

Star Trek Factoids

by

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The Star Trek franchise is mainly about entertainment, but it also takes the time to deal with some of the deep questions: Why are we here? What is my purpose in life? And why is it when you wait for a Starship, three show up at the same time. In this spirit of enquiry, we present some of the great unanswered mysteries of Trek.

1. Shakespeare: Star Trek is Shakespeare mad. They're forever quoting him, putting on his plays, hefting around those embarrassing gift editions bound in genuine imitation leather—and that's just the Klingons. If you don't like his stuff, you're out of luck. Come to think of it, you're out of luck if you do.
2. Klingons: An alien race who are a byword for underachievement. Once the most feared villains in the galaxy, several decades of bat'leth swinging, blood wine swilling, aphorism spouting, and getting beaten up by everyone up to and including the Ferengi reveals that they're really a race of interstellar Renaissance faire pirates.
3. Transporters: Getting from point A to B is something of a black and white affair on Star Trek. Sure, you can warp across interstellar space and beam down to a planet surface in a split second, but after that, you're walking. Would it be so hard to beam a bike down?
4. Physics: Star Trek proves that the laws of physics can be suspended for dramatic purposes. It may be hard vacuum out there between the stars, but starships still go whoosh and phasers go pheeuuuwww. In space, no one can hear you scream, but they can hear you shout KHHHAAAAANNNNN!!!!
5. Androids: A step beyond Robby the Robot, androids in Star Trek are so advanced that they are legally recognised as artificial lifeforms. It's a pity that despite their sophistication they still can't recognise a joke when they fall over one, master contractions, or seem to get that head-turning thing sorted out.
6. Money: None of this about, sorry. For some unexplained reason, the 24th century has abandoned currency and are jolly smug about it. There is a lot of gold-pressed latinum about to fill the void, but why it has to be gold pressed is another of Trek's little mysteries.
7. Toilets: None of these, either. Anywhere. So how do the crew of the Enterprise cope with a five-year mission without bringing along the littlest room? No WC, that's true, but they do have phasers and, except for a few cadets lost in training, things worked out pretty well.
8. Time Travel: For a series about spaceships, there's a lot of time travel in Star Trek. In fact, there's so much that they make Doctor Who look like a stay at home. With everyone jumping back in time to avoid spilled mustard, most history books are written on Post-it notes.
9. Treknobabble: How Star Trek writers get out of the corner they've written themselves into. The key to mastering advanced technology is the ability to bluff like a madman by throwing up a smokescreen of doubletalk. No matter what the problem, recalibrating the paraphrased

transwarp field coils by subspace modulation always works.

10. Medicine: By the 24th century, medicine has progressed beyond imagination. Not only are doctors equipped with cool whirly things to wave about, but every malady known to man has been cured with the exception of some the more fatal types of death. However, male pattern baldness still takes its terrible toll.