

Armada 1 Economy

As in any other [RTS](#) game, only with a decent [macro management](#) will you be able to be a successful player. But what does that mean in numbers? What do you have to do? What do you have to consider?

There are four kinds of resources in this game, Crew and Dilithium, Special Weapons Energy and Supply. Crew is gained by [starbases](#), Dilithium by [Dilithium Moons](#). Energy for [special weapons](#) is created out of nothing but only per unit/building. Supply on the other hand is capped by the number of starbases and their extensions. Increasing it is done by using Dilithium for building new starbases or supply extensions.

The three resources are by default indicated by a bar of three numbers in the upper right corner of the screen:



The left number indicates the Dilithium in possession. The number in the middle represents the current crew amount. The right numbers indicate the currently used supply and the current upper limit of supply.

The Different Resources

Dilithium

Dilithium is provided by [Dilithium Moons](#) and [Infinite Dilithium Moons](#). It is mined by [mining freighters](#), which transport it from the moons to [mining station](#) in packages of 150, which is slowly unloaded at the mining station. The income is therefore semi-continuous.

It is always mandatory, to max out a Dilithium Moon, regardless whether it is an infinite one, or a limited one. Usually that means 3 freighters. That's 2 on top of the automatically provided one from the built mining station. Only when the map geometry or mining station positioning is bad, it may require more than 3 for maximum output.

The mining rate of a fully maxed moon is always roughly 10.5 dil/sec. or approximately 630 per minute. That means, a full 20'000 Dilithium Moon is mined down in about 32 minutes. On most maps you have 2 moons relatively close to your starting location, which together give you an income of up to 1'260 per minute. When you compare that with the time and resource requirements for ships build, you can have an idea of how much production rate you can muster with such an income. It also implies the following: A maxed out Dilithium Moon costs 1'000 dil. for the station and another 800 for the two freighters. So the 1'800 units of Dilithium are returned after round about 3 minutes.

As the [Borg](#) usually run out of crew before running out of Dilithium, they tend to pile up Dilithium. So on the long run they may manage with less Dilithium Moons than the other Factions.

Crew

The crew is used for constructing most [units](#) and [stations](#). Repairing ships at yards and re-crewing stations can also use up crew. If you run out of crew you can only build [sensor stations](#), [torpedo turrets](#) and [pulse turrets](#), as well as do research. The only source of crew are [starbases](#). When placed at no special location a starbase gives 3.5 crew/sec.. Depending on the race, the modifier for [planet-site](#) starbases is 1.5 (Borg) or 1.25 (rest). That results in a maximum of 5.25 crew/sec for Borg and 4.375 crew/sec. for the other factions (per starbase). The accumulation of crew is continuous, regardless of the state of the starbase, just as long as it is not destroyed or completely vacated. It is in general reasonable to prefer placing planet-side starbase. However, other tactical considerations may also indicate placing a new starbase somewhere else. (E.g. at choke points on the map.)

The [Borg](#) are particularly prone to run out of crew, as most of their [units](#) require a relatively large amount of crew. Building [Nexus](#) is more important when playing this faction, than for the other factions.

Supply

Almost all [units](#) and all [stations](#) require supply to be built. Research items also use up supply when researched. Supply is not collected and spent like the other resources. It's actually the supply limit, that has to be extended over time. If the currently used amount of supply hits or exceeds the current limit of supply, then no more units, research items or stations can be obtained (except for [dilithium freighters](#), which take up no supply). If this situation arises, the player is [supply-blocked](#). Until he either recycles units, research items or stations, or extends the supply limit by building a [starbase](#) or an extension of a starbase, or units or stations are destroyed somehow, this situation cannot be resolved.

There are actually three situations, that can lead to a need for extending the supply limit:

- Construction of units and stations raising the used supply.
- Capturing units or stations raises the used supply as well.
- Losing a [starbase](#) reduces the supply limit by the amount of 20 for the starbase and maybe even further for the supply extensions present at that starbase.

Increasing the supply limit is done fastest by extensions at starbases. Each starbase can extend the supply six times by the number of 20. A new starbase increases the supply by 20, too. Starbases take considerably longer to build but once all extension slots of all starbases are in use, there is no alternative to acquiring new starbases or recycling units or stations.

