

**STAR  
WARs**

**vs**

***STAR TREK***

I know, I get it. This looks as corny as heck.



Sulu

Spock

Uhura

Kirk

Dr. "Bones" McCoy

Chekov

Scotty



## So why are those in the actual science and engineering communities usually more into Star Trek than Star Wars?

- The stories are about US and a hypothetical future for our space exploration, NOT for someone, somewhere else “a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.”
- All of the Star Trek shows and movies have on staff writers with a scientific background who are charged with inserting terminology and concepts for space exploration technology that are based on theoretical physics/tech. (that might one day exist) and the portrayed ETs are based on real theoretical ideas in astrobiology.
- The stories and the theoretical technology and imagined ET races they include are well-thought out attempts to deal with multiple, complex “what if” scenarios related to the consequences of interstellar travel and someday what contacting and interacting with other life could be like.

# The Star Trek Universe Created by its Television Series

## Star Trek – The Original Series (TOS): 1966-69

The story of the 5 year mission of the starship Enterprise **in the 2260s** and its veteran captain, James T. Kirk, along with Mr. Spock, Lt. Uhura, Dr. “Bones” McCoy and Mr. Sulu, as they “bodily go where no man has gone before” on behalf of the United Federation of Planets. Although originally only popular with hardcore sci-fi fans and engineering students (leading to its cancellation after just 3 seasons), its devoted following persists from its reruns.

## Star Trek – The Next Generation (TNG): 1987-94

Takes place about a century after TOS **in the mid 2300s** with the new Enterprise-D led by Captain Jean Luc Picard. New ETs appear in this series with the *Klingons* now important allies. ***It is the #1 show on TV in its final few years***, leading to a spin off of 3 other TV series and 4 of the now 13 total Star Trek movies.

## TNG Spin-Offs:

**Deep Space Nine: 1993-99** – A space station led by Commander Sisko (played by Rutgers grad and professor, Avery Brooks) that is parked next to a wormhole in years **2369 to 2375**, allowing them to encounter ETs from much farther away (Cardassians) than the other series.

**Voyager: 1995-2001** – In the years including and following TNG and Deep Space Nine (**2371 to 2378**), a new Federation starship named the Voyager is flung by a wormhole during a battle into a distant corner of our galaxy. The crew then experiences previously unknown planetary systems and ETs (such as the ruthless *Borg*) on their long trip back to Earth under the leadership of Star Trek’s 1<sup>st</sup> female captain, Kathryn Janeway.

**Enterprise: 2001-2005** – This is a prequel to TOS that takes place in the **2150s**, about 90 years after the first warp drive is invented (topic of the movie, “Star Trek First Contact”) when Earth is not yet part of the United Federation of Planets but is already making starships of its own, like the very first Enterprise that is the subject of this story.

## The Main ETs of Star Trek

**Vulcans** – The first ETs we encounter (see “Star Trek First Contact”), they become strong allies despite their distaste for our emotionality as they are a race dedicated to logic, intellect and the suppression and control of emotion since it interferes with the former. Keep in mind that Spock is actually really only half Vulcan (his mom is one of us).



**Klingons** – Although not integral to the last 3 movies, they are an aggressive species we wage war against throughout the 2200s but they end up part of the Federation, an alliance brought about by having common enemies in other ET races. Characterized by their spiny foreheads and regular anger and hostility in interpersonal exchanges.



**Romulans** – Despite shared ancestry with Vulcans, they act counterpoint to them with constant passion, cunning, political deceit and opportunism. They possess an empire in a different quadrant of the Milky Way but often are making forays into ours. Nero, the antagonist of the 1<sup>st</sup> of the last 3 movies is a Romulan.



**The Borg** – A combination biological-mechanical race discovered during TNG years (2300s), their statement to all they encounter is “resistance is futile – you will be assimilated.” They result from self aware machines that seek perfection through biomechanical synthesis with their hive mind. Their biological components come from those they have conquered and killed after assimilating the leaders of their victims to gain understanding.



## **The Star Trek Universe movies I recommend (we are watching one):**

### **Star Trek 8: First Contact (1996)**

Captain Picard (from TNG) and his crew pursue the Borg back in time to stop them from preventing Earth's first contact with the Vulcans. They also make sure that Zefram Cochrane makes his famous maiden flight at warp speed. *This 8<sup>th</sup> Star Trek film was heralded by most critics as perhaps the best of the Trek movies to date in 1996.*

### **Star Trek (Movie #11 2009)**

It is the eleventh film of the *Star Trek* film franchise (the 1st revival of a "Star \_\_\_\_\_" franchise by J.J.

Abrams like "The Force Awakens" was), **a reboot of the original *Star Trek* television series with all of its main characters, portrayed by a new cast.** The film follows a young James T. Kirk and Mr. Spock aboard the *USS Enterprise* as they combat Nero, a Romulan from their future who threatens the United Federation of Planets.