

**StarCraft** is a *Real-time Strategy* game. The player is required to build a virtual base and army with which he can attack and overcome his opponent. Although mission goals may differ in the campaign, in competitive play the objective is to destroy all enemy buildings. However, in most games a player can concede by typing "gg" and leaving the game when his losses can't be overcome.

A player can pick one of three unique [races](#) to play with: The [Protoss](#), [Zerg](#) and [Terran](#). All three races have their own qualities and weaknesses as well as units, abilities and gameplay mechanics.

Player activities can be divided in two categories: [macro](#) and [micro](#). Macro includes the gathering of resources and making [buildings](#) and [units](#). [Micro](#) involves the control of the army or individual units.

## Macro

In regular head-to-head games, players start out with a [Command Center](#), [Nexus](#) or [Hatchery](#) and 4 [Workers](#). Workers are units that are primarily used to harvest [resources](#) and construct [buildings](#). Buildings can be used to produce certain units, research upgrades, to provide supply or function as static defence. Certain buildings will unlock buildings higher up the tech tree.

The main resource is [minerals](#). Workers can be ordered to mine from them, taking back 8 minerals at a time. Minerals are needed to purchase buildings and units. The number of minerals a player has gathered is show top-right. No more than one worker can mine from a mineral patch and every mineral patch can only be mined from for a set number of times. see also perfect mining

The secondary resource is [Vespene Gas](#) (or **Gas** for short). Gas is only needed to buy certain buildings or units (usually higher up the Tech tree). Gas is mined from a [Geyser](#). Once a player has found a geyser he has to build a Gas mining facility ([Assimilator](#), [Refinery](#) or [Extractor](#)) on it before being able to harvest from it. A Geyser also has a set amount of Gas available. However, when it depletes players can still harvest from it, bringing home 2 Gas per round rather than 8.

Using the resources the workers mined, the player can use the workers to build [buildings](#). These buildings unlock certain units as well as other buildings. This unlocking process is called the techtree, and making buildings in order to get to specific other buildings or units is called "Teching up". Apart from building separate buildings, [Zerg](#) can tech up by morphing some of their existing buildings into a more advanced form ([Hatchery](#) into [Lair](#) into [Hive](#) and [Spire](#) into [Greater Spire](#)) and [Terran](#) can build [Add-ons](#) on their [Factories](#), [Starports](#) or [Science Facilities](#).

When buying units a player has another resource to take into account: [Food](#) (a term coined from StarCraft's predecessor WarCraft II). Certain buildings or units provide the player with an increase of how many units they are allowed to build. Protoss is dependant on **psi**, provided by [Pylons](#) and [Nexuses](#), Terrans have **supply**, provided by [Supply Depots](#) and [Command Centers](#) and Zergs have **control** provided by [Overlords](#). Building these increases the players army capacity but that same capacity can never exceed 200. Most small units cost 1 supply, but bigger units higher up the tech tree cost more.

Once a player has enough minerals, gas and free supply available he can build units. [Protoss](#) and [Terran](#) players can select a production facility and a selection of units will appear. [Zerg](#) makes all their units from [Larvae](#) found at the [Hatchery](#) (or [Lair](#) or [Hive](#)). Once the unit is selected a status bar will appear that reflects the progress of the unit's building process. When it is completed the unit will appear next to the building or hatch from its egg. There are alternative ways of making units. The most common ways are "morphing" and "merging". Certain Zerg units can Morph into a more advanced species and two Protoss Templars can morph into an Archon.

All production facilities can set **Rally Points**. Upon spawning after finished production, units will (try to) move to this point. You can set a Rally Point for a building by selecting the building, clicking Rally (or shortcut **R**) and clicking anywhere on the minimap. [Patch 1.12](#) allows players to use Right-click to set a Rally Point once a building is selected.

All these operations are part of **Macro**

## **Micro**

In Rush strategies or in big battles "Micro" is used. Micro is controlling ones units to preserve the life of the unit(s) and cause more damage to your opponents units.

Telling your units to attack, move, patrol, or hold position are all forms of micro.

The most common form of micro is the "Attack" micro. This when you have a unit or a group of units and you hit "Attack (A on the keyboard)" and then "Move" to a certain location and they attack whatever is enemy in their sight range

The second most common form of micro is the "Move" micro. This is where you hit the left mouse button or "Move (M on the keyboard then left click)" they walk to the place you told them to not attacking anything in their sight range.

The third common form of micro is the "Hold Position" micro. This is giving a unit a "Move" command and then hitting "Hold position(H on the keyboard)"

to make it fire. This technique is often used with 'Dragoons' and essential for 'Mutalisk' Micro.

The fourth most common form of micro is the "Patrol" micro. This is where you send a unit going one way then hitting "Patrol (P on the keyboard)" directly behind said unit making the unit turn back extremely fast attacking whatever is behind it. This technique is often used with 'Mutalisks' killing scourge and essential for 'Vulture' micro.

Other types of micro is to flank, surround, sandwich, or make a concave. Flanking is where you have one group of units attack the enemy from one angle and then you have another group of units attack from another angle. Surrounding is when you have a group of units enclose a unit or a group of units so they cant escape. Sandwiching is when you have one group of units attack from one angle then you have another group of units attack from the opposite angle. Making a concave is when you make a semi circle to making it harder for your opponent to attack you without sustaining heavy losses or making it easier for all of your units to attack at once causing more damage.

All of these are considered "Micro"

### ***Balancing Micro & Macro***

While it is ideal to perform optimal micro and macro, it is usually impossible to do both tasks together as well as one could perform each separately. Thus, a player is forced to make the decision where to allocate his or her actions and attention. In order to win, a player should consider the opportunity cost of his or her choice. By spending attention on micro, we are omitting macro, and vice-versa. It is generally accepted that good macro is more valuable than good micro.

So why is macro better? Consider pitting a micro-oriented player against a macro-oriented player both with the same amount of attention and APM. Overall, the macro player will have a better economy and more units, and can usually overpower the micro player no matter how good his or her control is. Because of this, attention to macro is generally more valuable than attention to micro. Since focus on macro is the better choice, let us consider the case of two macro-oriented players with the same amount of attention. Both will amass a similarly-sized army and both will have similar economies, so who is victorious? It comes down to unit positioning and the outcome of battles; essentially micro.

Thus, players who want to win will practice both micro and macro in order to out-micro and out-produce their opponents. The marginal benefit of micro will be apparent if the macro abilities of the players are the same. Good players will allocate the appropriate time for each to get the most benefit from their actions. It is a good idea to also take into consideration the cost to your opponent when deciding between micro and macro as well, and how well off you will be in relation to your opponent when you decide, for example,

to spend time controlling Mutalisks to destroy SCVs. You may reduce your opponent's income but you may also forget to make more Drones at the right time. If you switch to production, you may leave your Mutalisks vulnerable or simply unused. In this sense the game becomes a balancing act between micro and macro.

## **Strategy and Tactics**

Before we get confused here let us understand what strategy and tactics are. Tactics is the simpler of the two, it is the art of engagement – or how one seeks to break the opponent by physically overpowering him. Strategy is much harder to define because it is a much more abstract concept.

- Consider this example: You are playing a straight up player. You know that when he plays straight up he is a solid player, so you decide to play more unconventionally by relying on drops and harassment to slowly wither him down.

In this case, the decision to play a certain style would be what is considered a strategy, because you know it will give you an inherent advantage. The style of play itself, however, would be considered a tactic. Strategy is the reasoning behind every move you make; tactics are a way to achieve the move.

Simply put, strategy deals with *what* you want to achieve, while tactics is all about *how* you want to achieve that strategy.