Special Weapon Energy

Most [units](#) and some [stations](#) can have [special weapons](#). Most of those weapons require Special Weapon Energy. It follows the classic [mana](#) concept. Each unit or station, that requires special weapon energy, has a reservoir for it. Usually the limit of it is 1000. But [Hero Ships](#) may have a greater capacity. When using special weapons, the amount of special weapons energy is reduced by a value or rate specific to that special weapon. The recovering rate depends on the unit. Once the special weapon energy reaches 100% capacity of the unit or station, it is not increased any further. If the special weapon energy falls below the activation threshold or drops to 0, the special weapon(s)

can not be used any more, until it is recharged enough.

Deconstruction of Units

One source of resources was not mentioned here, yet: Deconstruction of ships or stations. This means the unit is removed from the match and the resources invested are returned. Every unit that is produced and every station, that is built, can be deconstructed. For ships this is only possible in a yard. For stations this happens in-place. When a unit is deconstructed, all the Dilithium is returned to the players pool (except for the first Starbase, that may come by the tech tree for free, this one only returns 1'000 Dilithium). Same goes for the remaining crew. The value currently on board the station or ship is returned to the player's pool. Similarly the supply is returned, meaning the supply in use is reduced by the unit's cost.

This is especially interesting, if you intend on using the beam-in mechanics to steal units, or as a Borg player, the assimilation mechanics (which is effectively the same). For a Borg player in particular, this solves a short-term lack of Dilithium very easily. The long-term problem of a lack of crew amounting from frequent assimilation will not really be solved in this fashion. It will only be mildly reduced, as beamed in crew is permanently lost. Only the few remaining crewmembers on a freshly assimilated unit will be returned to the crew pool. The rest invested cannot be returned. (This is basically why Borg have such a high demand in crew income, because one of their main offensive abilities does exactly that: destroy crew, theirs and the opponents.) The gained Dilithium on the other hand can still be used for defense stations, even when there is a strong crew shortage.

However, depending on the situation, this may still be a very sensible course of action, even for the other factions. If the chosen tech tree of the match does not give you the special weapons of units for free/automatically, then a captured unit is basically a bare unit (with no special abilities) while ones own units usually do have them available. So deconstructing a unit and building new units of ones own faction can be preferable for having special weapons available.

One immediate problem of stealing ships and stations can be the automatically increased supply usage. Any stations or units that use supply will have this effect the moment they are taken over. This is also one of two ways how a player may end up using more supply than he actually possesses. The other one would be a destruction of supply (losing or deconstructing a Starbase). So especially the Borg assimilation mechanics can cause this problem very quickly, if the remaining supply is already rather low while the player has fast successes in assimilating units. This may even make it necessary to deconstruct units, in order to progress other constructions that are supply-blocked.

Borg Cube Example

Let's take a straight forward example, the [Borg Cube](#). It costs 1'200 dil., takes 120 seconds to be build and requires 1'000 crew + 7 supply. When comparing that with your dilithium income, you can build actually one cube per minute, which means, you can fire up two [Advanced Assembly Matrices](#) at the same time. (Or half a cube per minute and moon.) You will end up with 50-60 dilithium spare per minute as well. But be aware that the other cost is also to be taken into account. 2 Cubes per minute also means, 14 supply per minute and 2'000 crew per minute. Considering, that the max of one starbase is 5.25 crew/sec. or 315 crew/minute that means the 2000 crew are a time equivalent of 6 minutes.

When playing with limitations on both resources, you *will* run into resources stalling of that kind rather soon, when trying to build Cubes. E.g. starting with 3'000 crew already requires you to wait some time for the second Cube and/or to build another [Nexus](#), as the buildings required for full [techtree](#) up to two Advanced Assembly Matrices costs 2'700 crew of the 3'000 starting. To put it in another perspective: 2000 crew/min is a [starbase](#) equivalent of more than 6, and that [planet](#)-site. One Advanced Assembly Matrix on the other hand can be fed crew by ca. 3-4 starbases. That is relatively maintainable. But it also shows, why [Nexus](#) are very important for [Borg](#) players. The only thing that can alleviate that crew problem is using [Assimilators](#), as the crew they steal is added to the main pool, if they are at full 200 or 200 crew already. But that requires more micro management and puts off building Cubes for Dilithium requirements.

