DarkStar Astrodynamics

Mod-Author Instructions

# Be Familiar with xEdit

I cannot stress this enough. I’m willing to help occasionally, but my time is valuable. I literally don’t have the time to teach everyone xEdit. I also don’t consider myself an expert, by any means. If you’re doing nif/mesh/texture work, I am 100% not your guy. If you’re looking to use features that require SFSE and/or RTFP, then you’re on your own. I don’t do those at all.

# You are NOT required to adhere to DarkStar’s Design Philosophy

Mods are optional. Patches for mods are even more optional. If you are not adhering to the balance and design choices you’ll see on display in the full mod, that’s your choice entirely, and I’m sure there’s a market for that. However, make sure you make that fact CLEAR to your potential users on the Mod’s download page. At the same time, if you HAVE adhered to balance/design philosophy, then absolutely mention that to your users. A lot of the feedback I’ve gotten is regarding these very details, all in a very positive light.

So, you do you, but be open and honest with those who are thinking about downloading.

# What IS DarkStar’s Design Philosophy?

I’m glad you didn’t ask! Lol…

No matter what game I’m doing addon/mod work for, I strive to make the project balanced and make it feel natural to the game. An extension of what I think the developers were going for, if you will. Yes, I take things farther than they do, or are allowed to, but I try not to go overboard, or bring in content from external intellectual properties.

Furthermore, I strive to make my Starfield mods fully functional for Steam and GamePass players with full intent to bring them all to Console as soon as that is possible. That means, I can’t use SFSE, and anything that relies on SFSE. In fact, I don’t run SFSE myself. I use UltimateASILoader to launch Pluginstxt Enabler, which makes modding possible on both platforms. While everyone else is freaking out that SFSE broke and they can’t play with mods, or have to force Steam not to update… I don’t have to worry, I don’t have to guess, and I can let the game update whenever it wants to. My mods work without SFSE, so they work across game versions without a problem. And, since I try to AVOID overriding game systems/gear/parts, my mods should very, very rarely break with an update.

You do NOT have to adhere to this… but now you know what I’m personally striving for.

# Getting Started

Grab the .pas files out of the xEdit Scripts folder this Doc came with, and copy them into the Edit Scripts folder wherever you have xEdit installed.

Then… start making your mod. When you’re done, and you’ve thoroughly tested everything on multiple characters in every way you can conceive of… come back to this document and follow the instructions below, to maximize your User adoption.

If you are going to make SHIP WEAPONS then please use the included spreadsheet. You can import it into Google Docs if you need to. If you are using Microsoft Excel or something similar that runs on desktop, you can also install the included Fonts from that folder, and then the Excel doc will have the proper fonts to let you make screenshots directly from the spreadsheet to post on your mod page… like I do. I recommend GreenShot desktop app (it’s free) to make this process EVEN EASIER, without needing a photo editor at all. Google it 😊

# Making Install Variations (like WykkydGaming does)

Yes, these are the very techniques I use. With this process, I can make all 9 install variations in about 15 minutes. If you want to do it all by hand, that’s your call. For me, DarkStar Astro is just WAY too huge to do this by hand. I learned that the hard way, and started making scripts.

1. Make a new Folder to contain all your mod’s files.
2. Inside that folder, your structure should look like this. Even though your mod’s ESM file name will be different, this structure will help your Users, and help keep things organized.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

1. Now, grab your freshly saved ESM and place it inside this root folder, beside all of the folders pictured above.
2. Highlight your ESM, and CTRL+C
3. Paste (CTRL+V) 9 times. Yes, 9.
4. Rename each copy so that it is <yourmodname>\_<suffix from a folder above>.esm
   1. For example: DarkStar\_Astrodynamics-MyNewWeapon-Balanced.esm
5. Once you have all 9 copies, copy those new ESM files over to your Data folder for the game.
6. Open xEdit, and select ONLY your new copies with those suffixes appended.
7. Once loaded, one by one select an ESM from the list in xEdit, and:
   1. Right Click
   2. Apply Script
   3. Select the script that matches the Suffix of the ESM.
      1. IE: for the example -Balanced.esm above, select the \_WG-DarkStar-02-Balanced script
8. Repeat step 9 for all 9 files, running the CORRECT script against the CORRECT copy.
9. Once that’s done, open EVERY .ESM that has the phrase NoPerk in the file name.
   1. Find every single Class B Reactor, if any, and make sure they require Piloting 3.
   2. Find every single Class C Reactor, if any, and make sure they require Piloting 4.
10. Afterward, open EVERY .ESM that has Discounted in the file name.
    1. Find every COBJ for building at your outpost, if you created any, then…
    2. Edit the Credits value, if any, in the Components section and reduce price by 50%
11. After that, open EVERY .ESM that has Slashed in the file name.
    1. Find every COBJ for building at your outpost, if you created any, then…
    2. Edit the Credits value, if any, in the Components section and reduce price to 5 total credits.
12. Save every .ESM you just changed with scripts.
13. Close xEdit
14. Cut those files out of your Data folder (CTRL+X) and paste them back into the root mod folder, beside those folders we prepared in step 2.
15. One by one, drag each .ESM into the folder that matches its’ suffix.
16. Go into each folder and rename the .ESM to be exactly the name of your mod’s preferred ESM. When you are done, every folder EXCEPT fomod should contain a file with the exact same name.
17. Open the XML files inside the FOMOD folder and find/replace DarkStar\_Astrodynamics.esm with your mod’s file name.
18. In the Info.XML, change your mod’s name, version number, and image (if any).
19. OR – Use the FOMOD builder (FO4 has a good one on Nexus) to edit those XML files. Dealer’s choice.
20. Once all of that is done, go back to your mod’s root folder.
21. Remove all extra files in that root folder. It should just be a folder full of folders, like screenshot above.
22. Go up one folder, and right click the mod folder you made.
23. Compress to ZIP.
24. Now, go create/edit your Mod page and upload that Zip for others to enjoy.

Please make sure to set DarkStar\_Astrodynamics as a REQUIREMENT for your mod.

Please make sure to give credit to the original author.

Feel free to accept donations for your hard work.

Please encourage your users to donate to the original author as well.