech you can get. The gems you can sell back later at price at least 20 fold higher, and starting off with some ore and weapons means you can build a tank yard right away. Don't buy fuel unless you have a fuel tank.

2.) Tax rate affects QoL. In the late game, once you have a reserve of cash, drop the tax rate as much as you can (until it is 0%). At the beginning of the game, you might be tempted to raise the tax rate to the maximum 20%, but it will negatively impact your QoL. If your QoL drops to 10, you run the risk of either your colonists abandoning you or being assassinated. Personally, I sometimes raise taxes to 18% at first to boost my cash flow without too much of a QoL penalty, but I think raising taxes over 15% should only be temporary, and it is definitely not necessary in the first few scenarios.

3.) Spying - the first two intelligence reports you get are bland. I only put between \$1000-\$3000 credits in the spying grant for those two (if you put more, you will end up paying ~\$6000 for the same information). The third, fourth, and fifth reports can be a little more interesting and give more information if you want pay for them. All in all, though, I think paying for better intelligence reports is just for fun. The only things you need to know are: 1) what direction is the enemy city? The pathfinding AI is terrible in this game, so amassing tanks on the side nearest the enemy city will help when you attack. 2) Do they start with tanks or aircraft? If they start with tanks, you can neglect defending impassible terrain. With aircraft, expect to rely on missiles even more, since they can come from any angle. 3.) The attack warning. If you don't have enough money in your spying grant, your spies won't tell you when the first attack is coming, which could be bad. The attack warning is your last chance to build up missiles, position your tanks, and whatever else you need to do. I think the minimum amount of money needed in the spying grant is different for different scenarios; I haven't investigated this thoroughly. If you don't have enough money in the grant, you don't get any spying reports. Bottom line: if you don't get a spy report in the first 6-8 months, bump up your funding a little.

4.) Trading - The "Keep" column in the finance screen is supposed to control an "auto-trade" feature within the game. It does NOT mean that you will throw away a certain percentage of goods, as has been errantly reported. The auto trade feature seems buggy to me for the SNES version of the game, but the idea was that the computer would sell your goods for you up to a certain percentage if there is demand. Unfortunately, it doesn't really work, so you just have to do it by hand every month. Be sure to set the keep value to 100% on gems, because I have had the computer auto-sell my valuable stock of gems when the price was low. I usually set everything to 100% (except maybe food) and manage trading myself.

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D.) GAME MECHANICS:

BIRTH RATE

Births last month = floor(last month's total population / 100)\*rate+5  
The rate depends on whether the birth rate is low, medium, or high. Low = 3, Med= 6, and High = 10. The floor() function means that it rounds down. So if your population is 199 last month, floor(199/100) = 1, and at high birth rate 15 colonists will be born.

#### RECRUITMENT RATE

Each month, the number of people that will start working in an industry is the number of available workers / 50 rounded down (at least that is my experience. Let me know if this formula isn't consistent with what you are seeing). This is calculated at the very beginning of each month. Timing your buildings so that they complete before the end of the month can help speed up recruitment.

As an example, if you have 500 available colonists and 8 empty workshops, 10 people will start working in workshops and the council screen will report 490 colonists as available. If you have 500 available colonists and 1 empty workshop, 1 empty laboratory, 1 empty mine, 1 empty arms lab, and 1 empty chemical plant, and 1 empty tank yard, 60 people will begin working (10 in each type) and the council screen will report 440 available colonists. I'm just trying to illustrate that you want empty spaces in every type of building at the end of the month. It doesn't help at all to have multiple empty buildings of the same building type.

Buildings that follow this recruitment rule are: workshops, laboratories, arms laboratories, mines, chemical plants, security buildings, ship yards, and tank yards. Hydroponics always fill immediately and are the one exception.

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Questions or comments on this guide?

Email phaethonfire(at)gmail.com and put "Utopia" in the subject line. I can't promise a prompt response, but I'll read your email eventually.

Final thoughts from the author

I come back to this game from time to time. I feel like it is the only game to capture such a good balance between city building management and defense. I've played Outpost (which is way too focused on build order and anticipating disasters) and other similar games, but I don't know of a very good Utopia sequel, which bugs me (one of you computer science geniuses out there needs to make one!). With a better user interface, better pathfinding AI, and maybe some minor tweaks to game balance, Utopia could have been a real work of art. As it is, though, it is a fun game to go back to occasionally to try to beat the next planet on the list.

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