Also the starting supply is not that much in terms of fast building. The build up to two Advanced Assembly Matrices costs 43 of the 100 Energy Nodes (minimum value and if you recycle your [scout](#) that is). With a [Holding Beam](#) it costs even more. So the supply will run out after 7 Cubes and an increase of supply will cost 500 dil. and gain 20 supply (another 3 Cubes) but takes additional time.

So for a full squad of eight cubes a supply upgrade is necessary, as well as a second or better third Nexus is highly advised. Otherwise the additional 7 cubes would take another 42 minutes of crew gain. When playing with starting crew limited to 3'000, the borg mostly suffer from lack of crew and not so much from a lack of Dilithium. They tend to pile up Dilithium, which can easily be turned into supply and defense stations.

The Sphere Example

You can also go smaller, e.g. for [Spheres](#): A Sphere costs 500 dil., 250 crew and 5 supply. The process takes 50 seconds. In 50 seconds one moon gives approx. 525 dil. So you can perfectly support one [Assembly Matrix](#) per moon producing Spheres. But again, mind the drain of the other resources. 50 seconds per Sphere also translates to 250 crew in 50 seconds, meaning 5 crew per second or 300 per minute. For a [Nexus](#) in orbit or a [planet](#) that's OK. For only one Starbase without planet bonus it's not enough for a stable production cycle. On the long run you will crew-stall.

The supply adds up to 6 per minute, meaning after 10 minutes with one moon and one Assembly Matrix or 5 minutes with two moons and two Assembly Matrices you will begin running out of supply. This will mean 12 Spheres, which is already a lot. But you would also have to muster the crew requirements of 3'000 Crew (more than 9 minutes with one Nexus with planet bonus). So it's again rather likely, that at some point you will *want* to build a second Nexus. Otherwise high production rates of ships are not feasible. You might turn to supplementing defense stations instead as they don't take crew (but still supply).

The Interceptor Example

If you go even smaller, let's say, only [Interceptors](#) and one moon to rush your opponent, the calculations are similar: One moon giving you at best 630 dilithium per minute. An Interceptor costs 250 dil, 3 supply and 100 crew per 30 seconds, so meaning, 500 dil. per minute, 6 supply per minute and 200 crew per minute (Nexus equivalent: 38 seconds, so this is doable for even a normal Nexus). Interceptors are a bit less draining on crew than Spheres, but comparable on supply and dilithium. That's two Interceptors per minute and moon and 130 spare dilithium as well as a crew gain of 5 per

unit.

Bottom Line of Borg Crew Management

So for the early game one normal Nexus is sufficient for one Assembly Matrix producing Interceptors. Building Spheres will require to have a Nexus near a planet, to be maintainable. Once you build an Advanced Assembly Matrix, a second Nexus will practically become mandatory, unless you play with high starting values of crew. Similar considerations are in effect for the other races, too. Just not to the same extend as for Borg players.

Damage, Shield Equivalents and Unit Roles

Just keep in mind: A Sphere can inflict a damage rate of 12 per second while two Interceptors together have 16 per second. The shields are at a recuperating rate of 1.41 per second for one Interceptor and 2.81 for the Sphere (which is comparable to 2 Interceptors). What really sets them apart, is the Sphere's [Regeneration](#) special weapon, that let's it recharge a lot faster (up to 100% shields when using 100% special weapon energy) than the Interceptors, while the latter are *really good* at jumping away, once you have their [Transwarp Drive](#) ability. So the Interceptors are meant more as a powerful harass unit, while the Spheres are more sturdy and therefore meant for a more heads on approach. The Cube on the other hand deals a whopping 34.7 damage per second (on average) which is the top value, besides the [super weapons](#), and reloads its shields at 8.44/sec. So it's a damage equivalent of four Interceptors and a shield equivalent of 6 Interceptors. It's an all out [battleship](#). This in turn justifies, why a Cube is a lot more expensive in terms of crew, than other units. So on the long run, Borg will tend to pile up dilithium, unless they spend it early on building more Nexus. And even then, using stationary defenses may become necessary for actually making use of the excess dilithium. They don't cost any crew but a bit of supply. So basically they only cost dilithium.

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